



ALMA MATER STUDIORUM
UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA



Funded by
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The Many Faces of Research Assessment How Context Shapes Evaluation

Opening remarks: the LEVRA project

Francesca Masini

Bologna, 26 June 2026



What is LEVRA?

- LEVRA (*Leveraging the local research evaluation system to raise awareness at the University of Bologna*) is an **institutional pilot project** at the **University of Bologna (UNIBO)**
 - Funded by the CoARA Boost Cascade Funding initiative (second call)
- UNIBO is a CoARA member since 2022 and co-chaired the Italian National Chapter (2023-2025)
 - Roadmap / Action Plan: published in 2024, implementation documented publicly since 2025
 - <https://www.unibo.it/en/research/research-evaluation/coalition-for-advancing-research-assessment-coara>
- Despite the efforts put in CoARA at the institutional level, UNIBO struggles to implement the reform, due to **external** (national-level) and **internal challenges** that need to be addressed

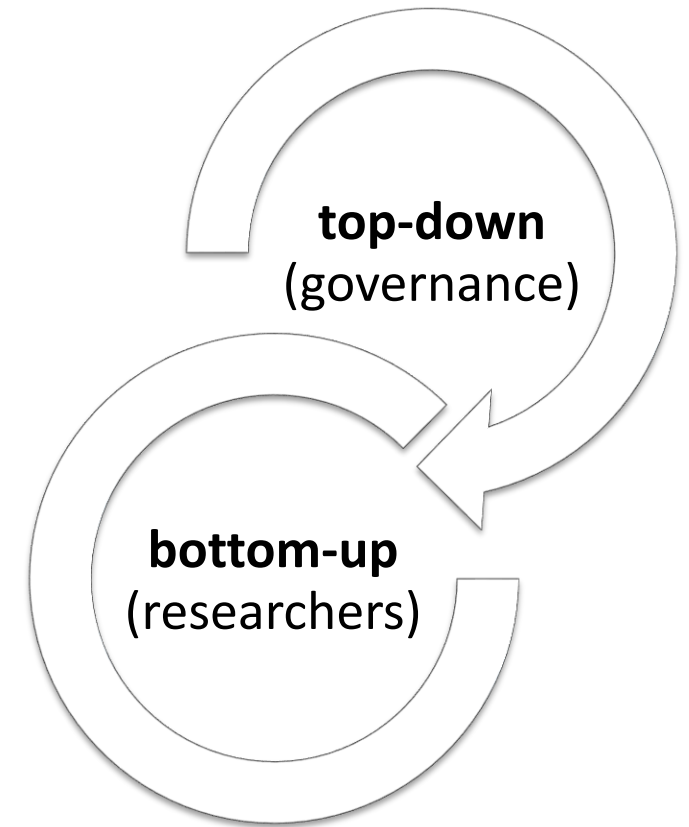


Focus on internal challenges capitalizing on our history

- The University of Bologna has a long tradition of evaluating internal research activities
 - 1997-2013 • Research Observatory
 - Since 2013 • University Research Evaluation Committee (**CVRA**), responsible for the University Research Evaluation process (**VRA**), which aims primarily at improving research quality
- Drawing on this long-standing experience, LEVRA deliberately turned its attention **inward**
- We saw our institutional history not simply as a legacy, but as a **resource**
 - An **opportunity** to critically reflect on our own practices and how they could gradually evolve in light of the principles underpinning CoARA's reform

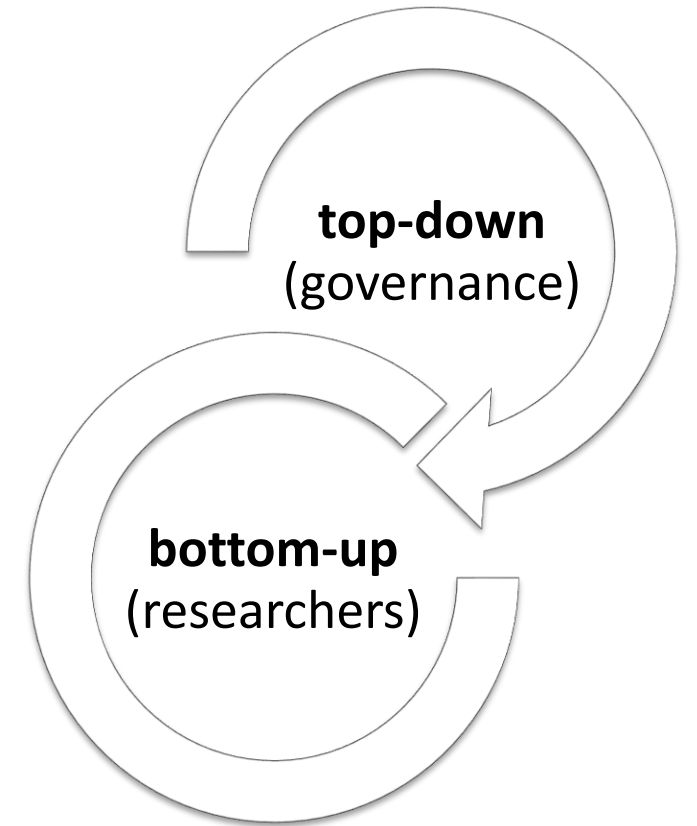
LEVRA's main objective: raising awareness

