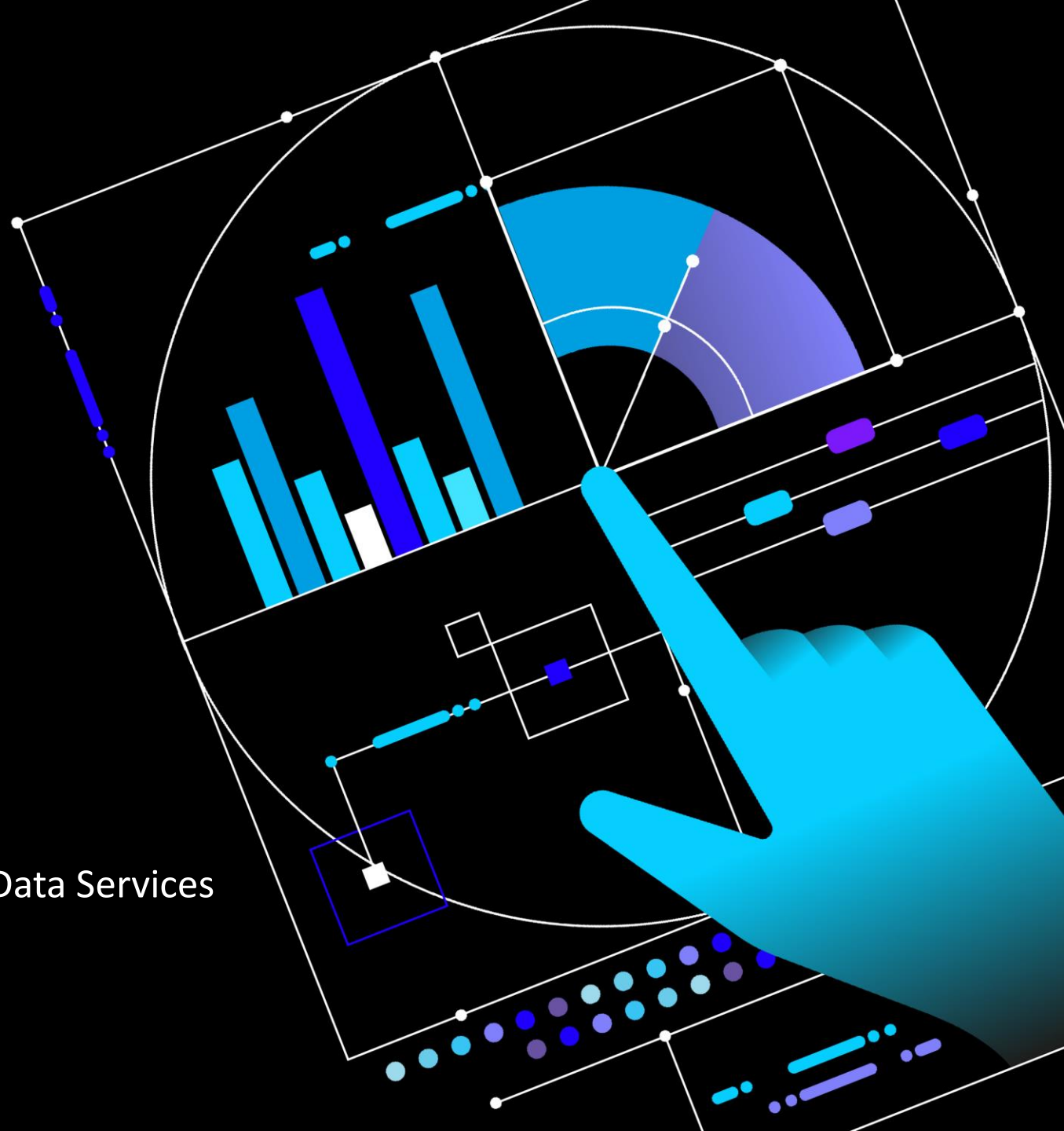**THE** World University Rankings 2025

The 2025 World University Rankings

Duncan Ross
Chief data officer
Times Higher Education

M'hamed El Aisati
VP Analytical and Data Services
Elsevier

50+ Years of Insights

Empowering higher education by combining data and expertise within a global platform, THE helps universities deliver transformative impact for people, places and the planet.

We connect the world's higher education community, facilitate the flow of ideas and talent, and help academics and students fulfil their potential.

We are proud to support universities, and believe that together we will build a better, more sustainable future.
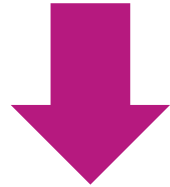
1971

2024

THE
Times
Higher
Education

Our Rankings

RESEARCH	IMPACT & SUSTAINABILITY

THE World University Rankings

Times Higher Education **Impact Rankings**
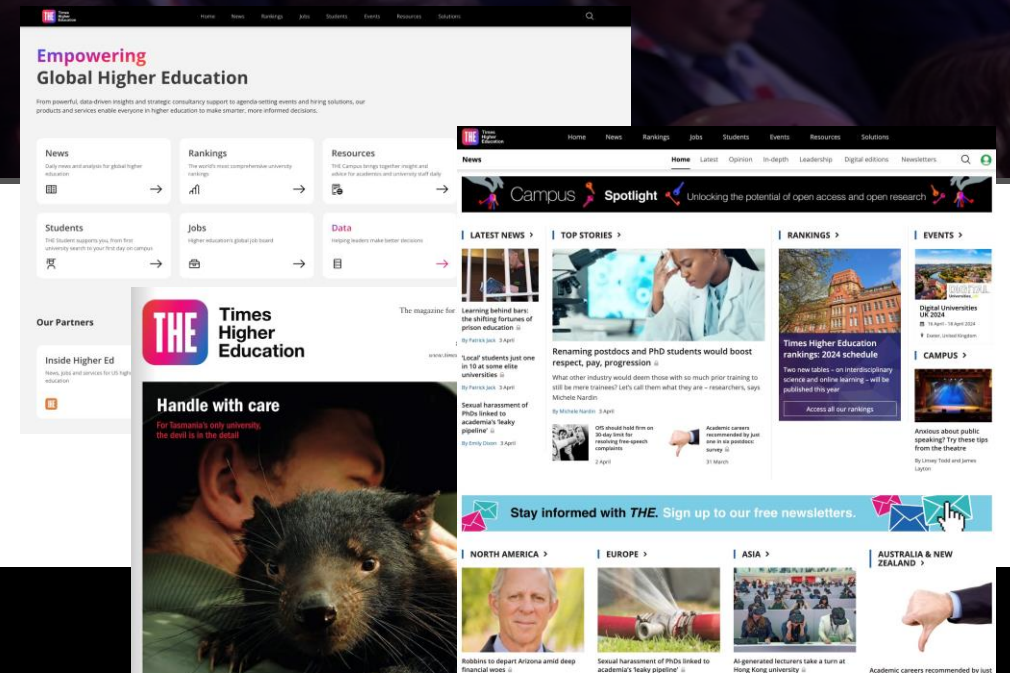
Focus: research output, research quality, research collaboration, reputation + more

Participation rules: 1,000+ publications over 5 years, teach undergraduates across a range of subjects
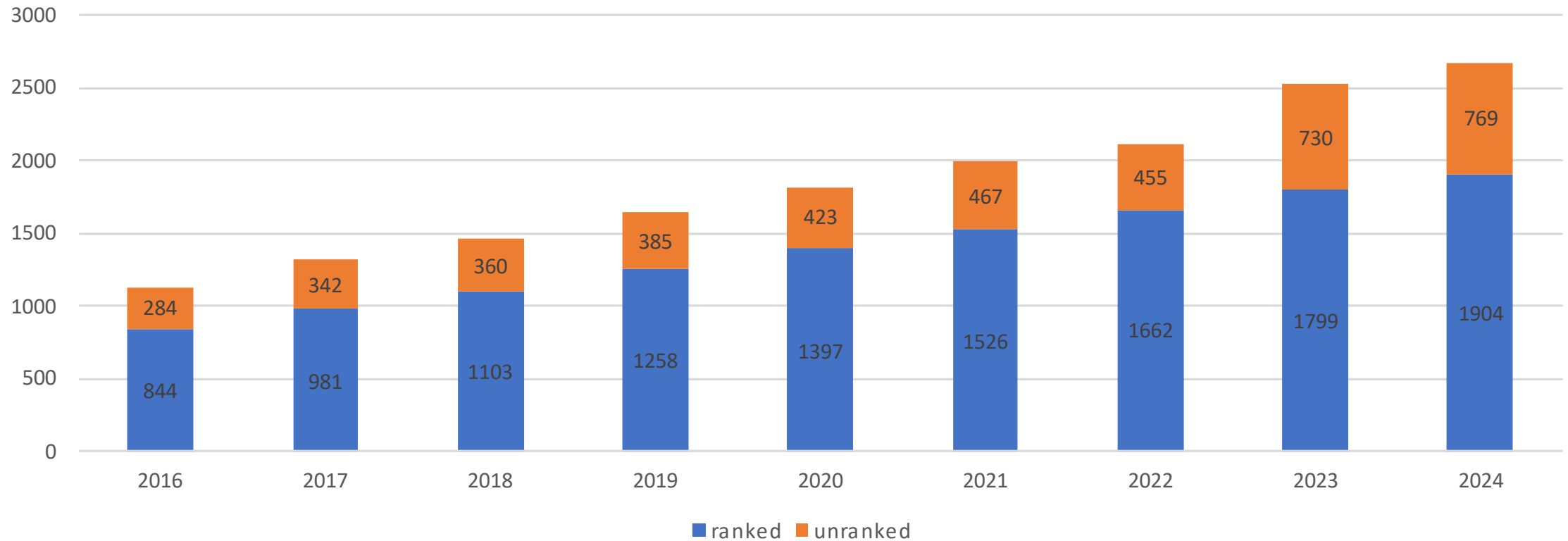
Focus: research, teaching, stewardship and outreach against the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals

Participation rules: all UG or PG higher education institutions

WUR 2024: 20ᵗʰ Anniversary of THE World University Rankings

Number of universities which submitted data to
THE World University Rankings

Year	ranked	unranked
2016	844	284
2017	981	342
2018	1103	360
2019	1258	385
2020	1397	423
2021	1526	467
2022	1662	455
2023	1799	730
2024	1904	769

