TORCH

TRANSFORMING OPEN RESPONSIBLE RESEARCH AND INNOVATION THROUGH CHARM

TORCH

DELIVERABLE D8.3 – TORCH: RESEARCH ASSESSMENT REPORT

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CHARM-EU - Challenge Driven, Accessible, Research-based and Mobile European University

D - Deliverable of the project

ELTE - Eötvös Loránd University Budapest

RRI – Responsible Research and Innovation

PMT - Project management meeting

SPA – Strategic Priority Area

TCD - Trinity College Dublin

TORCH - Transforming Open Responsible Research and Innovation through CHARM

UB - University of Barcelona

UM - University of Montpellier

UU - Utrecht University

WP - Work package

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: RESEARCH ASSESSMENT REPORT

This report outlines the impacts of implementing a connected RRI strategy on research assessment and provides recommendations on change evaluation. It focuses on SPA1 Working Towards reforming research assessment - and more specifically, pays special attention to Rewards and Recognition as a central element in the reform of Research Assessment. It provides background information on the current environment of Research Assessment. It describes Developing a CHARM-EU Research Assessment system as linked with Recognition and Rewards at UU. It then discusses the core elements of a connected RRI in relation to Reform of research assessment, analysing its impacts on different levels and concludes with recommendations for change evaluation.

For CHARM-EU and its member universities, reforming research assessment is both a dynamic evolving activity and a prerequisite to advance our collaboration and bring our innovation ideas into practice. Whilst our alliance has entered a new phase with the start of CHARM-EIGHT, the research and innovation dimension addressed by TORCH is coming to its first major milestone with the conclusion of the project, giving us an opportunity to reflect on the work completed and its impact, both intended and unintended, as well as the ramifications for the future. The main objective of this report is to outline the **impacts of implementing a connected RRI strategy on research assessment and provide recommendations on change evaluation**. This report can contribute to different work packages in CHARM-EIGHT, such as those directed toward professional development and rewarding excellence in teaching or the work towards a transdisciplinary and team-oriented doctoral programme.

As described in D8.4, the second half of TORCH is characterized by an integrative approach focusing on the identification and development of five strategic priority areas (SPAs). One of these is Working Towards the Reform of Research Assessment, which includes rewards, recognition and human resource strategies in relation to research assessment. Given the timeframe in TORCH, the complexity of the Reform of Research Assessment and the establishment of a large coalition to prepare and share reform approaches and experiences, we decided not to pilot Research Assessment within the project timeline. Instead, this topic is addressed in a proposed action plan (see Description of AP1 in Deliverable 9.2) to be carried out at an appropriate time.

This report focuses on SPA1 Working Towards reforming research assessment - and more specifically, pays special attention to Rewards and Recognition as a central element in the reform of Research Assessment. Our work in previous work packages and deliverables (specifically D8.1) has identified the area of recruitment and promotion of staff as being one of the central hubs of interconnected RRI, which is at the core of new Rewards and Recognition practices. At this, our approach is primarily informed by the implementation of innovative practices at Utrecht University, one of the TORCH and CHARM partners, and the member institution with the largest amount of work already conducted on research assessment reform. As a Dutch university, UU is part of a national process to reform rewards and recognition processes. UU is actively advancing this field and is in a natural and logical position to share its experiences and expertise with the alliance

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partners. UU is also highlighted as an example of best practice in the LERU Position Paper on Research Assessment and by the authors of the mid-term review of TORCH.

We have found that our existing practices to recognize and nurture RRI practices are still fragmented, and existing recognition and reward structures overall still form a source of disincentives to engage with RRI. For research assessment this means we identify a clear need to screen and uncover where recognition and rewards structures in fact function as disincentives to RRI and what changes could be made to make these structures more suited to facilitate RRI. One aim of Research assessment should thus lie in actively encouraging RRI activities (such as by recognizing a broader set of contributions) by recognizing them as relevant activities for researchers and ideally by providing career paths for researchers who excel at such activities. Furthermore, our CHARM alliance could help provide a community of like-minded researchers with opportunities to exchange experiences. To help overcome the fragmentation of existing initiatives, a long-term vision and commitment to develop institutional support for transdisciplinary science and public engagement are needed. Research assessment reforms have stressed the need for more team-based evaluation approaches, which could be a valuable step in addressing fragmentation.

All five TORCH partners have signed the CoARA agreement and have thus committed themselves to implement relevant organizational changes and share practices towards a reform of research assessment. Beyond this, our alliance is inspired by the commitments and principles spelled out in CoARA. After discussing this suggestion and weighing the different options to design, launch, implement and evaluate pilot actions, the TORCH PMT decided that rather than developing piloting activities on research assessment, it was advisable to define a strategy, an action plan. We recognised that the final phase of the TORCH project coincided directly with the rapid development of CoARA and we considered it better to delay our piloting activities until the basic elements of CoARA became clearer.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background, context and focus of this report

This report was prepared in the context of the project TORCH (Transforming Open Responsible Research and Innovation through CHARM), which develops the Research and Innovation Dimension of the CHARM-EU University Alliance. This project is funded by the Horizon 2020 Science with and for Society instrument. This report reflects on the implications of implementing a connected RRI strategy in the context of working towards reformed research assessment.

For CHARM-EU and its member universities, reforming research assessment is both a dynamic evolving activity and a prerequisite to advance our collaboration and bring our innovation ideas into practice. Whilst our alliance has entered a new phase with the start of CHARM-EIGHT, the research and innovation dimension addressed by TORCH is coming to its first major milestone with the conclusion of the project, giving us an opportunity to reflect on the work completed and its impact, both intended and unintended, as well as the ramifications for the future. The main objective of this report is to outline the **impacts of implementing a connected RRI strategy on research assessment and provide recommendations on change evaluation**. This report can contribute to different work packages in CHARM-EIGHT, such as those directed toward professional development and rewarding excellence in teaching or the work towards a transdisciplinary and team-oriented doctoral programme.

The main work packages in TORCH concern the development of a **connected Responsible Research and Innovation strategy** (the WPs dealing with Crosscutting Principles (WP3), Common Science Agenda (WP4), Strengthening Cooperation between Universities and Enterprises (WP5), Mainstreaming of comprehensive Open Science Practices and Public Engagement (WP6), whilst specifically Deliverable 3.1 and WP7 make relevant statements about research assessment. Two work packages, WP8 on Common Policies and Strategies and WP9 on Action Plans and Pilots are taking an integrative approach towards the work done in WPs 3-7. The overview table in Figure 1 shows how the WPs feed into this deliverable.
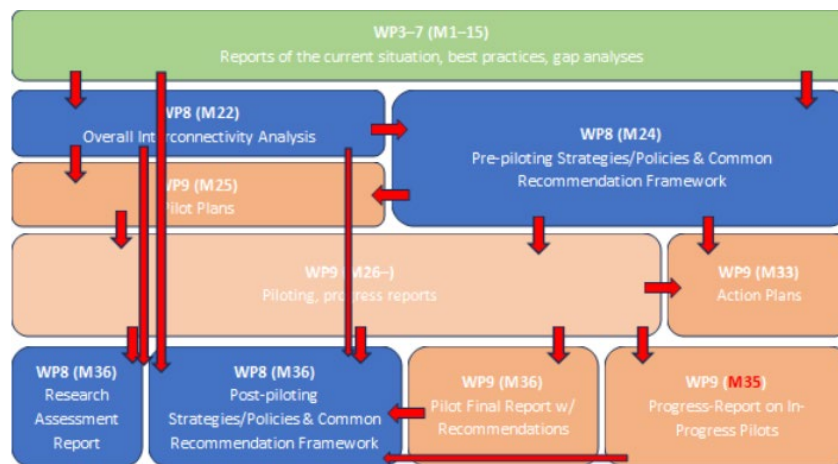

Figure 1. WP8-WP9 cooperation in the second half of the Project.

