



Responsible Research Assessment (RRA): State-of-the-art and the way ahead

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Universiteit
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*Recent events do not give me hope,
but they do give me purpose*

---Kathleen Fitzpatrick, The Generous University

“But I want to make clear that *this output* is much more valuable than anything I have published in my career to date. However, *the current evaluation mechanisms do not assess its true value.*”

“I have written *manuals for students and given scientific advice* to policy makers, *but this counts for nothing in the academic world.*”

I also *don't add my name unnecessarily to articles written by colleagues* and so my publication numbers are decreasing. *According to the current evaluation criteria, I am lazier now than I was in the past!*’



Italian marine biologist Professor Ferdinando Boero (e-mail correspondence, 08/2017)

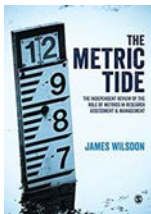
A moment of opportunity? Concern has intensified



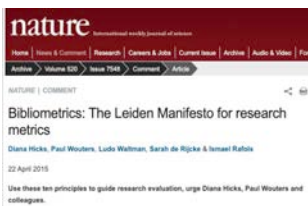
- the **misapplication of narrow criteria and indicators of research quality or impact**
- has **reduced the diversity of research missions and purposes**



- the **systemic biases against those who do not meet - or choose not to prioritise - narrow criteria and indicators of quality or impact**
- these biases have **reduced the diversity, vitality and representative legitimacy of the research community**



- a **diversion of policy & managerial attention to things that can be measured**, at the expense of less tangible or quantifiable qualities, impacts, assets and values



RoRI Working Paper No.3
**The changing role of
funders in responsible
research assessment:**


progress, obstacles and the way ahead

Stephen Curry, Sarah de Rijcke, Anna Hatch, Dorsamy (Gansen)
Pillay, Inge van der Weijden and James Wilsdon

November 2020

Produced in partnership with:



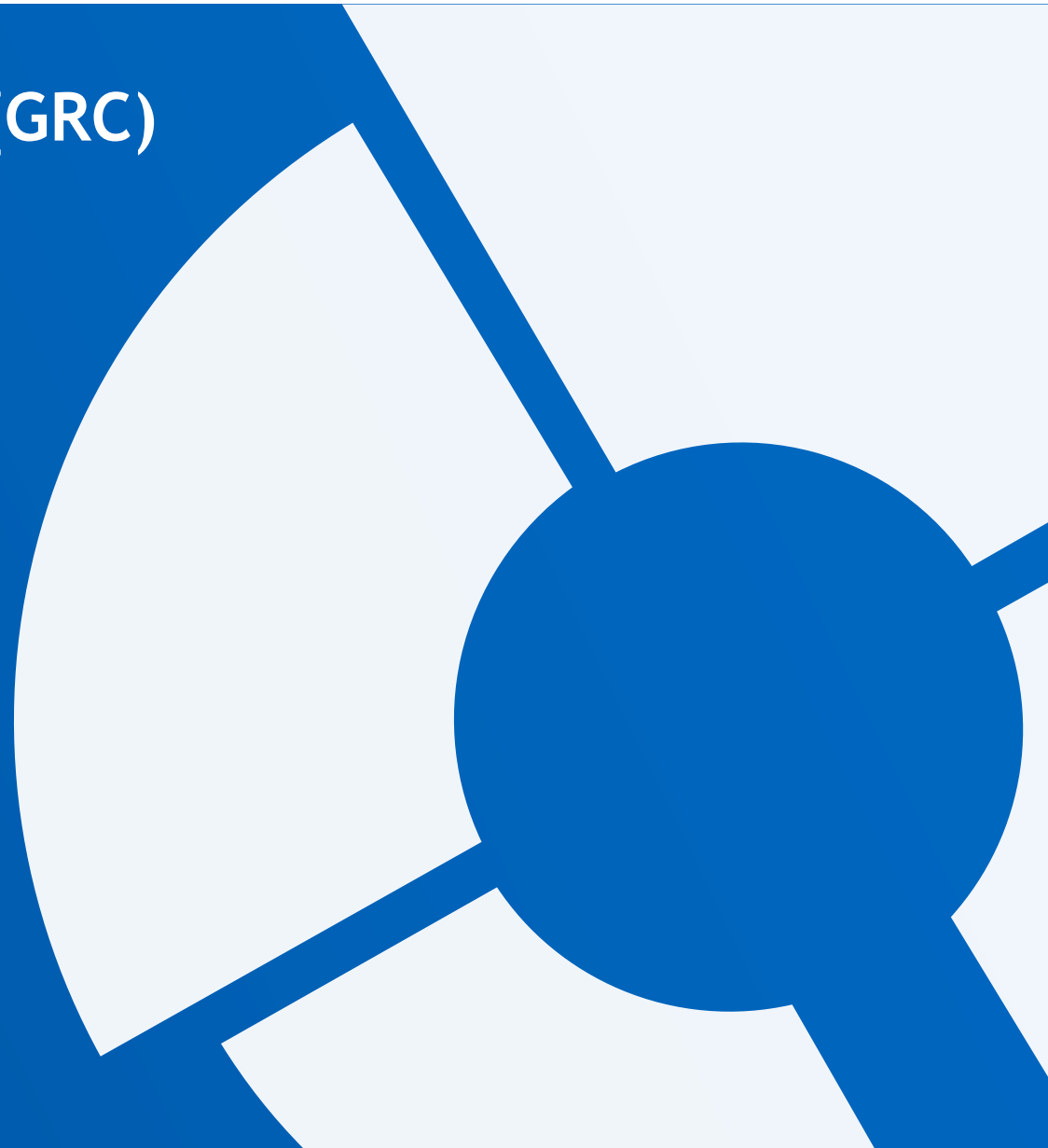
The background of the slide is a repeating pattern of blue and white Twitter bird icons. The birds are stylized and appear to be layered or overlapping, creating a sense of depth and movement. The colors are a vibrant blue and a clean white.

The purpose of RRA is to improve research, in cultures, in practices and in products.

Global Research Council (GRC) Survey on RRA



RoRI RESEARCH
ON RESEARCH
INSTITUTE



Methodology

Online survey:

- 23 questions
- Builds on Science Europe questionnaire on RA practices 2019
- Open from September-October 2020
- Completed by 55 organisations - 46% response rate

	N	%
Africa and Middle-East <i>(Sub-Saharan Africa, North Africa & Middle East)</i>	10	18.2
Asia-Pacific	14	25.5
Americas	10	18.2
Europe	21	38.2
<i>Total</i>	55	100