THE World University Rankings

The world's biggest university ranking

Universities
The world's biggest university ranking

Universities submitted data	Number of countries represented
2,860	**133**

Bibliometrics
In partnership with **ELSEVIER**

Research papers	Citations
18m	**157m**

Universities Data
The world's largest data gathering exercise from universities

Data values	Data fields collected
472,694	**216**

Academic Survey
The world's largest academic survey

Respondents	Votes	Countries
93,440	**1,288,684**	**199**

THE World University Rankings 2025
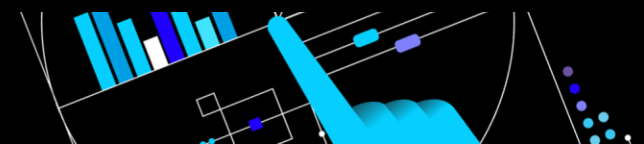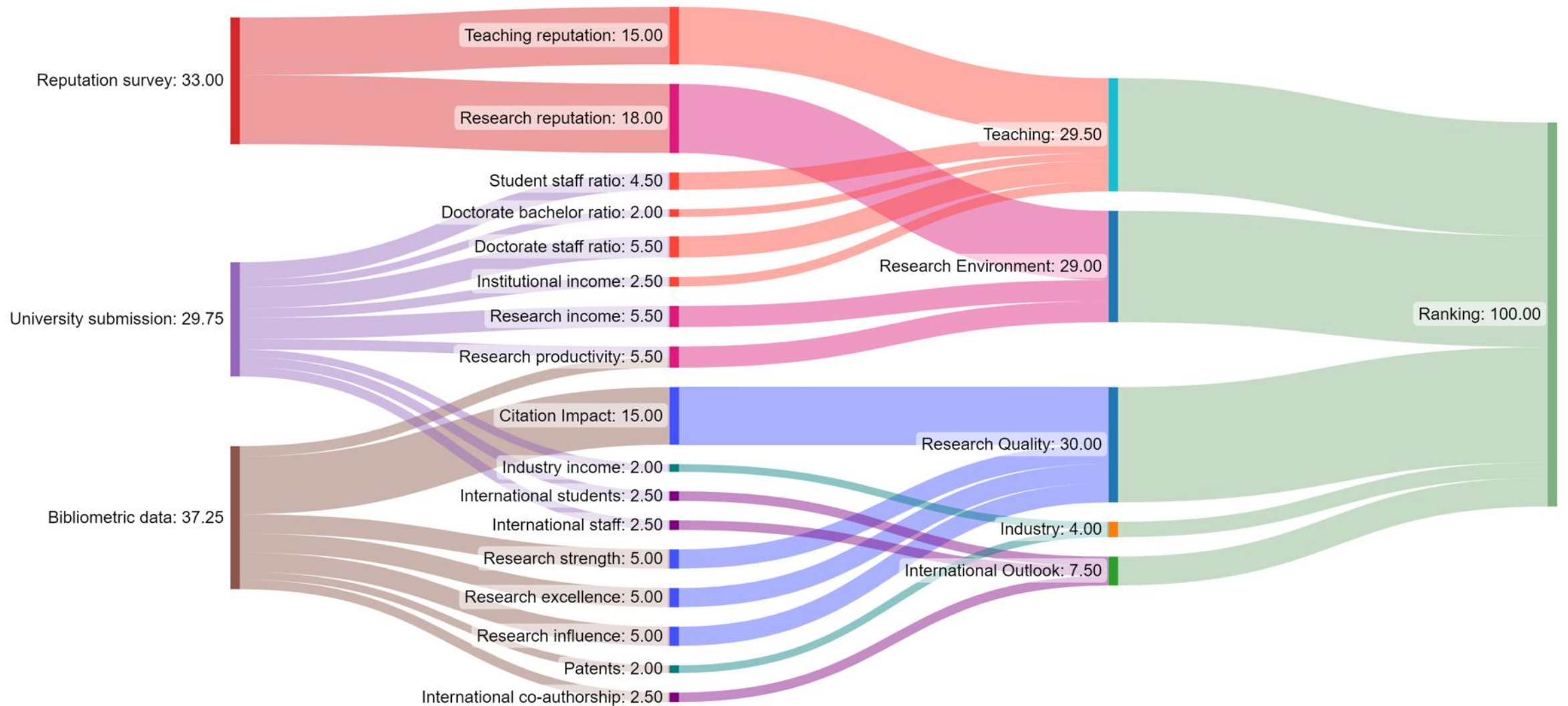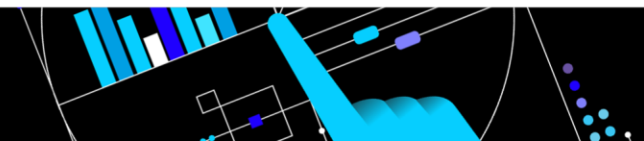
Methodology

Changes 2022 onwards

Taking a more sophisticated approach to metrics

- Bibliometrics

- Reputation assessment

- Validation and comparison

Partnership with Elsevier

THE and Elsevier have recently renewed their partnership agreement.

THE will now be calculating bibliometric measures directly from the source data, with support from Elsevier.

Both companies will share expertise, experience and data to support the sector.

The basic units of bibliometric understanding

Publication type

Subject
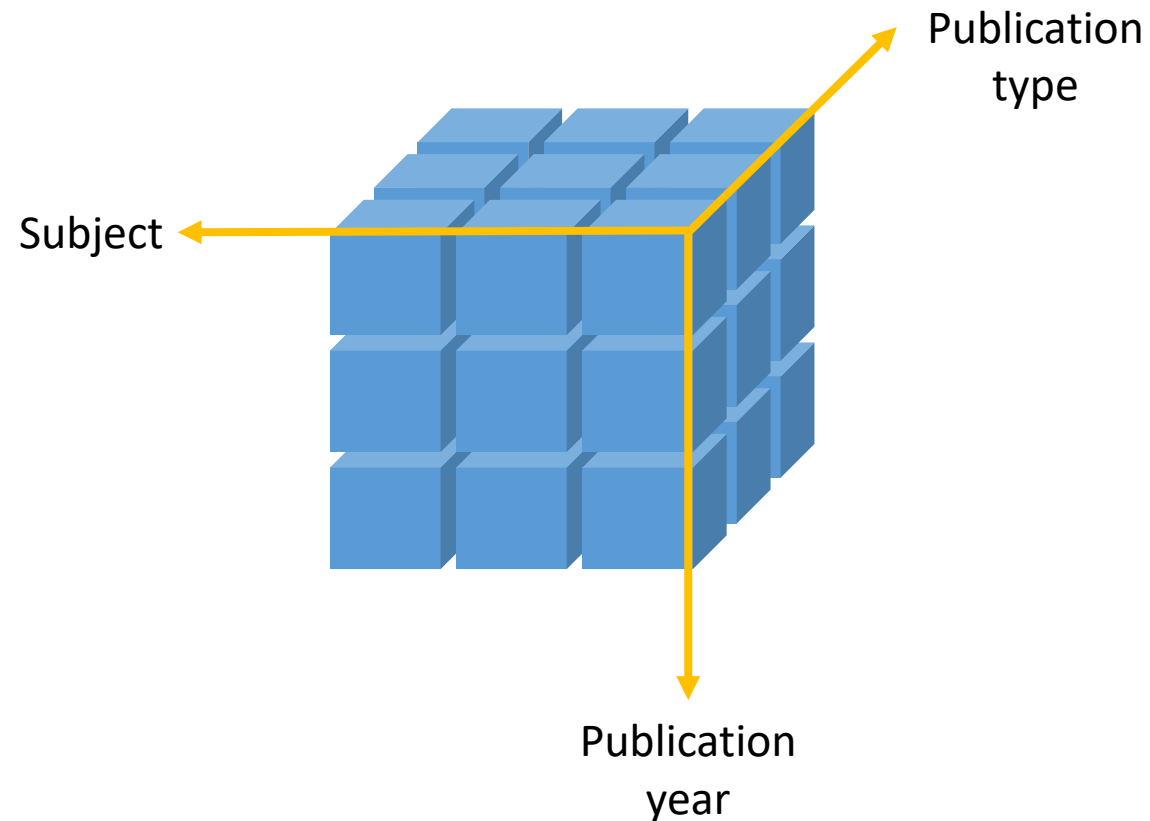
Publication year

Let's say I published a journal article in 2019 on artificial intelligence, and it received 6 citations so far…

…and the average number of citations received by publications of the same type, same year and same subject is 2…

…then the FWCI of this publication is 6/2 = 3
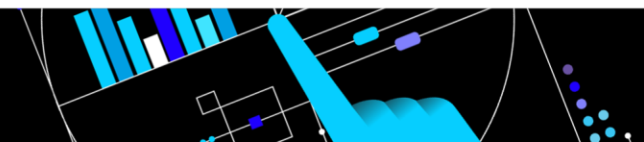
THE World University Rankings Research Quality Metrics

- Citation Impact – Mean FWCI of an institution's output

- Research Strength – 75th percentile FWCI of an institution's outp

- Research Excellence – Number of papers in top 10 percent by F

- Research Influence – Different from others research quality me
  - Not all citations are created equal
  - Citations from important papers counts more
  - How to define "important papers"?

... same university but log Y-axis
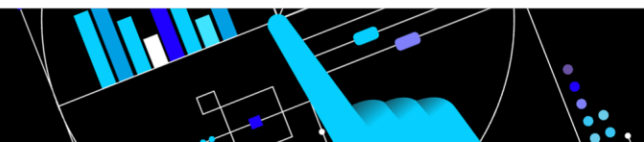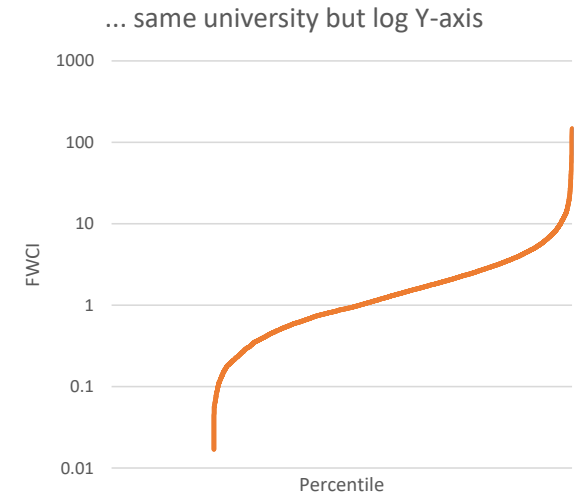
Research Influence - Papers

Taking a broader look at how citations interlink gives us deeper insight into the value of research

Citing Paper ——▶ Cited Paper
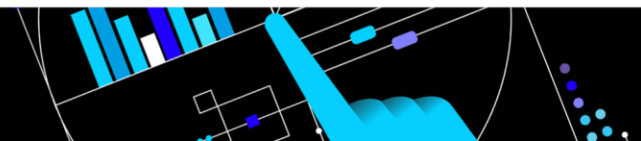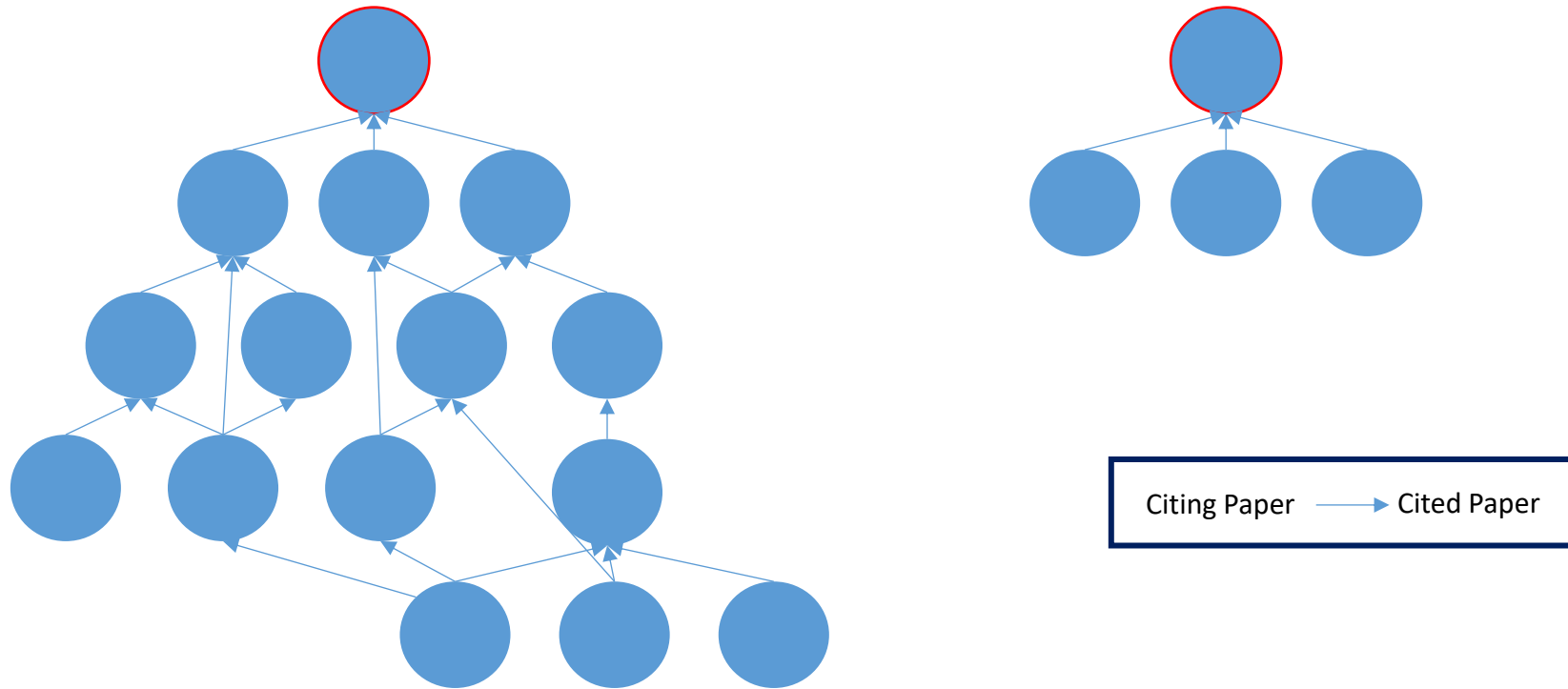
Effect on participation rules

Using a basket of bibliometric measures makes the assessment of quality more stable and robust.

