



**CoARA**

# INTRODUCTION TO THE COARA WG ON MULTILINGUALISM

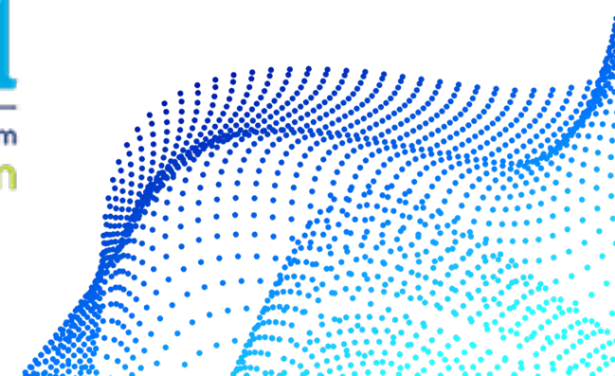
**4 April**

Multilingualism in Research and Assessment  
in Higher Education seminar

**Janne Pölönen**



**ECSPM**  
European Civil Society Platform  
for Multilingualism



# PRESENTATION

1. **CoARA – Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment**
2. **CoARA WG on Multilingualism and Language Biases**
3. **Practical Example: scholarly communication**

# 1. COARA – COALITION FOR ADVANCING RESEARCH ASSESSMENT

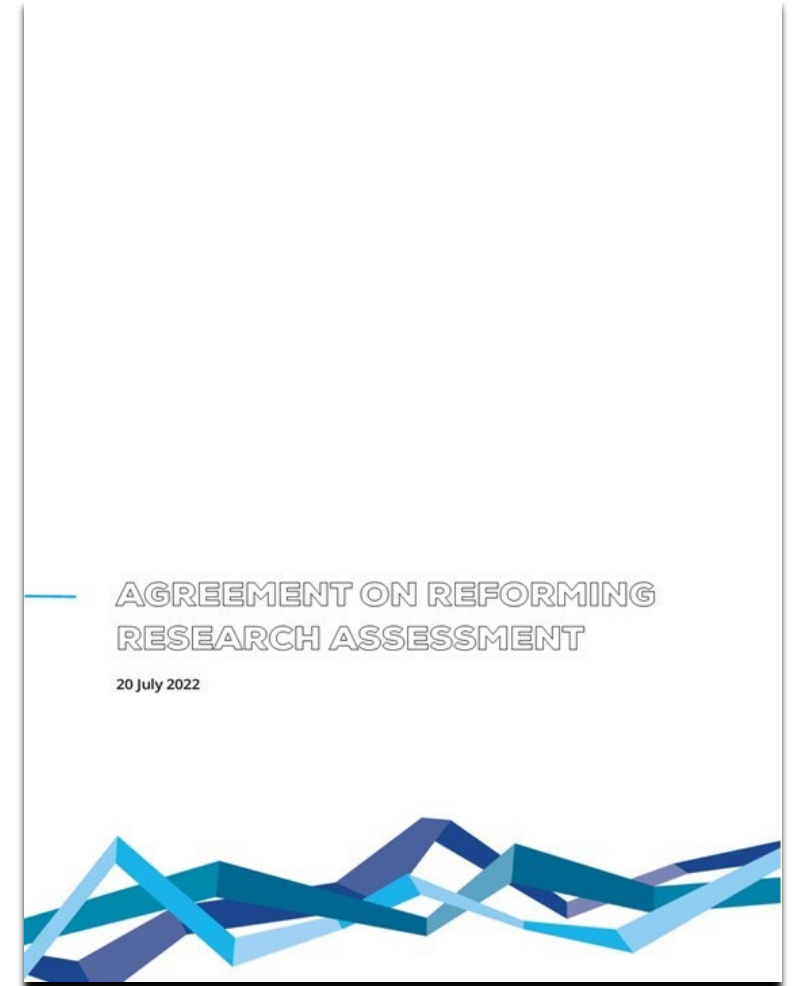
# THE AGREEMENT

CoARA's Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment, **published on 20 July 2022**, establishes a **common direction for research assessment reform**, while respecting organisations' autonomy. It is based on

- **10 overarching principles**,
- **10 commitments**: 4 core and 6 supporting
- **timeframe** for reforms: 1 and 5 years after signing

Signature of the Agreement is open to all organisations involved in research assessment. **Signatory organisations can then apply to become members of the Coalition** and join a community to facilitate the implementation of their own reform and enable systemic change.

