

DORA Strategic Plan 2023-2026

DORA, the Declaration on Research Assessment, is both a statement of principles and an organization that campaigns for and supports reform of research evaluation practices. [Signing the declaration](#) is an important way for individuals and organizations to publicly declare their commitment to improve research and research practices by supporting a shift towards responsible research assessment (RRA), which [has been defined](#) as “an umbrella term for approaches to assessment which incentivise, reflect and reward the plural characteristics of high-quality research, in support of diverse and inclusive research cultures.”

But signing DORA is only a first step. The next and more challenging steps require changes in processes to ensure that decisions based on research and researcher assessment (e.g. hiring, promotion, tenure, redundancy, and funding) focus on the diverse qualities of the products and conduct of research that are most highly valued within the academy and society at large, rather than on questionable proxies such as journal-based metrics. They also require culture changes that are rooted in a strong sense of epistemic justice, to ensure that all contributions are evaluated fairly, irrespective of the personal characteristics of the researcher.

To advance this agenda, DORA has worked with the scholarly community worldwide (including, among others, scholars, funders, academic institutions, learned societies, and publishers) to raise awareness of the need for research assessment reform, to discover and disseminate good practice, and to co-create new tools and processes that will enable real and positive change. Through this work, DORA has built an international reputation as a professional organization that has influenced and contributed to research assessment reform globally. This is an endeavor shared by many different organizations; the most notable initiatives are listed [here](#).

As a result, the scholarly landscape now looks very different than in 2013, when the declaration was first published. We have seen widespread acceptance of the need for responsible research assessment, which has resulted in many instances of practical action. Nevertheless, there remains a pressing need to increase the scale, pace and impact of reform, and to ensure that commitment to the declaration on paper results in meaningful change on the ground.

At DORA we wish to build on the momentum for change and action. To that end, we set out here our updated strategic plan, which will provide the framework and focus for our work over the next three years.

To learn more about the principles and values that underpin our work, read about DORA's [vision](#) and our [recognition](#) of how reform of assessment is critical for the advance of open scholarship and greater equity within the research ecosystem.

The communities that DORA aims to serve: funding agencies, academic institutions, and [other parties](#).

Objective 1

We will increase awareness of the negative impacts of research assessment practices that are too dependent on inappropriate metrics, and of the positive impacts of alternative practices.

Rationale

Experience over the past decade and input from a range of scholarly community members has shown us that reform of research assessment is a challenge to a status quo that reaches across the globe; despite recent progress, the case for change still needs to be made in forms that are both powerful and empathetic.

Specific Activities

- 1.1 Create concise, timely, and practical guidance in a range of media that explain the case for change and outline practical pathways to the reform of research assessment.
- 1.2 Carefully curate and showcase evidence of positive impact of implementation of good practices in research assessment.
- 1.3 Co-host and participate in scientific and scholarly meetings to support reform of research assessment.
- 1.4 Initiate and engage with dialogue on research assessment via social and other media
- 1.5 Draw attention to national or regional-level policies that either support or constrain local effort to reform research assessment
- 1.6 Where possible, provide tools, frameworks and other resources in different languages.

Objective 2

We will work to accelerate the development of clear and concrete measures to reform research assessment.

Rationale

DORA can support change and propose specific reforms, but only through the hard work of co-creation and implementation with the scholarly community can we expect to convert ideas and policy aspirations into lasting and relevant improvements in research assessment.

Specific Activities

- 2.1 Build on existing collaborations with a variety of scholarly community members, from funders to individual research organizations, to advance practical measures for research assessment reform

2.2 To the best of our capacity, support DORA signatories working to implement their research assessment reforms.

2.3 Cultivate new collaborations, particularly in regions of the world where we have heard demand for greater engagement with DORA in promoting reform.

2.4 Develop and disseminate concise and concrete advice and training materials on best practices and innovations in research assessment.

2.5 Collect and disseminate critical evaluations of the outcomes of reformed research assessment practices.

Objective 3

We will support advocates of research assessment reform worldwide

Rationale

To enhance DORA's capacity we will empower individuals and communities who are allies of DORA in advocating for research assessment reform in their own locales and organizations.

Specific Activities

3.1 Create a 'DORA advocate' toolkit.

3.2 Grow our online communities of practice to support individual DORA advocates and others working to implement responsible research assessment; these will provide spaces for dialogue, collaboration, and the sharing of evidence for assessment practices that work well.

3.3 Continue the DORA Community Engagement Grants Program that was piloted in 2021-2022.

Objective 4

We will secure the funding needed to deliver DORA's mission as efficiently and as rapidly as possible.

Rationale

DORA's success in recent years has been critically dependent on securing funds to support a small but dedicated full-time staff. To maintain our capacity to drive research assessment reform, we need to ensure that the initiative has the resources needed to ensure enactment of the declaration.

Specific Activities

4.1 Seek out opportunities to recruit new contributor organizations.

4.2 Seek funding or in-kind support for specific projects.