

RESOLUTION
on the Evaluation Criteria and Principles Used/Recommended by the Scientific
Council of Babeş-Bolyai University

Having considered Opinion No. 32042/8 May 2026 of the Scientific Council of Babeş-Bolyai University,

the Administrative Council of Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, convened on 22 June 2026,

HEREBY RESOLVES:

The Evaluation Criteria and Principles Used/Recommended by the Scientific Council of Babeş-Bolyai University are hereby approved in the form annexed to this Resolution.

Rector,

Prof. Dr Daniel DAVID

Evaluation Criteria and Principles Used/Recommended by the Scientific Council of Babeş-Bolyai University

Academic evaluation at UBB follows, within the limits permitted by legally prevailing regulations, such as those issued by governmental bodies including CNATDCU, the principles underpinning the Leiden Manifesto¹, the HR Excellence in Research Award (HRS4R)², and CoARA (Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment)³. In essence, this means qualitative assessment responsibly informed by bibliometric/scientometric considerations, without excessive reliance on numerical formulas and without artificial restrictions regarding the types of outputs recognised, career paths, age/experience, etc.

As a general rule, unless explicit instructions provide otherwise, evaluation shall seek to assign one of three ratings:

a. Significant impact in the broader international context (IE);

b. Significant impact in the regional context (IR);

c. Not yet meeting the “exceptional” criterion (potential impact - IP).

Significant impact refers to achievements whose visibility and resonance are comparable to the most important achievements in the field within the geographical area corresponding to the relevant category. At the same time, the categories above also imply that a project with a predominantly local or national focus may achieve an impact of such significance that it extends beyond these boundaries and becomes internationally relevant. Neither the mode nor the physical location of dissemination constitutes a criterion in itself; rather, the relevant considerations are the quality of the results and their impact within the scientific community and beyond.

The types of achievements listed below are intended as indicative examples illustrating the criteria for assigning the above ratings, as well as for assessing whether a project/grant under evaluation is likely to generate results of comparable quality. It is not necessary to satisfy more than one criterion/condition cumulatively. Evaluators shall apply the criteria flexibly and with full autonomy and academic freedom, avoiding misuse of scientometrics in either a positive or negative direction. Annex 1 provides recommendations for situations in which more than three evaluation categories are required.

a. Significant/extensive impact in the international context (IE)

¹ Hicks, D., Wouters, P., Waltman, L. et al. “Bibliometrics: The Leiden Manifesto for research metrics.” Nature 520, 429-431 (2015). <https://doi.org/10.1038/520429a>

² <https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/hrexcellenceaward>

³ <https://www.coara.org/>

***Mutatis mutandis*, candidates receiving this rating would be considered to have a reasonable prospect of being shortlisted for an academic position at any prestigious university or research institute worldwide:**

i) **Authored books** with highly notable impact. Evidence of impact may include citation in the bibliographies of official governmental or international documents, reviews in prestigious sources within and/or beyond the relevant field, or inclusion in a large number of libraries worldwide. The latter may be verified through union catalogues such as WorldCat (www.worldcat.org) or KVK (<https://kvk.bibliothek.kit.edu/index.html>). The quality of the content, the number of authors, the role of the evaluated author within the author team, and the prestige of the publisher may carry substantial weight in the evaluator's decision whether to assign the rating.

ii) **Articles published annually** as a lead/conceptual author (according to international standards in the field - corresponding author, or "lead/first/last author", etc.) in journals ranked Q1 under the most recent UEFISCDI classifications. Prestigious book chapters (assessed in a manner similar to point i) above) and international patents (e.g. EU/US/Japan or comparable markets) shall be regarded as equivalent.

iii) **Articles in journals indexed in the Nature Index.**

iv) A number of **citations** ("times cited") significantly above the average for the field/academic community in which the candidate is active. Scopus Field-Weighted Citation Impact (FWCI), or similar indicators, may be used as supporting evidence.

v) A number of **publications indexed in Scopus/WoS/ERIH** significantly above the average for the field/academic community in which the candidate is active. The quality of the content, the number of authors, the role of the evaluated author within the author team, and the prestige of the journals/publishers may carry substantial weight in the evaluator's decision whether to assign the rating.

vi) **Any other evidence** that the candidate's results, ideas, and concepts are accepted and used at the forefront of the field and/or have a significant broader societal impact, including achievements with a national or local focus. Examples may include technology-transfer or other contributions to society; significant translations into/from Romanian, Hungarian, or German; books or book chapters with demonstrably outstanding national resonance or whose impact is demonstrated in major catalogues other than WorldCat; articles in high-impact journals not yet included or recognised as such in UEFISCDI classifications; or awards from a highly prestigious national or international academy.

b. Significant impact in the regional context (IR)

