



THE UNIVERSITY  
OF QUEENSLAND  
AUSTRALIA

CREATE CHANGE

# NHMRC Investigator Grants Key Findings 2021–2025

May 2025

# Notes on this document

- This information should be read in conjunction with the NHMRC Investigator Grants Outcomes Factsheets available from the NHMRC website
- Round years refer to the year before the funding will commence e.g., 2025 NHMRC Investigator Grants for funding commencing in 2026, are represented by '2025'.
- The information presented in these slides is sourced from UQ data, the NHMRC and SciVal.
- Supporting guides and other helpful resources are available from the [UQ R&I website](#).
- Interpret metrics with care - averages may be significantly inflated by outliers

This document is produced with thanks to the UQ Library, who provided metrics analysis for successful applicants.

# Executive Summary

- Your publication profile matters.
- Choose your top 10 publications carefully and ensure that the evidence of the impact of the research and your contribution is explicitly stated.
- Give clear examples of the outcomes and impact of *your* contributions in the Leadership section.
- Impact Case Studies are more than metrics
- The *Category and Level Applied Justification* section is your chance to outline the context of you in your discipline and in the InvG scheme – use it to your advantage: illustrate momentum and trajectory.
- Evidence your upward trajectory clearly throughout your application.
- Ensure your knowledge proposal is a program of research, not disparate projects, and demonstrate how it is a progression from current activities.
- Write for the generalist panel.