We expect that this will enable us to reduce the number of papers required for participation in the World University Rankings

- Initial reduction in the number of papers per year (maintaining an overall requirement)

- Possible reduction in the overall number of papers required

- Ability to build more sophisticated approaches accounting for subject balance
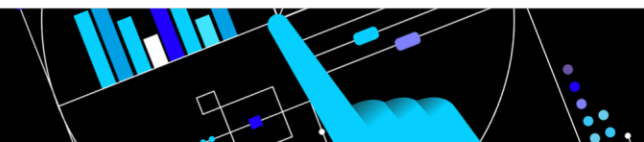
Fairly assessing reputation

Primary goals:

- Randomly selected

- Active academics (published in last 5 years)

- Balanced by geography

Secondary goals:

- Balanced by subject
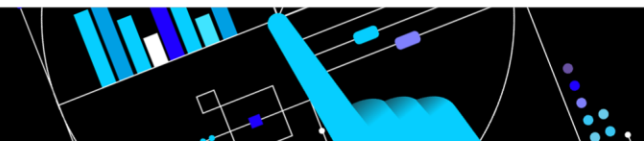
Academic survey details

	1 **Data sources**	2 **Initial participation rules**	3 **Selection method**	4 **Stratification**	5 **Quality checks**	6 **Number of responses**
New approach	Contact details from *openly available research papers*	Have published at least once in last five years, *with one or more citations*	Random	1) National based on country, 2) Subject based on previous survey results*	National and *university level*	c 55,000
Previous approach	Contact details from research papers *within Scopus*	Have published at least once in last five years. *Not included in another Elsevier survey.*	Random	1) National based on country, 2) Subject based on previous survey results	Mainly national level only	c 10,000
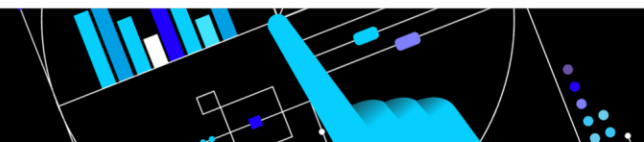
Effect of new approach

The new in-house survey attracts more than 5 times as many votes as the previous out-sourced survey, giving us far more representation, plus deeper insight as we know more about the respondents

	2021 (Elsevier)	2023 (In house)	2024 (In house)	Ratio 2021-2024
Respondents	10,963	38,796	55,037	500%+
Ranking votes	149,536	524,305	764,397	510%+
Countries participating	128	166	193	150%
Response rate	1.6%	1.8%	1.8%	

WUR 2025 will utilise reputation survey results from 2023 and 2024 surveys, utilising more than 5.2 times as many votes in the reputation metrics compared to WUR 2022
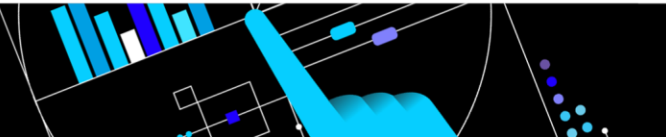
Changes to reputation

Self voting is not wrong, unless it is abused

- Self votes are now limited to a maximum of 10% of an institution's votes

- Only a small number of institutions are affected

Voting distribution

- Where votes come from a small range of institutions it may be an indicator of inappropriate behaviour

- We are now limiting the ratio of votes per institution to approximately 15:1 (to be confirmed)

- Less than 15 institutions are affected

Country distribution

- The current dataset of national researcher numbers is being discontinued

- Need to find a new stratification approach
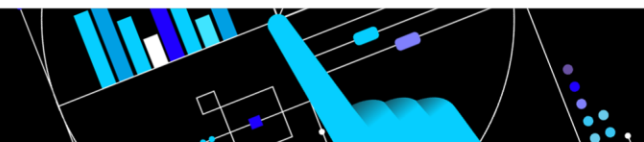
Data definitions: staff numbers

Working towards country specific definitions for a number of metrics

This will allow us to give clearer guidance in individual countries, and also relate this to official datasets

Key principals for calculation

- Use FTE for staff numbers

- Only include staff numbers in relevant roles (academic)

- Where roles are permanent the employment status of the employee is not the issue

We do want feedback to ensure we can get to consistency across major nations
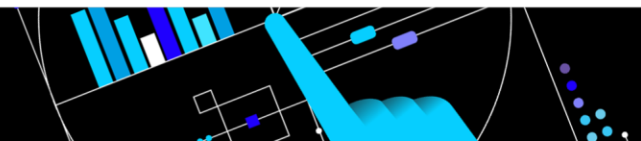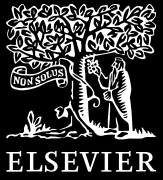
Operationalising the Academic Evaluation Framework
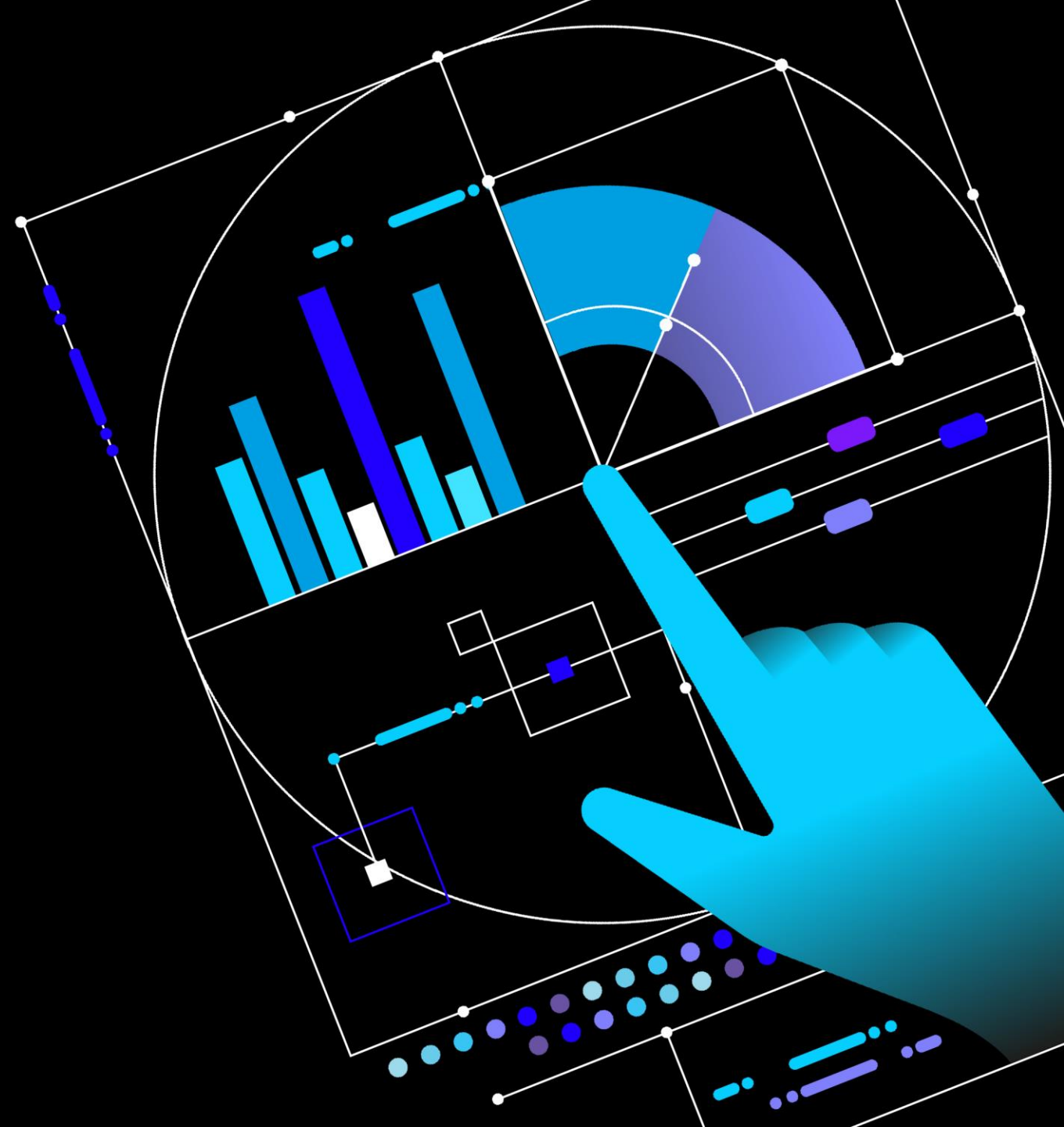
Background and Context

For over a decade, Academic communities globally have been calling for the evolution of evaluation systems

To gain insights into the need for change and what prevents it, Elsevier commissioned a global survey of the academic community

A global survey with 400 respondents:

- 180 academic and institutional leaders

- 120 researchers

- 100 executives at funding bodies

Back to Earth

Landing real-world impact
in research evaluation

ELSEVIER

LOCATION

Nordics
12%

UK
18%

USA
22%

Netherlands
8%

Japan
15%

Australia
15%

New Zealand
10%

ELSEVIER
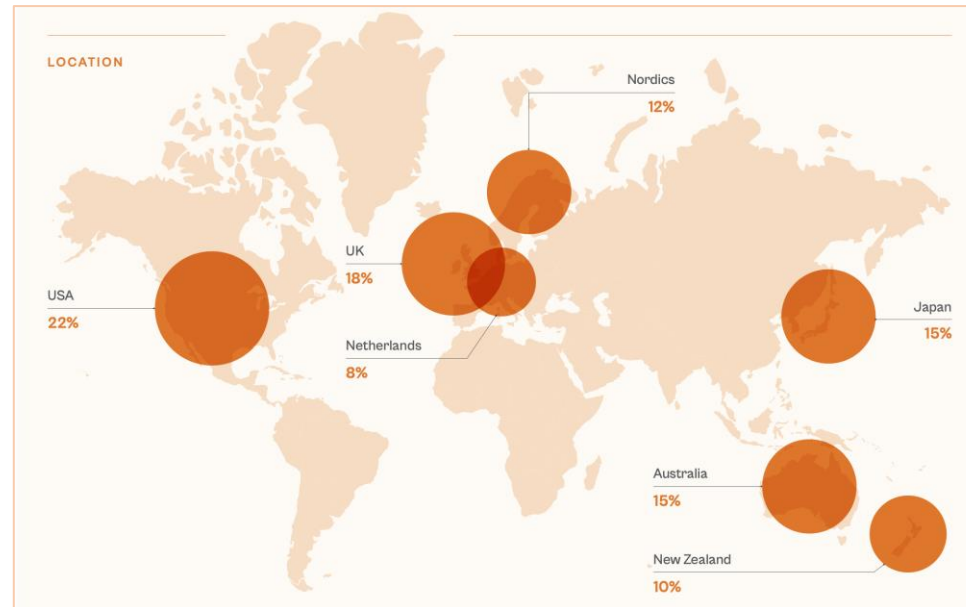
A clear global trend toward an accelerated holistic evaluation that includes real-world impact

FUNDERS ARE AS PASSIONATE ABOUT REAL-WORLD IMPACT AS RESEARCHERS AND ACADEMIC LEADERS

Question: Are you passionate about being part of research that has a positive impact on the world we live in?

67% Funders

71% Researchers and academic leaders
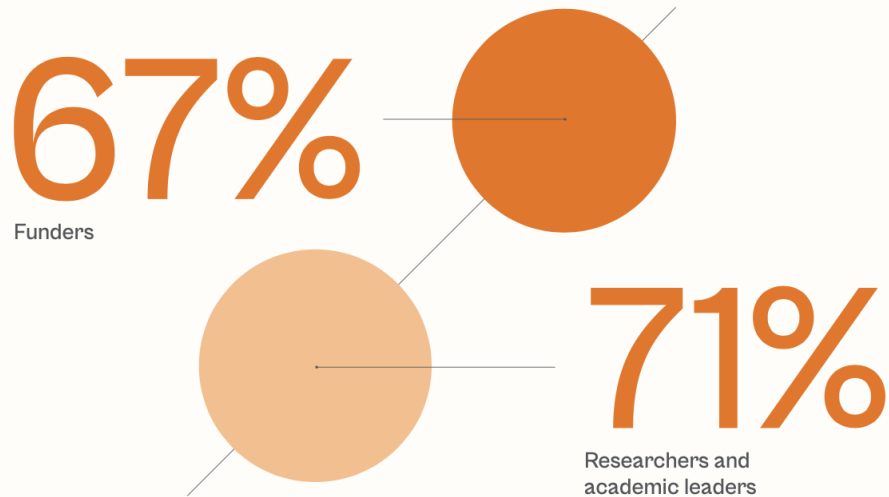
Question: Is there now a clear imperative for a shift to a more holistic approach to research evaluation?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Academic leaders
| 20% | 48% | 17% | 14% | 1% |

Researchers
| 16% | 42% | 20% | 21% | 2% |

Funders
| 29% | 43% | 19% | 6% | 3% |

With this input, Elsevier developed the Academic Evaluation Framework

Academic Evaluation

① Resources	② Education	③ Knowledge Creation Process (Throughput)	④ Knowledge created (Output)	⑤ Outcomes and Impact
Human Capital	Study	I&D	Quantity	Cultural
Funding	Teaching Quality	Verification and Reproducibility	Excellence	Economic
Equipment	Learning Environment	Open Science	Collaboration	Enviromental
Facilities	Student Outcomes	Sustainability	Innovation	Health
Capabilities	Learning Gains	Research Practices	Capabilities	Political
	Reputation	Multi-Interdisciplinarity	Commercialization	Societal
		Knowledge Exchange		technological

Quantitative and Qualitative

Academic Evaluation Framework

OVERVIEW

RESOURCES
- HUMAN CAPITAL
- FUNDING
- EQUIPMENT
- FACILITIES
- CAPABILITIES

RESEARCH PROCESS
- I&D
- VERIFICATION & REPRODUCIBILITY
- OPEN SCIENCE
- SUSTAINABILITY
- RESEARCH PRACTICES
- MULTI-INTERDISCIPLINARITY
- KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

RESEARCH CREATED
- QUANTITY
- EXCELLENCE
- COLLABORATION
- INNOVATION
- CAPABILITIES
- COMMERCIALIZATION

RESEARCH

EDUCATION

EDUCATION PROCESS
- STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS
- TEACHING QUALITY
- LEARNING ENVIRONMENT
- STUDENT SELECTION
- I&D OF STUDENT BODY
- SUSTAINABILITY

EDUCATION OUTPUT
- STUDENT GRADUATION
- LEARNING GAINS
- CAREER READINESS
- EQUITY
- RESEARCH OUTPUT

OUTCOMES AND IMPACT
- CULTURAL
- ECONOMIC
- ENVIRONMENTAL
- HEALTH
- POLITICAL
- SOCIETAL
- TECHNOLOGICAL

ALWAYS USE A COMBINATION OF QUANTITATIVE
AND QUALITATIVE INDICATORS ALONG WITH PEER JUDGEMENT.
POSITIVE OUTCOMES AND IMPACT CAN LEAD TO INCREASED RESOURCES,
SUPPORTING FURTHER RESEARCH AND EDUCATION ACTIVITIES.

