



BFH Action Plan for Responsible Research Assessment: 2024 and Beyond

Preamble

The Bern University of Applied Sciences (BFH) has been a member of the Coalition on Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA) since November 2022. By joining CoARA, the BFH commits itself to reviewing and developing the criteria, instruments and processes of research assessment. The BFH has many years of experience in the field of Responsible Research Assessment (RRA) and has in the past advocated for fair and comprehensive research assessment. In 2018, the BFH signed the DORA Declaration, which outlines principles for fair and RRA. The BFH Action Plan integrates existing RRA practices and outlines further actions to implement the CoARA principles. Implementation of the action plan will begin in 2024 and will be reviewed and updated annually.

The BFH is committed to the following Coalition on Advancing Research Assessment commitments:

Key commitments

- Recognising the diversity of contributions to and careers in research
- Qualitative assessment as the basis for research evaluation
- Avoid inappropriate use of journal and publication-based metrics
- Avoid the use of rankings

Support commitments

- Provide resources
- Review and develop criteria, tools and processes
- Raise awareness
- Share practices and experiences
- Communicating progress
- Evaluate practices, criteria and tools
- Open Science

The BFH promotes Open Science as an important aspect of RRA.

With this preamble, the BFH underlines its importance as a pioneer in the field of RRA and clarifies its commitment to fair and comprehensive research assessment.

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For the BFH Research Committee:

Prof. Dr Corina Caduff

Vice-President Research and President of the BFH Research Committee

Peter Brunner

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Dr Anja Raab

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BFH Action Plan for Responsible Research Assessment: 2024 and Beyond

	Reflection Point	Action	Milestone
Starting Points	Reflect on your strategy and change approach	Establish and promote the UAS-specific research profile (practice and impact orientation) within the organisation and the community	Review of BFH Research strategy
		Host a networking event for BFH researchers	BFH Research Management Day: "Societal Impact of Research" BFH Researchers' Day 2024: "International research: added value for research and teaching"
	Involve your institutional community in the change process	Organising dialogue between BFH researchers and reviewing research evaluation practices	BFH Research Management Day: "Societal Impact of Research" BFH Researchers' Day 2024: "International research: added value for research and teaching"
	Identify key challenges to address	-	-

	Reflection Point	Action	Milestone	
Core Commitments	1	Recognise the diversity of contributions to, and careers in, research in accordance with the needs and nature of the research	Implement the BFH Talent Development Programme , including the Tenure Track (new from 2024) and the Junior Scholars Program: BFH transversal , to attract and support researchers from diverse backgrounds	Define, review or adapt evaluation criteria to reflect and promote diversity in research contributions and career paths
		Integrate diversity considerations into the recruitment process and ensure that recruitment practices are inclusive and equitable		
	2	Base research assessment primarily on qualitative evaluation for which peer review is central, supported by responsible use of quantitative indicators	Implement qualitative evaluation mechanisms in BFH Funding Instruments for Research (Projects, Internationalisation, Research Initiative) and Strategic Thematic Fields (Caring Society / Humane Digital Society / Sustainable Development)	Develop proposals for evaluation schemes
			Share "Food for Thought" on current developments in metascience with members of the BFH Research Committee	
	3	Abandon inappropriate uses in research assessment of journal- and publication-based metrics, in particular inappropriate uses of Journal Impact Factor (JIF) and h-index	Incorporate alternative metrics , such as Altmetric scores, into the hiring process and talent promotion (Tenure Track)	Develop and implement a revised evaluation framework that incorporates Altmetric scores
			Use Altmetric scores alongside traditional metrics for a more comprehensive assessment of research impact	
	4	Avoid the use of rankings of research organisations in research assessment	Ongoing discussions to identify and implement strategies to reduce reliance on organisation rankings	

	Reflection Point	Action	Milestone	
Supporting Commitments	5	Commit resources to reforming research assessment as is needed to achieve the organisational changes committed to	Develop a comprehensive resource allocation plan within the BFH Vice Rectorate Research and Research Committee	
			Integrate resource allocation plans into the Research Committee's business planning process	
			Membership of relevant working groups to keep informed and contribute to the development of best practice	
	6	Review and develop research assessment criteria, tools and processes	Integrate alternative assessment criteria, tools, and processes into the recruitment process and talent promotion initiatives , such as the Tenure Track	Develop and implement a plan for incorporating alternative assessment criteria, tools, and processes into the hiring process and talent promotion initiatives
	7	Raise awareness of research assessment reform and provide transparent communication, guidance, and training on assessment criteria and processes as well as their use	Implement a training for appointing bodies to reduce unconscious bias and promote equitable assessment practices	Implementation of a training programme
8	Exchange practices and experiences to enable mutual learning within and beyond the Coalition	Actively participate in CoARA membership activities , including working groups and National Chapter , to promote the exchange of best practice in research assessment reform.		
9	Communicate progress made on adherence to the principles and implementation of the Commitments	Use BFH communication channels to disseminate information about the organisation's research evaluation processes		

	Reflection Point	Action	Milestone
		Organising a workshop for the BFH Research Committee and those responsible for research communication in order to promote cooperation and knowledge sharing	
10	Evaluate practices, criteria and tools based on solid evidence and the state-of-the-art in research on research, and make data openly available for evidence gathering and research	Carry out an evaluation of the three main funding schemes : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talent Development (Tenure Track, Junior Scholars Program: BFH transversal, PhD) • Strategic Thematic Fields (Caring Society / Humane Digital Society / Sustainable Development) • Funding instruments (projects, internationalisation) 	Evaluation and Revision