Responsible Research Assessment of Faculty and Staff

Summary of Webinar

This webinar, presented on February 17, 2026, by Dr. David Moher (Centre for Journalology, Ottawa Hospital Research Institute), explored strategies for maximizing trust, reproducibility, and rigor in Research-Performing Organizations (RPOs) through reformed assessment practices.

Please find the webinar slides [here](#).

The session was recorded and will be made available for subsequent viewing shortly

Key Themes from the Webinar

1. The Current Currency of Advancement The webinar addressed the systemic reliance on publication quantity as the primary "currency" for researcher advancement. Current assessment models often prioritize:

- Traditional criteria such as the number of publications and specific authorship order (e.g., first or senior author).

- Quantitative metrics that favor "prestige" over the actual quality or rigor of the research.

2. Limitations of Traditional Metrics Dr. Moher highlighted the misalignment between current incentives and scientific integrity:

- **Impact Factors**: The term "Impact Factor" is often misused as a proxy for individual research quality.

- **Grant Expectations**: There is an overwhelming pressure to secure grants and maintain high publication volumes, which can undermine the focus on reproducibility.

- **Lack of Diversity**: Analysis of international samples shows a heavy reliance on traditional criteria, with fewer rewards for non-traditional or open science contributions.

3. Implementing Responsible Assessment

The presentation proposed shifting toward a model that values "Responsible Research Assessment." From a three-round Delphi study with diverse stakeholders, six core practices emerged from consensus that research-performing organizations should reward.

1. Data, materials & code sharing (within ethical/legal

constraints)

2. Open access publishing (via OA routes and/or

repositories/preprints)

3. Prospective study registration

4. Reporting transparency (use reporting guidelines)

5. Disclosure of interests & funding

6. Verification efforts

To ensure success, the transition to responsible research assessment must be discipline-specific and follow a modular, phased implementation. By rewarding early efforts and pairing institutional mandates with robust training and infrastructure, organizations can foster a sustainable culture of research integrity.

4. The "1% Investment" Proposal A significant takeaway was the call for RPOs to invest in the "Ethical, Legal and Social Implications" of research practices.

- Taking a cue from the Human Genome Project, which invested 1% of its budget into ELSI research, RPOs should dedicate resources to improving the practices of scientists.

- Such investments can shape policy, protect against data misuse, and realign incentives toward credibility.

Conclusions

The webinar concluded that while current assessment systems emphasize quantity, adopting responsible standards can reduce waste and strengthen public trust in science. While resource variability may require phased timelines, the move toward these practices is essential for the long-term health of the research community.

Acknowledgements

Sincere thanks to Dr. David Moher for sharing insights on reforming faculty and staff assessment to prioritize research rigor and institutional integrity.