

DGPs: CoARA Action Plan

The DGPs already signed the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA) in 2021 and was the first German scientific society to join the Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA) at the beginning of 2023. CoARA aims to ensure that various practices and activities that promote the intrinsic quality of research are recognized in the assessment of research. Not only publications should count, but also, for example, large published data sets or the development of research software; transparency and reproducibility are explicitly named as relevant quality criteria. A qualitative evaluation process should be supported by the responsible use of valid quantitative indicators. This Action Plan describes how the DGPs pursues the process of implementing the Core Commitments according to an Action Plan with defined milestones.

The Action Plan has been approved on 2024-06-29 by the Executive Committee of the DGPs.

Process:

- For our action plan, we systematized possible *Types of Research Assessment* and evaluated which are performed within our academic society (see p. 2).
- For all relevant types, we systematically assessed the current state of the CoARA Core Commitments (1 to 4) and derive milestones and concrete action points (with a date and a responsible person; see pp. 3-11)
- Cross-cutting through all types, we evaluate the supporting commitments 5 to 10 (see pp. 12-13)
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Commission and the Commission ‘Studium und Lehre’) and Prof. Dr. Jakob Fink-Lamotte (U Postdam; Member of the Open Science Commission)

1. Types of Research Assessment done within DGP5

Type of Research Assessment	Done at DGP5?	ID	Comment
DGP5 Membership Regulations	✓	R	
Awards	✓	A	
Academic graduation (e.g., PhD, habilitation)	(✓) Recommendations	G	Not done within our society, but we provide recommendations on that topic for our members
Academic hiring	(✓) Recommendations	H	Not done within our society, but we work on recommendations on that topic for our members
Job promotion to a higher payment or prestige level	✗		
Performance-oriented payments and rewards	✗		
Funding decisions (both third-party and internal funding; project-based and/or permanent positions)	✗		

We will review the current state and propose actions for the four relevant areas (DGP5 Membership Regulations, Graduation, Hiring, and Awards) separately.

2. The current state of CoARA commitments in our Research Assessment + future milestones

2.1. DGPs Membership Regulations (ID: R)

CoARA Core Commitment	Current State	Milestone	Action Points	Responsible / Date
1. Recognise the diversity of contributions to, and careers in, research in accordance with the needs and nature of the research	One publication (beyond and independent from the dissertation) is necessary to be eligible as a DGPs member.	R1: Consider other contributions (e.g., data or software publications) as a criterion for full membership. This requires an amendment in §5 (4) of our statutes. As we do no quality check ourselves, those other contributions should also be peer-reviewed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R1a: Change the text on the website to recognize diversity of contributions as a criterion for full membership, by adding further contributions that can also be recognized (e.g., data or software publications). Date: 30-09-2026 • R1b: Define the procedure of how the quality of these contributions can be checked for, by e.g., defining qualitative criteria for a peer reviewing process. Date: 30-09-2026 • R1c: Change the statutes §5 (4) Date: 30-09-2026 	DGPs Executive Committee
2. Base research assessment primarily on qualitative evaluation for which peer review is central, supported by responsible use of quantitative indicators	The quality of the additional publication and/or the dissertation is not considered.	As the hurdles for becoming a member are minimal criteria, we consider the <i>existence</i> of one additional contribution sufficient (without further check of quality; we trust the mandatory peer-review here)	-	-
3. Abandon inappropriate uses in research assessment of journal- and publication-based metrics, in particular inappropriate uses	Not done; no change needed.	-	-	-
4. Avoid the use of rankings of	Not done; no change	-	-	-

research organisations in research assessment	needed.			
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2.2. Awards (ID: A)

The DGPs currently awards eight central prizes and at least 48 additional awards are given from the different sections. Next central awards will be awarded in 2026: Call will be announced at the end of 2025, submissions will be possible until Jan 2026. The calls for the next section awards will be, presumably, at the end of 2024. We plan to achieve the milestones A1 to A6 until then.