# Scheme overview

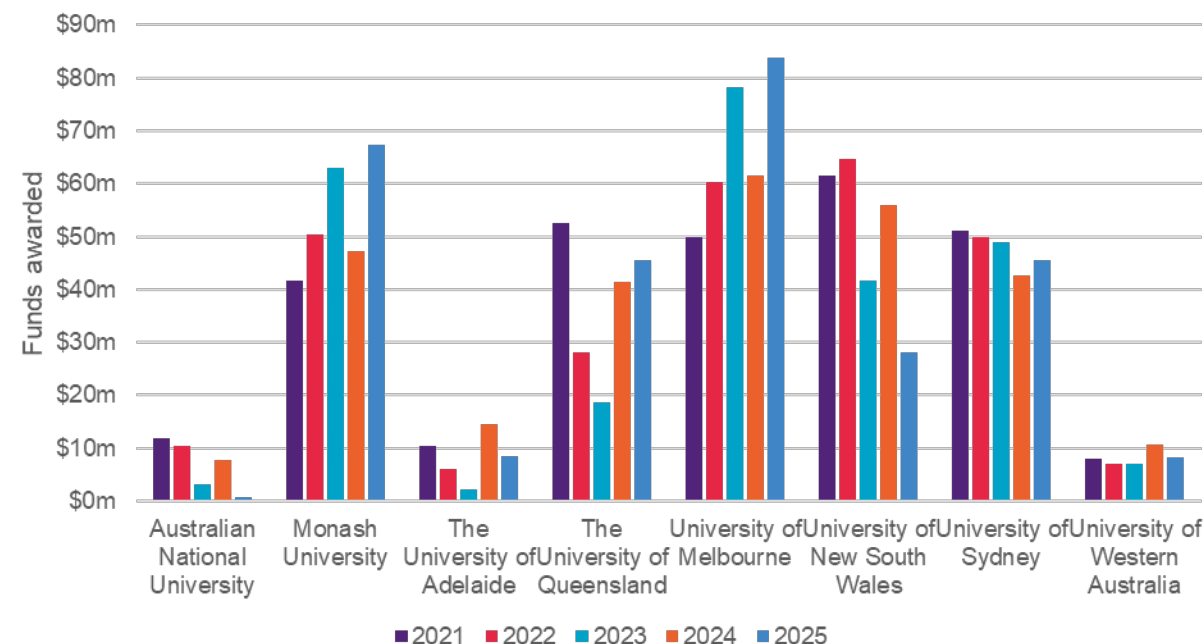
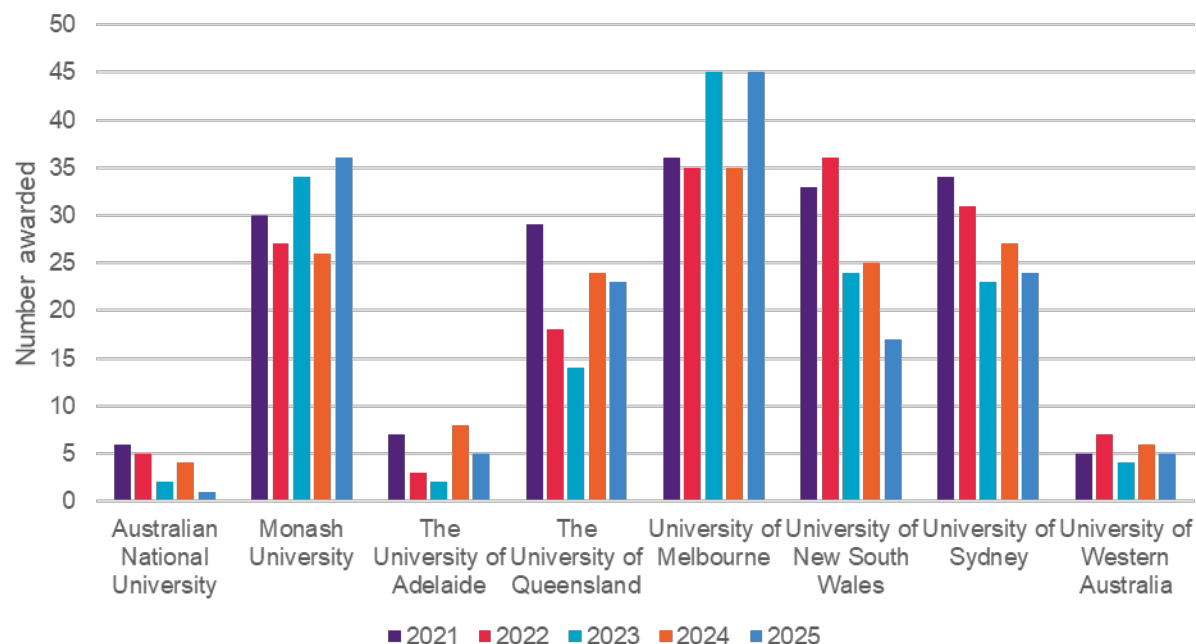
- Investigator Grants support the research program of outstanding investigators at all career stages.
- The scheme provides five-year funding through a salary and project costs (research support package, RSP)
- RSP for EL1 is \$50,000 per annum and EL2 is \$200,000 per annum.
- RSP for Leadership level grants is \$400,000 per annum.
- For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander EL1 and EL2 recipients, funding of \$11,000 (2025\$) is available to facilitate International Indigenous Researcher Networks.
- NHMRC has applied the gender field response data to implement gender equity interventions under the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* to address systemic disadvantage faced by female and non-binary applicants to the Investigator Grant scheme. For the Leadership category (L1, L2 and L3 combined), an intervention to achieve equal numbers of grants by gender used 2 groupings:
  - **Group A** comprising female/woman and non-binary applicants. Applicants who responded with 'I use a different term' and use a relevant term to describe their gender in the free text field were also placed in Group A.
  - **Group B** comprising of male/man, prefer not to answer and not stated/blank applicants

# Assessment Criteria

Assessment Criteria		Weighting
Track Record (70%)	Publications	35%
	Research Impact <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reach &amp; significance of impact (10%)</li><li>• Applicant's contribution to the research impact (10%)</li></ul>	20%
	Leadership	15%
Knowledge Gain (30%)	Proposed Research	30%

# UQ Performance against Go8

In the last round, UQ ranked fourth for both the total number of awards and funding received, with 23 awards totaling \$45.6 million.