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THE World University Rankings 2025

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Research Outcomes and Impact

Cultural
- Media Mentions
- Gender, race, ethnicity & disability
- Policy Documents Citations

Economic
- Industry Collaboration
- Patent Citations
- Academic spin-offs
- Alumni/ Graduate workforce (Job creation)
- Media Mentions
- Licensed Patents

Environmental
- SDG 13, 14, 15, 6 & 7 related publications
- SDG 13, 14, 15 , 6 & 7 patents citing publications
- SDG 13, 14, 15, 6 & 7 publications cited by patents

Health
- SDG 3 related publications
- Clinical Guidelines Citations
- Clinical Trial relatedness
- Health Policy Document Citations
- Media Mentions
- Health patents

Political
- Policy Documents Citations
- Media Mentions
- SDG 16, 5, 11, & 10 related publications

Societal
- Policy Documents Citations
- Media Mentions
- SDG, 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10 & 16 related publications
- Gender, Race, Ethnicity & Disability

Technological
- Patent Asset Index
- Patent Citations
- Patent Technology Relevancy
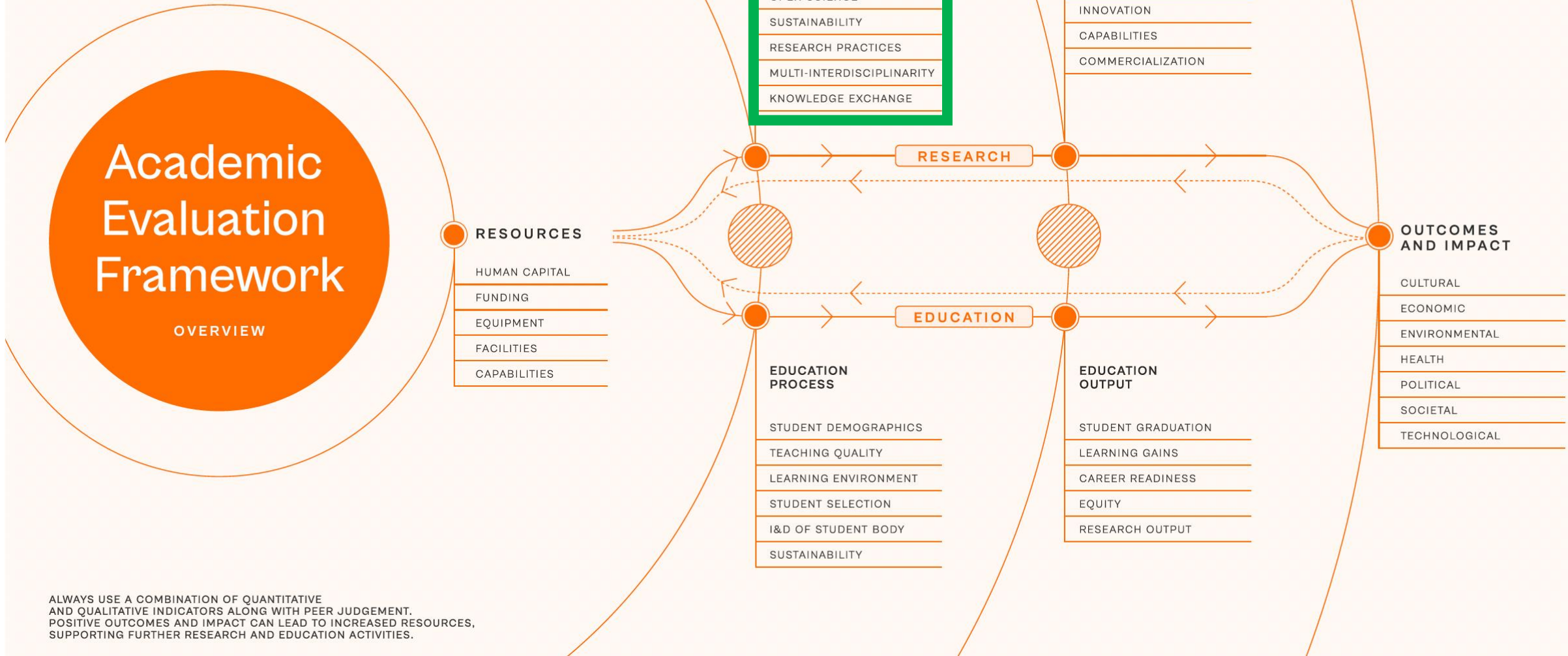- Technology Complexity
- Licensed Patents

Operationalising the AEF: Examples

To operationalise the Academic Evaluation Framework to deliver real value beyond bibliometrics, Elsevier has been working closely with universities and funders. This is consistent with and builds on prior collaborative efforts (e.g. Snowball metrics, Tasmanian Societal Impact Model).

The following examples are part of this program of activity. Specifically, we developed a set of indicators to get insights around:

1. The research **process**
2. Assessing the progress and performance to help TU/e assess its progress and performance in becoming a '**Fourth Generation University**'
3. Identifying real-world impact output and providing **narratives** around it leveraging GenAI
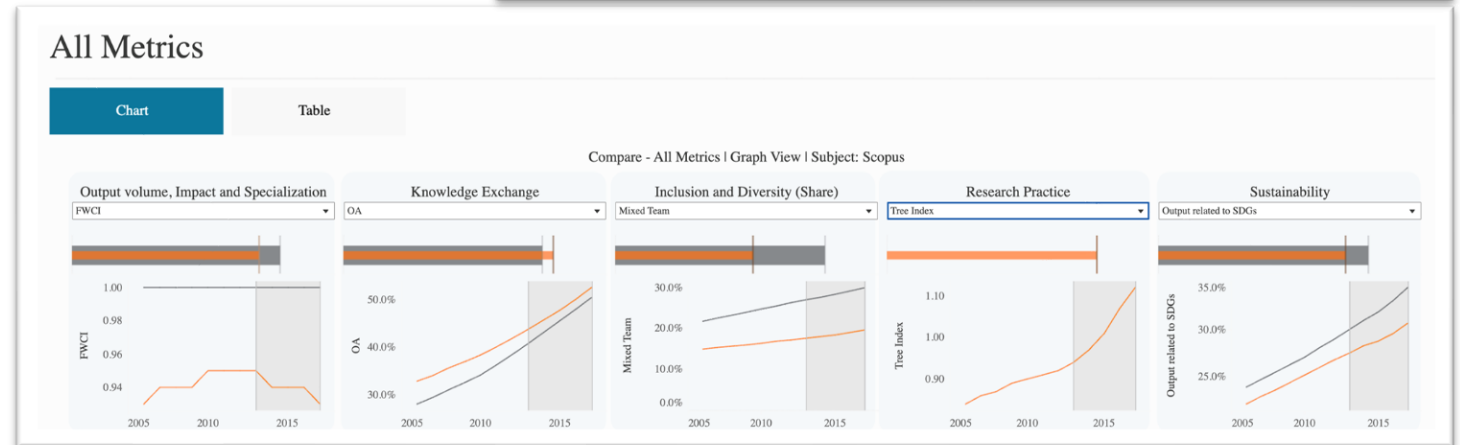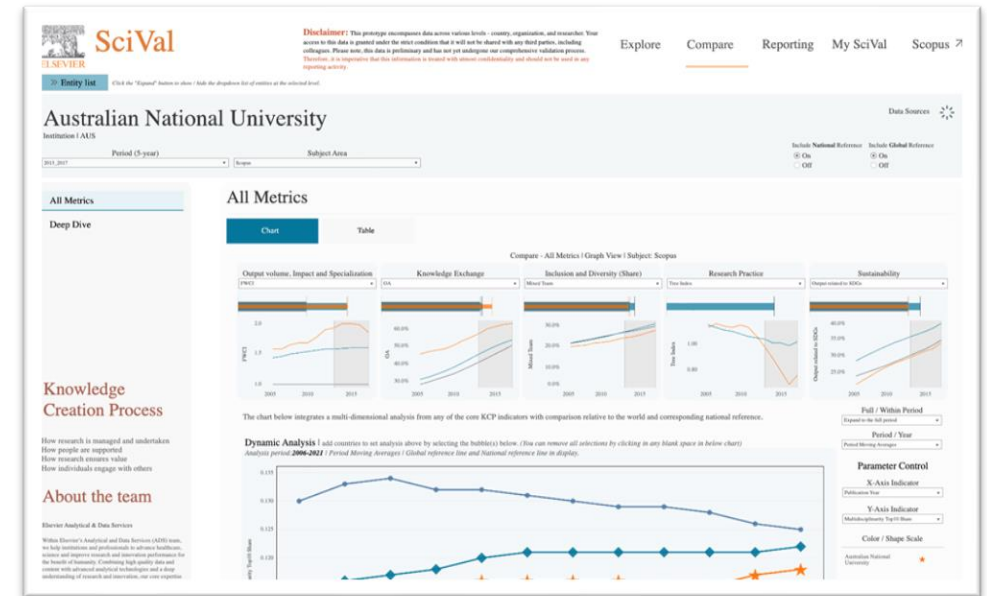4. Identifying abnormalities in research output

E1 – Operationalising the AEF to get insights around the Research Creation Process

Academic Evaluation Framework

OVERVIEW

RESEARCH PROCESS
- I&D
- VERIFICATION & REPRODUCIBILITY
- OPEN SCIENCE
- SUSTAINABILITY
- RESEARCH PRACTICES
- MULTI-INTERDISCIPLINARITY
- KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