**692 signatory organisations**  
as of February 2024

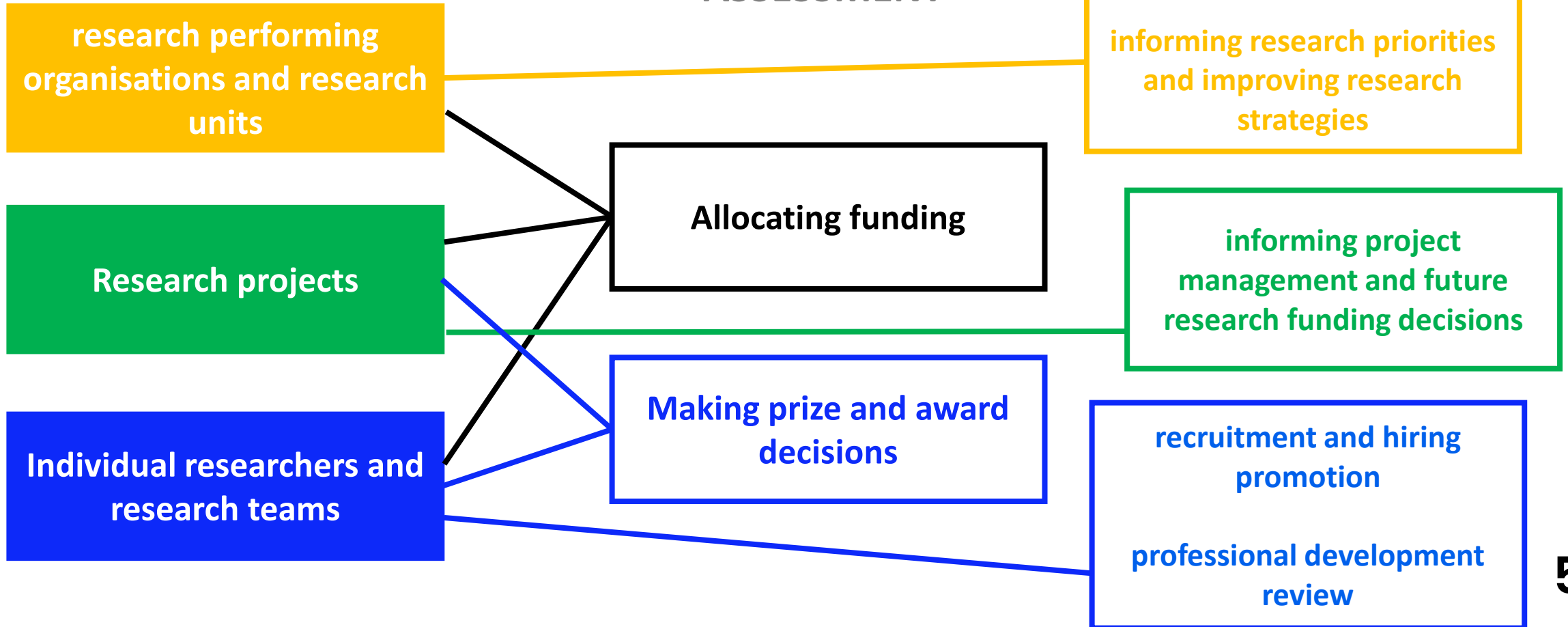


# RESEARCH ASSESSMENT



## UNITS OF ASSESSMENT

## PURPOSES OF ASSESSMENT



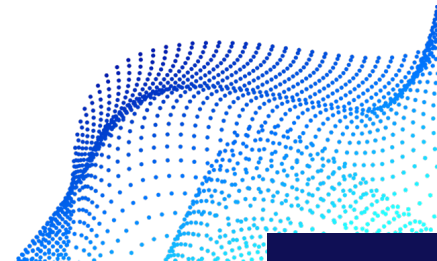
# CORE COMMITMENTS



1. Recognise the diversity of contributions to, and careers in, research in accordance with the needs and nature of the research
2. Base research assessment primarily on qualitative evaluation for which peer review is central, supported by responsible use of quantitative indicators
3. Abandon inappropriate uses in research assessment of journal- and publicationbased metrics, in particular inappropriate uses of Journal Impact Factor (JIF) and h-index
4. Avoid the use of rankings of research organisations in research assessment

# THE COALITION

- **The Coalition offers a space for its members to learn from others' experiences**, to advance the process of research assessment reform in Europe and beyond.
- **Signatory organisations**, having subscribed to the Guiding Principles and Code of Conduct, are invited to become members of the coalition and actively involved in advancing reform.
- The Coalition is governed by its **General Assembly of Members** and **Steering Board** and supported by a **Secretariat** hosted by the European Science Foundation (ESF)–Science Connect.
- Coalition members are invited to be involved in **National Chapters** and **Working Groups** and other Coalition activities.



# 13 WORKING GROUPS



## Reforming Academic Career Assessment



Global framework for research evaluation in the social sciences and the humanities (SSH)



## Recognizing and Rewarding Peer Review



## Towards Open Infrastructures for Responsible Research Assessment



## Ethics and Research Integrity Policy in Responsible Research Assessment for Data and Artificial Intelligence (ERIP)



Supporting the alignment of research assessment systems with CoARA in biomedical disciplines through administrative reforms and governance



## TIER – Towards an Inclusive Evaluation of Research



## Early- and mid-Career Researchers (EMCRs) – Assessment and Research Culture



Towards Transformations: Transdisciplinarity, Applied/Practice-Based Research, and Impacts



Multilingualism and language biases in research assessment



Experiments in Assessment – Idea generation, co-creation, and piloting



Responsible metrics and indicators



Improving practices in the assessment of research proposals



## 2. COARA WG ON MULTILINGUALISM AND LANGUAGE BIASES

# WG PARTNERS

- **17 Universities:** Coimbra group, AMU, Hanken, Sorbonne, TAU, TOUR4EU, UMI, UHR, UAntwerp, LEI, UNIMIB, UTU, Nanterre, SU, JYU, Lusófona, UAB
- **5 Research centres and infrastructures:** OPERAS, CNR, CSIC, CNRS, NIFU
- **6 Academies, societies and association of researchers:** TSV, MCAA, ECSPM, Eurodoc, EuroScience, ENRESSH
- **4 Public or private research funding organisations:** AKA, ANR, FWO, cOAlition S
- **1 Evaluation authorities/agencies:** ANVUR
- **2 Not-for-profit organisations:** EASSH, ISE
- **3 Organisations outside Europe:** CLACSO-FOLEC (Argentina), translate (Australia), UNESCO Chair on Open Science (Canada)

**39 member organisations / 71 experts**  
as of March 2024

## CO-CHAIRS

- Emanuel Kulczycki (Adam Mickiewicz University Poznan)
- Monica Dietl (ISE)
- Gian Maria Greco (MCAA)

## COORDINATION

- Janne Pölönen (TSV)

# WG MISSION

- By addressing language diversity and biases in assessment, WG supports the EU (and other) institutions in fulfilling their duty to enhance, promote and uphold linguistic equity, diversity and non-discrimination in Europe and globally.
- This requires fostering an academic culture that values diverse competencies, interactions and communications in all languages without exclusions or priorities.



