

The SCOPE Framework

A five-stage process for evaluating research responsibly

Why SCOPE?

In response to sector concerns about poor research evaluation practices, the SCOPE Framework was developed by the International Network of Research Management Societies (INORMS) Research Evaluation Group (REG) as a practical way of implementing responsible research evaluation principles to design robust evaluations.

The five-stage SCOPE Framework

START with what you value

- Clearly articulate what you value about the entity being evaluated
- Not with what others' value (external drivers)
- Not with available data sources (the 'Streetlight Effect')

CONTEXT considerations

- Ensure your evaluation is context-specific
- WHO are you evaluating? (Entity size and discipline)
- WHY are you evaluating?

OPTIONS for evaluating

- Consider both quantitative and qualitative options
- Be careful when using quantities to indicate qualities

PROBE deeply

- WHO might your evaluation approach discriminate against?
- HOW might your evaluation approach be gamed?
- WHAT might the unintended consequences be?
- CONSIDER the cost-benefit of the evaluation

EVALUATE your evaluation

- Did your evaluation achieve its aims?
- Was it formative as well as summative?
- Use SCOPE to evaluate your evaluation.

The SCOPE Principles

The five stages of SCOPE operate under three main principles:

1. **Evaluate only where necessary.** Evaluation is not always the right strategy. When it comes to incentivising behaviours, for example, it may be more fruitful to enable them than to evaluate them.
2. **Evaluate with the evaluated.** Any evaluation should be co-designed and co-interpreted by the communities being evaluated.
3. **Draw on evaluation expertise.** We should apply the same rigour to our evaluations that we apply to our academic research.

For more information on the INORMS Research Evaluation Group please go to:
<https://inorms.net/research-evaluation-group/>