RESEARCH CREATED
- QUANTITY
- EXCELLENCE
- COLLABORATION
- INNOVATION
- CAPABILITIES
- COMMERCIALIZATION

RESOURCES
- HUMAN CAPITAL
- FUNDING
- EQUIPMENT
- FACILITIES
- CAPABILITIES

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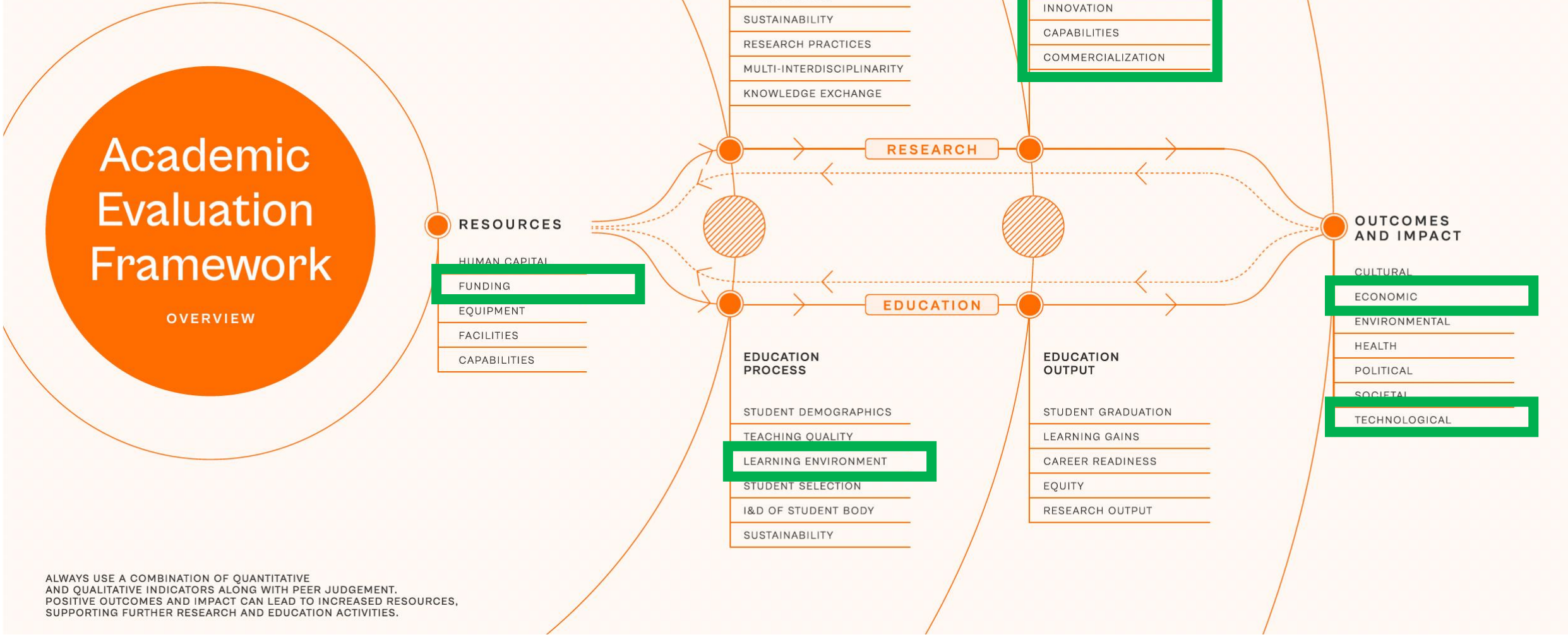- HEALTH
- POLITICAL
- SOCIETAL
- TECHNOLOGICAL

ALWAYS USE A COMBINATION OF QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE INDICATORS ALONG WITH PEER JUDGEMENT. POSITIVE OUTCOMES AND IMPACT CAN LEAD TO INCREASED RESOURCES, SUPPORTING FURTHER RESEARCH AND EDUCATION ACTIVITIES.

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Underlying drivers for developing a Knowledge Creation Process Dashboard

- Showcase commitment to sustainability, diversity & inclusion, etc.;

- Monitor and adaptively manage research activities to maximize desired outputs, outcomes, and impacts; and

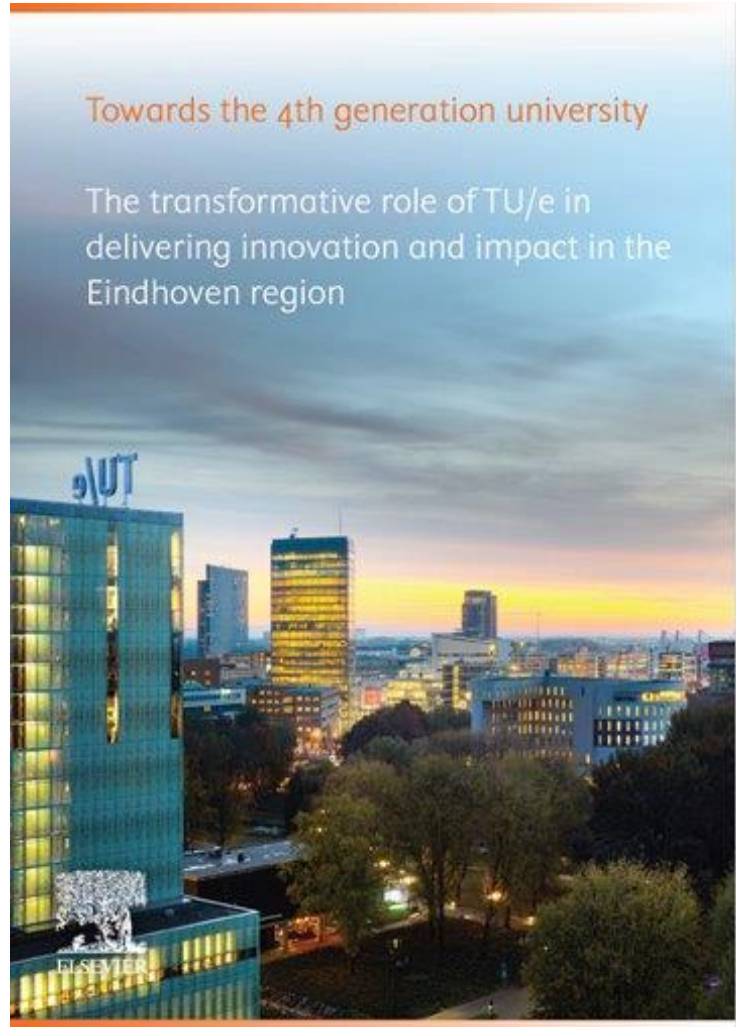- Comply with eligibility/evaluation requirements

E2 – Operationalising the AEF to get insights around the 4th Generation Universities

Academic Evaluation Framework

OVERVIEW

RESOURCES
- HUMAN CAPITAL
- FUNDING
- EQUIPMENT
- FACILITIES
- CAPABILITIES

RESEARCH PROCESS
- I&D
- VERIFICATION & REPRODUCIBILITY
- OPEN SCIENCE
- SUSTAINABILITY
- RESEARCH PRACTICES
- MULTI-INTERDISCIPLINARITY
- KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

RESEARCH

RESEARCH CREATED
- QUANTITY
- EXCELLENCE
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- ENVIRONMENTAL
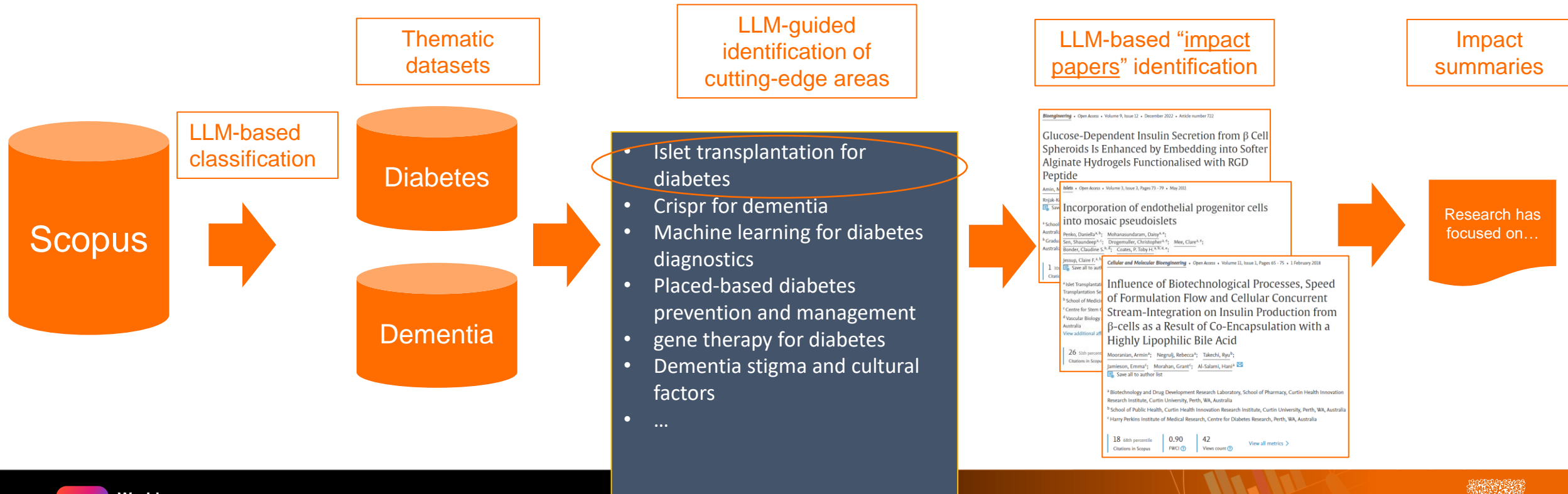- HEALTH
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Background to 4th generation university (4GU) project

Towards the 4th generation university

The transformative role of TU/e in delivering innovation and impact in the Eindhoven region

- **Project initiated by TU/e President Robert-Jan Smits** who approached Elsevier looking for effective measures of what universities are trying to achieve.

- **Elsevier and TU/e collaborated for a full year to develop and calculate indicators** that aimed to capture the four key dimensions of 4GUs.

- **The report was publicly launched in March 2024** at the Times Higher European Universities Summit in Bremen.

- **Feedback since launch has been extremely positive**. Universities and university associations around the world are expressing an interest in being involved.

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Transfer knowledge: spinouts

TU/e spinouts establish themselves close to campus, benefiting from university links

Distribution of spinout companies by distance (horizontal axis) from the university and latest number of employees (log vertical axis). Note that several companies, for which employee data was unavailable were excluded.

Source: Dealroom

E3 – Operationalising the AEF and GenAI to generate a narrative around real-world impact

Academic Evaluation Framework

OVERVIEW

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- EQUIPMENT
- FACILITIES
- CAPABILITIES

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E3 - Real-world impact: economic, social, environmental

Assessing research impact beyond bibliometrics, technometrics (patents), and policy: What is the <u>real impact</u>?

Key idea: Identify papers that discuss the economic, social, environmental, and other impacts of research on cutting-edge technologies/interventions

Real-world impact: economic, social, environmental

Cutting- edge Area	Impact summary
CRISPR for dementia	**CRISPR Technology for Dementia: Unraveling the Complexity of Neurodegenerative Diseases** CRISPR/Cas9 genome editing has been employed to investigate the molecular mechanisms underlying dementia, a complex and multifactorial neurodegenerative disorder. In CLN3 disease, a lysosomal storage disorder associated with fatal neurodegeneration, CRISPR/Cas9 correction of the 966 bp deletion mutation in human induced pluripotent stem cells (iPSCs) revealed disease-related changes in protein synthesis, trafficking, and degradation, as well as neuronal activity (10.1242/dmm.049651). Similarly, CRISPR/Cas9-mediated knockdown of APOE in SK-N-SH human neuroblastoma cells demonstrated that apoE is not essential for neuritogenesis or cell survival, but its loss affects HtrA1 expression (10.1042/BSR20204243). In amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), CRISPR/Cas9 editing of the TARDBP gene introduced a heterozygous missense mutation, generating a human iPSC line with normal cellular morphology and pluripotency markers (10.1016/j.scr.2023.103137). Furthermore, CRISPR/Cas9-mediated generation of a tau knockout strain in mice revealed reduced susceptibility to excitotoxic seizures and normal memory formation in young mice (10.3233/JAD-171058). Additionally, CRISPR/Cas9 tagging of TDP-43 in live cells showed that aggregation-prone TDP-43 sequesters and drives pathological transitions of free nuclear TDP-43, exacerbating neurodegeneration (10.1007/s00018-023-04739-2). These studies collectively demonstrate the potential of CRISPR technology in elucidating the molecular mechanisms underlying dementia and related neurodegenerative diseases.
Machine learning for diabetes diagnostics	**Machine Learning for Diabetes Diagnostics: A Synthesis of NHMRC-Funded Research** The NHMRC-funded research has made significant strides in leveraging machine learning (ML) for diabetes diagnostics, demonstrating its potential in predicting end-stage kidney disease (ESKD), detecting nocturnal hypoglycemia, and identifying cardiac autonomic neuropathy (CAN). A non-invasive, real-time imaging technique using auto-fluorescence multispectral imaging (AFMI) was developed to assess reactive oxygen species (ROS) levels in live cells and tissues, which can contribute to progressive diseases like diabetes (10.1016/j.redox.2020.101561). An ML model was trained on featurized time series data to predict ESKD with superior performance compared to clinicians and the Kidney Failure Risk Equation (KFRE) (10.3389/fmed.2022.837232). Retinal age gap, calculated using a deep learning model, was found to be associated with metabolic syndrome and inflammation (10.1111/1753-0407.13364). Electroencephalogram (EEG) spectral moments were used to detect nocturnal hypoglycemia in type 1 diabetes patients, with significant changes observed in spectral moments during hypoglycemic episodes (10.1109/JBHI.2019.2931782, 10.1109/JBHI.2021.3054876). Finally, an ML model was developed to predict CAN occurrence in patients with diabetes using clinical data, demonstrating outstanding performance with a receiver operating characteristic curve of 0.962 (10.1177/20420188221086693).
…	…