Answers to questions about the impact of implementing a connected RRI strategy on research assessment are provided in many ways in these different work packages, which also provide materials and insights on which to base recommendations for change evaluation. This deliverable therefore aims to focus on and integrate these contributions with a view to discussing Research Assessment impacts and providing recommendations on change evaluation.

As described in D8.4, the second half of TORCH is characterized by an integrative approach focusing on the identification and development of five strategic priority areas (SPAs). One of these is Working Towards the Reform of Research Assessment, which includes rewards, recognition and human resource strategies in relation to research assessment. Given the timeframe in TORCH, the complexity of the Reform of Research Assessment and the establishment of a large coalition to prepare and share reform approaches and experiences, we decided not to pilot Research Assessment within the project timeline. Instead, this topic is addressed in a proposed action plan (see Description of AP1 in Deliverable 9.2) to be carried out at an appropriate time.

The focus in the second half of the TORCH project is on the following five interconnected SPAs, which lead and shape our interconnected RRI Strategy. Their purpose is to articulate the CHARM-EU Alliance partners' commitment and pathway towards a structured and collaborative approach that provides a framework for joint and shared R&I-related activities.

· TORCH SPA1: Working towards reforming research assessment.

· TORCH SPA2: Fostering equality, diversity and inclusivity.

· TORCH SPA3: Championing Open Science.

· TORCH SPA4: Promoting inter/transdisciplinary research driven by societal challenges.

· TORCH SPA5: Intensifying R&I cooperation between universities.
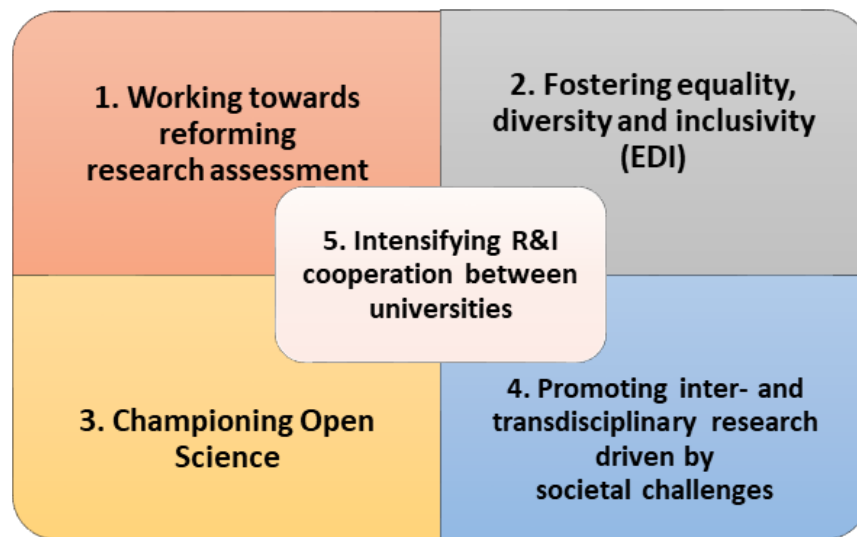
Figure 2. TORCH five Strategic Priority Areas

This report focuses on SPA1 Working Towards reforming research assessment - and more specifically, it pays special attention to Rewards and Recognition as a central element in the reform of Research Assessment. Our work in previous work packages and deliverables (specifically D8.1) has identified the area of recruitment and promotion of staff as being one of the central hubs of interconnected RRI, which is at the core of new Rewards and Recognition practices. At this, our approach is primarily informed by the implementation of innovative practices at Utrecht University, one of the TORCH and CHARM partners, and the member institution with the largest amount of work already conducted on research assessment reform. As a Dutch university, UU is part of a national process to reform rewards and recognition processes. UU is actively advancing this field and is in a natural and logical position to share its experiences and expertise with the alliance partners. UU is also highlighted as an example of best practice in the LERU Position Paper on Research Assessment and by the authors of the mid-term review of TORCH.

In addition, the sharing of innovative frameworks, beyond the work done in TORCH, as well as the sharing of best practices will help the alliance to function as a vehicle not only internally for our group of alliance partners but also distribute knowledge and best practices beyond our alliance, to other alliances and universities.

1.2 Update on the current environment regarding research assessment:

The discussion on the Reform of Research Assessment has developed a very strong dynamic and backing from European Commission since 2019, when we initially wrote the proposal for TORCH. Indeed, activity in this field can be traced back further, such as to the DORA initiative from 2013. We will discuss this context and explain what it has meant for our work. While this report does not aim to provide a comprehensive overview of policy and reform developments, it will address the most relevant activities within TORCH and the most influential policy developments around the reform of research assessment.

To achieve this, Deliverable 8.3. focuses specifically on **TORCH intermediate results** concerning Research Assessment/Rewards and Recognition and revisits selected TORCH results through that lens. Specifically, we re-visited Deliverables 3.1 and the reports from WP7 since these have been found to have the most relevance for this report. These are discussed in the following paragraphs.

1.2.1 TORCH Cross-cutting principles

Deliverable 3.1 presents the results of a landscape analysis focused on mapping the current structures and practices relating to the three cross-cutting principles (as shown below) across the five TORCH partner institutions.
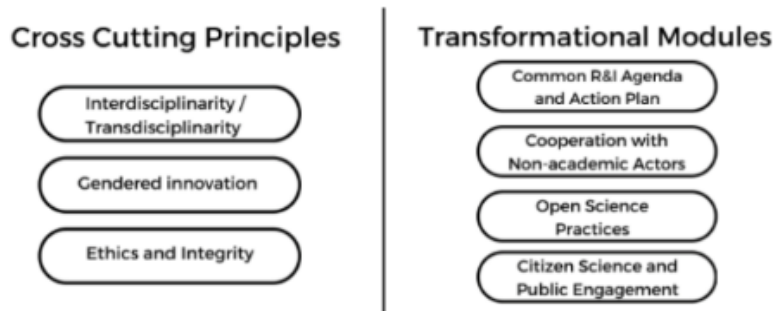
Figure 3. Cross Cutting Principles & Transformational Modules.

D3.1 deals with three core cross-cutting elements of a connected RRI strategy: Inter- and Trans-disciplinarity, Gendered Innovation and Ethics and Integrity. It describes procedures and practices in our institutions, based on the results of the analysis of responses to a qualitative questionnaire. Zooming-in on recognition practices shows that recognition practices are an element in both sub-chapters on gendered innovation and inter/transdisciplinarity. Overall, the deliverable concludes that **fewer measures are in place to recognize or encourage inter/transdisciplinarity** than for gendered innovation which seems to be addressed in a more consistent way.

1.2.2 Interdisciplinarity and Public Engagement

Our Work Package 7 on Public Engagement presents and discusses a broad range of public engagement (PE) and inter/transdisciplinary activities and policies at the partner universities. As described in D7.1, there exists a large variety of initiatives and practices. However, overall, these tend to be fragmented and often based on bottom-up initiatives by academics. Existing rewards and recognition systems on the university level are experienced by some as disincentives to engage truly in PE. We found that some infrastructures and pioneering institutions are helpful in promoting more public engagement, concluding that a lot has been done in terms of promoting public engagement and transdisciplinary science as part of the open science movement in many of our universities. We observed that different universities report comparable incentives and disincentives for conducting public engagement and transdisciplinary science as reported by different universities are quite similar. Whilst at the individual level peer support and internal motivation play a prominent role as incentives, **disincentives often relate to missing capacities and lack of rewards and recognition for scientists** who want to pursue their careers through public engagement and transdisciplinary science.