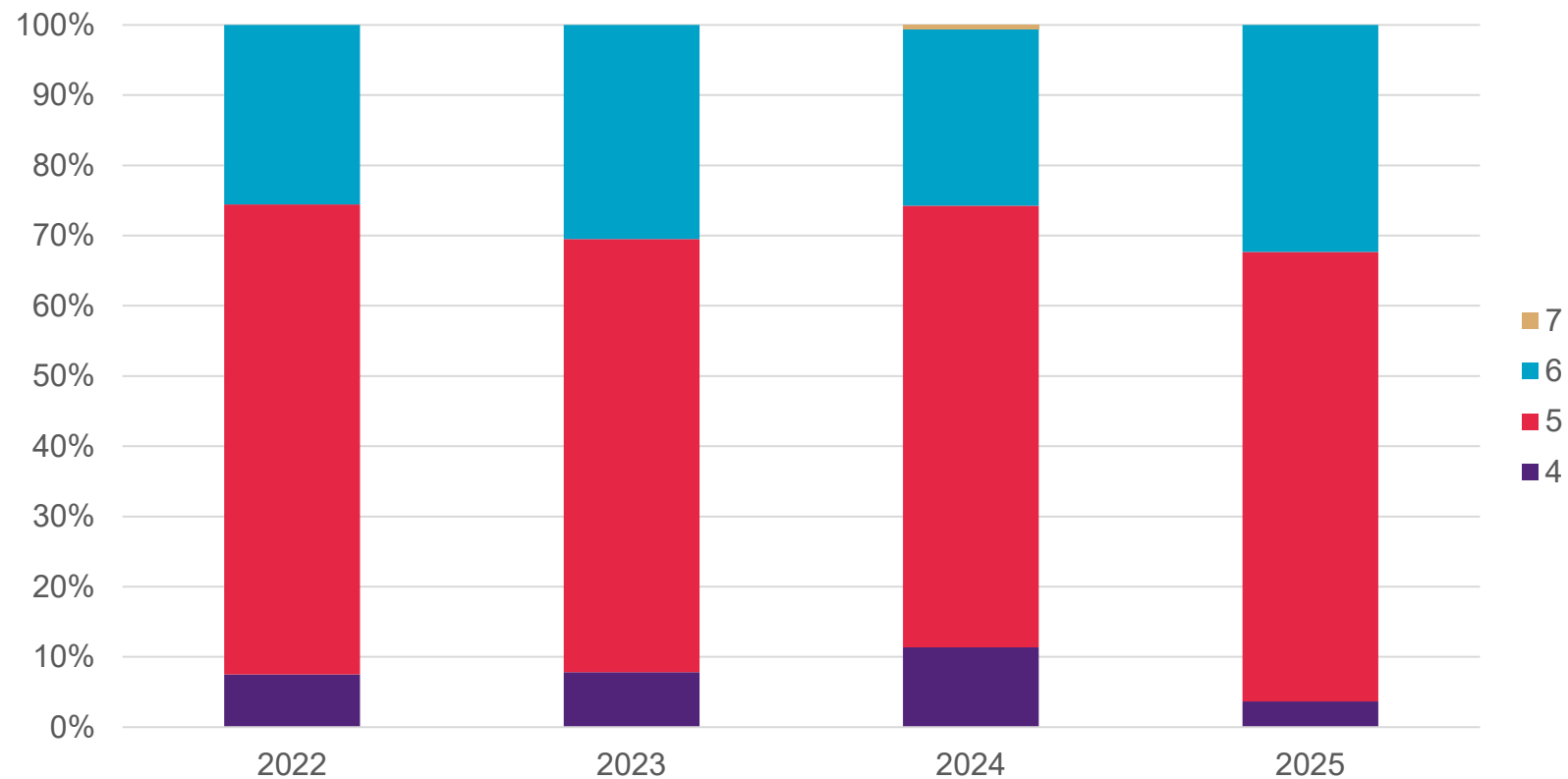


# UQ Success Rates 2023-2025

Level	2023			2024			2025		
	Submitted	Awarded	Success Rate	Submitted	Awarded	Success Rate	Submitted	Awarded	Success Rate
EL1	53	8	15%	51	9	18%	49	5	10.0%
EL2	35	2	6%	33	2	6%	47	6	13%
L1	14	3	21%	22	0	0%	35	3	9%
L2	24	5	21%	15	2	13%	19	2	11%
L3	8	0	0%	7	1	14%	15	7	47%
Overall	134	18	13%	128	14	11%	142	23	14%

# UQ Scoring Profile 2022-2025

- Many of UQ's applicants in the 2025 round were 'near misses', representing a good opportunity for success in the next round.

