



CoARA Action Plan

24 January 2024

The University of Luxembourg (www.uni.lu) is an international research university with a distinctly multilingual and interdisciplinary character. The University of Luxembourg (UL) was founded in 2003 and is the only public university in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. It currently hosts three faculties and three interdisciplinary research centres (ICs), with two additional ICs to be established over the next months. About 6,000 Bachelor, Master, and PhD students are currently enrolled at the university. The UL strategic development areas are sustainable and societal development, medicine and health, and digital transformation ([link](#)).

The University of Luxembourg signed the CoARA agreement on 3 November 2022. Since March 2023, the Vice-Rector for Research of the University of Luxembourg, Prof. Simone Niclou, leads and coordinates the activities of research assessment. To drive the internal reflection process on these topics, the rector Prof. Jens Kreisel has appointed in June 2023 Prof. Anja Leist as *Chargée de Mission* (Special Advisor to the Rectorate) on the topic of 'Research Assessment' and Prof. Emma Schymanski as *Chargée de Mission* on the topic of 'Open Science and Data Management'.

UL actively engages on the topic of evolving research assessment and already offers several initiatives that promote alternative/holistic impact considerations, for example.:

- The use of UL's institutional open repository and bibliography ORBilu is encouraged, as it allows sharing different kinds of research outputs (peer reviewed and non-peer reviewed scientific output and collaborative work, reports, presentations, technical works, metadata for datasets, media work and public outreach items, etc.), following the "as open as possible, as closed as necessary" approach ([link](#)).
- The Community Engagement Certificate for students and doctoral researchers to recognize volunteering during the studies ([link](#)).
- The ADVANCE mentoring programme (started in 2023, [link](#)) promotes young researchers' personal narratives and career planning, recognising the importance of diversity and dialogue in research and academia.
- The updated tenure/promotion-track general provisions and evaluation procedure allows for valorisation of various researcher activities related to research, teaching and doctoral education, knowledge and technology transfer (outreach, impact etc.), and administration and management. The evaluation of research achievements comprises both quantitative and qualitative evaluation, with peer evaluation being most relevant.

In both a bottom-up and top-down manner, representatives of UL's management and research community engage in relevant national and international working groups and events.

We hereby provide the UL contribution to the initial CoARA Action Plan that all CoARA signatories have committed to submit after the first year of signing the agreement. A four-year follow-up end of 2027 is planned to communicate progress made on and evaluation of adherence to the principles and implementation of the Commitments.

Relevance of Advancing Research Assessment Activities for UL.

While UL supports the use of qualitative evaluation through a peer-review process, and the responsible use of quantitative indicators, UL also recognizes the importance of other CoARA principles, with a particular focus on:

- Promoting early-career researchers through internal and external training measures
- Advancing the evaluation of the academic careers of early- and mid-career researchers, both in hiring and internal promotion procedures
- Valuing research in a multilingual environment and interdisciplinary research settings
- Recognising and disseminating research with impact that responds to the global challenges populations are exposed to, such as sustainable societies, climate change, health issues, artificial intelligence, and geopolitical instabilities.
- Recognising the value of diversity of research and researcher profiles
- Aligning with national and international stakeholders on evolving practices in research(er) assessment

Planned Activities on the Topic of Advancing Research Assessment.

While possibly more actions will be implemented over the coming years to support the CoARA principles, the UL in its initial internal process of reflection has identified the following actions to be done to increase alignment with the CoARA principles:

1. UL representatives have joined (or are joining at the time of writing) several CoARA working groups ([link](#)) to actively participate in advancing practices of research assessment:
 - a. Reforming Academic Career Assessment (representative: Paula Souza, Advisor to the Vice-Rector for Research)
 - b. Towards Transformations: Transdisciplinarity, Applied/Practice-Based Research, and Impact (representative: Prof. Markus Hesse)
 - c. Experiments in Assessment – Idea generation, co-creation, and piloting (representative: Dr Philippe Delfosse, Advisor to the Rector)
 - d. Responsible metrics and indicators (representative: Prof. Anja Leist)
2. Continue the internal process of reflection and increase awareness of advancing research assessment practices at the university across faculties and interdisciplinary centres and among researchers at different career stages; review internal rules and regulations to align with DORA and CoARA principles.
3. Actively participate in European and international discussions on how to recognize research excellence in a reformed system. The university wishes to continue to strive for excellence in its three missions research, teaching, and societal impact. UL will strive to take an active role in international discussions, such as in the CoARA working groups, on how to recognize excellence in research and researchers.

4. Streamline and offer training for early-career and mid-career researchers across faculties and centres, by increasing awareness of existing offers and actively searching for candidates who could benefit from these programmes. The ADVANCE mentoring programme launched in 2023 will play a key role in this effort.
5. Engage into implementation process of DORA principles in the internal researcher evaluation procedures. A review of the application documents for the authorization to supervise doctoral students, the internal tenure track and competitive promotion procedures, and hiring guidelines will be carried out over the next year to align with the DORA principles.
6. Increase visibility and recognition of research with societal and policy impact. UL hosts several research activities with societal and policy impact, for example: The National Youth Report ([link](#)); Scienceteens Lab ([link](#)); Secondary school education on energy saving ([link](#)); Girls Exploring Math Days ([link](#)); and Cancer prevention ([link](#)).

These and other activities to generate social, policy and technological impact shall be featured more prominently on the website and through dissemination. UL will also encourage their researchers to deposit lay-audience publications, stakeholder events, talks etc. on the UL repository ORBilu to increase visibility for activities with societal and policy impact.

7. Increase visibility of excellent research beyond rankings, to a variety of audiences. As a very young university, UL must communicate its (early) achievements towards funders, students, and the public. While rankings, e.g., by Times Higher Education, are very visible for these stakeholders, the UL acknowledges the shortcomings of focusing exclusively on these metrics. We strive towards making further indicators accessible to evaluate UL achievements beyond rankings, such as outreach activities, showcasing achievements, like high-quality publications and prestigious research grants to be visible to the targeted audiences.
8. Streamlining Open Science practices at UL. We aim to streamline and adopt existing best-practice Open Science policies and infrastructure across all faculties and centres of UL, taking into account the financial framework of the university.
9. Supporting 'science for society' initiatives. UL hosts several relevant initiatives, such as outreach of researchers to school children and the public as mentioned above and contributes to initiatives by the national funder Luxembourg National Research Fund (FNR) (e.g., *Chercheurs à l'école*, annually; Researchers' Days, bi-annually). UL commits to continue its support to researchers who aim to participate in these activities and generate societal impact through these and other initiatives.
10. Increase educational and awareness-raising activities about Research Integrity, Open Science, and Gender equality jointly with the relevant offices at UL, as measures impacting research culture & assessment.

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