
REFLECT project

Charles University coordinates the European REFLECT project on fairer research careers



**Funded by
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How do gender, disability, migration background, socio-economic background and other characteristics intersect in shaping researchers' careers? And how can universities and research organisations better identify and address the barriers resulting from these inequalities? These questions are at the heart of REFLECT, a new European research project coordinated by Charles University.

REFLECT – Researching Intersectional Equity and Fairness in Lived Experiences and Career Trajectories started in September 2026 and will investigate inequalities affecting research careers across Europe over the next three years. Funded under Horizon Europe, the project brings together seven partner organisations from seven European countries.

Understanding intersecting inequalities in research careers

REFLECT is based on the premise that barriers in research careers cannot be fully understood by looking at individual characteristics in isolation. While gender remains a central dimension of the analysis, the project examines it in relation to other factors, including ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, migration background, age and socio-economic background. Their intersections may produce specific forms of disadvantage that existing data and institutional measures often fail to capture.

The project therefore combines a range of research approaches. Alongside a large-scale European survey, REFLECT will work with existing and open research information as well as narrative CVs. Qualitative research will be conducted in 15 European countries using methods including narrative interviews, photovoice and reverse mentoring. This combination will make it possible to examine not only the scale of inequalities, but also researchers' lived experiences and the mechanisms through which inequalities are created or reproduced within institutions.

Turning research into practical tools

REFLECT is designed to move beyond identifying existing problems. Evidence generated by the project will be translated, together with universities, research organisations, research funders, policymakers and researchers themselves, into practical tools and recommendations.

Project outputs will include instruments for monitoring inequalities, more inclusive approaches to research and career assessment, reverse mentoring schemes, guidelines and training resources. An open-access REFLECT Toolkit will also be developed to help institutions translate evidence on intersectional inequalities into concrete changes in human resources policies, research assessment and organisational culture.

Charles University as project coordinator

Charles University coordinates the international consortium. In addition to overall coordination, administrative and financial oversight, ethics and risk management, Charles University will contribute to conceptual mapping, qualitative research, the development and validation of project tools, and stakeholder engagement. Charles University will also serve as a pilot site for selected REFLECT tools. Project coordination at Charles University is led by the CU Point and Faculty of Humanities of Charles University is participating in research activities.

Charles University will also use its engagement in European university networks to support the wider uptake of REFLECT results. Through the Coimbra Group, the University will help connect the project with other European universities, which will be able to engage in research activities as well as in the pilot testing of selected tools developed within REFLECT.

The project began with a kick-off meeting held in Prague on 29–30 September 2026, bringing consortium partners together to launch the collaboration and prepare the first research activities.



REFLECT consortium

The consortium brings together **Charles University** (Czechia), **Yellow Window** (Belgium), **University of Gothenburg** (Sweden), **Conoscenza e Innovazione** (Italy), **University of Deusto** (Spain), **Trinity College Dublin** (Ireland), and the **National Information Processing Institute – OPI PIB** (Poland).

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Coordinator: Charles University

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