Table 1: Respondents by geographical region

Research Assessment Indicators

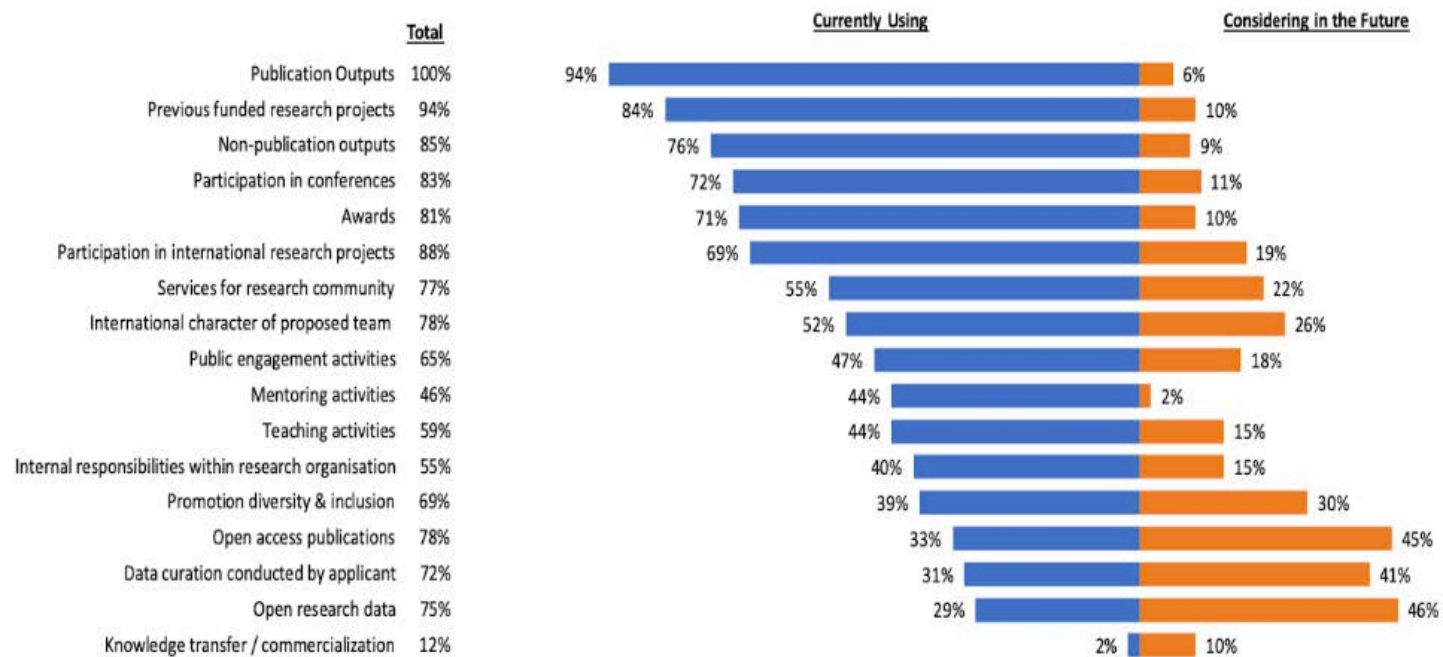