Deliverable 7.1 concludes in the synthesis report that whilst many universities have integrated some form of public engagement or transdisciplinarity into their wider aims to open up science, not all of them have dedicated or specific centralized policies in place geared towards stimulating or facilitating in a structured way open science, transdisciplinary science or public engagement. Although there are many good practices on public engagement and transdisciplinary science in both research and education, the **existing initiatives are fragmented**. In addition, they are very much dependent on bottom-up, individual/team leaderships in initiating transdisciplinary science and public engagement activities.

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Concerning interdisciplinarity, for instance the UU model is highly ambitious, featuring four Interdisciplinary Strategic Themes. However, we note that until today, at UU we do not know enough about the career prospects of interdisciplinary researchers. We observe that **currently there is no adequate recognition system available in terms of research across multiple disciplines**. Although such projects and individual researchers can be interesting to include in communication strategies and as newsitems for the general public, they are often not perceived as being as representative for the University's vision and strategy. In addition, our work in WP3, as shown in D3.1, revealed that the number of interdisciplinary funding applications or awards is mostly not monitored or tracked internally.

From both reports we can conclude that existing practices to recognize and nurture RRI practices are still fragmented, and existing recognition and reward structures overall still form a source of disincentives to engage with RRI. For research assessment this means we identify **a clear need to screen and uncover where recognition and rewards structures in fact function as disincentives to RRI** and what changes could be made to make these structures more suited to facilitate RRI. One aim of Research assessment should thus lie in actively encouraging RRI activities by recognizing them as relevant activities for researchers and ideally by providing career paths for researchers who excel at such activities. Furthermore, our CHARM alliance could help provide a community of like-minded researchers with opportunities to exchange experiences. To help overcome the fragmentation of existing initiatives, a long-term vision and commitment to develop institutional support for transdisciplinary science and public engagement are needed. Research assessment reforms have stressed the need for more team-based evaluation approaches, which could be a valuable step in addressing fragmentation. The above examples illustrate that **to advance RRI an integrated effort** is needed, where activities in public engagement and open science are seen in concert and adequate rewards and recognition is embedded in the university in a structural and connected way.

1.2.3 CoARA and the Future of the Reform of Research Assessment

Most recently, the CoARA process of the Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (https://coara.eu/), is taking a leading role in Reform of Research Assessment. This process has been gaining traction since 2021, with its constitutive assembly taking place in December 2022. Several policy and change priorities relevant for research assessment within our alliance will be addressed in working groups within CoARA. All five TORCH partners have signed the agreement and have thus committed themselves to implement relevant organizational changes and share practices towards a reform of research assessment. Beyond this, our alliance is inspired by the commitments and principles spelled out in CoARA.

As of November 2023, CoARA is becoming operational, issuing calls to establish topical working groups and, most recently, breaking the news on receiving considerable financial backing to boost the initiative's operational capacity, acquiring cascade funding of 2.75 million Euro to support at least 50 projects. In the coming years therefore, it may be possible for the CHARM alliance to apply for funding to support its work within to advance research assessment concepts, exchange of best practices and implementation experiences.

As signatories, we have fully agreed to following the CoARA commitments, which we repeat below. As a group, they represent the goals which we aim for, with each commitment also representing several intersecting RRI areas, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. CoARA commitments and their implicated RRI areas.

No.	CoARA commitment	Implicated RRI areas
1	Recognise the diversity of contributions to, and careers in, research in accordance with the needs and nature of the research.	Equality, diversity & inclusivity; Public engagement; Science communication; Ethics & integrity
2	Base research assessment primarily on qualitative evaluation for which peer review is central, supported by responsible use of quantitative indicators.	Equality, diversity & inclusivity; Ethics & integrity
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.	Open Science; Public Engagement; Ethics & integrity
4	Avoid the use of rankings of research organisations in research assessment.	Science communication; Governance of RRI
5	Commit resources to reforming research assessment as is needed to achieve the organisational changes committed to.	Equality, diversity & inclusivity; Ethics & integrity; Governance of RRI
6	Review and develop research assessment criteria, tools and processes.	Equality, diversity & inclusivity; Public Engagement; Ethics & integrity; Governance of RRI
7	Raise awareness of research assessment reform and provide transparent communication, guidance, and training on assessment criteria and processes as well as their use.	Equality, diversity & inclusivity; Open Science; Public Engagement; Science communication; Ethics & integrity
8	Exchange practices and experiences to enable mutual learning within and beyond the Coalition	Open Science; Science communication; Ethics & integrity
9	Communicate progress made on adherence to the Principles and implementation of the Commitments.	Open Science; Public Engagement; Science communication; Ethics & integrity
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.	Equality, diversity & inclusivity; Open Science; Science communication; Ethics & integrity; Governance of RRI

The overlap and potential synergies with the areas addressed in TORCH are very strong. For instance, the first 5 CoARA working groups that are now operational, of which three deal with "Reforming Academic Career Assessment", "Experiments in Assessment" and "Responsible Metrics and Indicators" - all of them topics at the core of TORCH.

Reforming research assessment is a priority for the European Research Area and one of the core actions in the ERA Policy Agenda for 2022-2024. The ERA Policy Agenda sets out voluntary ERA actions for the period 2022-2024 to contribute to the priority areas defined in the Council Recommendation on a Pact for Research and Innovation in Europe (Pact for R&I). Of the list of the

20 Actions many are relevant for CHARM. The ERA Policy Agenda 2022-2024 lays out a number of priority actions for that period, some of which provide a framework to strengthen future cooperation among Alliances, namely: Action 13 ("Empower Higher Education Institutions to develop in line with the ERA, and in synergy with the European Education Area"), and Action 17 ("Enhance the strategic capacity of Europe's public research performing organisations") (European Commission, 2021). As a European University Alliance, we are well placed to help progress the European Strategy for Universities. Elsewhere CHARM has made its position clear on the need for an investment pathway towards European Universities that helps strengthen the synergies between education and research and innovation.

1.2.4 LERU view

In 2022, LERU published its position paper: "A Pathway towards Multidimensional Academic Careers", sketching elements of a framework for the assessment of researchers.[1] One of the main conclusions of this position paper is that the assessment of researchers to date is too heavily focused on past performance and puts a too strong focus on exceptional and individual accomplishments, while not paying enough attention and undervaluing a lot of other efforts which are needed to build and maintain an innovative research ecosystem.

LERU universities aim to tackle this issue but at the same time also face a dilemma, since they feel the need to stay connected to the global scientific community which is characterized by a competitive funding landscape based on reputation and rankings. New ways of assessing researchers are difficult to align with the existing traditional ways of judging research performance. LERU universities signal need for support from funders and policy making, since advancing new ways of assessing researchers is complex and challenging, requiring experimentation space for universities where they can trial and develop new, more adequate forms of assessing researchers. Their conclusion is very valid for our alliance: on a European level funding and policy making should help develop measures to continue support for alliances which play a vital role in the European Higher Education and Research area as essential multi-partner experimentation and learning spaces.

It is noteworthy that in its introduction the LERU paper calls for broadening assessment beyond excellence to include teaching, impact and leadership, and in the same paragraph relates this to the topics of inclusion, scientific integrity, impact and open science noting that in a broader assessment of researchers these will be included. Recent publications from LERU cover related topics such as inclusion, Open Science and scientific integrity.