CoARA Core Commitment	Current State	Milestone	Action Points	Responsible
1. Recognise the diversity of contributions to, and careers in, research in accordance with the needs and nature of the research	There are many different awards that are awarded either by the head organization or by the different sections. Criteria are defined in the respective call for each award and can be changed each time an award is announced. Across all sections, the most frequently listed criteria are (1) innovation, (2) scientific quality, (3) methodological quality, (4) originality, and (5) open science practices.	A1: Explicitly mention “diversity of contributions” in all awards. A2: Create a “ how-to ” document for award committees that is handed out to all members of the committees upon appointment. This applies to all central awards and all awards of the Fachgruppen. It contains generic rules that apply to all committees. Explicitly mention “diversity of contributions”.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A1a: Mention “diversity of contributions” in all central public award announcements and all internal guidelines for award committees. Where possible make it concrete (e.g., by mentioning “data sets” and “research software”). Date: 15-12-2024 • A1b: Analogously, change criteria and documents of all awards of the Fachgruppen. Date: 15-12-2024 • A2a: Create a "how-to" document that defines the generic rules for the work of the award committees in the discipline. This should define how the committee takes into account the "diversity of contributions" in the award process. Where possible make it concrete (e.g., by mentioning "data sets" and "research software"). In addition, further CoARA Core Commitments should be considered in the "how-to" document (see A2-A.4) Date: 15-12-2024 • A2b: Save the "how-to" document in a suitable location where all members of current and future committees can access it. Date: 15-12-2024 • A2c: The “how-to” documents are centrally reviewed. Date: 30-09-2025 	DGPs Executive Committee / Section boards / CoARA Commission
2. Base research assessment	In an internal survey of	A3: Explicitly mention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A3a: Mention “quality over quantity” in all central public 	DGPs

<p>primarily on qualitative evaluation for which peer review is central, supported by responsible use of quantitative indicators</p>	<p>criteria used across sections, we found that the vast majority of research assessment is already based on qualitative evaluation. However, currently no specific recommendations to prefer qualitative over quantitative assessments is given.</p>	<p>“quality over quantity” in the award announcements.</p> <p>A4: Explicitly mention “quality over quantity” in the “how-to” document (see A2). The laudatio should refrain from capitalizing on quantity.</p>	<p>award announcements and all internal guidelines for award committees. Where possible make it concrete (e.g., by defining qualitative criteria and by defining a peer review procedure). Date: 15-12-2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A3b: Analogously, change criteria and documents of all awards of the Fachgruppen. Date: 15-12-2024 • A4a: Explicitly mention “quality over quantity” in the “how-to” document for award committees (see A2a). Where possible make it concrete (e.g., by defining qualitative criteria and by defining a peer review procedure). Date: 15-12-2024 • A4b: Explicitly mention in the “how-to” document for award committees (see A2a) that the award laudation should refrain from capitalizing on quality criteria, but should highlight the qualitative aspects of the research. Date: 15-12-2024 	<p>Executive Committee / Section boards / CoARA Commission</p>
<p>3. Abandon inappropriate uses in research assessment of journal- and publication-based metrics, in particular inappropriate uses</p>	<p>Journal- and publication-based metrics are not mentioned in calls for awards, but there is also no explicit discouragement. In an internal survey of criteria used across sections, we found that JIF is sometimes (but not regularly) considered in award decisions.</p>	<p>A5: In the “how-to” document (see A2), define what an “inappropriate” use of journal- and publication-based metrics is. Explicitly discourage such an use in award committees.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A5a: Define in the “how-to” document for award committees (see A2a) what an “inappropriate” use of journal- and publication-based metrics is. Where possible make it concrete (no use of # of publications, Impact factors, H-factors, etc.). Date: 15-12-2024 • A5b: Explicitly mention in the “how-to” document for award committees (see A2a) that the “inappropriate” use of journal- and publication-based metrics is discouraged and will not determine the decision finding of the award committee. Date: 15-12-2024 	<p>DGPs Executive Committee / Section boards / CoARA Commission</p>
<p>4. Avoid the use of rankings of research organisations in</p>	<p>No mention of “prestige of</p>	<p>A6: Explicitly mention in the “how-to” document that</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A6a: Explicitly mention in the “how-to” document for award committees (see A2a) that the affiliation of a 	<p>DGPs Executive</p>

<p>research assessment</p>	<p>university”, but also no explicit discouragement. In an internal survey of criteria used across sections, we found no evidence that the ranking of research organizations is currently considered as a criterion in research assessment.</p>	<p>the affiliation of a candidate must not play a role in the decision of the award committee.</p>	<p>candidate must not play a role in the decision of the award committee. Date: 15-12-2024</p>	<p>Committee / Section boards / CoARA Commission</p>
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2.3. Graduation (ID: G)

The DGPs does not graduate academic personnel itself, but it provides recommendations in these texts:

