

Global University Rankings, Higher Education and the Principles and Values of Open Science



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The good governance, design, management and application of research and science builds upon various foundations

Including systems of higher education

Universities perform multiple functions in societies beyond education and research ...

- promote enlightened values and cultural life
- strengthen democracy through public education and by informing public debate
- build trust
- help hold governments and other powerful actors to account
- shape patterns of social mobility
- enable inter-national communication, cooperation and peace

World-class Universities? Interrogating the Biases and Coloniality of Global University Rankings

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Statement on Global University Rankings

Independent Expert Group (IEG) convened by the United Nations
University International Institute for Global Health



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Nine problems

Conceptually invalid

Flawed and non-transparent data and methods

Biased towards research, STEM subjects and English

Colonial

Undermines sector-wide development

Encourages short-termism

Produces unhealthy reputational anxiety

Extractive and commercially-driven

Conflicts of interest

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The influence of commercial rankers is symptomatic of the broader marketisation and corporatisation of higher education – a trend that has diminished the public-interest functions and social responsibilities that universities have in society, both nationally and globally.

Yet, more than ever, there is a need to harness the qualities of higher education to better respond to the urgent and complex challenges facing the world and serve equitable and sustainable development. Instead, global university rankings drive higher education towards becoming a homogenised but unequal market of winners and losers based on arbitrary, dubious, and simplistic criteria.

A more valid, de-colonial, context-specific, and sophisticated approach to the evaluation of university performance is required. Such an approach would promote quality and improvement in *all* universities, encourage sector-wide planning relevant to national and regional contexts, accommodate a more diverse ecosystem of differentiated universities, and preserve and strengthen the mandates of universities to serve the global common good.

Thankyou