Engaging with hard-to-reach people

USTLG 5th June 2015

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COMMENT

SUSTAINABILITY Data needed to drive UN development goals **p.432**

CONSERVATION Economics and environmental catastrophe **p.434**

GEOLOGY Questions raised over proposed Anthropocene dates **p.436**

HISTORY Music inspired Newton to add more colours to the rainbow **p.436**

The Leiden Manifesto for research metrics

Use these ten principles to guide research evaluation, urge **Diana Hicks**, **Paul Wouters** and colleagues.

Data are increasingly used to govern science. Research evaluations that were once bespoke and performed by peers are now routine and reliant on metrics[1]. The problem is that evaluation is now led by the data rather than by judgement. Metrics have proliferated: usually well intentioned, not always well informed, often ill applied. We risk damaging the system with the very tools designed to improve it, as evaluation is increasingly implemented by organizations without knowledge of, or advice on, good practice and interpretation.

Before 2000, there was the Science Citation Index on CD-ROM from the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI), used by experts for specialist analyses. In 2002, Thomson Reuters launched an integrated web platform, making the Web of Science database widely accessible. Competing citation indices were created: Elsevier's Scopus (released in 2004) and Google Scholar (beta version released in 2004). Web-based tools to easily compare institutional research productivity and impact were introduced, such as InCites (using the Web of Science) and SciVal (using Scopus), as well as software to analyse individual citation profiles using Google Scholar (Publish or Perish, released in 2007).

In 2005, Jorge Hirsch, a physicist at the University of California, San Diego, proposed the *h*-index, popularizing citation counting for individual researchers. Interest in the journal impact factor grew steadily after 1995 (see 'Impact-factor obsession').

Lately, metrics related to social usage ▶

ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID PARKINS

Hicks, D., Wouters, P., de Rijcke, S., & Rafols, I., 2015. The Leiden Manifesto for research metrics. *Nature*. 520 (7548) 429-431 doi:10.1038/520429a

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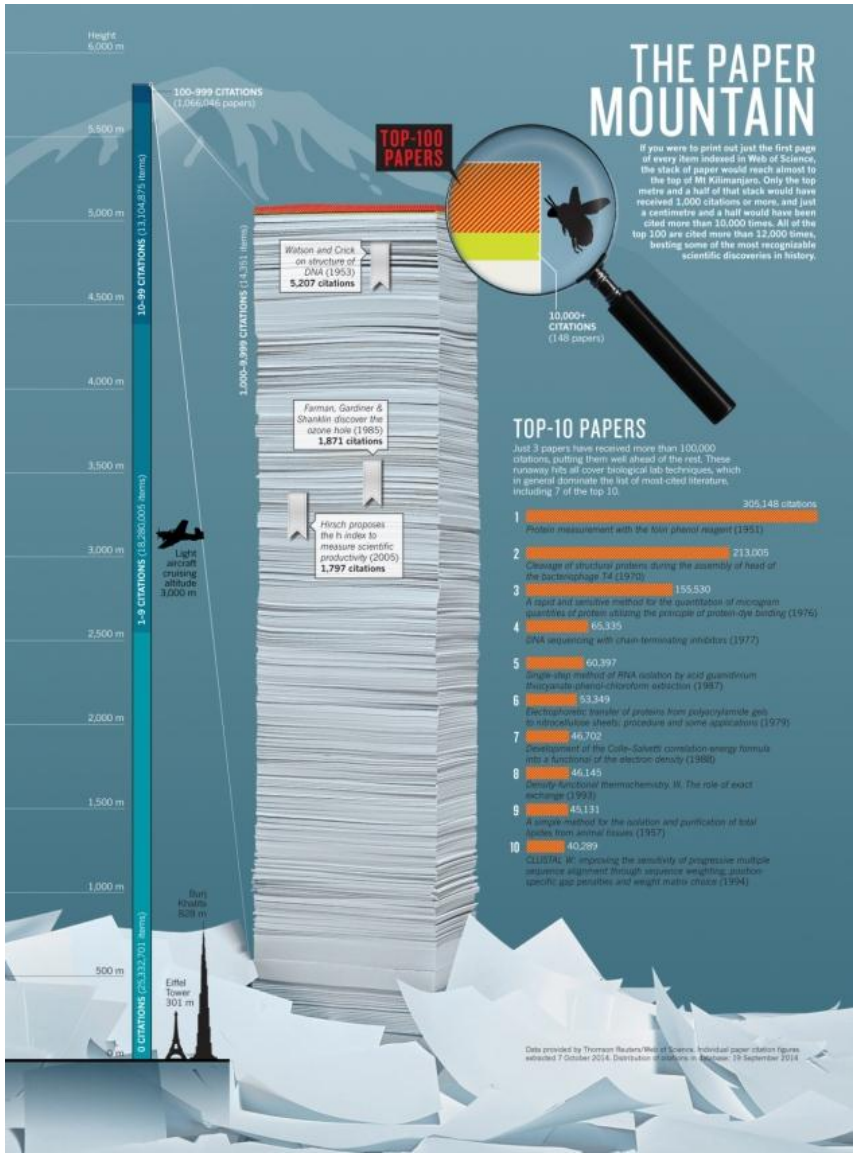

Van Noorden, R. Maher, B., Nuzzo, R. 2014. The top 100 papers. *Nature*. 514 (7524) 550-553 doi:10.1038/514550a

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