- Bössel, N., Kluge, A., Leising, D., Mischkowski, D., Phan, L.V., Schmitt, M., & Stahl, J. (2023). Anreizsystem, Machtmissbrauch und wissenschaftliches Fehlverhalten. Eine Analyse zum funktionalen Zusammenhang zwischen strukturellen Bedingungen und unethischem Verhalten in der Wissenschaft. https://www.dgps.de/fileadmin/user_upload/PDF/Berichte/Bericht_AMWF20230626.pdf
- [Empfehlungen der Kommission zu unterschiedlichen Dissertationsformen](#)

CoARA Core Commitment	Current State	Milestone	Action Points	Responsible
1. Recognise the diversity of contributions to, and careers in, research in accordance with the needs and nature of the research	Only publications / manuscripts and no other types of contributions are considered as part of a dissertation.	G1: The commission “Studium und Lehre” is commissioned to revise their “Empfehlungen der "Kommission Studium und Lehre" der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Psychologie zu unterschiedlichen Dissertationsformen”. In this revision it should be explicitly discussed how a diversity of contributions (notably, data sets and research software) can be part of a dissertation, and which quality criteria they need to fulfill. Insights from the Bössel et al. (2023) report should be transferred into the recommendations of the commission.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • G1a: Revise the “Empfehlungen der "Kommission Studium und Lehre" der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Psychologie zu unterschiedlichen Dissertationsformen” concerning the diversity of contributions in the dissertation by (a) defining how a diversity of contributions (notably, data sets and research software) can be part of the dissertation and (b) which quality criteria needs to be met. Date: 30-03-2025 • G1b: Include insights of the Bössel et al (2023) report (where appropriate) to the recommendations of the commissions concerning the evaluation of dissertations. Date: 30-03-2025 	Commission “Studium und Lehre”
2. Base research assessment primarily on qualitative evaluation for which peer review is central, supported by responsible use of quantitative indicators	It is explicitly stated that dissertations should only be evaluated based on the quality of the presented research, not the quantity of included manuscripts / studies / pages.			
3. Abandon inappropriate uses in research assessment of journal- and publication-based metrics, in particular inappropriate uses	Not done; no change needed.	-	-	
4. Avoid the use of rankings of	Not done; no change	-	-	

research organisations in research assessment	needed.			
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2.4. Hiring (ID: H)

The DGPs does not hire academic staff itself, but it provides recommendations. These recommendations are given in:

- AMWF report (Bössel et al., 2023, see 2.3)
- Recommendations in Abele-Brehm & Bühner 2016 (although these are not official recommendations from the DGPs board)
- and the upcoming RESQUE / CoARA report

The main **milestone** is to develop a recommendation (based on RESQUE, or independent from that) on hiring procedures.

CoARA Core Commitment	Current State	Milestone	Action Points	Responsible
1. Recognise the diversity of contributions to, and careers in, research in accordance with the needs and nature of the research	The diversity of contributions and careers is currently not reflected in our recommendations.	H1: Create a recommendation (based on RESQUE, or independent from that) on hiring procedures, that covers the CoARA core commitments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H1: Create a recommendation for the hiring process in which the diversity of contributions is explicitly mentioned. This can be based on RESQUE. Where possible make it specific (e.g., by defining qualitative criteria and by mentioning “data sets” and “research software”) Date: 30-03-2025 	DGPs Executive Committee / CoARA Commission
2. Base research assessment primarily on qualitative evaluation for which peer review is central, supported by responsible use of quantitative indicators	It is recommended to engage with individual research outputs in a qualitative manner to discuss the individual strengths and weaknesses of contributions. In addition, committees should ensure that they have sufficient relevant expertise in the subject		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H2: Create a recommendation for the hiring process in which the “quality over quantity” is explicitly mentioned. This can be based on RESQUE. Where possible make it specific (e.g., by defining qualitative criteria and by defining a peer review procedure) Date: 30-03-2025 	

	matter being discussed (e.g., through the inclusion of multiple external commission members).			
3. Abandon inappropriate uses in research assessment of journal- and publication-based metrics, in particular inappropriate uses	It is recommended to not use such inappropriate quantitative metrics.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> H3: Create a recommendation for the hiring process in which the inappropriate use of journal- and publication-based metrics is explicitly mentioned. This can be based on RESQUE. Where possible make it concrete (no use of # of publications, Impact factors, H-factors, etc.). Date: 30-03-2025 	D DGPs Executive Committee / CoARA Commission
4. Avoid the use of rankings of research organisations in research assessment	No mention of “prestige of university”, but also no explicit discouragement.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> H4: Create a recommendation for the hiring process in which is mentioned that a candidate’s affiliation must not play a role in the decision of the hiring process. This can be based on RESQUE. Date: 30-03-2025 	DGPs Executive Committee / CoARA Commission

