

Statement on ‘Research Assessment in Australia: Evidence for Modernisation’ – Dr Julie Glover

Wednesday 15 November 2023

Thanks to Kevin and others for the report – it provides an excellent summary of challenges and opportunities for Australia’s research assessment system. It will be a very useful resource going forward. Particularly valuable are the perspectives from people involved in assessments – both assessing and being assessed.

How we identify the best research and researchers is fundamental to our investments in the research system. At NHMRC, quality research assessment is a huge focus of our staff and our expert committees and the 2000 or so peer reviewers who contribute to our processes every year.

Confidence in our assessment systems is critical – we know that they need to be evidence-based, co-designed, and the outcomes need to support a pipeline of diverse researchers and diverse types of research.

At NHMRC, we really value the leadership and advice provided by DORA, the Declaration on Research Assessment - we have been a signatory for over 10 years as well as an active member of the DORA international funder discussion group.

We have made significant shifts in our research assessment policies over the last five years to:

- value quality over quantity,
- incorporate research impact assessment into key schemes,
- incorporate consumer and end-user perspectives in assessment into targeted schemes
- focus on diversity of researchers and research funded – in terms of gender and support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research and researchers.

But we know shifting culture on research assessment in the sector is tricky.

We’ve had a big focus on using evidence to inform our processes and improvements. We are also very keen to engage in projects with other agencies, including by being involved in the Research on Research Institute.

Thanks for the opportunity to come along today and we look forward to hearing questions and comments on the report and ideas on shifting culture.

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