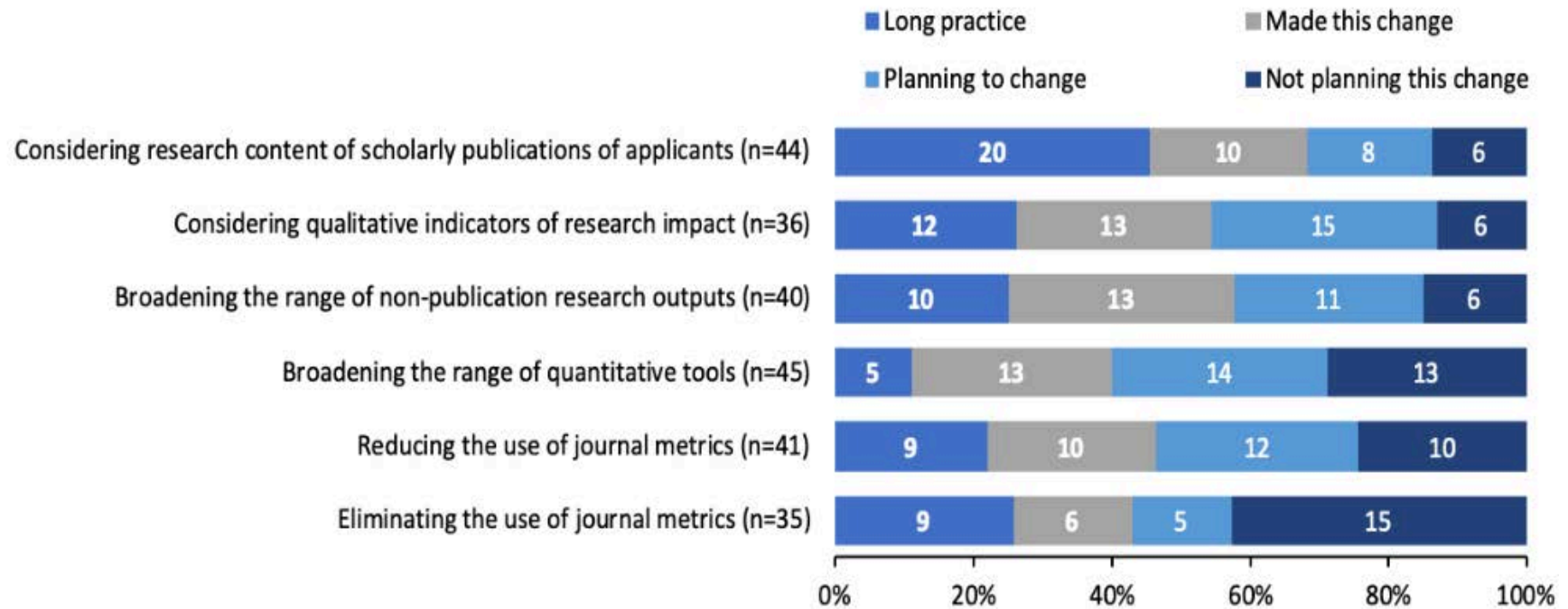
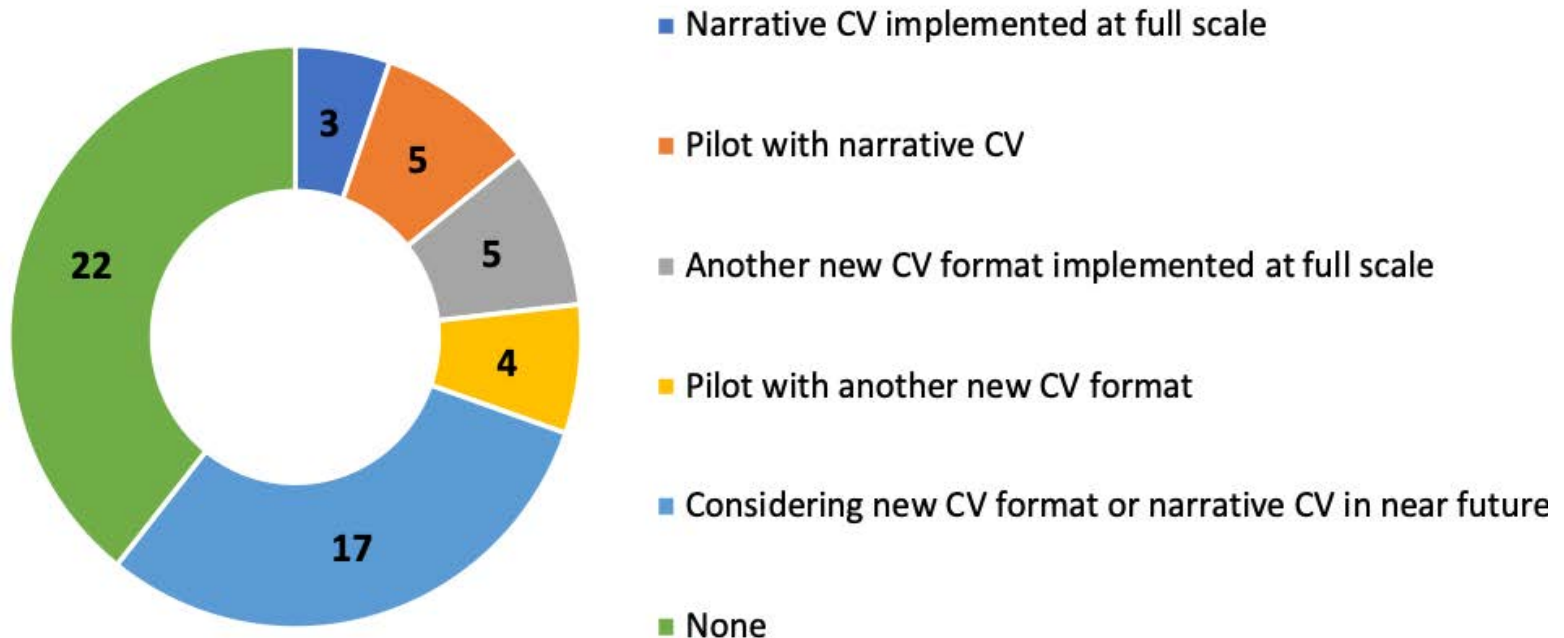