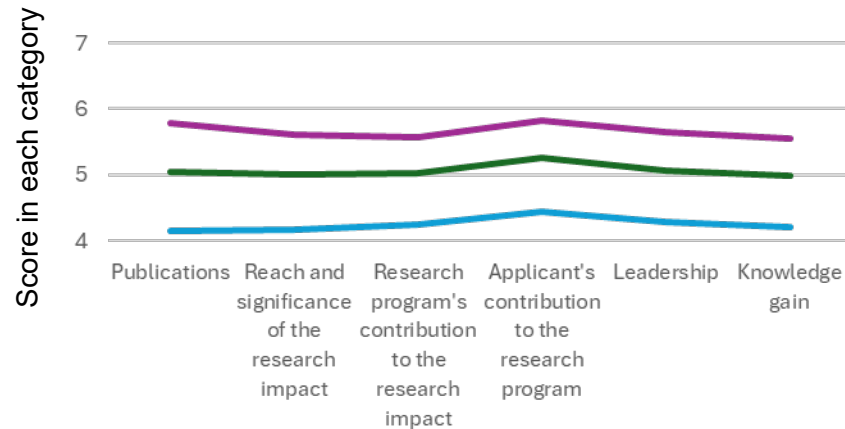




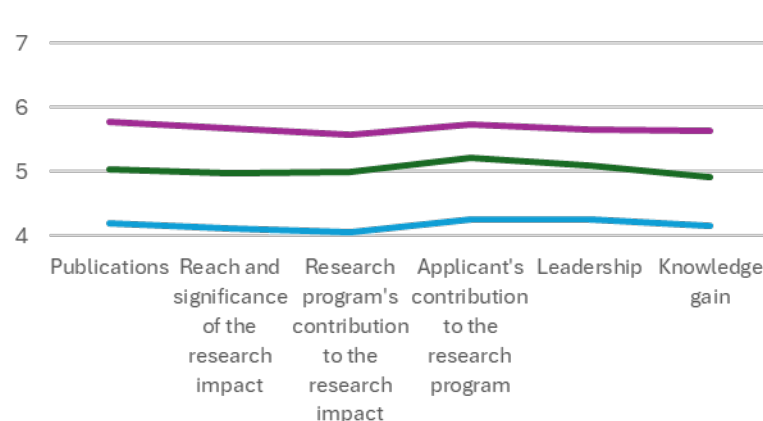
# National Scoring Profile (2023 – 2025) – EL1 applications

2023							2024							2025						
Number (%) of applications in category	Publications	Reach and significance of the research impact	Research program's contribution to the research impact	Applicant's contribution to the research program	Leadership	Knowledge gain	Number (%) of applications in category	Publications	Reach and significance of the research impact	Research program's contribution to the research impact	Applicant's contribution to the research program	Leadership	Knowledge gain	Number (%) of applications in category	Publications	Reach and significance of the research impact	Research program's contribution to the research impact	Applicant's contribution to the research program	Leadership	Knowledge gain
0 (0%)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0%)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0%)	0	0	0	0	0	0
55 (12.6%)	5.778	5.607	5.575	5.822	5.644	5.553	76 (13.5%)	5.766	5.684	5.566	5.743	5.655	5.639	102 (16.9%)	5.854	5.667	5.617	5.839	5.589	5.62
301 (69.0%)	5.045	5.004	5.015	5.254	5.062	4.981	367 (65.2%)	5.044	4.978	4.989	5.214	5.099	4.919	411 (67.9%)	5.006	5.014	5.025	5.162	5.063	4.934
78 (17.9%)	4.151	4.159	4.241	4.436	4.29	4.2	118 (21.0%)	4.188	4.117	4.059	4.252	4.258	4.163	88 (14.5%)	4.191	4.169	4.24	4.383	4.348	4.23
2 (0.5%)	2.7	2.7	2.7	3	3.7	3.2	2 (0.4%)	3.4	2.3	2.6	2.7	3.2	3.3	4 (0.7%)	2.95	3.263	3.4	3.5	3.125	3.575
0 (0%)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0%)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0%)	0	0	0	0	0	0
0 (0%)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0%)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0%)	0	0	0	0	0	0