The United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights article 27 states that **"everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits"**, and this according to Article 2 **"without distinction of any kind, such as... language"**

The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU also places an obligation on the Union to **respect linguistic diversity** (Article 22) **and prohibits discrimination on grounds of language** (Article 21).



# EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR RESEARCHERS



Council of the  
European Union

## **Recommendation on a European framework to attract and retain research, innovation and entrepreneurial talents in Europe**

- Approved 18th of December 2023

- NON-DISCRIMINATION: **Employers and funders of researchers should not discriminate against researchers in any way based on** gender, age, ethnic, national or social origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, **language**, disability, political opinion, social or economic condition.

# MULTILINGUALISM IN COARA



- **1st core commitment:** “Recognize valuable contributions that researchers make to science and for the benefit of society, including diverse outputs beyond journal publications and **irrespective of the language in which they are communicated**”.
- **3rd core commitment:** inappropriate uses include assessing outputs based on metrics relating to publication venue, format or **language**.
- **Toolkit:** Value diverse outputs (FAIR data sets, replication studies, registered reports, pre-prints) in different languages **in accordance with the Helsinki initiative**

### 3. Promote language diversity in research assessment, evaluation, and funding systems.

Make sure that in the process of **expert-based evaluation**, high quality research is valued regardless of the publishing language or publication channel

Make sure that when **metrics-based systems** are utilized, journal and book publications in all languages are adequately taken into account

# WG MAIN OBJECTIVES

1. to raise awareness across all fields about the importance of “multilingualism in practice of science, in scientific publications and in academic communications” (UNESCO)
2. to provide institutions with guidelines, toolbox and implementation proposal for recognizing, rewarding and incentivizing research carried out and communicated in all languages, and for addressing language biases in metrics, expert-assessment and rankings

## Task Forces (TF)

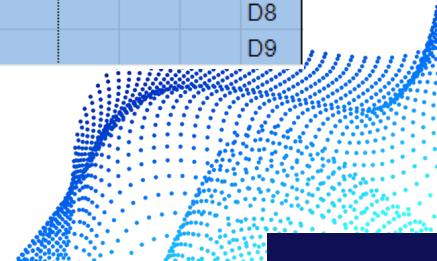
1. TF1: Coordination
2. TF2: Landscape analysis
3. TF3: Policy advice and implementation
4. TF4: Communication

## Interest Groups (IG)

1. Early career researchers
2. Civil society
3. Intersectionality
4. Language learning and skills
5. Open Scholarly communication

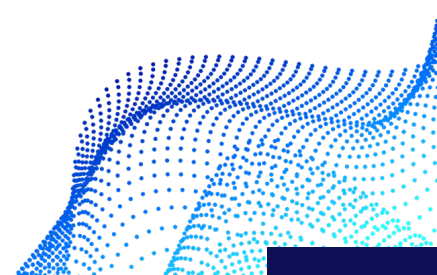
# WG ACTION PLAN

Task-Forces (TF) and Interest Groups (IG)	Activities (A) and Deliverables (D)	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8	M9	M10	M11	M12	M13	M14	M15	M16	M17	M18	M19	M20	M21	M22	M23	M24
		2023	2023	2024	2024	2024	2024	2024	2024	2024	2024	2024	2024	2024	2024	2024	2025	2025	2025	2025	2025	2025	2025	2025	2025
		11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
TF 1: Coordination	A1. Drafting an Action Plan																								
	A9. Development of an implementation proposal for CoARA on language aware assessments																								
	D6. Implementation proposal																								D6
TF2: Landscape Analysis	A4. Landscape analysis on the current state of multilingualism																								
	- A4.1 Literature review																								
	- A4.2 Survey to researchers																								
	- A4.3 Case-studies																								
	- A4.4 Bibliometric analyses																								
	D1: Landscape report on the current state of multilingualism																								
	A5. Landscape analysis on best practices																								
- A5.1 Literature review																									
- A5.2 Survey to organisations																									
D2 Landscape report on best practices in language-aware assessment																									
D3: White Paper on the importance and issues of multilingualism in relation to assessment reform																									
TF3: Policy Advice and Implementation	A6. Development of Language policy advice																								
	D4: Policy advice to (a) HEI and RPO and (b) RFO and Evaluation agencies																								D4
	A7+A8 Devising and testing tools, guidelines and models for recognizing, monitoring and supporting multilingual work																								
	D5: Toolbox for language aware-assessments																								D5
TF4: Communication	A2+A3 Drafting a Communication and Interaction Plan																								
	A10. Activities to communicate and disseminate the WG early, mid-term and final results																								
	D7: Workshops and webinars recordings																								D7
	D8: Position paper on multilingualism in research assessment																								D8
	D9: Different language versions of D4-8																								D9