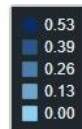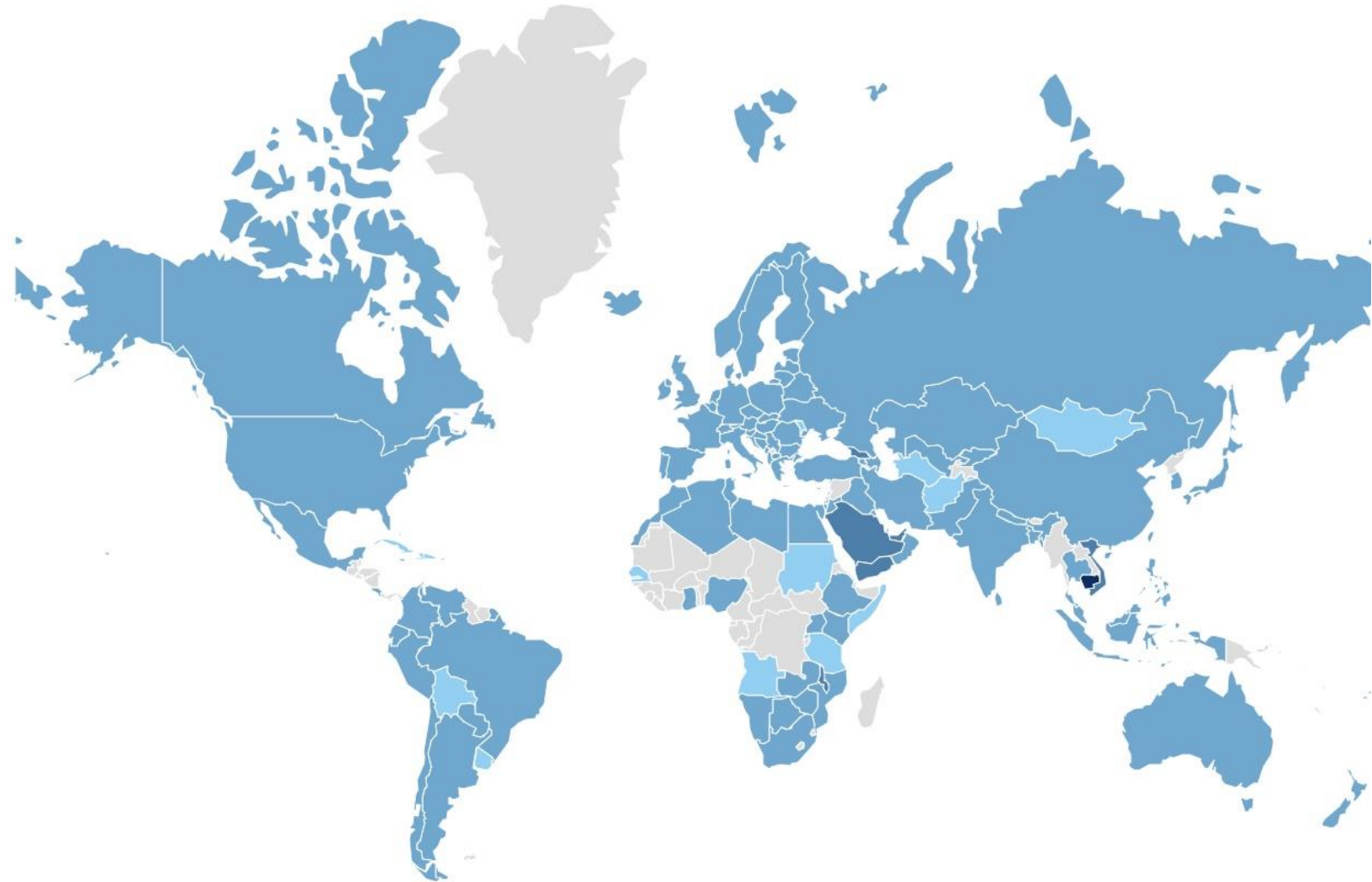# E4 – Operationalising the AEF and GenAI to generate insights around potential "abnormalities"
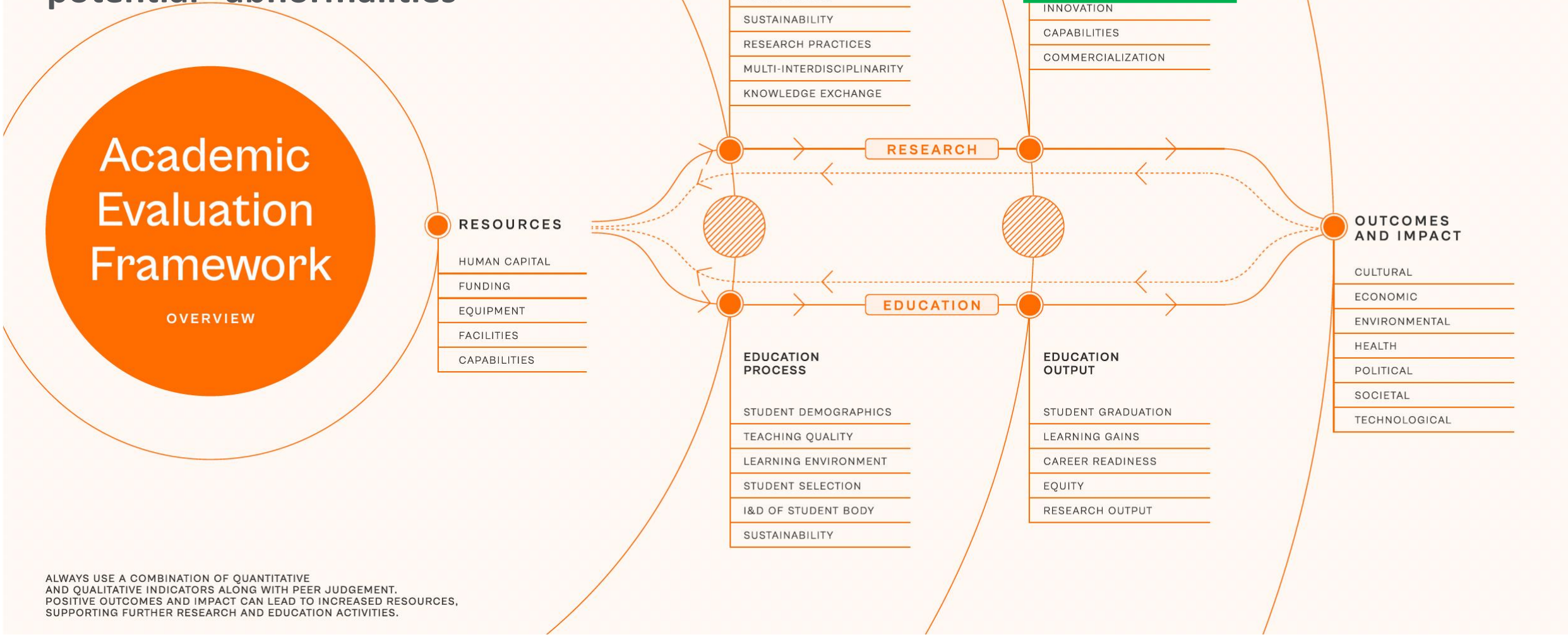
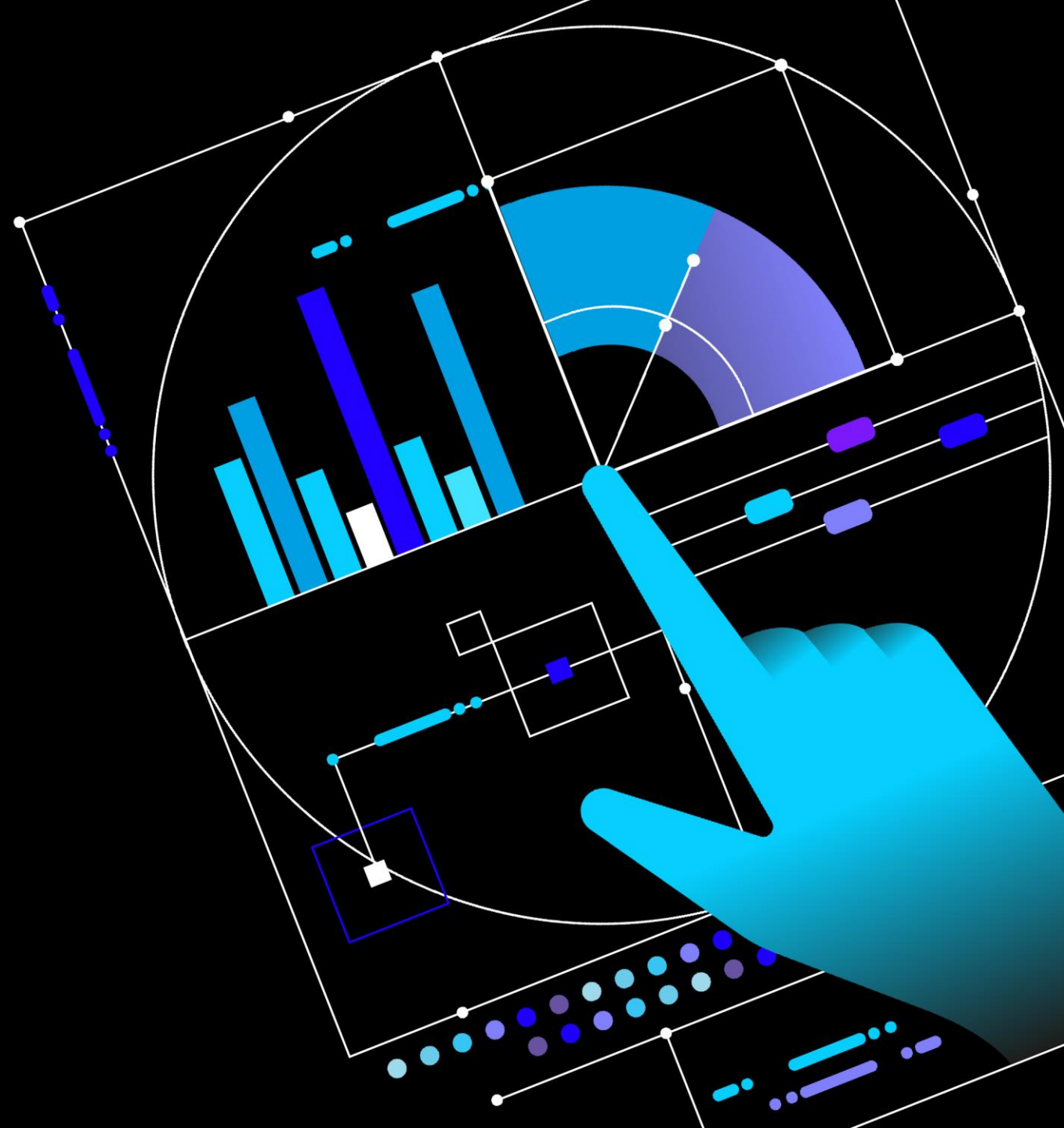# Hyperprolific authors's contribution to publication output

Period = 2019-2023

Hyperprolific author = author with > 19 papers in one single publication year

Colour scheme = the darker the higher is the % of publications from by highprolific authors relative to total country output

0.53
0.39
0.26
0.13
0.00

THE World University Rankings 2025

ELSEVIER

Country insights

What's happening in the UK (and Australia)?

FINANCIAL TIMES

K COMPANIES TECH MARKETS CLIMATE OPINION LEX WORK & CAREERS LIFE & ARTS HTSI

Education + Add to myFT

More than half of British universities slip down global rankings

Australian universities rise in world rankings but experts warn international student cap could hurt 'cutting-edge' status

UK universities face 'irreversible decline', global league table suggests

British institutions face possible closure as 52 out of 90 are given lower positions this year in Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) rankings

📷 Imperial College London has been named as the second top education institution in the world in the annual QS rankings, but was one of only 20 British universities to see its ratings improve. Photograph: Toby Melville/Reuters

UK universities will have their international reputations dented and face possible closure because of continuing funding pressures, according to an

THE World University Rankings 2025
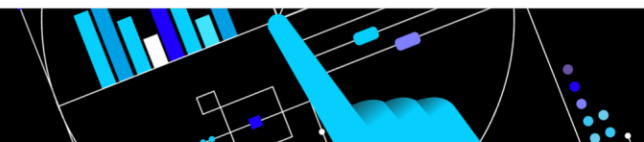
"The report of my death was an exaggeration"

- UK retains 3 places in Top 10

- Oxford is No. 1 for the nineth consecutive year.

- Cambridge stable at 5th place, Imperial College London drops one place from 8th to 9th

- A total of 107 universities from the UK are ranked (up 2 from 105)

- The UK takes 25 places in the Global Top 200, same as last year (12 up, 8 down, 5 unchanged)

- All but two (University of Edinburgh and University of Glasgow) of these 25 are in England

- Amongst the UK universities in the Global Top 200, there are notable improvements in funding related metrics (institutional income, research income and industry income). However, both reputation metrics (teaching and research) drop this year.