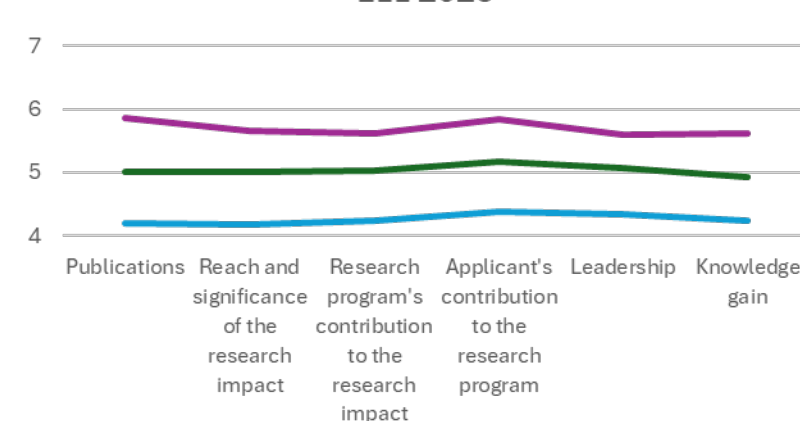
EL1 2023



EL1 2024



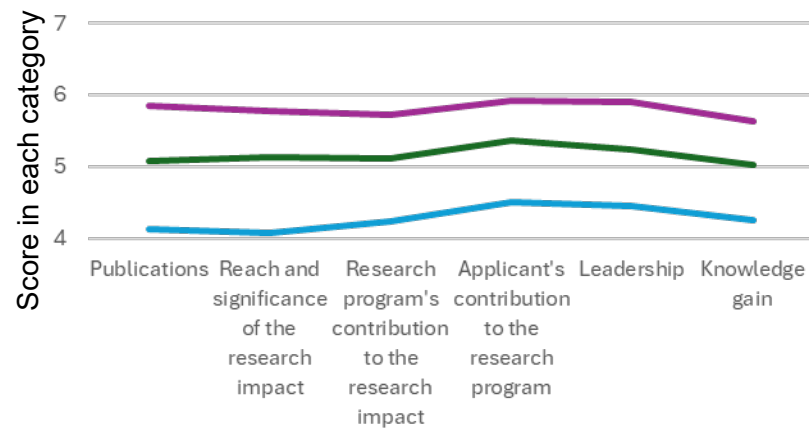
EL1 2025



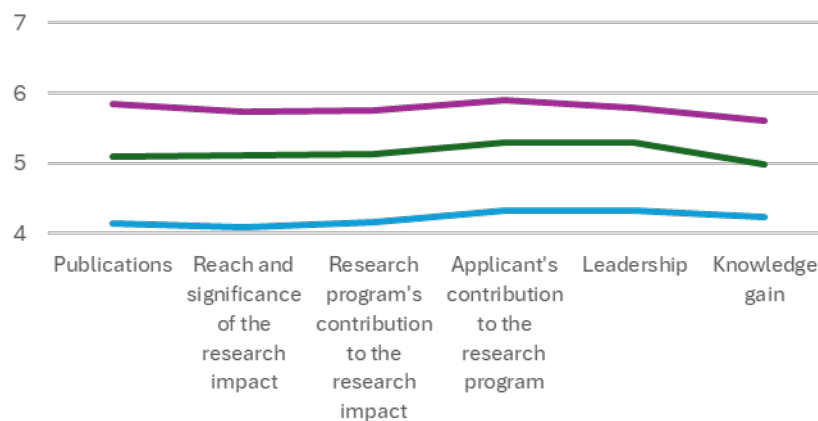
# National Scoring Profile (2023 – 2025) – EL2 applications