# HOW TO CONTRIBUTE

- **Experts** from CoARA member organisations are welcome to join the WG
  - Send email to coordinator Janne Pölönen ([janne.polonen@tsv.fi](mailto:janne.polonen@tsv.fi)) and indicate willingness to contribute to specific WG activities and deliverables
- **CoARA member organisations** will be invited to
  - Contribute data, respond to and distribute surveys and participate in case studies
  - Test and develop toolbox
  - Comment through open consultations on each core WG output
- **Interested experts and organisations** can benefit of
  - Online workshops and webinars to share, present and discuss WG outputs (aim to translate key outputs to several languages)
  - In-person workshops can be held within events organised by WG members





# 3. PRACTICAL EXAMPLE: SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION

# MULTILINGUALISM ACROSS FIELDS

- While English has become the lingua franca of global science, it has been well-established that especially in the social sciences and humanities (SSH), communication of original research results in multiple languages is an ongoing practice (Kulczycki et al., 2020).
- It is often taken for granted that researchers in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) have almost completely abandoned publishing research results in languages other than English (Ammon, 2012).
- Are STEM fields entirely dominated by English language communication?

Ammon, U. (2012). Linguistic inequality and its effects on participation in scientific discourse and on global knowledge accumulation — With a closer look at the problems of the second-rank language communities. *Applied Linguistics Review*, <https://doi.org/10.1515/applirev-2012-0016>

Kulczycki et al. (2020). Multilingual publishing in the social sciences and humanities: A seven-country European study. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, <https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.24336>

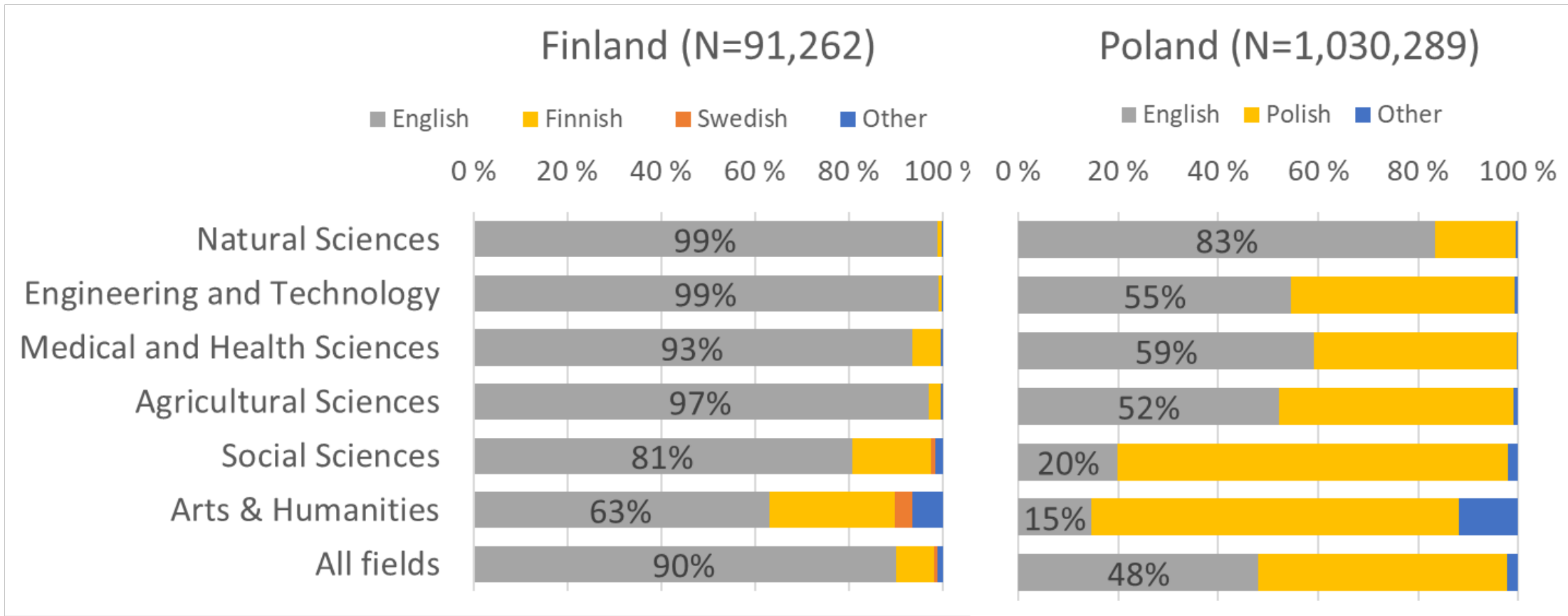
# INFORMATION SOURCES

- Standard publication and citation databases, notably Web of Science and Scopus, predominantly index peer-reviewed articles published in international English language journals.
  - Peer-reviewed research published in languages other than English remains invisible.
  - Databases ignore science communication, which is specifically targeted to professional and general audiences outside academia.
- Poland and Finland have comprehensive publication data integrated from local Current Research Information Systems (CRIS) of universities (Sile et al., 2018).

Sile, L., Pölönen, J., Sivertsen, G... Teitelbaum, R. (2018). Comprehensiveness of national bibliographic databases for social sciences and humanities: findings from a European survey. *Research Evaluation*, <https://doi.org/10.1093/reseval/rvy016>

# SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION

2b. How large share of the **peer-reviewed publication output** of **Finnish** and **Polish** universities is in different languages?