Figure 3: Research assessment indicators (to be) used by GRC participating organisations who responded to the survey (n=50, missing n=5)

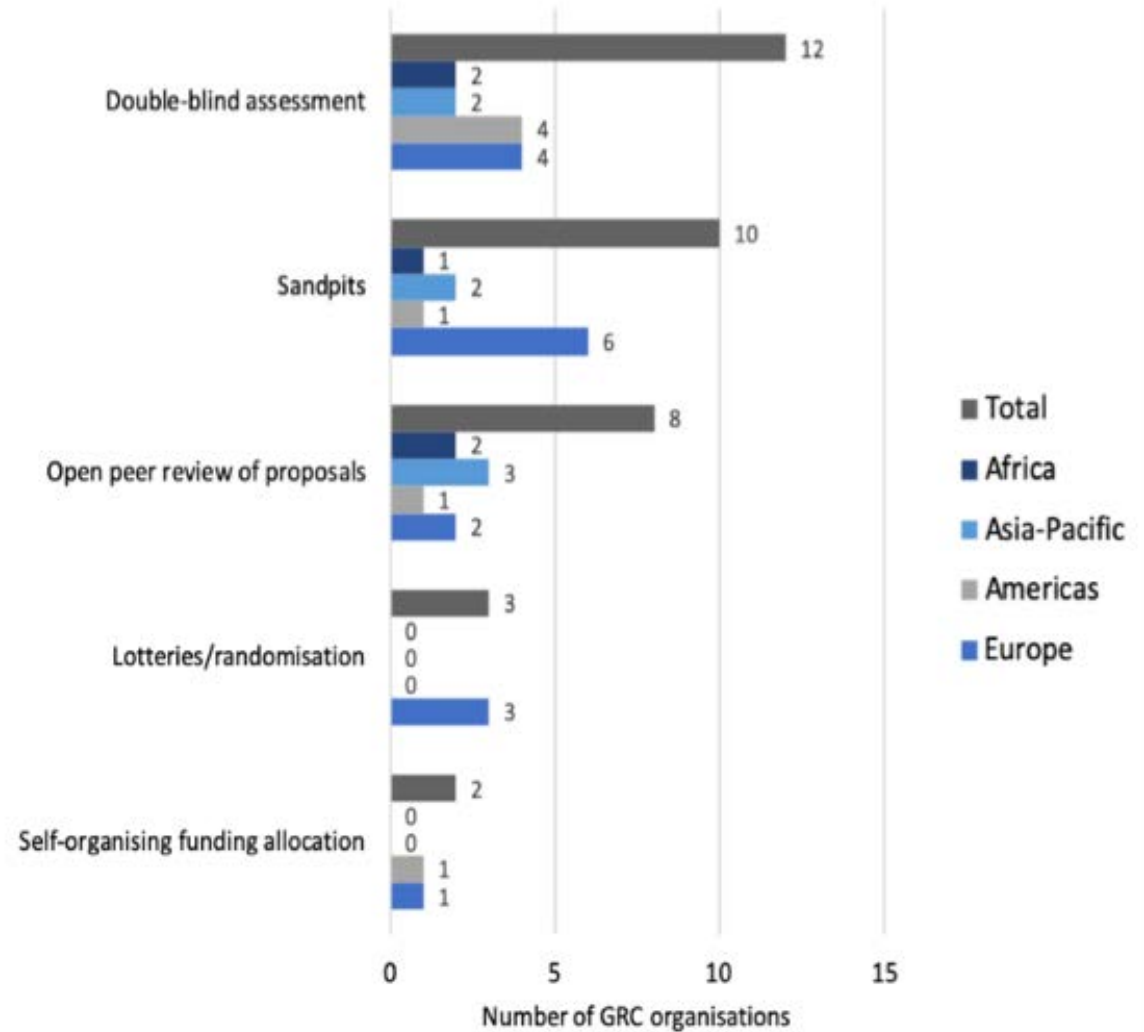
Changes in the way research proposals are assessed