3. The Supporting Commitments (ID: S)

Supporting CoARA Commitment	Current State	Milestone	Action Points	Responsible
5. Commit resources to reforming research assessment as is needed to achieve the organisational changes committed to	The DGPs commits considerable resources to reforming research assessment, mostly in terms of voluntary work. Specifically, it has several commissions (the open science commission, the commission “incentive systems, abuse of power and scientific misconduct”, and the RESQUE working group) that contribute to this endeavor, and the executive committee made this one of its priorities in its present term of office.	S1: Make “research assessment” a top-priority topic for DGPs	S1a: Decide that a working group on “research assessment” within the DGPs will receive the status as a permanent group (instead of a group that would have to be implemented by each new incoming EC) Date: 19-09-2024 S1b: Create a subpage on the DGPs homepage (www.dgps.de) dedicated to research assessment; label it as a “Schwerpunktthema” on the website Date: 31-10-2024	DGPs Executive Committee
6. Review and develop research assessment criteria, tools and processes	Such criteria are reviewed and developed by the involved commissions and discussed with the different sections of the scientific society.	S2: Task the “research assessment” working group (see S1a) with reviewing and developing criteria, tools, and processes, and with working in collaboration with the “open science” working group	S2a: Install a DGPs working group on “research assessment” (select members; write letter of appointment) and assign members with the task to continuously review and develop criteria, tools, and processes Date: 31-10-2024	DGPs Executive Committee
7. Raise awareness of research assessment reform and provide transparent communication,	The executive committee and the involved commissions raise awareness of research assessment	S3: Maintain the “research assessment” website on the DGPs homepage (see S1b)	S3a: Assign one member of the new DGPs working group on “research assessment” as	CoARA Commission

<p>guidance, and training on assessment criteria and processes as well as their use</p>	<p>through newsletters, statements, recommendations, and discussions. A website dedicated to the reform of research assessment if maintained by the RESQUE working group: https://resque-framework.github.io/website/</p>	<p>S4: Inform the EC regularly about their work S5: Draft information and texts for the regular DGPs newsletter (“Aktuelle Mitteilungen”) S6: Report about the working group at plenary sessions of the Fakultätentag Psychologie (FTPs // meetings of psychology department representatives)</p>	<p>responsible for the website Date: 31-01-2025 S4a: Invite the head of the working group to EC meetings (at least twice a year) Regularly S5a: Ask the head of the new working group to prepare and draft texts for the newsletter Regularly S6a: Invite the head of the working group to FTPs plenary sessions Regularly</p>	
<p>8. Exchange practices and experiences to enable mutual learning within and beyond the Coalition</p>	<p>Felix Schönbrodt leads the CoARA Working Group “Responsible Metrics and Indicators” and will communicate our insights via this WG.</p>	<p>S7: Foster exchanges between the DGPs working groups “Open Science”, “Research Assessment”, and other relevant groups S8: Foster exchanges with other scientific organizations (e.g., societies, Allgemeiner Fakultätentag)</p>	<p>S7a: Mutual invitations to group meetings Regularly S8a: Report at meetings of other organizations Date: tba</p>	<p>Head of the CoARA Commission</p>
<p>9. Communicate progress made on adherence to the Principles and implementation of the Commitments</p>	<p>Felix Schönbrodt takes part in regular meeting of the German National CoARA chapter.</p>	<p>S8: Report what is being done at DGPs at the German National CoARA chapter</p>	<p>S8a: Continuous liaison with the German CoARA chapter Regularly</p>	<p>Head of the CoARA Commission</p>
<p>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</p>	<p>Newly developed metrics and tools are currently in the process of being evaluated (see https://resque-framework.github.io/website/eval_projects.html). Practices are currently not being evaluated.</p>	<p>S9: Evaluate practices and criteria: Do DGPs committees (e.g., award juries) and DGPs members (in their departments) implement the changes proposed by the DGPs EC? Monitor experiences that DGPs committees and members make with these practices S10: Evaluate tools: Review new</p>	<p>S9a: Launch a qualitative and quantitative evaluation (e.g., survey) on proposed research assessment practices three years after those practices have been proposed by the DGPs EC Date: 31-12-2027 S10a: Develop and assess</p>	<p>CoARA Commission</p>

		tools and users' experiences with these tools and disseminate these experiences among DGPs members	tools (e.g., a metric for assessing theory precision) and disseminate these on the DGPs website Regularly	
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