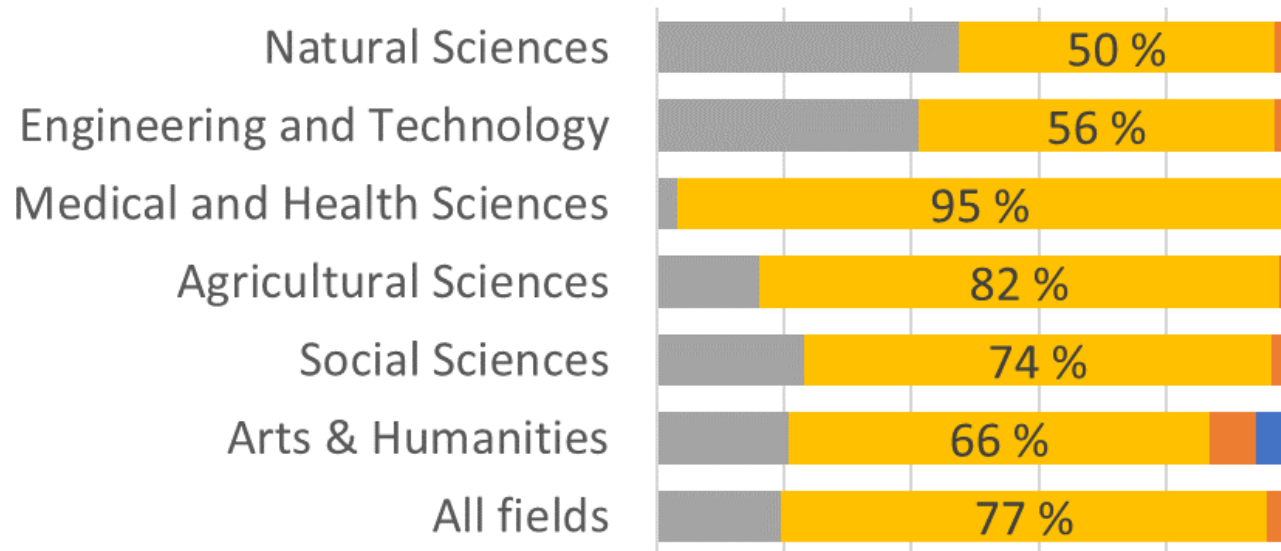
# SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

## 3. How large share of the **non-peer-reviewed publication output** of the **finnish universities** is in different languages?

Professional audiences (N=13443)

■ English ■ Finnish ■ Swedish ■ Other

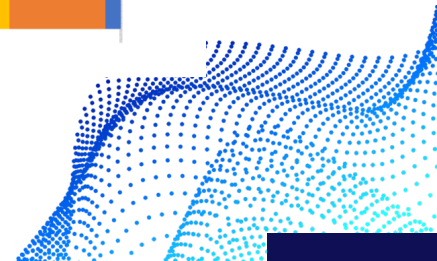
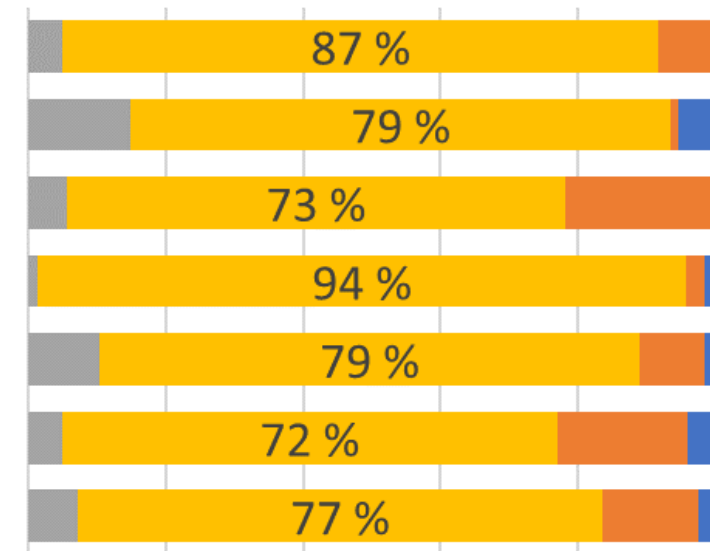
0 % 20 % 40 % 60 % 80 % 100 %