Use of new CV formats of applicants



New assessment and funding allocation methods



Conclusions



- Less reliance on metrics; more qualitative or mixed-methods modes of assessment
- Alternative CV formats are being piloted or implemented by 60% of respondents
- Half of the respondents have introduced new assessment processes and systems
- Experiments with radically different funding allocation methods remain rare



RRA: from an initial focus on metrics to a more holistic focus on fostering a healthy research culture

RRA in 2021: Reasons for optimism!

- Growing slew of initiatives
- Lively and progressive engagement with RRA
- Is already impacting funder practices worldwide
- And is also impacting **universities!**

Culture Change toward RRA in the Netherlands

Position paper ‘Room for everyone’s talent’

Association of Dutch Universities (VSNU) & NFU

- New framework for assessment, development and promotion
- Principles RRA in Strategy Evaluation Protocol (SEP)
- Concrete implementation of a new balance in RRA

Funders: NWO and ZonMw

- More diversity in funding instruments
- More emphasis on Team Science
- Application forms of a more narrative nature



Academia in Motion: Leiden University's contribution to the Dutch national RRA initiative

**Academia in Motion:
Recognition & Rewards at Leiden University**

- 1 Academia in Motion: Recognition & Rewards at Leiden University
- 2 Leiden University: Diversity in unity
- 3 Recognition & Rewards: Why is a change in this necessary?
- 4 Our ambitions
5 Dilemmas
- 6 How are we going to do it?
- 7 Members steering group
Plan of approach



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Discover the world at Leiden University

Leiden University's approach

Steering Group: Start April 2020 (+/- 1,5 years)

Project leader: Vincent Wolters

Chairs Steering Group: Manon van der Heijden & Sarah de Rijcke

Composition: broad representation of faculties and roles

Assignment:

1. Formulate vision on Responsible Research Assessment
2. Plan of action implementation vision
3. Coordinate implementation, in consultation with Faculties and Executive Board
4. Pay attention to diversity



Planning Steering Group Leiden

What	How	When
Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Memo and presentation • Inventory (good) practices on yearly appraisals, hiring, promotion • Dialogue: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Information round of faculties and administrative bodies</i> - <i>Discussions of steering group members with broad representation of employees</i> 	April - September 2020
Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dialogue: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Publication 'Academia in Motion: Recognition & Reward Leiden University' and website</i> - <i>Plan professional, university-wide 'dialogue sessions'</i> • Design and implementation of a targeted survey 	September 2020 - March 2021
Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of collected data and survey results • Dialogue: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Sessions</i> - <i>Information round Faculties and governing bodies</i> 	September - March 2021
Set priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set priorities based on data analysis, survey results and information round • Dialogue sessions: round Faculties and governing bodies • Translation of vision into concrete objectives 	March - May 2021
Implementation proposals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan of action for implementation of vision • Dialogue sessions: round Faculties and governing bodies • Implementation and effectuation 	From Summer 2021 onwards

Approach: culture change is a process



Approach Leiden University



Why do we need culture change?