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[1] League of European Research Universities (LERU). (2022) A Pathway Towards Multidimensional Academic Careers. LERU Position Paper by Prof. Bert Overlaet. Available at: https://www.leru.org/files/Publications/LERU_PositionPaper_Framework-for-the-Assessment-of-Researchers.pdf

1.3. Midterm Review of TORCH / First Wave of SWAFs funded projects

One of the suggestions during the midterm review of TORCH was to examine whether we could pilot new forms of research assessment within the Alliance, stating "TORCH is one of the projects well placed to lead on pioneering a new researcher assessment framework across the Alliance. It is recommended that TORCH be ambitious in this regard, implementing with leadership support a pilot aimed at trialing a comprehensive new researcher assessment framework across the alliance, in line with the project's principles. This would be a major impact from and significant legacy of the project" (from the TORCH Project mid-term review in September 2022 with the recommendations for the second half of the Project provided in the result review letter).

After discussing this suggestion and weighing the different options to design, launch, implement and evaluate pilot actions, the TORCH PMT decided that rather than developing piloting activities on research assessment, it was advisable to define a strategy, an action plan. We recognised that the final phase of the TORCH project coincided directly with the rapid development of CoARA and we considered it better to delay our piloting activities until the basic elements of CoARA became clearer. It also recognised the complexity of the issue, as reflected in the recently conducted Midterm Review of the SWAFS projects alliances, which notes that the topic of researcher assessment is extremely complex and also cross-cutting in the case of transformation modules being addressed by the alliances.

In the overarching Midterm Review of the first wave of SWAFS alliance projects, the reviewers conclude that the alliances stress the need for new assessment criteria, such as research collaboration, transdisciplinarity, support to early-career researchers, research mediation, research group leadership, and thesis supervision and identifies the lack of incentives and rewards as common challenge for implementing open science practices, highlighting open science practices as core elements to include when establishing new assessment criteria.

As this Midterm Review Report further suggests, "the alliances should further strategically engage and align with the new Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA) to drive reforming research assessment at individual researcher and institutional levels and include Open Science activities". We are currently examining the first proposals to join topical working groups. As mentioned above, CoARA has announced it has secured a budget for such cascade-funding and this might open avenues to develop some elements further. For instance, the University of Barcelona has participated in the proposal of a WG on "Social Impact Monitoring and Assessment", who are inviting partners to join their proposals as an Affiliated Organization. Providing that there is no other proposal addressing social impact, this WG could be an interesting opportunity to take a lead in an increasingly important dimension of assessment.

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2. DEVELOPING A CHARM-EU RESEARCH ASSESSMENT SYSTEM AS LINKED WITH RECOGNITION AND REWARDS AT UU

The description of Recognition and Rewards activities at UU is related to the proposal in Action Plan 1 to work towards creating a Research Assessment Manifesto for the alliance.

2.1. Action Plan: Creating a Research Assessment Manifesto for the Alliance

This action plan is detailed in D9.2. We had originally envisioned creating a document on guidance towards research assessment, implementing the necessary rewards and recognition practices in conjunction with OS practices, EDI, Public Engagement, etc. by the partners in the Alliance, as a pilot action. As the development of such a document would involve organising a number of focus sessions with partners to discuss experiences, best practices and pitfalls, before the creation of the overall document, and considering the broader European context of research assessment as discussed above, we agreed that it would be better to create an action plan towards creating this manifesto, rather than creating the document itself at this stage.

When realised, this document will cover practical issues such as rewards and recognition and previous work done in TORCH, including human resources strategies intended to promote, incentivise and support researchers in relation to research assessment. This Manifesto will renew, deepen and extend (with the new partners) the commitment to CHARM-EU and its principles as a testbed university for innovation on public engagement and transdisciplinary science and the Open Science agenda in Europe and beyond. As we stated, all TORCH members have signed up to CoARA, so learnings from being part of such a community will be brought to the development of a manifesto. In addition, we will consider other frameworks which are used to help develop new approaches to research assessment such as Scope[2] or others that we agree upon as relevant to include in the future.

2.1.1 Rewards and Recognition

Within our partnership, differences exist in how far and which parts of the Reform of Research Assessment our institutions have embraced or started to implement. UU is especially strong in advancing Rewards and Recognition as part of a national collaboration together with all other universities in the Netherlands. This could make UU the natural choice to help share best practices, e.g. in a series of workshops around iRRI practices (R&R, Teamwork, open science, EDI, etc.), as is described in Action Plan 1 in D9.2.

The topic of Recognition and Rewards is being actively developed at UU, working towards creating a culture in which teamwork and collaboration are more important. Recognition and Rewards is one

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[2] International Network of Research Management Societies (INORMS), (2023), SCOPE Framework for Research Evaluation. Available at: https://inorms.net/scope-framework-for-research-evaluation/

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of five tracks in the Utrecht University Open Science programme, amongst Open Access, Fair Data and Software, Public Engagement and Open Education. In all fields, TORCH has produced relevant results. Central to the Vision on Recognition and Rewards is the TRIPLE model, which is a tool for putting the principles of recognition and rewards into practice. The Vision explains the elements of TRIPLE and how this concept can be used in practice on different levels to engage in a dialogue about Rewards and Recognition.[3]

The TRIPLE model consists of six elements: **t**eam spirit; **r**esearch; **i**mpact; **p**rofessional performance; **l**eadership; and **e**ducation. These describe the three domains where output is generated (research, professional performance and education), the impact such output has on science and society, and leadership in academia that actively supports an environment in which they can flourish. TRIPLE is expected to become the overall framework for rewarding academic work at UU. This new system for Recognition and Rewards provides guidance for procedures regarding recruitment & selection, training & development, staffing, performance appraisal, and promotion of employees. It will also have an effect on how to structure teamwork & cooperation, dynamic career paths, employee involvement in decision making, and employee autonomy. The principles of TRIPLE can be summarized as the following:

· The collective as point of departure

· Leadership is key

· Room for individual development and dynamic career paths

· Recognising and rewarding openness in all domains

· Recognise and reward quality over quantity: no one size fits all criteria

The TRIPLE model is an elaboration of these principles. It helps to take a broad look at the different aspects of our work and to connect them with each other. The TRIPLE lotus (Fig.4) is made up of three types of elements: the base (Team and Leadership), the core (Impact) and the flower petals (the domains in which we carry out our activities). Team spirit and (personal) leadership are the foundation supporting every employee and team: they are prerequisites for effective performance, collaboration and personal development.

Translating the lotus image to our situation in CHARM, the base petals (green) stand for our Priority areas of Intensifying R&I cooperation between universities and the coloured petals would be filled in as the relevant domains of our activities relating to the multidimensional RRI. In our perspective, such interconnected RRI includes **Reform of Research Assessment, Championing Open Science, Fostering equality, diversity and inclusivity; and Promoting inter/transdisciplinary research driven by societal challenges**, and in the case of CHARM including **educational performance**,

[3] Utrecht University. (2023). Vision on Recognition and Rewards. Available at:
https://www.uu.nl/sites/default/files/UU%20Vision%20Recognition%20and%20Rewards_2023.pdf

encompassing the related RRI elements of **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Public Engagement and Science Communication, Ethics and Integrity.**

The TRIPLE lotus is made up of three types of elements: the base (Team and Leadership), the core (Impact) and the flower petals (the domains in which we carry out our activities). Team spirit and (personal) leadership are the foundation supporting every employee and team: they are prerequisites for effective performance, collaboration and personal development.

Figure 4. TRIPLE lotus.

Leadership and team spirit are closely intertwined and re-inforce each other. For a well-functioning, engaged team, a safe working climate based on trust is crucial. This requires a proactive attitude and personal leadership from everyone. The TRIPLE model is applicable to all UU employees, both at the individual and team levels. Teams can use it to discuss everyone's contribution to goals. It can also be useful in a conversation about professional development or a job posting. The Development and Careers Framework[4] (FLOW) describes how the TRIPLE model is applied in career policies at UU. Above all, TRIPLE is an invitation to every employee and every team to take a broad look at different work activities and discuss them.