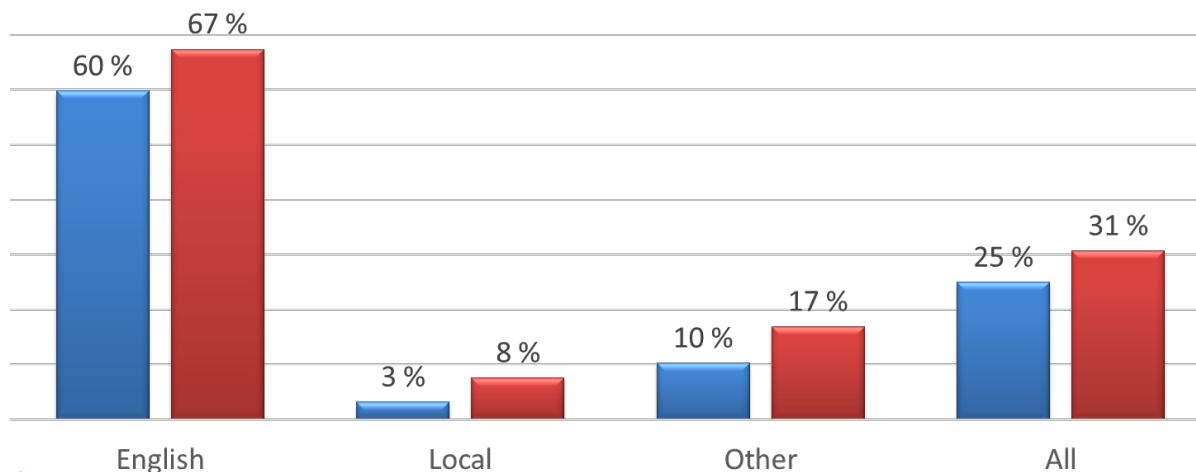
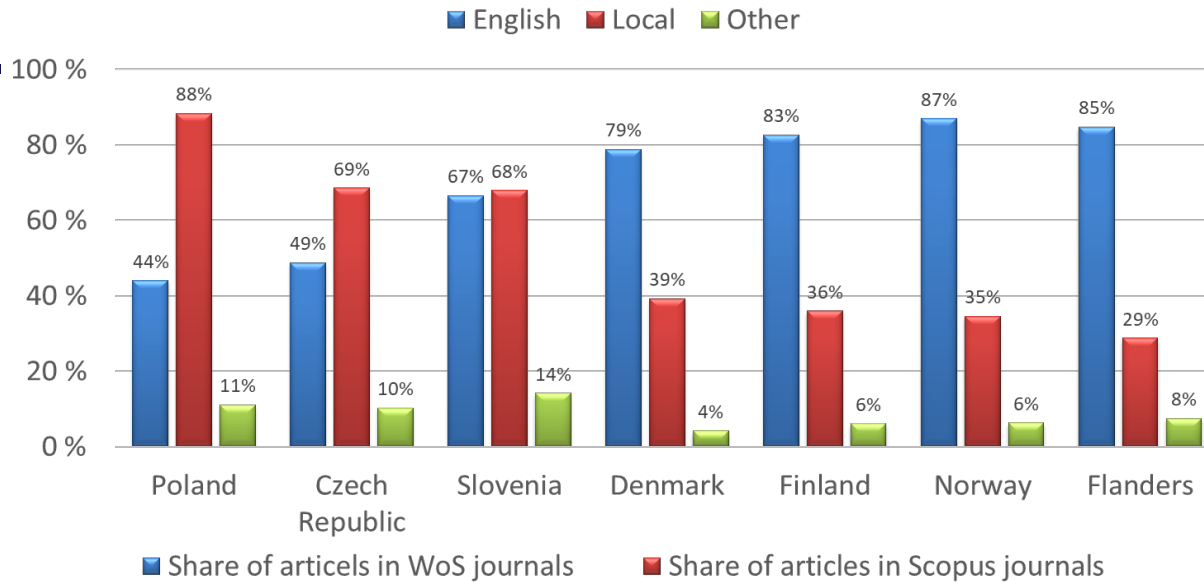
General audiences (N=7282)

■ English ■ Finnish ■ Swedish ■ Other

0 % 20 % 40 % 60 % 80 % 100 %



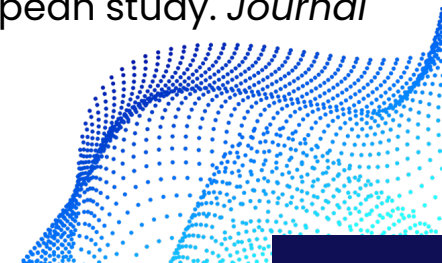
# METRICS COVERAGE OF SSH JOURNAL ARTICLES



- Large share of SSH researchers across 7 European countries published in 2013–15 peer-reviewed journal articles in the local language(s) of their country:
  - 88% in Poland
  - 29% in Flanders
- Web of Science and Scopus covered only 3%–8% of 94,000 peer-reviewed journal articles published in the local languages of 7 European countries