- The idea behind LEVRA was to leverage our current system for internal research assessment (VRA) to **raise awareness** on CoARA's reform, thus shifting the focus from governance to researchers, enabling a **broader participation** to the debate around responsible research assessment (RRA)
- The *University Research Evaluation Committee* (CVRA) started reflecting on the concrete implementation of CoARA's principles at the local level, exploring ways to **gradually** revise and enrich our current VRA model, starting from **Open Science** and **Research Data**, one of our core areas of intervention in the last few years



LEVRA's main objective: raising awareness

- The project explored how VRA results are used by departments and what other practices are used, generating **dialogue** across the university and showing the benefits of **mutual learning**
- In the meantime, LEVRA's team designed and organized new **training sessions** on research assessment issues for both newly recruited and 'stable' researchers, who will also be engaged in a wider **experiment on their perception** of research assessment
- Today's event is the third and last milestone of the project, which will hopefully **foster the discussion** on CoARA not only at the local level but also at the national and international level



How context shapes (or should shape) evaluation

- Today's topic is inspired by one of the internal challenges that motivated LEVRA: UNIBO's **complexity**, with 3400+ researchers, a **wide range of disciplines**, and **global collaborations**
- Diversity reminds us that there is **no one-size-fits-all** model: to be fair and responsible, research assessment needs to be tailored to context – and 'context' can mean many things
 - Different **disciplines** and **research traditions** communicate knowledge in different ways, produce different kinds of outputs, and generate impact through different pathways, calling for different kinds of judgments and a broader concept of 'excellence' (no single model of 'academic success')
 - Early-career **researchers**, established scholars, researchers working across sectors face different opportunities and constraints, thus requiring different forms of recognition
 - Researchers are evaluated in a variety of **situations** (recruitment, promotion, projects, resource allocation, etc.) that require a context-sensitive assessment rather than a universal formula

Programme

Session 1 • CoARA reform of research assessment

Chair: Francesca Masini (University of Bologna)

09.45-10.05 • **Keynote speaker** • **Stanisław Kistryn** (CoARA Steering Board, Jagiellonian University), *Status and perspectives of CoARA*

10.05-10.25 • **Keynote speakers** • **Paola Galimberti** (Università Statale di Milano) & **Giuliana Rubbia** (Co-Chair Italian National Chapter, INGV), *CoARA Italy: fundamentals, stories and challenges*

10.25-10.45 • Q&A

10:45-11:15 • Coffee break

The Many Faces of Research Assessment:
How Context Shapes Evaluation



26 June 2026: 09.30–16.15
AULA PRODI
P.zza San Giovanni in Monte, 2 – Bologna
+ streaming
Programme, info, and registration → → →



Programme

Session 2 • Research Assessment Across Situations and Career Stages

11:15-11:45 • **Keynote speaker** • **Miriam Kip** (Berlin Institute of Health),
*From Theory to Practice: Implementing Context-Sensitive Research
Assessment Reforms*

Chair: Silvio Peroni (University of Bologna)

11.45-12.45 • **Round table** • **Luca Fontanesi** (University of Bologna), **Julien
Giordani** (MSCA Doctoral Networks) , **Corinna Guerzoni** (University of
Bologna), **Matteo Millan** (University of Padua), **Marco Malgarini** (ANVUR)

Chair: Maria Laura Bolognesi (University of Bologna)

12.45-13.00 • Q&A

13:00-14:15 Lunch break



Programme

Session 3 • Research Assessment Across Disciplines and Traditions

14:15-14.45 • **Keynote speaker** • **Giovanna Lima** (DORA), *Context matters: balancing diversity and alignment in research assessment*

Chair: Stefania Bonfiglioli (University of Bologna)

14.45-15.45 • **Round table** • **Ozen Dolcerocca** (University of Bologna), **Raffaele Giusti** (Sant'Andrea Hospital, Rome), **Ginevra Peruginelli** (National Research Council, IGSG), **Davide Viaggi** (University of Bologna)

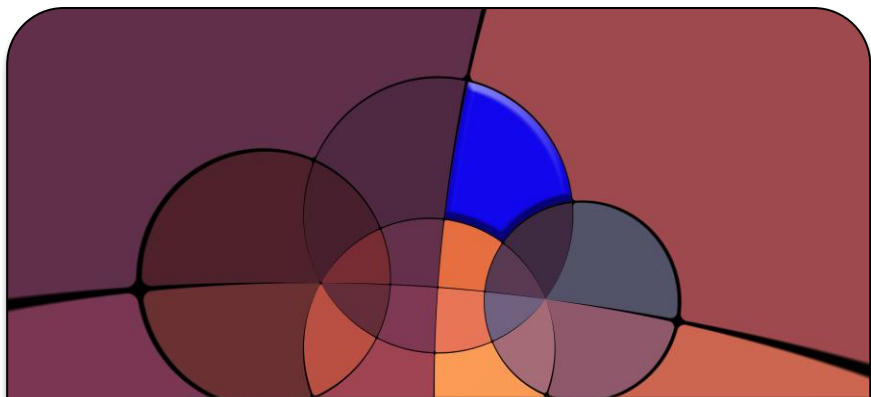
Chair: Caterina Mauri (University of Bologna)

15.45-16.00 • Q&A

16.00-16.15 • **Giovanni Molari** (Rector, University of Bologna), *Closing remarks*



Setting the scene for today's discussion



Research is plural, and research assessment should be plural too.

Diversity should not be treated as an obstacle to overcome, but as a reality to recognize, understand, and value.



Research assessment is not an end in itself.

It is a tool to support high-quality research, foster integrity, and ultimately strengthen trust in science.



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