The domains in which we work are the flower petals of the lotus. If you zoom out all the way and look at UU as a whole, this is where you will see the domains of education, research and professional performance/organisation. When you apply the TRIPLE model as a team or as an individual employee, the three domains can also be made more specific. The goal is always to map the full spectrum of the work to enable dialogue. This way the lotus structure provides a framework that can be adapted flexibly to different relevant contexts.

The petals of the Lotus stand for different domains: education, research and professional performance/organisation. For the positions of assistant professor, associate professor and full professor, the domains of education and research apply in any case, although the scope of both may be subject to variation within teams and can shift over time. These domains may likewise be relevant for other positions and teams, such as for an education coordinator who provides an essential contribution to teaching or a technician who ensures that research can be conducted robustly and safely. If the work cannot directly be linked to education or research, it falls under the domain of professional performance/organisation. As this is a very broad domain, it can be useful to apply a further breakdown of this domain. For example, advising can be a domain for a policy adviser or

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[4] Utrecht University. (2023). Development and Careers Framework Flow. Available internally only at: https://intranet.uu.nl/en/knowledgebase/development-and-careers-framework-flow

study adviser, and project support can be a domain for a management and office assistant. You can choose the domains that are relevant to your team or your position. Colleagues who are engaged in teaching and research are often also involved in the domain of professional performance/organisation. In the medical domain, patient care naturally plays an important role. In veterinary medicine, the third domain has been translated to animal health care. In other contexts, this may involve, for example, (science) communication or another service for the benefit of academia, society or the local UU community.
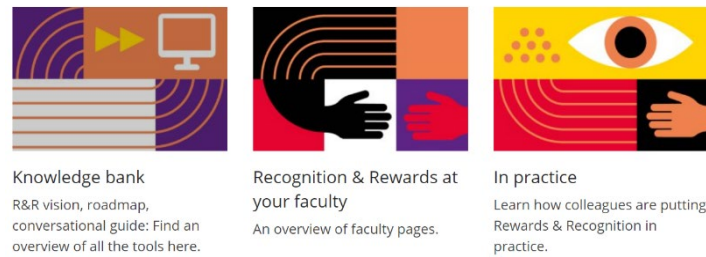
2.1.2 Recognition and rewards as a (national) development

The Vision and the TRIPLE model build on the national position paper Room for Everyone's Talent (2019), the UU strategy Open Mind, Open Attitude, Open Science (2020-2025) and the previous UU vision on recognition and rewards (2021). For Utrecht University, it soon became clear that the culture change we need can only be successful if the entire university is part of it. Therefore, a new version of the Recognition and Rewards vision was written UU Vision Recognition and Rewards_2023.pdf that applies to all employees, (cited from Vision Document on Recognition and Rewards 2023, available on intranet).
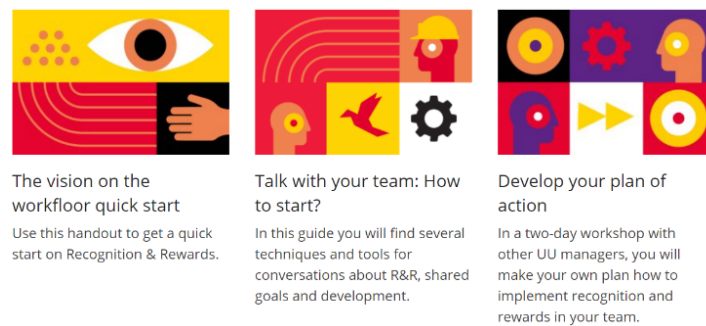
"The recognition and rewards movement is a process featuring many changes taking place in parallel. These changes can be both small and large, both bottom up and top down. They involve 'hard' and 'soft' factors, such as structures and interpersonal contact. All these changes are necessary steps to realise our ambitions regarding recognition and rewards. Here as well, everyone's contribution matters". In addition to the vision document, several training courses at UU are being offered for different target groups and a presentation with conversational guidelines is available. This presentation gives suggestions for methods to use for teambuilding/ one-on-one conversation on personal development/ coaching/ interviews.

The new Development and Careers Framework is an important step towards putting recognition and rewards into practice at UU. Recognition and rewards represents a culture change in which UU aims to create more room for different talents, more cooperation and less competition. Since 2022, employees can find recognition and rewards on their A&D form for their assessment and development interview, and managers can participate in a training workshop. In addition, faculties have made the TRIPLE model part of their promotion policy for academic positions or they are in the process of doing so. Thus, recognition and rewards is increasingly becoming part of the organisation, and the way we work together.

For managers, for instance, there is specific information available (Fig. 6). Course material includes guidelines for discussion about the current situation and ideas for future developments and pathways there.

Knowledge bank

R&R vision, roadmap, conversational guide: Find an overview of all the tools here.

Recognition & Rewards at your faculty

An overview of faculty pages.

In practice

Learn how colleagues are putting Rewards & Recognition in practice.

Figure 5. The intranet-portal on recognition and rewards provides tailored information for different target groups[5].

The vision on the workfloor quick start

Use this handout to get a quick start on Recognition & Rewards.

Talk with your team: How to start?

In this guide you will find several techniques and tools for conversations about R&R, shared goals and development.

Develop your plan of action

In a two-day workshop with other UU managers, you will make your own plan how to implement recognition and rewards in your team.

Figure 6. UU information for managers.

Yet another step in this process is to let go of the distinction between academic personnel and support staff. The University will no longer use two separate categories to distinguish between two groups of employees: scientific staff (WP) and support and administrative staff (OBP) as was publicly announced at the opening of the 2023-24 Academic Year. Whilst this does not have an immediate effect on the types of job descriptions and functions, it can be expected to have a symbolic effect towards a more team-oriented working culture valuing both academic and support contributions.

Letting go of this distinction between WP-OBP does not mean positions such as assistant professor or policy advisor will disappear. All positions will continue to exist. What will disappear, to start with, are the terms WP and OBP. In the coming period the university will explore what adjustments are needed to bring this into practice and treat all UU employees more as one single group.

This culture change, like any other, does not happen by itself, and managers need to play an important role. The Recognition and Rewards program offers these colleagues additional support in the form of workshops, tools and an intranet environment. There, a number of other materials are produced to share best practices and give more specific information on domains or groups of staff. Also, in September 2023 a kick-off meeting was organized for the entire group of all HR advisors at the University to acquaint them with the new manners of Reward and Recognition.

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[5] Utrecht University. (2023). Recognition and rewards. Everyone's Contribution Counts. Available internally only at: https://intranet.uu.nl/en/knowledgebase/recognition-and-rewards-everyones-contribution-counts

The national platform www.recognitionandrewards.nl helps to align initiatives in the Netherlands and to organize exchange of experiences. Recognition & Rewards (R&R) is a national programme involving all the universities of the Netherlands, the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW), the Dutch Research Council (NWO), the Netherlands Organisation for Health Research and Development (ZonMw) and the university hospitals. As part of a National Platform, there is critical mass to make advances, the developments are shared and advanced together and many options for dialogue are given.

2.1.3 Moving forward

The above description of current developments at UU and in the Netherlands is provided because we suggest that Recognition and Rewards would be a good topic to start with in the future TORCH action plan on research assessment. This Action Plan, as documented in D9.2, suggests organizing a number of workshops each focusing on a different element of Research Assessment reform. We propose a first workshop could be centred around rewards and recognition practices and lead to conclusions about the relevance of such practices for our alliance. Such conclusions would be formulated in a way, that they form the building blocks and central statements of an Alliance Manifesto on Advancing the Reform of Research Assessment (AMRA). By relating the Manifesto statements to broadly attended workshop discussions, the statements of the AMRA are more likely to have broad support and impact in the alliance member institutions and beyond.