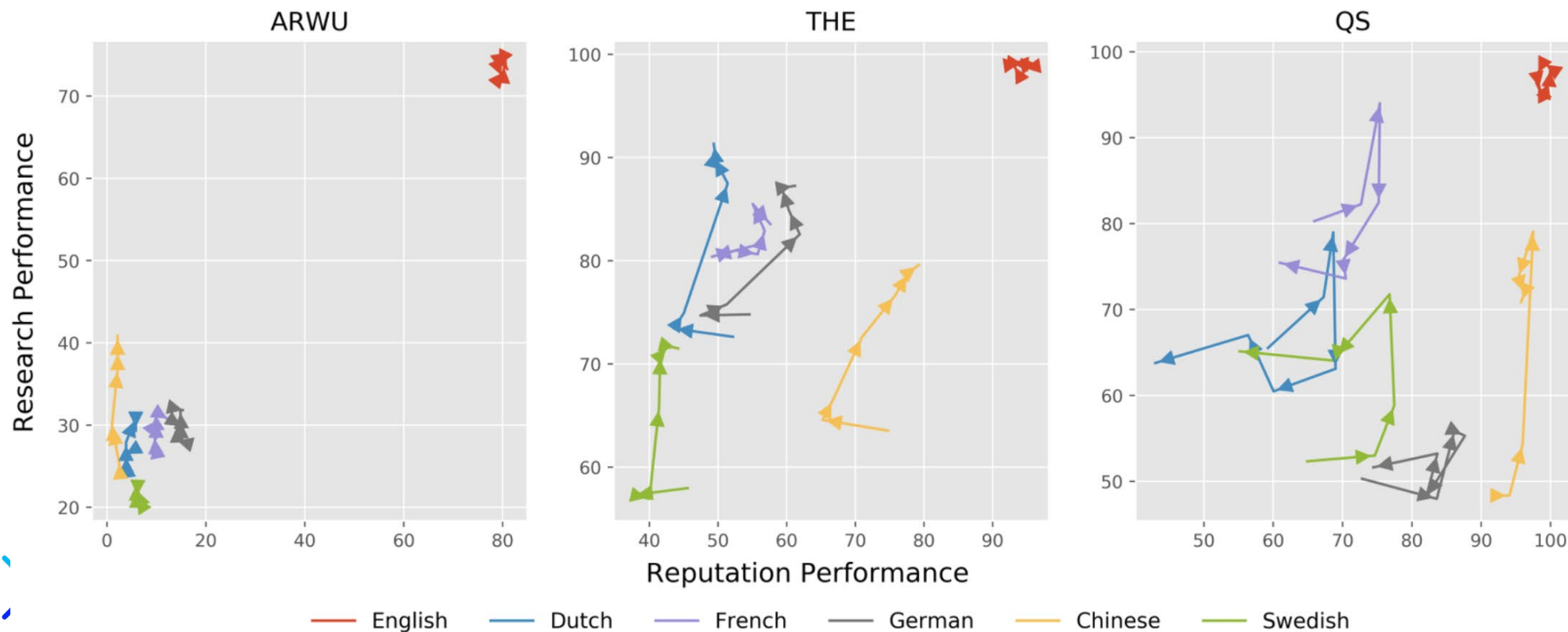
Based on data created for Kulczycki, E., Guns, R., Pölönen J., Engels, T., Rozkosz, E., ... Sivertsen, G. (2020). Multilingual publishing in the social sciences and humanities: A seven-country European study. *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology*.

<https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.24336>



# DISADVANTAGES – INSTITUTIONS

- **University Rankings** are biased towards universities in the United States or English-speaking universities by using a subset of mostly English journals to measure research performance
- Universities in English-speaking countries rank ahead of universities from other language regions in reputation and research performance

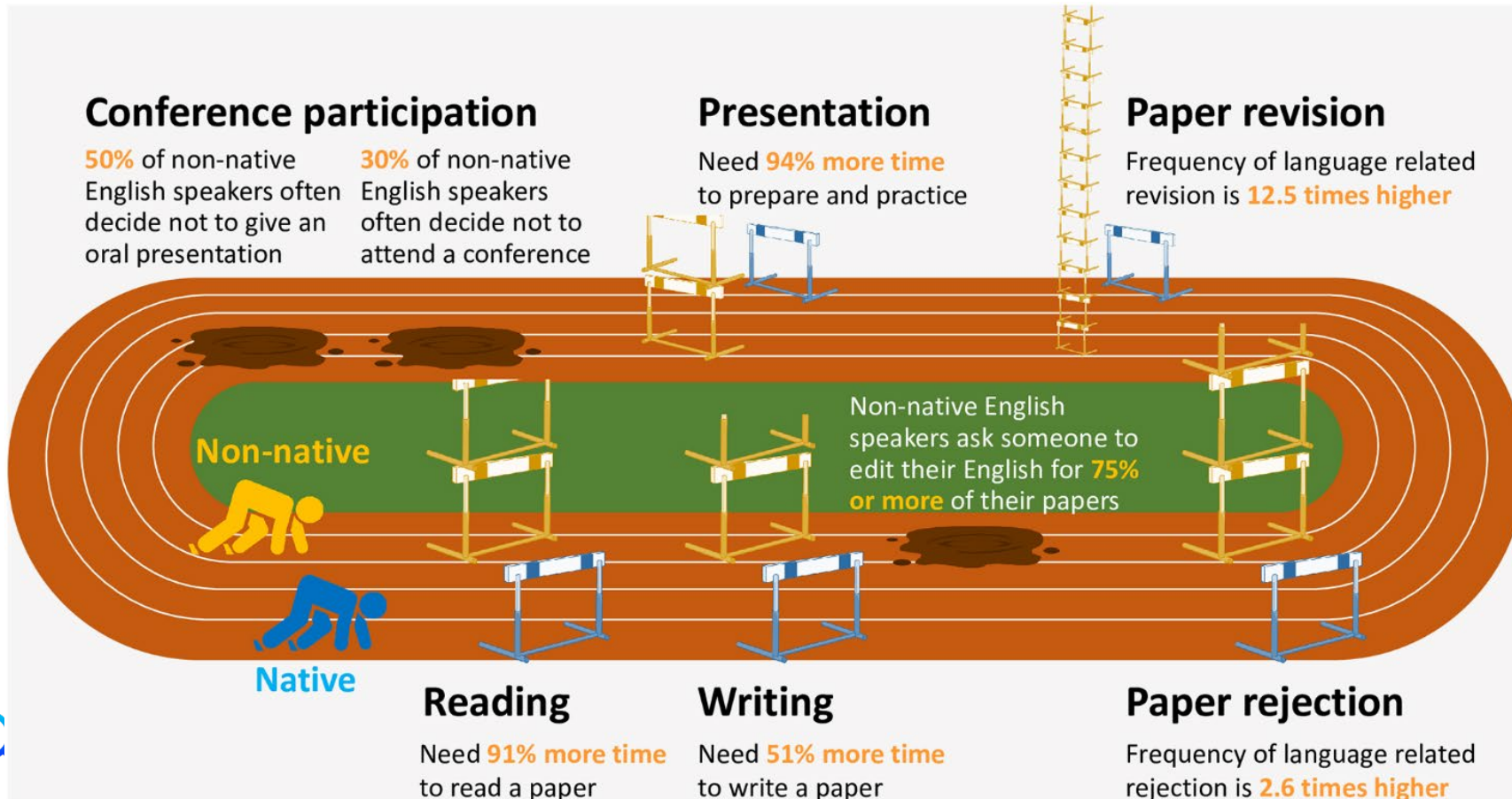


Selten, F., Neylon, C., Huang, C.-K., & Groth, P. (2020). [A longitudinal analysis of university rankings](#). *Quantitative Science Studies*, 1(3), 1109–1135.

