

# Metrics and international collaboration

JAMES COE

**WONKHE**



# The metric tide revisited

Big idea

The interesting idea

The idea to avoid

The idea I had no idea about

Metrics

The future of REF

Tweaking

Automation

The overuse of metrics risks crowding out qualitative analysis of research quality

Whether a single REF exercise can achieve the panoply of demands that are placed upon it with such a varied sector

That a review of research assessment generally should focus only on REF and only on a few changes within it

Is the future AI, algorithms, and simply weightings by FTE

The quite enormous implications of  
changing R&D methodologies

**WONKHE**

- R&D expenditure is calculated through a business survey methodology invented in the 1980s
- This method asks a sample of companies if they are undertaking R&D activity and then this is extrapolated across the business population to provide a figure
- R&D activity taking place in small businesses has been significantly undercounted to potentially an amount of .7% per cent of the UK's total GDP
- This is because the sampling methodology assumed that most R&D activity was taking place in large businesses
- This might mean that not only is the UK R&D economy bigger but that more activity, in different specialisms, in different parts of the country, has been taking place.
- The impact of this could be an exaggeration of some relative research strength and clusters and yet undiscovered strong research clusters.
- In turn, this could impact both general R&D investment and strategies but also who universities choose to work with.





“

We will continue to pursue a positive trade and investment partnership with China, while ensuring our national security and values are protected