As already stated, currently there is no follow-up funding available to support TORCH-related activities. According to the CHARM governance, this action plan would have to be proposed to the executive board, and, if deemed necessary, to the Strategic Board, and enter a process of agreement. However, at this stage the financial resources are unclear. We reflected upon the reviewer recommendation from the Midterm Review to be ambitious in piloting a new "researcher assessment framework across the Alliance, particularly given the pathfinding work already done in the area of recognition and rewards by (…) the University of Utrecht" (European Commission, TORCH project review report). We also mentioned that TORCH as a project of the CHARM-EU alliance and funded by the Science with and for Society Horizon 2020 scheme, has no operative function after the end of 2023, because no equivalent competitive funding instrument to secure continuation has been made available. As stated above, we concluded that to properly prepare and implement an action, a longer period than the 14 months between mid-term review and project conclusion would be required to pilot the substantial changes in line with the level of ambition encouraged in the review. As the discussion on the results of the WPs has shown, we see this as an area with many interconnections across each and any of our institutions. Changes could potentially impact all of these areas, and, without proper preparation, could lead to confusion and disruption or even might lead to disputes in situations where unfairness was felt.

The next chapter will explain how working towards the reform of research assessment will rely on (and in turn also reinforce) an interconnected strategy for Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI), in which Recognition and Rewards would be embedded.

3. CONNECTED RRI

In the pilot phase of TORCH we focused on the implementation of a selected number of pilots chosen according to our agreed set of Strategic Priority Areas (SPA) but also to demonstrate and learn from the pilot experience how we could eventually implement our connected RRI itself.

The priority areas include:

· TORCH SPA1: Working towards reforming research assessment.

· TORCH SPA2: Fostering equality, diversity and inclusivity.

· TORCH SPA3: Championing Open Science.

· TORCH SPA4: Promoting inter/transdisciplinary research driven by societal challenges.

· TORCH SPA5: Intensifying R&I cooperation between universities.

This set of five strategic priority areas represent joint ambitions and targets for our alliance, laying the foundations for the CHARM-EU Alliance to help it evolve into a full university, encompassing research-informed education as well as excellent and competitive research addressing global challenges. We see the priority areas as the central building blocks of a structured and collaborative approach and as a framework for related R&I-related activities. Hence, in the second half of TORCH we carried out a set of selected pilots to test and empirically reinforce the five strategic priority areas.

This report does not repeat the description of the pilots, but instead discusses the pilots across a number of criteria we see as essential for implementing our vision of an interconnected RRI and its relationship with research assessment.

3.1 Connected best practice

The pilots delivered valuable insights and helped to build networks between our support units and researchers. In the future, the pilot actions can be repeated and potentially upscaled as a way to exchange best practices and enhance capacity building as well as growing our inter-institutional networks. Our experience from running the pilot actions showed that it is essential to see the pilots as elements not in isolation, but to place them in their broader context of a connected RRI.

The reports on both ongoing and finalized pilots show that the pilots we implemented in 2023 (i.e. the pilot action on R&I days, the pilot action on Research Support, Open Science Training and Citizen Science Training) all rely heavily on facilitation by Research Support offices, which lead to the conclusion in WP8 that **research support** can function as a major hub of interconnected RRI and related areas.

Interdisciplinary **research centres and institutes** are identified as an important element to advance interdisciplinarity within our institutions as well as within our alliance. The Pilot actions concerning a Joint Research Support Strategy and organizing Research and Innovation days drew considerable interest from our institutions, especially from early to mid-career researchers who are enthusiastic about interdisciplinary research collaboration. However, we note that support structures are highly relevant but not in all cases sufficient to deliver tailored support for complex consortium proposals with multiple scientific and societal partners.

Concerning the element of gender (as reflected by the pilot Plan for EDI), WP8 concluded that whilst **research centres and institutes** can play a vital role in forging interconnections between the common science agenda, collaboration with industry and public engagement, gendered innovation was seen as a part where we could advance in the future in our alliance.

Recruitment, evaluation and promotion of staff (equal opportunities and driving forward the developing reform of research assessment), for Careers: gendered innovation and research ethics & integrity are strongly present and it is likely that this area will feature many more interconnection nodes as a result of elements such as Open Science, public engagement, collaboration with both academic and non-academic sectors and inter/transdisciplinary research.

These three elements are identified as **interlocutors of strategic relevance for advancing the implementation of our RRI.**

Although we view our RRI strategy as a connected concept, it may not always be possible to advance this as a connected best practice. For instance, we discussed an ambition to link inter/transdisciplinary research, Open Science, and equality, diversity and inclusivity. While this topic is a clear indication of the intersections of inter/transdisciplinary research, Open Science and EDI, we agreed that due to its cross-cutting nature, we expected to see these elements connect throughout our R&I agenda rather than in an isolated action. We see diversity and inclusiveness at the top of the agenda in strengthening public engagement and transdisciplinary science as part of the broader open science movement.

As the R&I agenda evolves and grows in the future, it may become more relevant to explore creation of mechanisms to increase inclusiveness, engage the unusual suspects, diversify geographical representation and societal stakeholders, and be more active in relating public engagement to the aims concerning internationalization. Any specific future actions, which may be realised under any of the strategic priorities, might include expanding practices to broaden the open science movement and create further links to equality, diversity, and inclusivity, for example in terms of hiring and promotion policy or inclusion of stakeholders from diverse backgrounds in research and educational projects.

The next chapter will focus on the discussion of impacts as well as intended and unintended consequences of implementing an interconnected RRI/ Open Science.

4. IMPACT OF INTERCONNECTED RRI

This chapter discusses potential impacts of this RRI strategy, structuring the discussion on impacts at different levels, namely:

· Researchers

· Evaluators

· Funding agencies

· Institutions (as workplaces)

· Research

4.1 Impact on researchers

Recognizing a broader set of activities and achievements opens new avenues for researchers. Especially, when also their teaching activities are recognized, and career paths are opened for such profiles. UU for instance has for its different programmes installed fellows (fellows in public engagement, for instance).

Impacts on researchers might initially be not only positive. The diversification of career paths might raise questions for researchers in what ways they want to develop their profile. In its position paper, LERU highlights a concern that recognizing a broader diversity of contributions may decrease the clarity of what really matters in an application. When universities expand their career frameworks in order to recognize the diversity of contributions, they risk giving an implicit message that a person must excel in every possible aspect of the job.

The introduction of new forms of R&R does not start at point zero, but for researchers it means they have to adjust in their current work and career planning. This might lead to situations where they feel they have to meet double standards (classic and new) and this could lead to a situation where they feel overwhelmed. "Despite notable progress, career development remains a challenge for reaching the true potential of inter- and transdisciplinary research. Given the level of control of disciplinary structures in many universities on appointments and tenure, scholars who pursue a predominantly inter- and transdisciplinary approach, are faced with disproportionate obstacles (p 3 Wernli and Ohlmeyer)"

The principles for open education can offer a way forward to re-concile and re-discover the synergies between research and teaching (when challenge-based teaching enables students to participate and facilitate research projects, as is explained in more detail in the recent programmatic publication "university in transition" by three UU rectors: Kummeling, Kluijtmans and Miedema: 2023).

To navigate an increasingly complex academic environment, personal skills are becoming ever more important, which is why our CHARM alliance is committed to invest in training and mentoring for personal development (such as illustrated by dedicating work packages in CHARM towards onboarding and professional development).

4.2 Impact on evaluators

Evaluators need to be trained in handling the new criteria but maybe also with new forms of review processes (more process oriented instead of output oriented), more quality oriented vs. quantity or indicator oriented. As it is pointed out, the assessment process may become more time-consuming, for instance: "The assessors, meanwhile, face the challenge of judging many criteria, often with no more than self-reports and qualitative data for some criteria, and must compare a much more diverse array of profiles" (page 16 LERU Position paper: LERU_PositionPaper_Framework-for-the-Assessment-of-Researchers.pdf).

