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8 juni 2026

Nomination FORRT for the 2026 NWO-UKB Leo Waaijers  
Open Science Award

**Bijlage(n)**

Dear Members of the Assessment Committee,

It is with great enthusiasm that I write on behalf of Utrecht University to strongly endorse the nomination of the [Framework for Open and Reproducible Research Training \(FORRT\)](#) for the 2026 NWO-UKB Leo Waaijers Open Science Award.

Institutionally anchored here at Utrecht University and directed by our own [Assistant Professor Dr. Flávio Azevedo](#) with the support of many Dutch scholars at [FORRT's steering committee](#) and team-lead positions, FORRT has distinguished itself as a transformative, grassroots movement in academia. FORRT maintains a robust presence across the **Netherlands**, with active scholarly participation at numerous institutions. Key representatives include Dr. Aleksandrina Skvortsova and Dr. Tom Heyman (**Leiden** University); Rink Hoekstra and Nina Schwarzbach (University of **Groningen**); Olmo van den Akker (**Tilburg** University); Steven Verheyen (Erasmus University **Rotterdam**); Iris Smal (University of **Amsterdam**); Sofia Pelica (Vrije Universiteit **Amsterdam**); Hanne Oberman and Dr. Flávio Azevedo (**Utrecht** University); and Dr. Xavier Pouwels (University of **Twente**).

Since its inception, FORRT has grown into a vibrant interdisciplinary community of over 1,800 researchers spanning more than 100 countries. We are proud to support this initiative, which perfectly aligns with Utrecht University's ongoing commitment to open science and education, demonstrated by FORRT's active partnerships with our Open Science Community Utrecht ([OSCU](#)) and [COSiE](#).



We base our endorsement on FORRT's exceptional achievements in the areas evaluated by this award:

### **1. Quality of the Nominee: Unprecedented Leadership and Collaboration**

FORRT operates on a participatory, community-driven governance model that empowers early-career researchers, students, and senior academics to collaborate as equals. This inclusive ethos explicitly elevates voices from the Global South, neurodivergent scholars, and those in teaching-heavy roles. This global leadership has earned FORRT formal recognition as a Global Open Science Partner by UNESCO and formal endorsement as a Programme of the UN's International Decade of Sciences for Sustainable Development (2024-2033).

### **2. Quality of the Work: Innovative Pedagogical Infrastructure**

FORRT addresses a critical gap in the Open Science movement: integrating open and reproducible practices directly into higher education. The initiative has boldly developed several groundbreaking tools that democratize scientific training:

- [The Educational Nexus](#): An expansive e-learning platform hosting over 20 distinct initiatives—including curated courses, an open science glossary, and tailored resources—designed to make open scholarship accessible to anyone. This ecosystem also includes the world's largest open database of its kind, crowdsourced to host over 1,400 pedagogical materials.
- [The Replication Hub](#): The world's largest project on replications, encompassing a family of over 10 integrated replication initiatives. This ranges from the largest global databases of replication studies ([FReD and FLORA](#)) to [Replication Research \(R<sup>2</sup>\)](#), the world's first interdisciplinary, diamond open-access research journal dedicated entirely to replication and reproductions.
- [The Open Educational Resources Database](#): The world's largest open database of its kind, crowdsourced and curated to host over 1,400 open science pedagogical materials.
- [The Open Science Glossary](#): A crowd-sourced effort by over 110 volunteers to standardize open science terminology, currently expanding to 700 terms across 12 languages.
- [JUST-OS](#): A highly innovative, AI-powered chatbot designed to help researchers and students confidently navigate the vast landscape of open science resources.

### **3. Sustainability and Impact**

By systematically embedding open science into university curricula, FORRT ensures long-term, systemic cultural change. The initiative not only shapes how the next generation of researchers conducts science, but it also actively influences policy. FORRT has contributed to national policy inquiries, such as the UK Parliament's investigation into research integrity, and its work on "Equitable Science for All" has been highlighted by NASA.

FORRT is a bold, inspiring, and mobilizing force that embodies the legacy of Leo Waaijers by making scientific knowledge a public good accessible to all. We at Utrecht University are very proud to support FORRT and Dr. Azevedo in this cross-institutional nomination alongside our colleagues at Leiden



**Universiteit  
Utrecht**

University. We urge the committee to recognize their outstanding contributions to the Netherlands and the global academic community.

Sincerely,

prof. dr. Leoniek Wijngaards-de Meij  
Dean Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences - Universiteit Utrecht