2023							2024							2025						
Number (%) of applications in category	Publications	Reach and significance of the research impact	Research program's contribution to the research impact	Applicant's contribution to the research program	Leadership	Knowledge gain	Number (%) of applications in category	Publications	Reach and significance of the research impact	Research program's contribution to the research impact	Applicant's contribution to the research program	Leadership	Knowledge gain	Number (%) of applications in category	Publications	Reach and significance of the research impact	Research program's contribution to the research impact	Applicant's contribution to the research program	Leadership	Knowledge gain
0 (0%)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0%)	0	0	0	0	0	0	1 (0.3%)	7	6.4	6.4	6.4	6.2	6.2
115 (33.0%)	5.842	5.774	5.718	5.913	5.897	5.63	103 (27.8%)	5.848	5.727	5.75	5.9	5.79	5.613	118 (30.8%)	5.822	5.772	5.762	5.908	5.842	5.6
220 (63.0%)	5.08	5.132	5.115	5.361	5.231	5.022	246 (66.3%)	5.098	5.12	5.122	5.299	5.287	4.989	245 (64.0%)	5.075	5.197	5.157	5.318	5.229	5.013
14 (4.0%)	4.129	4.071	4.243	4.5	4.457	4.257	21 (5.7%)	4.143	4.093	4.15	4.326	4.317	4.229	16 (4.2%)	4.091	4.288	4.238	4.284	4.309	4.359
0 (0%)	0	0	0	0	0	0	1 (0.3%)	3.6	3.2	2.8	3.2	3.2	2.4	3 (0.8%)	3.183	2.733	2.8	2.533	3.667	3.567
0 (0%)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0%)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0%)	0	0	0	0	0	0
0 (0%)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0%)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0%)	0	0	0	0	0	0

