



UNIVERSITATEA DE MEDICINĂ ȘI FARMACIE
"CAROL DAVILA" din BUCUREȘTI

Str. Dionisie Lupu nr. 37, Sector 2, București, 020021 România, www.umfcd.ro, email: rectorat@umfcd.ro



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UMFCD

INSTITUTIONAL ACTION PLAN

for the implementation of the

CoARA principles

2026–2029

University of Medicine and Pharmacy Carol Davila of Bucharest

2026



SUMMARY

This Action Plan establishes how the University of Medicine and Pharmacy Carol Davila of Bucharest (UMFCD) commits to reforming research assessment in accordance with the Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment, signed within the framework of the Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA).

The Plan covers the period 2026–2029 and is structured around the CoARA Commitments. UMFCD is a signatory of the CoARA Agreement and supports the shared vision that research assessment must recognize the full diversity of research contributions, must be based primarily on qualitative, peer-informed expert judgment, and must progressively abandon undue reliance on quantitative bibliometric indicators.

The Plan identifies priority areas for action, aligned with the national context—particularly the National Strategy for Research, Innovation and Smart Specialization 2022–2027—and the open science framework promoted by UEFISCDI (the Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation Funding), as well as with the good practices of partner medical universities.

INTRODUCTION

The University of Medicine and Pharmacy Carol Davila of Bucharest (UMFCD) provides a unique and dynamic framework for excellence in education and advanced research, offering comprehensive undergraduate and postgraduate programs in the fields of Medicine, Dental Medicine, Pharmacy, and Nursing. Its activity is carried out across 25 departments, 256 disciplines, and 28 research centers, with more than 10,000 students and 5,000 residents who carry out clinical activities in 20 top hospitals in Bucharest, with access to complex pathologies.

CURRENT FRAMEWORK

The University of Medicine and Pharmacy Carol Davila is committed to achieving excellence in medical research by implementing a number of initiatives designed to promote progress in research, including:

Adherence to EU policies: The University has adopted the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, which are key elements of EU policies for promoting researchers' careers and research quality. On 4 June 2024, UMFCD received the "HR Excellence in Research" award, granted by the European Commission to



higher education and research and development institutions that comply with the principles set out in the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, thereby creating favorable working conditions and a transparent recruitment process for researchers.

These principles are consistent with our university's policy of active participation in the European Research Area and of increasing international visibility.

The HRS4R award guarantees equal treatment of researchers across all European institutions and facilitates access to European research funding, thereby reflecting UMFCF's commitment to continuously improving its human resources management policy in order to develop a culture of quality and successful research.

Adherence to national policies and strategies: The national framework for research assessment reform is evolving rapidly:

- The National Strategy for Research, Innovation and Smart Specialization 2022–2027 prioritizes research excellence and international competitiveness, providing a framework for reform.
- UEFISCDI, as the main organizer of research funding competitions and policy advisor to the Ministry of Research, has integrated open science requirements into its funding instruments and is piloting a Researcher Profile model within the GRASP-OS project (Next Generation Research Assessment to Promote Open Science).
- UEFISCDI's participation in the EU-funded OPUS project (2022–2025) introduced new assessment indicators that encourage open science practices in pilot funding calls, including those for Centers of Excellence.

UMFCF adheres to the principles and guidelines set out in the Action Plan of UEFISCDI – the Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation Funding – for implementing the reform of research assessment within CoARA.

In this context, UMFCF actively collaborates with UEFISCDI and the wider academic community in implementing the gradual reform of research assessment, contributing to a transparent, equitable academic system oriented toward excellence. UMFCF has thus taken part in various national events, such as the international conference "Rethinking Research Assessment," held in November 2024 in Bucharest, which brought together approximately 100 relevant experts from Europe, the European Commission, CoARA, Science Europe, the OPUS project, research and research-funding organizations, researchers, and representatives of Romania's research community.



CURRENT RESEARCH ASSESSMENT PRACTICES

An internal analysis of current assessment practices identified the following reference points:

- The assessment of researchers for hiring, promotion, and tenure is based mainly on the number of publications, articles in journals indexed in Web of Science or Scopus, and journal impact factors (JIF).
- Funding applications submitted to national bodies (UEFISCDI programs) predominantly use quantitative bibliometric indicators to assess research quality.
- Evaluation committees have no formal training in qualitative assessment or in the responsible use of bibliometric indicators.
- Clinical, educational, and public communication contributions are rarely recognized in formal assessment processes.
- Open science practices (open access, open data, preprints) are not yet systematically rewarded in internal assessments.
- Narrative or evidence-based CV formats are not widely used in institutional assessment processes.

These practices are generally in line with the reference situation observed at similar institutions. The recommendations of the European Commission (adopted together with CoARA) and engagement at the national level through the project coordinated by UEFISCDI confirm that a change in research assessment methods is both necessary and timely.