Research proposals, but also other ideas requiring funding for e.g. public engagement require that evaluators are adequately prepared and aware of the criteria and have sufficient time to adequately use qualitative criteria in their evaluations. Whilst in a disciplinary setting, evaluators are implicitly assumed to have the same standards of judgment criteria, in interdisciplinary settings this cannot be assumed ex-ante. Funders need to make more effort to organize a process and explain the use of criteria to evaluators. For transdisciplinary research, this complexity is even higher.

4.3 Impact on funders

Looking towards the future, we see a clear need for a more aligned funding logic that supports synergy between Research and Teaching. CHARM is being funded via ERASMUS with a strong focus on teaching, whilst TORCH focusing on an integrated R&I dimension for CHARM is funded by a different programme with a different funding logic and now a lack of funds leading to a halt for TORCH.

Funding processes become more complex, with interdisciplinary panels to develop calls or to judge interdisciplinary proposals. Next to this, the question arises, what kind of activities are fundable. Funders might need to broaden the type of activities that are eligible (e.g. outreach) or have to adjust their funding schemes to allow for citizen contributions or public engagement. In the Netherlands, NWO increasingly requests involvement of non-academic partners. However, many of the NWO funding schemes do cover funding for them which might lead to a skewed representation of non-academic partners (such regulations unintentionally being in favour of those who have enough resources to join without funding).

4.4 Impact on institutions

In some countries universities have limited autonomy to organize the assessment of their researchers. National bodies may have a strong direct influence on selection and promotion processes, or state regulations or guidelines may invalidate assessment criteria that the universities want to apply (LERU advice paper: 27)

LERU noted more limited progress in the key issue of career and evaluation of research where there is fierce competition for resources. There is currently a discrepancy between the discourse and the implementation. A very important challenge is the appointment/tenure of successful scholars who pursued a predominantly inter- and transdisciplinary research career: (page 42) (Implementing interdisciplinarity in research-intensive universities: good practices and challenges, Didier Wernli and Jane Ohlmeyer, LERU ADVICE PAPER no.30 - March 2023)

As the LERU Paper concludes, university governance should "show its commitment to recognize and reward more diverse contributions. (…) The university will also need to show in its actions that it is prepared to switch its focus away from the top predators and take more care about the rest of the research ecosystem. This requires a debate on what is considered to be the definition of "excellence", whether it is in research, education or leadership. The TRIPLE model of Utrecht University can be mentioned as an example."

4.5 Impact on research

The implications for research can be manifold as well, with a fully-fledged RRI, the population of researchers might evolve towards higher diversity of careers and backgrounds, which will consecutively influence the content of and forms in which research is conducted.

Research on the one hand might be enhanced by a challenge-based approach and its societal relevance could be strengthened. On the other hand, some also point out that not all research (even though it might at a later stage emerge to be relevant to tackle societal challenges) can or should be driven by societal challenges, this would lead to a narrowing of research topics and in its most extreme form could even hinder the creativity of academic freedom.

The above discussion shows that impacts are expected on all levels of the science system, which is the reason why we need to approach this as a cultural change.

The following table provides some examples of actions towards reform of RA and their effects. It is by no means meant to be exhaustive. It highlights some potential or actually observed impacts of implementing elements of an interconnected RRI, aiming to distinguish between intended consequences and possible mitigation actions to deal with unintended effects. In addition, it aims to place the TORCH priority areas next to related CoARA commitments and by this explore and point

to possible synergies where TORCH already is addressing important issues CoARA will be focusing on in the upcoming years.

Table 2. Research assessment reform and its impacts

TORCH SPA	CoARA commitment	Example of action	Intended consequence	Unintended/ potential consequence	Possible remediation
SPA1: Research assessment	CoARA1: Diversity of contributions	UU: Rewards and Recognition TORCH AP: Alliance Manifesto Research Assessment Reform	Contribute to recognizing diversity in research Allow for synergies between Teaching/ Research / Impact and public engagement	Resource needs (Staff and funding) Enable career path changes	Seek to form coalitions & engage in dialogue about broader criteria Align with and join appropriate working groups in CoARA/
SPA2: Fostering EDI	CoARA1: Diversity of contributions	TORCH Pilot: EDI for the R&I Dimension of CHARM	Contribute to a more diverse research base and inclusion	Consider legal and cultural situation regarding diversity data	Implement Inclusivity Plan
SPA3: Open Science	COARA 2: Quality beyond quantity	TORCH Pilot: Open Science Recognition Reward and Training	Reward quality	Time consuming evaluation processes Training needs	Support development of broader indicators & peer review mechanisms Open Science incentives (e.g. CHARM Open Science award) Open Science and Citizen Science training (TORCH pilots 3 & 4)
SPA1: Research assessment SPA3: Open Science	CoARA 3: Inappropriate uses of metrics	TORCH Pilot: Open Science Reward and Recognition Toolbox	Reduce the dominance of a narrow set of metrics Help research community and research organisations regain autonomy to shape assessment practices Avoid inappropriate metrics	Develop alternative ways of assessment Explain new standards Resources (staff and funding)	University coalitions/alliances/groups must align their actions & voices to present strong alternatives
SPA3: Open Science	CoARA 4: Use of rankings	UU: Consider position regarding university rankings: (e.g. Because Rankings put too much stress on competition UU has chosen not to submit data.)	Initiate and develop critical discussion on rankings Challenge the dominance of rankings Retain control over ranking methodologies and data	Effects on institutional attractiveness as a place of study/work	Separate methods for assessing institutions and individual researchers (e.g. if rankings are found to be useful for an institution, how can the researchers still evaluated beneficially?) Advise students to compare the content and nature of degree programs.
SPA1: Research assessment and	CoARA 5: Commit Resources CoARA 6: Review and develop	Review and develop criteria such as TRIPLE (UU) on alliance level	Switch from quantitative to qualitative criteria for assessment Require funders to commit resources to support Open Science practices	Buy-in and culture change from everyone involved Potential uncertainty for researchers regarding appointment criteria and career paths	Extra resources needed to develop and pilot alternatives Balance flexibility of criteria with clarity (e.g. Recognition & Rewards

SPA4: Promoting IDR	assessment criteria		Consider diverse academic positions, especially permanent vs. temporary appointments		programme - Recognition & Rewards (recognitionrewards.nl))
SPA4: Promoting IDR	CoARA 7: Raise awareness	TORCH Pilot: CHARM-EU Research and Innovation Days TORCH Pilot: Joint Support Strategy for Research Projects	Use expertise developed in TORCH to enhance local practices Disseminate knowledge to interested parties outside the Alliance	Resources (staff and funding) Risk of reducing IDR to a mechanic formality Excessively directive policies	TORCH examples/ elements piloted in TORCH, e.g. Repeat and enlarge CHARM-EU Research and Innovation Days Dedicated integrated Research Support Strategy for CHARM (TORCH AP) OS Recognition Reward Toobox Regular OS training / Citizen Science training
SPA5: R&I cooperation	CoARA 7: Raise awareness CoARA 8: Exchange practices and experiences CoARA9: Communicate about progress CoARA10: Evaluate and share	TORCH Pilot: TORCH R&I Days TORCH Pilot: Virtual TTO network TORCH Pilot: Charting current equality data collection practices I-0p[	Foster new researcher networks Exchange best practices Pioneer activities taking a testbed approach	Perceived enforcing of partnerships leading to tension Financial, political and societal inequalities between partners Wide cultural differences including ability & willingness to change.	Develop relevant action plans (Joint Support Strategy for Research Projects AP3; Expedited Research Ethics Approval Pathway AP4; CHARM-EU Research Infrastructure Catalogue AP5). Continue actions such as CHARM-EU Research & Innovation Days (workshop format). Consider how to align research support towards a joint (virtual) research support office for CHARM

5. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHANGE EVALUATION

We interpret our connected RRI strategy in a broad sense as also encompassing Open Science principles (the close alignment between both concepts is explained by Owen et al 2021), together with central elements inclusiveness, sharing of knowledge and team-orientation, public engagement, etc. The procedure of selecting and developing action plans underlined the fact that Open Science practices need to be embedded in or linked with other R&I actions and shed light on various methods how this linking can be carried out in practice by, e.g., embedding Open Science recognition in a comprehensive concept on Research Assessment.

