Petition for accessibility of EU research project evaluation data

From: *Collaboration Initiative for Research Evaluation*

Dear,

As European scientists studying research evaluation, we are committed to improving evaluation procedures for research proposals and considering data access, which is instrumental for this purpose. As such, we are making this appeal to you, as we believe you can play an important role in increasing accessibility to EU research projects evaluation data.

The current procedures for research proposal evaluation have been under the spotlight due to well-documented inefficiencies, which would limit the system's capacity to identify and support the most innovative and important projects.[1] This has negative implications for the credibility of science and potentially hampers Europe's competitive position over the long term.

In order to stimulate evidence-based research that can help improving procedures and policies, access to evaluation data is crucial. However, while the EU is strongly committed to the principles of Open Science, access to evaluation data is still limited.

Some previously successful national experience has shown that access to evaluation data for research purposes is the only way to improve our understanding of the evaluation processes and that this can fully respect privacy and confidentiality principles.[2] EU authorities are currently drafting the new Horizon Europe programme, so this is a unique opportunity to address questions of data accessibility for research on evaluation procedures. Therefore, we ask your help to promote:

i) the introduction of rules in the next Horizon Europe programme for granting controlled and secured access to evaluation data

ii) the creation of a data infrastructure that is aimed at collecting, anonymizing and storing evaluation data, and managing data sharing for scientific purposes, in full compliance with confidentiality and privacy principles.

We are confident that this joint effort will promote evidence-based improvements of project evaluation procedures and will substantially increase the impact and success of EU funded research. On our side, we are fully committed to make all our best effort in order to carry out research inspired to these principles and goals.

17th June 2019

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[1] See the report from the AAS forum on implicit bias held on 28 April 2016 in the US: https://science.sciencemag.org/content/352/6289/1067.

[2] For instance: The Research Council of Norway (RCN) informs the applicants about transparency rules, for research purposes and in full compliance to privacy and confidentiality principles; the Australian Research Council (ARC) gave access to evaluation data, e.g. https://www.nature.com/articles/nature18315.

Supporting scientists

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