

ALAEC manifesto for the responsible use of metrics in science evaluations in Latin America and the Caribbean

On behalf of the *Latin American Association of Science Editors (ALAEC)*, which stands for *Asociación Latinoamericana de Editores Científicos*, (<https://alaec.org/>), we call on scientific authorities, Ministries, and Universities at the regional level, as well as the heads of evaluation agencies and managers of universities and research centers, to subscribe and comply with the DORA Declaration (2013), the recommendations on the use of bibliometric indicators outlined in the Leiden Manifesto (2015), and the Helsinki Initiative (2019) on multilingualism.

We are in favor of open, non-commercial science, which values and promotes bibliodiversity and multilingualism.

Maintaining a robust ecosystem of local and regional science communication is essential for the economic and social development of Latin American and Caribbean countries.

Funding agencies and evaluation bodies must recognize that the inappropriate use of bibliometric indicators has systemic effects and can lead to changes in the topics of interest and restrictions to academic autonomy, the fulfilment of the institutional mission, social impact, creativity, and/or innovation.

It is essential that these bodies review their journal ranking and citation-based science evaluation systems and adopt a set of responsible and relevant factors and indicators according to their national and regional contexts while collaborating with the community and including academic/scientific journal publishers.

Within this framework, we propose the following actions:

1. To re-establish quality criteria, valuing:
 - Publications with relevant research, regardless of the area or subject, language, target language, or geographical scope;
 - A broad spectrum of scholarly and research contributions, such as innovation, replication, translation, synthesis, and meta-research;
 - Open science practices, such as open access and open data, among others;
 - The adoption of high ethics, quality, and integrity standards in scientific publishing.
2. To value and stimulate the work of scientific editors and editorial teams, promoting their training and development and recognizing their fundamental role in the adoption and dissemination of good practices in scientific publishing. The legitimacy of the professionalization of the editor and editorial *team must be recognized*.
3. To ensure that national journals and publishers do not lose financial incentives and the flow of manuscript submissions, thus allowing them to achieve and maintain high quality and integrity standards in their editorial processes, especially for journals that practice open science and multilingualism.
4. To strengthen, disseminate, and protect scientific communication infrastructures such as Latindex, SciELO, RedALyC, and LA Referencia, among others. These favor open science and multilingualism, and they can generate responsible metrics and indicators to evaluate local and regional science.
5. To encourage and value collaborative networks and exchange between all actors in the ecosystem of production and dissemination of knowledge in the region, such as institutions, authors, reviewers, funding agencies, etc.

Background

On **October 16-17, 2020**, the First Uruguayan Congress of Scientific Journals was held in Montevideo which was sealed with an agreement between the Uruguayan Association of Academic Journals (AURA, <https://aura.edu.uy/>) and the Brazilian Association of Scientific Editors (ABEC Brazil, <https://www.abecbrasil.org.br>) to move together towards a **Latin American Association of Scientific Editors**.

On **November 14, 2020**, the Association of University Publishers of Colombia (ASEUC, <https://unilibros.co>) received an invitation from CoLaV of Universidad de Antioquia, organizer of LATmetrics 2021, to join the event. Thus, ASEUC starts working to participate, and, in turn, LATmetrics invites ABEC Brazil and AURA Uruguay to join.

Finally, on Friday, **July 30, 2021**, an initial group of scientific publishing leaders representing different Latin American institutions meet online to consolidate the proposal.

Today, on **September 15, 2021**, ALAEC is created as the result of a collective, academic, accessible, open, non-commercial effort for Latin America and the Caribbean.

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