COMMITMENT

UMFCD supports the transition toward responsible research assessment, based on scientific excellence, the quality and impact of research, the diversity of academic contributions, and reduced reliance on quantitative bibliometric indicators. UMFCD commits to progressively aligning its institutional policies and practices with the CoARA principles, particularly with regard to:

- promoting qualitative and narrative assessment of scientific contributions;
- reducing undue reliance on quantitative bibliometric indicators;
- recognizing and valuing the diversity of research contributions, including open science practices;
- integrating FAIR principles into research data management;
- promoting gender equality, inclusion, and diversity in assessment processes;
- raising awareness of research assessment reform and encouraging the exchange of good practices to facilitate communication between institutions.

This Action Plan is explicitly aligned with the national reform trajectory coordinated by UEFISCDI and with the framework of national CoARA Plans and Chapters.



ACTION PLAN FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CoARA PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES

The CoARA Action Plan is closely aligned with the UMFCF Research Development Strategy 2025–2029 and with the UMFCF Institutional Development Strategic Plan, which set out clear and comprehensive directions supporting the progressive alignment with the CoARA principles and practices.

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE STRUCTURE	DEADLINE	INDICATOR
1. Promoting the reform of the researcher's status in medicine and diversifying career pathways: a sabbatical year for research, integrating research as an optional module in residency training, promoting the legal recognition of the medical researcher, and encouraging research coordination structures at the level of clinical units.	Senate, Administrative Board (AB); Vice-Rectorate for Research; HR and Non-Teaching Staff Department (RUNOS)	Dec. 2029	No. of approved policies/strategies/methodologies/documents
2. Recognizing and developing roles that complement the traditional academic career: research managers, data administrators, technical experts, science communication specialists.	RUNOS Department; DCDI	Dec. 2029	No. of support positions filled and no. of experts integrated into research projects
3. Valorization in evaluation processes of a wide range of scientific contributions: datasets, software, patents, science communication, mentoring, development and implementation of innovative technologies and artificial intelligence systems, and open science activities.	Senate; AB; Vice-Rectorate for Research; Scientific Council; DCDI	Dec. 2028	Updated evaluation grids that include diverse contributions
4. Introducing qualitative evaluation and the narrative CV in internal funding competitions: internal grants for doctoral students and postdoctoral researchers, Seed Fund projects, and "Carol Davila" grants for research mobility.	Vice-Rectorate for Research; Scientific Council; DCDI	Dec. 2028	Revised competition methodologies; integration of qualitative criteria into evaluation grids



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5. Revising the annual internal evaluation system for teaching staff and researchers, ensuring a balance between teaching and research activity and integrating qualitative components regarding research quality, relevance of results, societal impact, and contribution to the advancement of knowledge.	Senate; AB; Vice-Rectorates; Quality Evaluation and Assurance Committee	Dec. 2028	Internal evaluation methodology revised and approved by the Senate
6. Progressively revising the evaluation and promotion criteria, within the limits of the national legislative framework, by supplementing the use of bibliometric indicators.	Senate; Administrative Board; Vice-Rectorates	Dec. 2028	No. of regulations/methodologies revised in line with CoARA principles
7. Strengthening administrative capacity and professionalizing research support and management staff within DCDI, including through dedicated training in responsible research assessment.	DCDI; RUNOS Department	Ongoing; annual review	No. of staff trained; no. of training sessions
8. Digitalizing research management: operationalizing the integrated platform for managing research projects and results, capable of capturing the diversity of scientific contributions.	Vice-Rectorates; DCDI; IT Department	Dec. 2028	Revised operational platform; share of digitalized processes
9. Implementing the institutional open science policy: open access to publications and data, data management in accordance with FAIR principles, participation in the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC), with recognition of open science practices in evaluation.	Vice-Rectorate for Research; DCDI; UMFCF Library	Ongoing; annual review	No. of publications/datasets in open access
10. Defining and implementing a unified methodology for the establishment, evaluation, and support of research centers, based on qualitative performance criteria,	Senate; AB; Vice-Rectorate for Research; Scientific Council	Dec. 2028	Methodology approved; no. of centers evaluated



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ACTION	RESPONSIBLE STRUCTURE	DEADLINE	INDICATOR
international visibility, and potential for integration into European networks.			
11. Raising awareness of and training in CoARA principles and practices, and encouraging the exchange of good practices and mutual learning.	Vice-Rectorate for Research; Scientific Council		Participation in at least one university alliance / national or international working group for promoting and introducing CoARA practices

The CoARA Action Plan is a dynamic document, which will be periodically reviewed and updated according to the evolution of the national legislative framework, CoARA guidelines, and the institutional progress achieved in implementing the Research Strategy 2025–2029 and the Institutional Development Strategic Plan 2021–2029.

Significant updates will be submitted to the University Senate for approval, and will be communicated and published in a transparent manner.