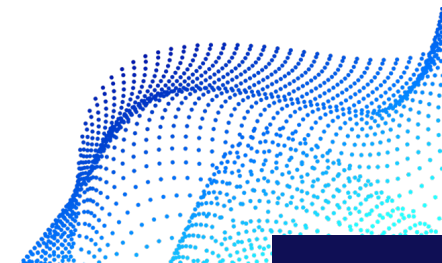


# DISADVANTAGES – RESEARCHERS

Amano et al. (2023) have shown that compared to fluent/native speakers, 2<sup>nd</sup> language speakers with low or moderate fluency need more time and effort in reading, writing and revising publications and presentations.



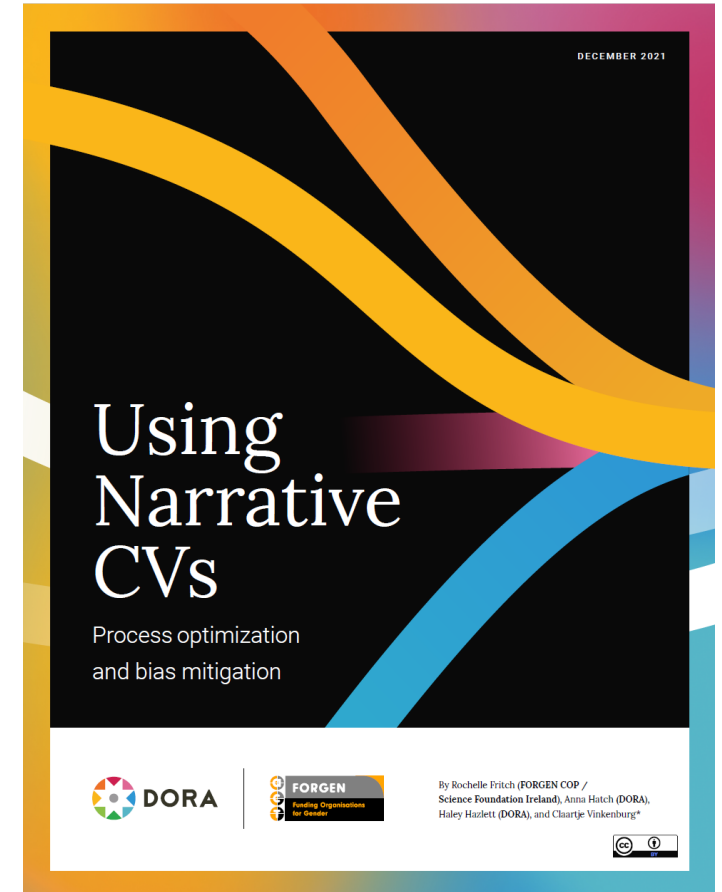
Amano, T., Ramírez-Castañeda, V., Berdejo-Espinola, V., Borokini, I., Chowdhury, S., Golivets, M., González-Trujillo, J. D., Montaña-Centellas, F., Paudel, K., White, R. L., & Veríssimo, D. (2023). The manifold costs of being a non-native English speaker in science. *PLOS Biology*, 21(7), e3002184.





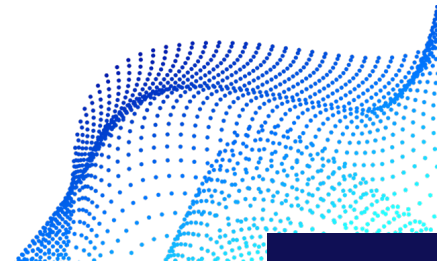
# QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT

- A narrative CV is a type of CV format that provides structured written descriptions of academics' or researchers' contributions and achievements that reflect a broad range of relevant skills, experiences and outputs and contributions regardless of language
- narrative CV's inherent emphasis on language use may introduce bias and noise into the evaluation process
- Gendered language and self-promotion tactics may also result in biased evaluations
- Importantly, funding organizations also need to consider and account for **how narrative formats disadvantage non-native language researchers**



# LANGUAGE PRIORITIES IN ASSESSMENT

- Ideally, assessment of researchers and research is evaluated based on quality and impact – in practice, criteria and methods are far from language neutral
- Policy-makers, evaluators and funders – even researchers – still think that research of any value to science and society is published in international English language journals.
- Excellence is typically identified as articles published in English language journals indexed in the Web of Science or Scopus, or having Journal Impact Factor.
- Intended or unintended language priorities in research assessment may
  - Result in systemic undervaluation of SSH research compared to STEM fields in assessments and funding (but also applied/practice oriented vs basic research, etc)
  - Compromise equal opportunities for individual researchers and institutions
  - Endanger epistemic diversity, locally relevant research and knowledge transfer beyond academia



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**Thank you for your attention!**

**Questions – Comments?**