***Mutatis mutandis*, candidates receiving this rating would be considered to have a reasonable prospect of being shortlisted for an academic position at any representative university or institute in the region (defined flexibly on a case-by-case basis, but generally understood as Central-Eastern or South-Eastern Europe):**

i) **Authored books** with an average level of impact for the field. Evidence of impact may include citation in the bibliographies of official governmental or international documents, reviews in prestigious sources within and/or beyond the relevant field, or inclusion in a large number of libraries worldwide. The latter may be verified through union catalogues such as WorldCat (www.worldcat.org) or KVK (<https://kvk.bibliothek.kit.edu/index.html>). The quality of the content, the number of authors, the role of the evaluated author within the author team, and the prestige of the publisher may carry substantial weight in the evaluator's decision whether to assign the rating.

ii) **Articles published annually** as a lead/conceptual author (according to international standards in the field - corresponding author, or "lead/first/last author", etc.) in journals ranked Q2 under the most recent UEFISCDI classifications, or articles as a secondary author in Q1 journals. Prestigious book chapters (assessed in a manner similar to point i) above) and national patents shall be regarded as equivalent.

iii) A number of **citations** ("times cited") within the average range for the field/academic community in which the candidate is active.

iv) A number of **publications indexed in Scopus/ISI/ERIH** at least within the average range for the field/academic community in which the candidate is active. The quality of the content, the number of authors, the role of the evaluated author within the author team, and the prestige of the journals/publishers may carry substantial weight in the evaluator's decision whether to assign the rating.

iv) **Any other evidence** that the candidate's results, ideas, and concepts are accepted and used in the field and/or have an above-average societal impact. Examples may include technology-transfer or other contributions to society⁴; significant translations into/from Romanian, Hungarian, or German; books/book chapters with notable resonance; articles in high-impact journals not yet included in UEFISCDI classifications; or awards from relevant scientific associations of at least national standing in broad fields (e.g. Sociology).

Where quantitative indicators such as those listed above are taken into account (e.g. number of publications, citation metrics, etc.), **comparisons between candidates must focus on quality and avoid forcing comparisons across different fields or levels of experience** (e.g. experimental sciences vs humanities; assistant lecturer vs professor). It is recommended that all candidates be assessed over equivalent time periods (e.g. the last 10 years) and/or by using average values per unit of time (e.g. an average of one high-impact publication per year over the last 10 years).

In order not to receive the lowest rating on the available scale, a submission must not include, among the list of significant contributions or outputs presented for evaluation (e.g. for meeting CNATDCU-type minimum criteria), publications appearing on "Beall's List". The UBB Scientific Council will provide details upon request concerning the nature of this list, including questions or substantiated arguments for exceptions. Diplomas/medals from "invention fairs" shall have the

⁴ Technology-transfer activities that result in practical outcomes may be considered as evidence supporting any of the three ratings (IE/IR/IP) depending on the scale of the activity, as determined on a case-by-case basis by the UBB assessment body.

same status as publications on Beall's List, except where the total number of awards/mentions/etc. represented less than 20% of all eligible contributions at the respective event. Contributions appearing in such sources remain within the scope of academic freedom of expression and shall not be penalised, provided that they are not included among the representative contributions submitted for evaluation. In this context, members of the academic community are advised to observe the following recommendations:

- Consult Beall's List (e.g. <https://beallslist.net/>) for predatory journals and publishers. Contact and collaboration with the publishers and journals listed there should be avoided. It should be noted that, in some cases, the list identifies controversies while leaving the final judgement to the reader. Examples in this latter category include publishers frequently used in academic environments such as Romania's, including Frontiers and MDPI. When members of the academic community contribute to internal evaluation processes, including the development of their own criteria, they are advised to bear in mind that there will be circumstances, competitions, and contexts in which such journals and publishers constitute grounds for disqualification. UBB excellence competitions are one such context.
- Consult Beall's List also with regard to vanity publishers. At UBB, as elsewhere, the same filters apply to predatory and vanity publishers. Collaboration with such publishers should be avoided, as should reliance on publications of this kind in a CV (e.g. to meet eligibility requirements for academic competitions), since some evaluators and evaluation bodies may penalise them. In this respect, Beall's List includes at least three publishers commonly encountered in Romanian CVs, including at leading universities: InTech, LAP, and IGI.
- Consult online resources such as Retraction Watch (RW, <https://retractionwatch.com/>) and the RW database of retracted articles, <https://retractiondatabase.org/RetractionSearch.aspx?>, or <https://www.predatoryjournals.org/>. These resources provide extensive reporting on cases involving controversial editorial practices. Journals identified as problematic in investigations reported by RW should be treated with caution.
- Avoid inflating designations of lead/corresponding authors, as well as building a CV around publications appearing in only a limited number of journals (low diversity). In some competitions, for example, these elements are regarded as problematic.