The three pilots associated with the strategy for Open Science underlined the importance of Open Science in the R&I activities of higher education institutions as was demonstrated by the large-scale interest in related awareness-raising activities on multiple levels of university operation including high- and mid-level leadership, support units, academic staff and PhD students.

Pilots called attention to a still general lack or low level of awareness in terms of specific practices of applying Open Science methods in the daily practice of researchers, characterising all layers of university operation.

The Pilot of the CHARM-EU Open Science Award showed that Open Science activities are in several cases carried out in a team and the contribution of individual team members can hardly be separated from the joint group effort. This requires alternative approaches to rewards and recognition methodologies.

As stated, the core document of the Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA) was signed by almost all CHARM-EU member universities. The Agreement of CoARA (https://coara.eu/app/uploads/2022/09/2022_07_19_rra_agreement_final.pdf) stresses the importance of Open Science practices and highlights their embeddedness in Research Assessment, inclusivity practices, as well as the societal impact of research. This further strengthened, on the one hand, CHARM-EU's conviction of the importance of Open Science, on the other hand, meant a warning that only a careful, step-by-step progression of our related activities can ensure alignment with complexly developing European concepts and policies.

In work package 6, the Open Science dashboard design (D6.2) provides a strategy, discovery, and collaboration platform and in D9.3 it is described how the Open Science rewards and recognition toolbox was piloted in a CHARM-EU Open Science award competition (TORCH PILOT2). In the future of CHARM-EU, such a dashboard could advertise Open Science training events so that members of the alliance could participate and learn from each other, and we would recognise those who are active in the Open Science movement. The CHARM-EU Open Science Policy draft has also stressed the need for Open Science training sessions and information courses for all areas of Open Science.

Future change evaluations could focus on the development of such trainings, their content, numbers of researchers attending such events and their further development within the Alliance context.

Importantly, Open Science "seems to encourage the rewarding not only of the quantity and quality of research publications, but different research behaviours and practices towards more open and collaborative forms of knowledge co-production (225)". This remark by Owen et al implies it would require more process-oriented indicators. This might be worth examining further in the future.

To ensure the linkages between the various fields of our RRI, we need to not only collaborate with researchers but continue the valuable work started by the Research support dimension of TORCH. WP4 on building our Common Challenge Based Research agenda (and its related Pilot activities) was a pioneering exercise to forge communities of researchers around SDGs topics, building on the KCTs in CHARM and extending to other researchers at our partnership. In future the RSO units could become a vital interlocutor to ensure connectivity of our RRI. Activities such as the R&I Days (workshop on water related research challenges) are relatively easy to kick off and meet the intrinsic interest of researchers when they reflect on a suitable topic for research collaboration and build research networks around SDG challenges. This way, we can strengthen our partnerships networks with (initially) relatively little extra effort (travel costs/ sharing of information). However, this implies that if as a result of such networking interdisciplinary proposals are developed, the pilots have shown, we need to be able to rely on specialized Research Support offices being in place which have the capacities to support additional (complex) team-based consortium proposals. However, since current funding for CHARM8 stems solely from Erasmus+ funds, for the time foreseeable, research activities are not funded on a structural base.

The work done in TORCH has enabled us to carve out the core elements of our RRI for CHARM and also highlighted areas for action in the future to develop our RRI further for the Research Dimension of CHARM8. The Utrecht Model of Rewards and Recognition could be shared within the alliance and eventually be adapted to the alliance context to inform Research Assessment (specifically Recognition and Rewards) within the Alliance activities of CHARM EIGHT such as Professional development and onboarding of new staff.

The latter is strongly related to the other interlocutor we identified in the area of Recruitment, evaluation and promotion of staff. CHARM has been examining the possibility of working with microcredentials to support the professional development of the educationalists involved in the Master programme. For instance, educationalists engaged in the development of the new master programme and its programmatic approach to formative testing – thereby contributing to innovation of education. "Badges" as microcredentials might be given by CHARM to such educationalists, by this recognizing their efforts and contributions (in the line with future rewards and recognition changes). Such badges could be a form of recognition towards the professional development of educationalists. Activities like these are going to be considered for the long-term priority agenda for CHARM.

In CHARM-EIGHT WP11 on professional development, there is attention for a CHARM Leadership programme, which will help educationalists involved in CHARM to develop their leadership skills and grow their professional networks across disciplines, faculties and universities. This also enhances the teamwork within our alliance. The knowledge creation teams in CHARM have excelled in

developing interdisciplinary teaching. In the new phase of CHARM-EIGHT, the didactical concept of CHARM will be further rolled out in the alliance and broadened to a new master, bachelor and doctoral programme as well as Lifelong learning. For all educationalists involved, CHARM sees the need for suitable rewards and recognition policies.

As these conclusions show, reforming research assessment is at the heart of the further development of our strategic alliance in CHARM. Reforming research assessment is both a dynamically evolving activity and a prerequisite to advance our collaboration and bring our innovation ideas into practice. Future Change evaluation should be process oriented, committed to advance RRI as an integrated effort. Our alliance profits from the enthusiasm of those involved and the knowledge exchanged up to now and from raising the bar together, to identify barriers and identify necessary changes in research assessment.

Concerning the Reform of Research assessment, we are on a path to (next to our commitment to CoARA) carve out our joint aspirations for the future in an Alliance Manifesto on Research assessment, which will stress our joint aspirations and reflects on the differing contexts and points of departure of the members in our partnership. In the future we will further use our collaboration as a vehicle to keep striving to embody the core principles of our RRI, encouraging inter- and transdisciplinary research, public engagement, equality, diversity and inclusion and working towards better systems for recognizing interdisciplinary research achievements, committed to screen and uncover where recognition and rewards structures in fact function as disincentives to RR.

We are using the networks and inspiration from CHARM as important vehicle to overcome fragmentation, and towards developing a joint long-term vision and commitment to develop institutional support for transdisciplinary science and public engagement, connected to the practices of Open Science. As nearly all of the alliance members are also CoARA signatories, we are in dialogue how to strategically engage and align with the new Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment.

This report has focused on Recognition and Rewards as once core element of Reforming Research assessment within our connected RRI. We have identified and discussed impacts (intended and unintended) on different levels which call for approaching the reform of research assessment as cultural change. This report has identified the areas of integrated research support, research institutes and centres, as well as recruitment, evaluation and promotion of staff as interlocutors of strategic relevance for advancing the implementation of our RRI.

The CHARM strategic board has discussed the Action Plans as they were tabled for decision making (including the AP1 on the Alliance Manifesto) and is in the process of agreeing to establish a task force to implement the Action plans (adapting any actions to different possible funding scenario's, from minimal to more developed.)   All alliance members have re-confirmed the need to include the R&I dimension now and in the future. The need to advance an Alliance approach towards the reform of research assessment is undisputed. The alliance is acknowledged as an ideally placed strategic network to pilot, share and push for new approaches towards research assessment in the future.

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