1. Too much emphasis on research performance and undervaluation of education, impact and leadership.
2. Too much emphasis on simplistic metrics
3. Too much emphasis on individual performance, too little on collaboration

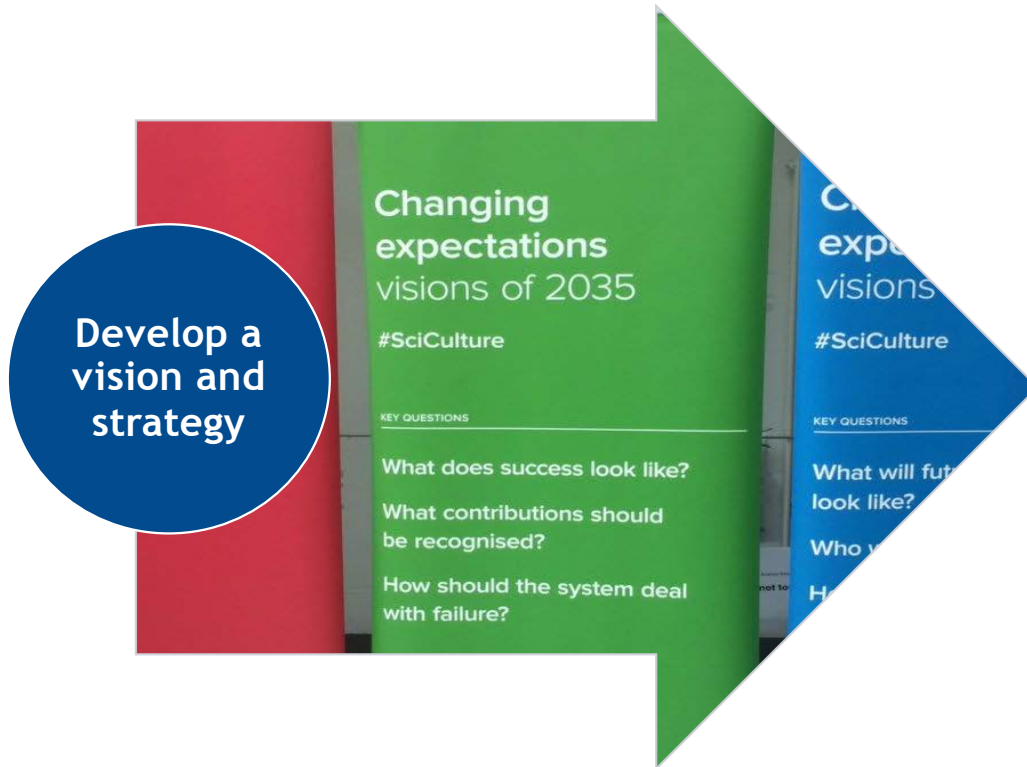
Approach Leiden University

Form a
leading
coalition



- Executive Board & Supervisory Board
- Deans, Faculty Boards, Scientific Directors Institutes
- Active national network of project leaders and steering group chairs
- Exchange with other steering groups
- Active international network

Approach Leiden University (status until January 2021)



Gaining insight into practices and experiences

- Collection of information: R&D, promotion, appointment / vacancies
- Discussions about RRA university-wide
- RRA survey

Disseminate information about intended culture change

- Memo Leiden University
- Presentations about RRA by members of the steering committee

Academia in Motion: Leiden University

- What, Why, How, When

Approach Leiden University



1. Diversification in academic careers

- Better balance
- More appreciation
- Teamwork: balance individual and collective achievements

2. Transparency

- Open Science
- Career opportunities, appointments, promotions, rewards, right of promotion

3. Leadership

- Key to culture change
- From 'I' to 'We'

Approach Leiden University



- Conversations and presentations
- Memo and paper *Academia in Motion*
- Targeted survey
- Dialogue sessions
- Communication strategy





RRA should not primarily focus on developing
'hard' numbers and technological fixes.

It must, above all, become more engaged in
order to become more meaningful.



RRA is a joint (ad)venture
I'm looking forward to learning
from Norway's next steps!

THANK YOU

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[@sarahderijcke](https://twitter.com/sarahderijcke)