ANNEX 1

Procedure for Prioritising Support for the Dissemination of Articles in Scholarly Journals

A. Order of Priority

For articles published in scholarly journals, the following order of priority is recommended:

1. Science and Nature journals.
2. Journals in the Nature or Science families (e.g. Nature Communications, Nature Human Behaviour, etc.).
3. Journals currently indexed in the Nature Index, or other exceptional journals⁵ in the humanities.
4. Journals indexed in the Nature Index within the last five years, or other exceptional journals in the humanities.
5. Journals ranked in the top 10%, or other exceptional journals in the humanities.
6. Q1 journals according to WoS, or Q1 Scimago journals in fields for which WoS does not calculate quartiles, or other exceptional humanities journals not indexed in WoS or Scopus.
7. Q2 journals according to WoS, or Q2 Scimago journals in fields for which WoS does not calculate quartiles, or other exceptional humanities journals not indexed in WoS or Scopus.
8. Q3 journals according to WoS, or Q3 Scimago journals in fields for which WoS does not calculate quartiles, or other exceptional humanities journals not indexed in WoS or Scopus.
9. Q4 journals according to WoS, or Q4 Scimago journals in fields for which WoS does not calculate quartiles, or other exceptional humanities journals not indexed in WoS or Scopus.

It should be noted that, for most evaluation procedures aimed at excellence, Categories 8 and 9 may be of limited relevance.

B. Limitations and Tie-Breaking

- i. Such priority rankings remain incomplete unless complemented by the expert qualitative assessment. At UBB, the Scientific Council is permanently available to provide support in this respect and therefore recommends that it be consulted by default whenever the relevant procedure does not explicitly designate another body for qualitative assessment (e.g. the Faculty Research Committee, the Scientific Council of the Institute, etc.). Expert assessment concerning a particular article may, among other things, alter priorities based solely on numerical journal indicators.

⁵ The designation “exceptional” may, depending on the case, require specific validation by a qualified body, such as the UBB Scientific Council.

ii. With regard to Open Science elements (Open Access, Open Data, Open Software, etc.), the principles set out in the UBB Open Science Strategy apply and their implementation is recommended, as further specified in Annex 2.

iii. Where two or more articles are placed at the same level, it is recommended that differentiation be based on the qualitative assessment of the relevant expert body (by default, the UBB Scientific Council, unless another body is specified by the applicable regulations). Where the applicable procedure requires automatic rather than quality-based differentiation, priority shall be given to cases in which UBB provides lead/conceptual authors, also taking their proportion into account. Citation counts may be considered as supporting evidence where contributions from the same field are compared and citation numbers, adjusted for the age of the article, differ significantly. Thereafter, chronological order shall apply: (1) the date on which the request was submitted, where comparison is made within an application-based competition; or (2) the date of publication. Where the tie-breaking process leaves several articles at the same quality-based priority level, any subsequent selection shall take into account the principles of equality and equity set out in the UBB Charter.

iv. When determining journal quartiles/top 10% status, the use of the most robust available indicators (e.g. AIS) is recommended. These classifications should be based on bibliometric values either at the date of publication or at the date of evaluation, whichever is more favourable to the application under evaluation.

C. Scope of Application

i. For reasons of simplification and depending on the context, it may be appropriate to combine certain levels: Levels 1 and 2, and Levels 3 and 4 or even 3, 4, and 5. Conversely, any procedure that reduces all nine levels to only one or two categories (e.g. merely “WoS-indexed” or “WoS vs BDI”) is counterproductive to the University’s efforts to achieve world-class standards.

ii. The evaluation of human and institutional resources should not be confined exclusively to journal articles. Accordingly, support/incentive/promotion measures should likewise not be limited to journal articles. For example, international patents should, in principle, be regarded as having an impact comparable to a Nature Index article or at least a Q1 article, while national patents may be regarded as comparable to a Q2 or at least a Q3 article. Books may have an impact comparable to any of Levels 1-9, subject to expert assessment.

ANNEX 2

Open Access

1. Publications accompanied by **open datasets or Open Software receive a 10% increase in their evaluation score** (i.e. such an article is equivalent to 1.1 standard articles when calculating scores for meeting CNATDCU criteria) for comparisons within the same field, avoiding comparisons with fields in which datasets or software resources are not relevant.
2. Publications in **Diamond/Platinum Open Access journals or with Diamond/Platinum Open Access publishers receive a 10% increase in their evaluation score** (i.e. such an article is equivalent to 1.1 standard articles when calculating scores for meeting CNATDCU criteria).
3. Points 1 and 2 above may be applied cumulatively (resulting in a total weighting of 1.2).
4. Publications issued by publishers operating exclusively under the **Gold Open Access model** (where publication is paid for by the author) **receive half the recognition assigned to other publications**, where other existing criteria do not further restrict such recognition. Accordingly, **such an article is equivalent to 0.5 standard articles** when calculating scores of the type used for meeting CNATDCU criteria. This provision does not apply to journals in Categories 1-5 of Annex 1. For the purposes of these regulations, this category includes publishers whose journals generally operate exclusively under the Gold Open Access model (where authors pay article processing charges, APCs, and publish Open Access), even where authors may occasionally receive fee waivers and even where the publisher also offers authors free publication options in addition to its journal publishing activities. Examples of such publishers include PLoS, MDPI, Frontiers, and PeerJ. Journals published by prestigious professional societies (e.g. the European Geosciences Union, EuChemS, Society for Free Radical Research International / Society for Free Radicals in Medicine and Biology, Geological Society of America, Romanian Chemical Society, etc.) **do not fall within this category**.