

# How to identify excellent researchers?

Lessons learned and tools to use

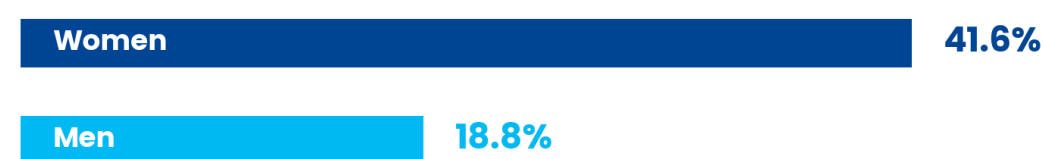
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## Introduction

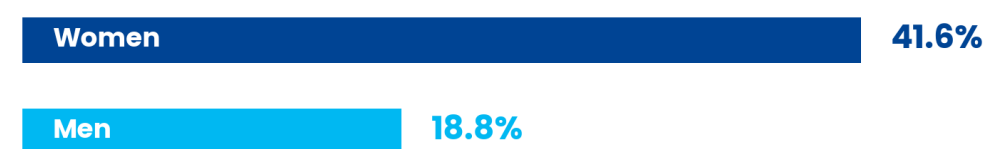
The CoARA Working Group TIER surveyed researchers across Europe on how research assessment is perceived and how it is actually practised: 1,682 respondents, 94% from research-performing (RPO) organisations, 97% Europe-based. The survey mapped which criteria count and for whom, tested whether the gender gap in perceived excellence is structural, and turned the findings into a practical self-assessment tool for institutions and funders.

## Who sees the problem

**Perceive gender bias in the definition of excellence**  
share rating 4–5 on a 1–5 scale



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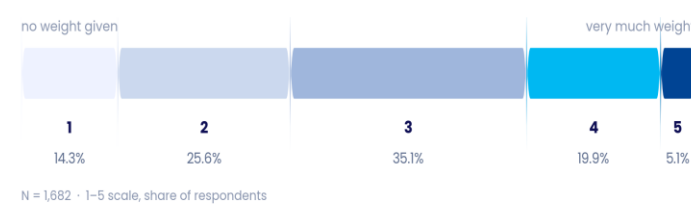


## Narrative CVs

**Narrative CVs: commitment vs perceived practice**

**25%**

perceive narrative CVs as already  
used in evaluation processes

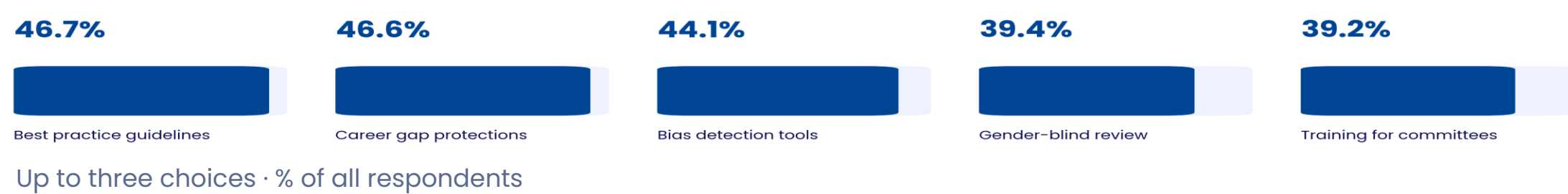


**Criteria women weight more heavily than men**  
by evaluation context

|                                      | Institutions | Funding agencies |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|------------------|
| Open Science & broader contributions | ●            | ●                |
| Societal impact & engagement         | ○            | ●                |
| Teaching & mentorship                | ○            | ●                |
| Collaboration & interdisciplinarity  | ○            | ●                |
| Institutional leadership & service   | ○            | ●                |
| Traditional bibliometrics            | ○            | ●                |

● women assign more weight ○ no difference  
N = 1,682 · all differences significant at  $p < .05$

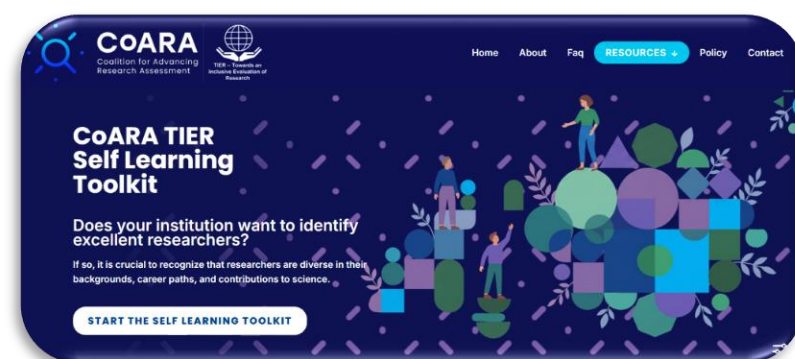
## What researchers ask for



## Key messages

- **Capping the number of publications** that can be submitted in competitive procedures shifts the incentive from quantity to quality and relieves peer review.
- **Transparency is part of evaluation:** telling researchers which criteria apply is the evaluator's responsibility.
- **Narrative CVs** are recommended by CoARA, DORA and the Leiden Manifesto, yet only one in four sees them used.
- No **uniform parental leave** across Europe: one of the main reasons for female exit from academia.
- The importance of dialogue with institutions: **TIER Dissemination Tour** confirmed the alignment between TIER's findings and the European Commission's reading of bias in research evaluation, and the shared need for practical instruments — a role the **Toolkit** can fill.

## The TIER Toolkit



A free, web-based, and non-judgemental self-assessment tool for guiding institutions and funders in making evaluations aligned with the CoARA framework. It includes a self-questionnaire with best practices, case studies, and novelty to guide institutions. It returns a downloadable PDF.

*Next frontier: implicit bias — the hardest to eradicate, because it operates below conscious awareness; results from survey for institutions available soon.*