But there are challenges coming

United Kingdom vs The World World University Rankings 2025 metrics boxplot

World University Rankings 2025
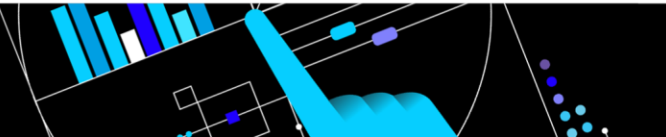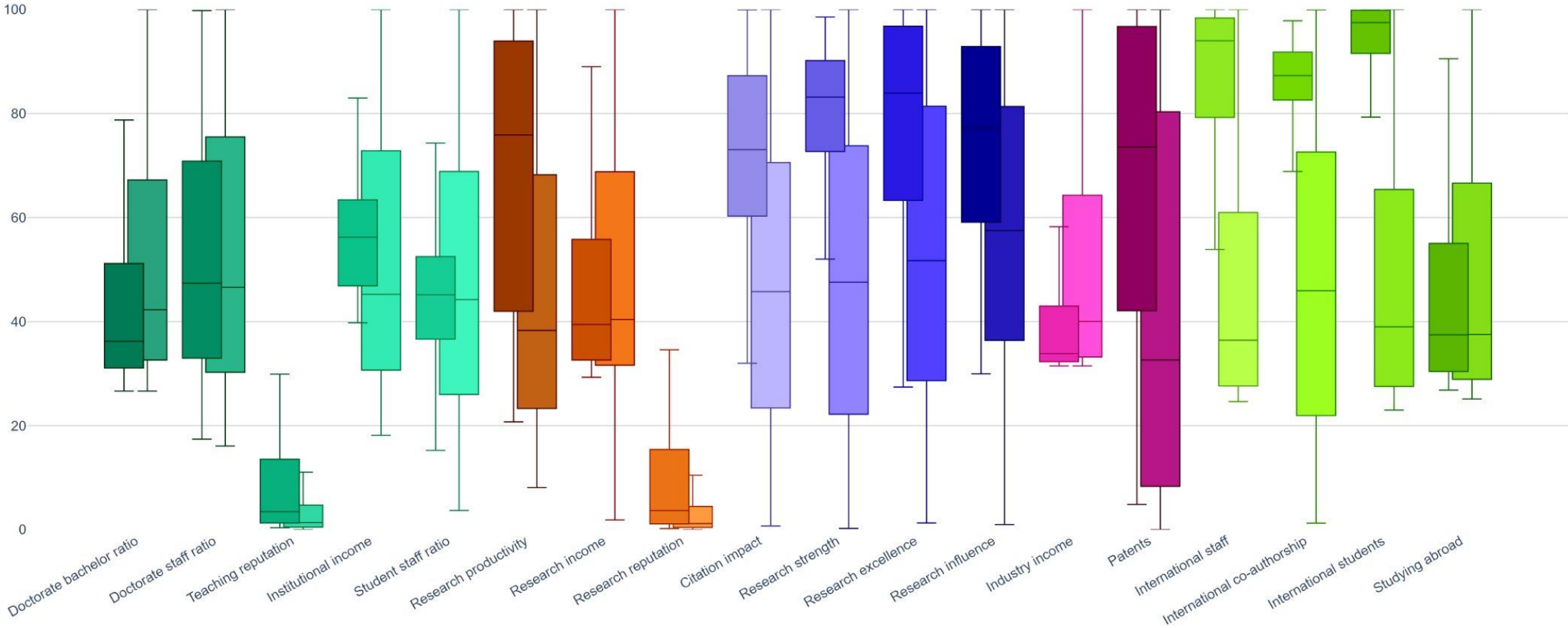
Trouble at the Top

Russell Group vs World Top 184 Metric Relative Score Difference 2024

Metric	Relative Score Difference
International co-authorship	22.14
International Staff	19.03
International Students	18.32
FWCI	9.43
Publications/Staff	9.09
Research Strength	8.55
Staff/Student	3.96
Research Excellence	1.6
Research Influence	0.98
Research Reputation	-1.79
Teaching Reputation	-1.85
Patents	-2.35
Studying abroad	-6.31
Doctorates/Staff	-11.21
Doctorates/Undergrad	-20.04
Income/Staff	-20.65
Research Income/Staff	-24.42
Industry Income	-32.89

Australia: a shift of focus

Change of Australia's vote share by country
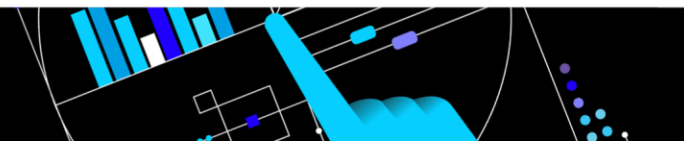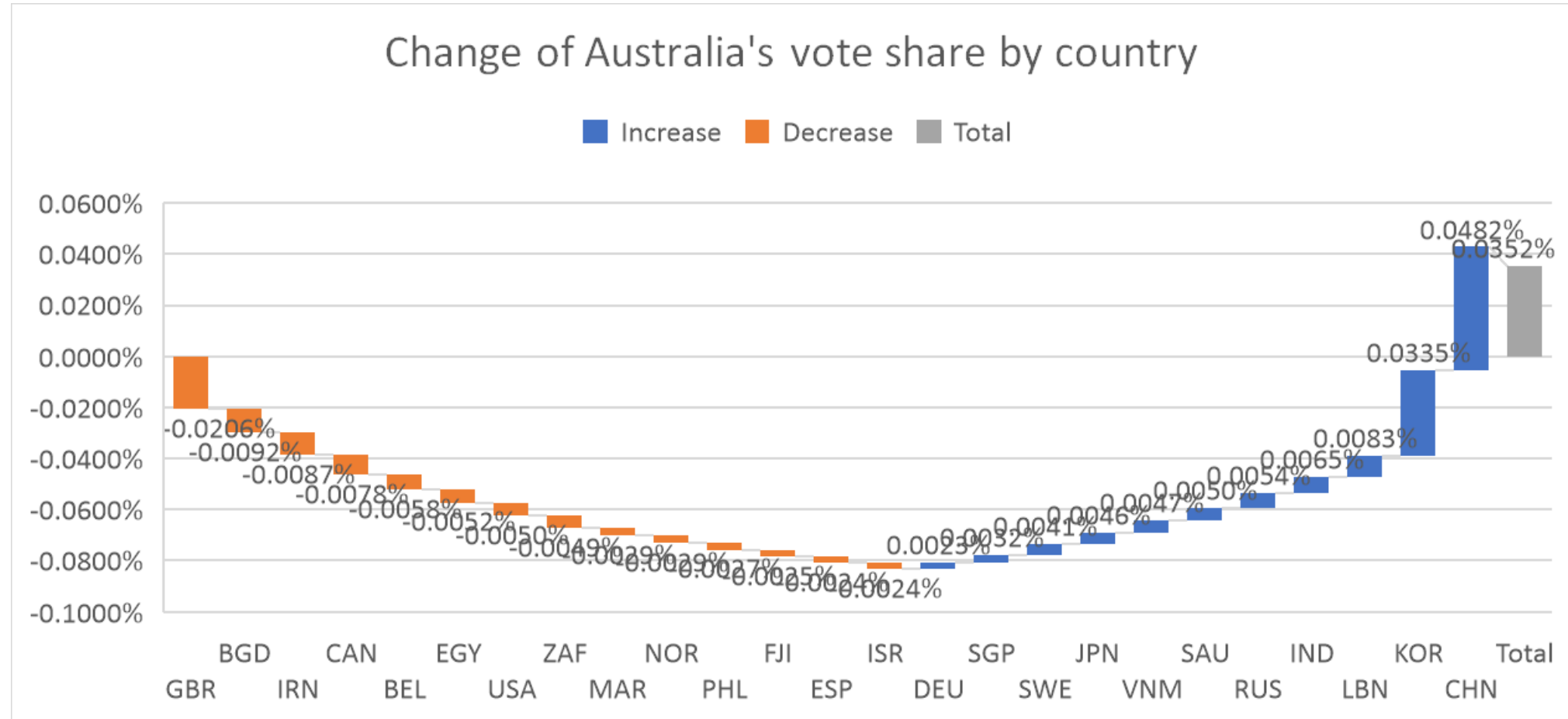
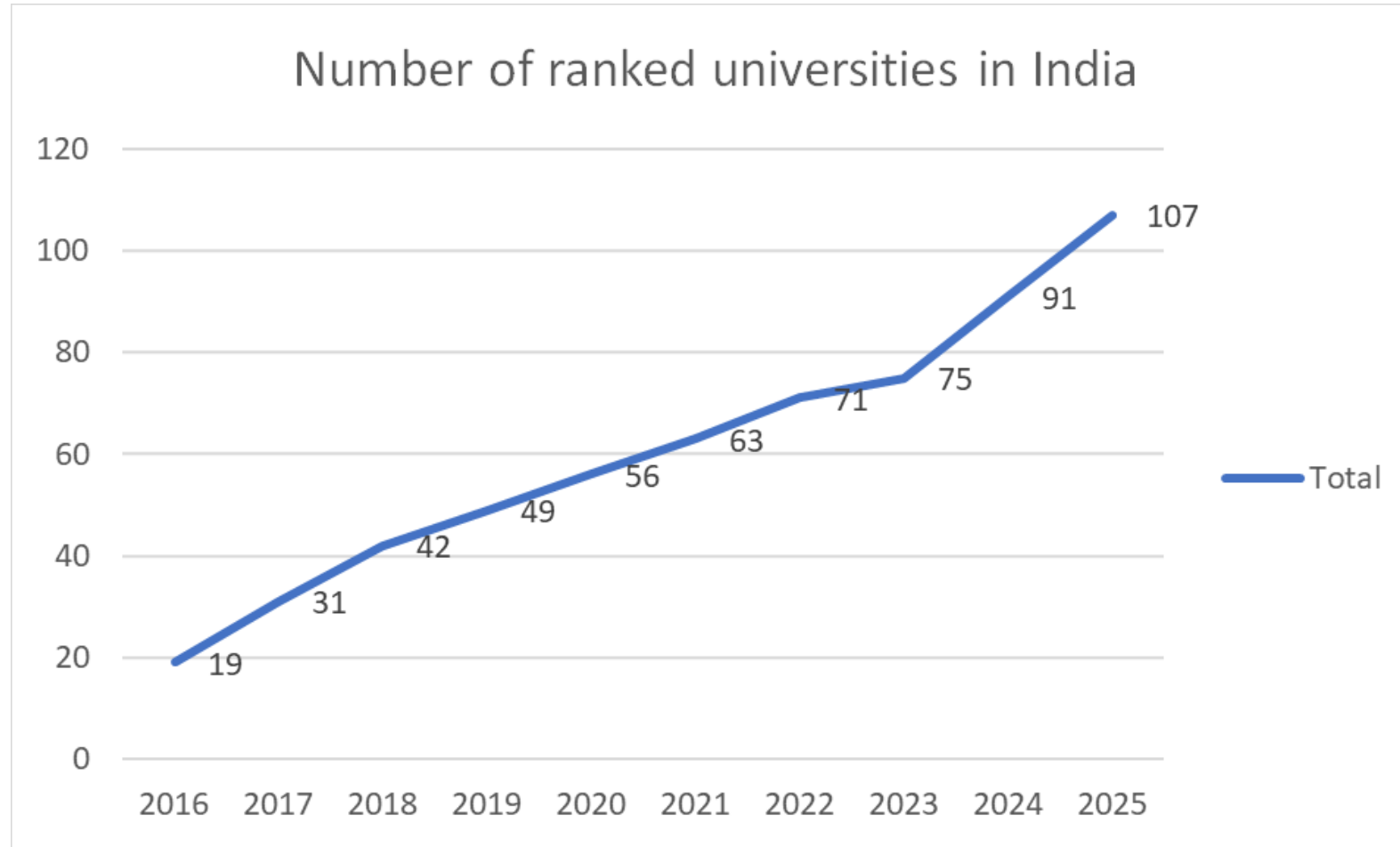# The European Centre: Germany, Austria, Hungary

% of GDP spent on education, by size of GDP
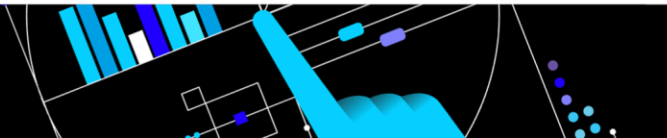(size of circle = % of the population that is 15-25yo)
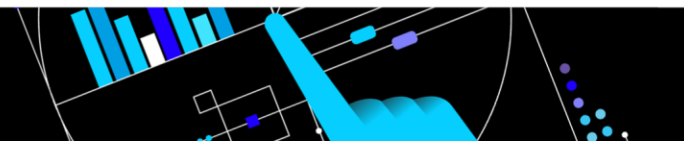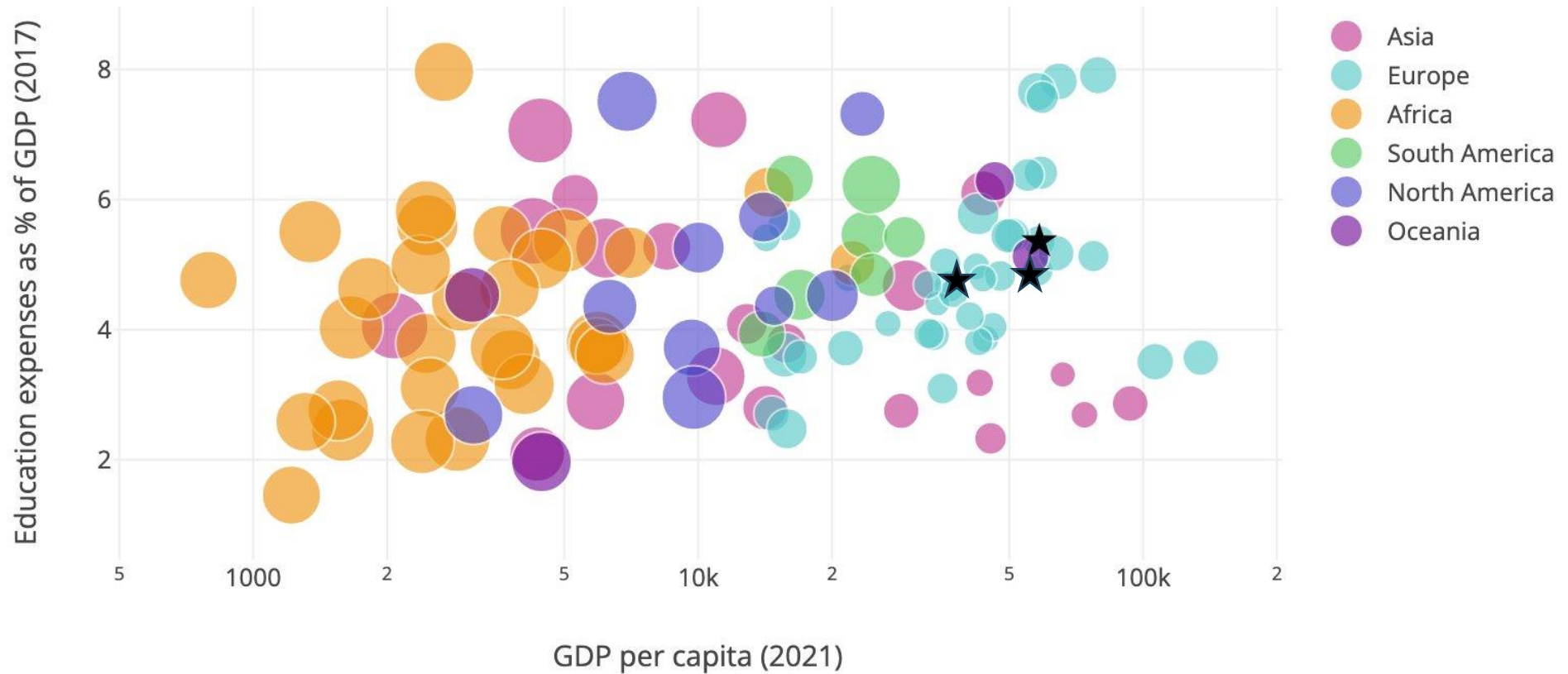
Research in the European Centre

India's growth
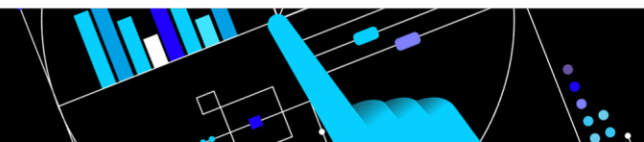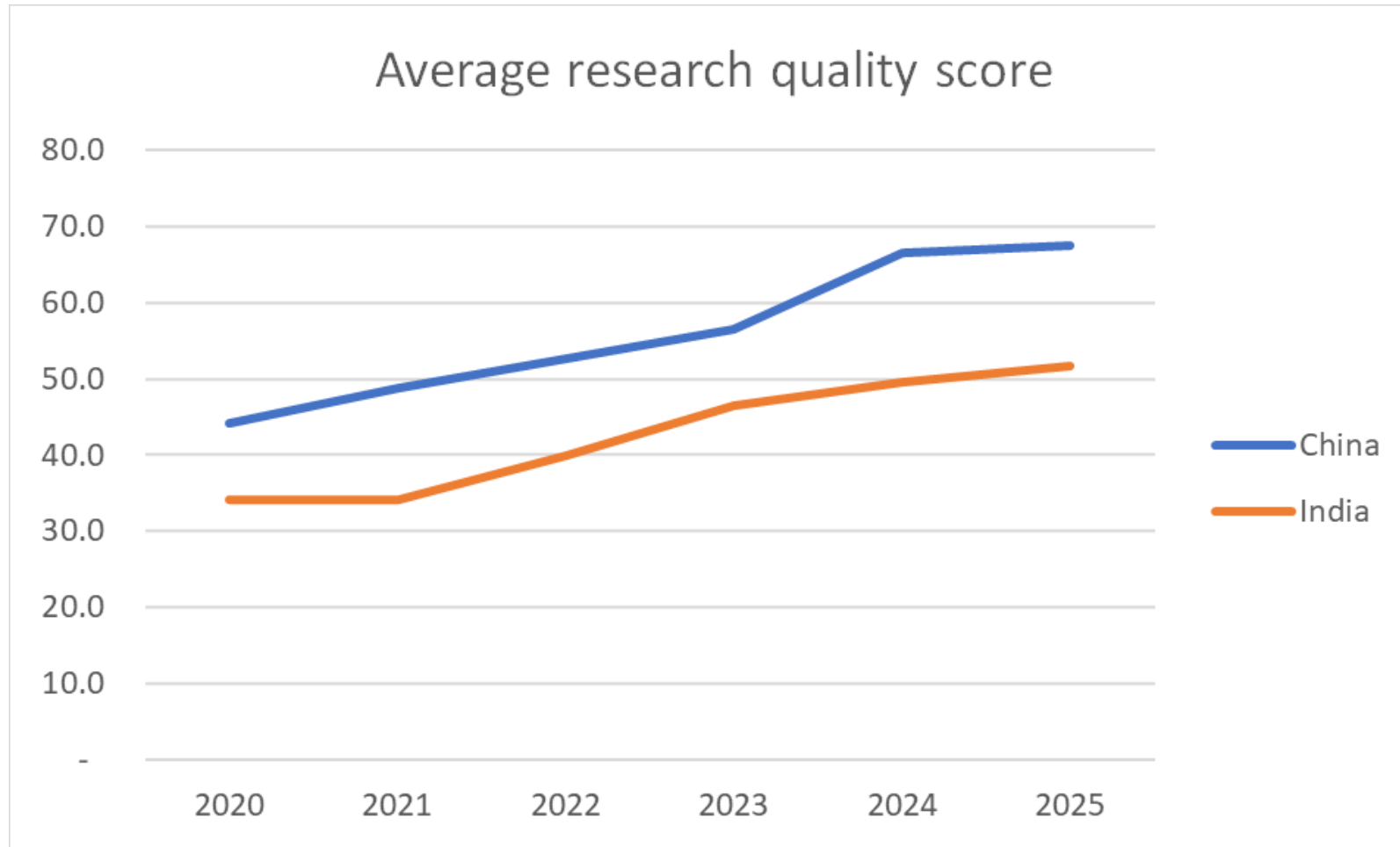

Number of ranked universities in India
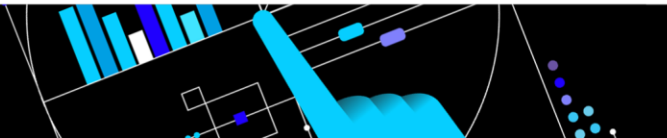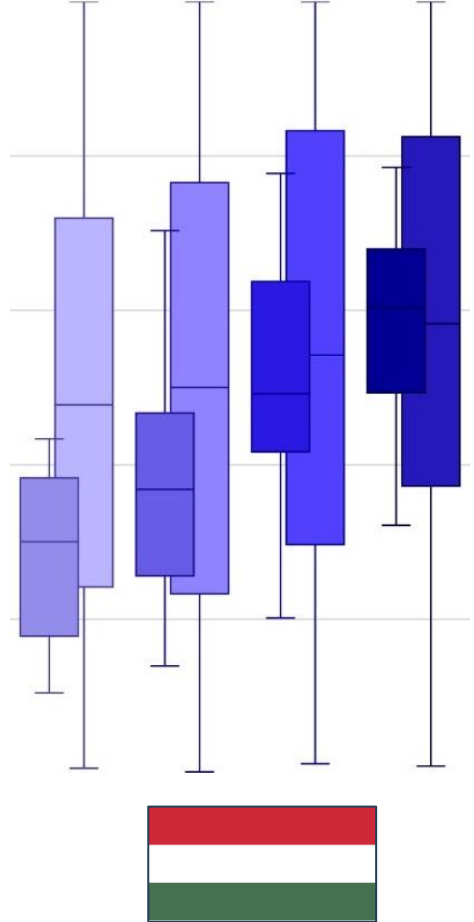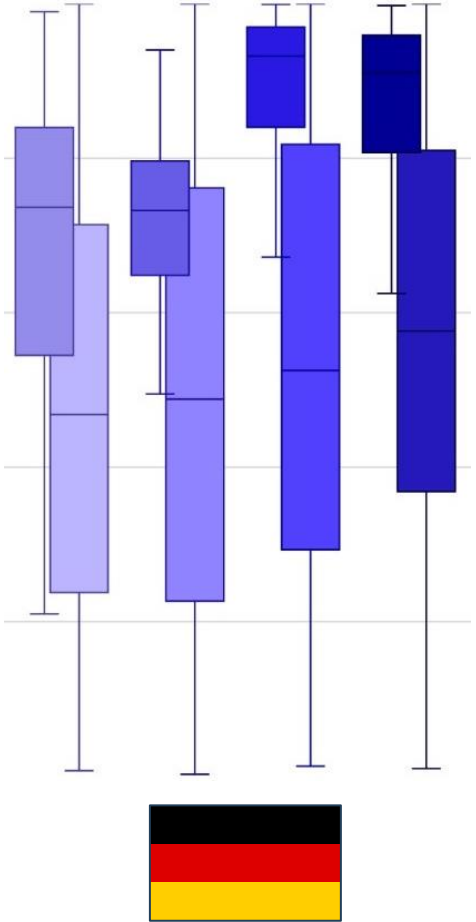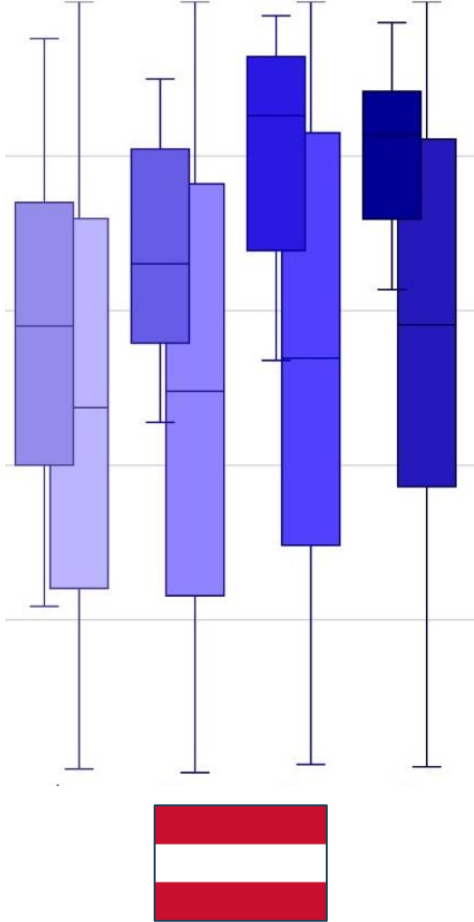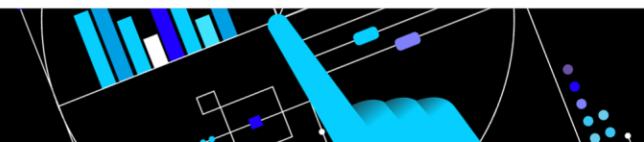
India's performance

The chase in Asia

Average research quality score

Thank you