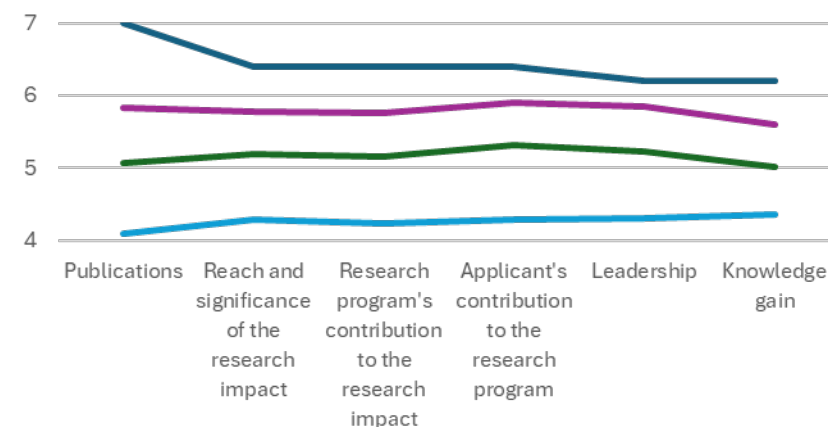
EL2 2023



EL2 2024



EL2 2025

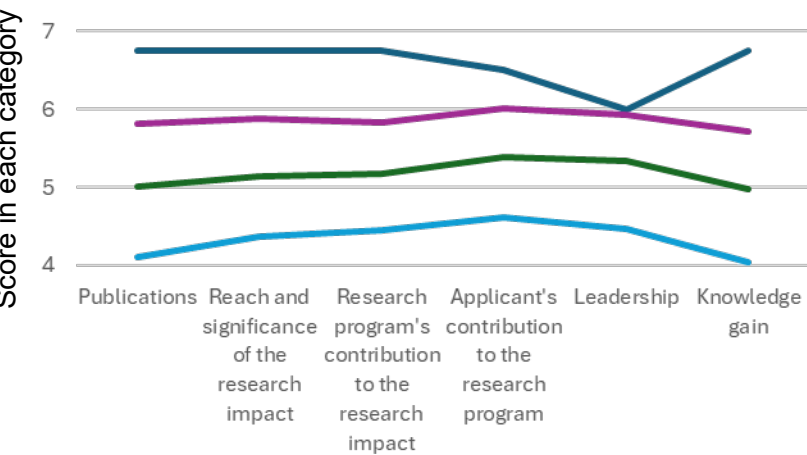


Overall score of 7 Overall score of 6 Overall score of 5 Overall score of 4

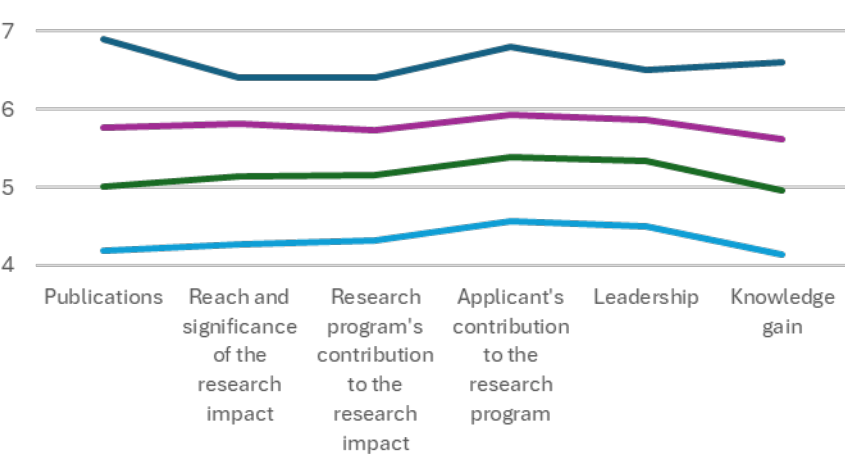
# National Scoring Profile (2021 – 2023) – Leadership A applications

2023							2024							2025						
Number (%) of applications in category	Publications	Reach and significance of the research impact	Research program's contribution to the research impact	Applicant's contribution to the research program	Leadership	Knowledge gain	Number (%) of applications in category	Publications	Reach and significance of the research impact	Research program's contribution to the research impact	Applicant's contribution to the research program	Leadership	Knowledge gain	Number (%) of applications in category	Publications	Reach and significance of the research impact	Research program's contribution to the research impact	Applicant's contribution to the research program	Leadership	Knowledge gain
1 (0.3%)	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.5	6	6.75	2 (0.6%)	6.9	6.4	6.4	6.8	6.5	6.6	1 (0.3%)	6.8	6.8	6.4	6.8	6.6	6.2
76 (24.4%)	5.812	5.883	5.826	6.011	5.924	5.709	98 (30.1%)	5.761	5.804	5.729	5.929	5.861	5.612	107 (33.2%)	5.739	5.898	5.851	6.014	5.957	5.625
208 (66.7%)	5.004	5.141	5.169	5.393	5.328	4.969	195 (59.8%)	5.011	5.134	5.156	5.389	5.335	4.952	196 (60.9%)	4.991	5.197	5.228	5.422	5.383	5.062
26 (8.3%)	4.1	4.362	4.446	4.615	4.462	4.038	31 (9.5%)	4.182	4.268	4.319	4.558	4.5	4.131	18 (5.6%)	4.033	4.289	4.4	4.478	4.333	4.222
1 (0.3%)	2.75	2.75	3	3.25	3.75	3.5	0 (0.0%)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0%)	0	0	0	0	0	0
0 (0.0%)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0%)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0%)	0	0	0	0	0	0
0 (0.0%)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0%)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0%)	0	0	0	0	0	0

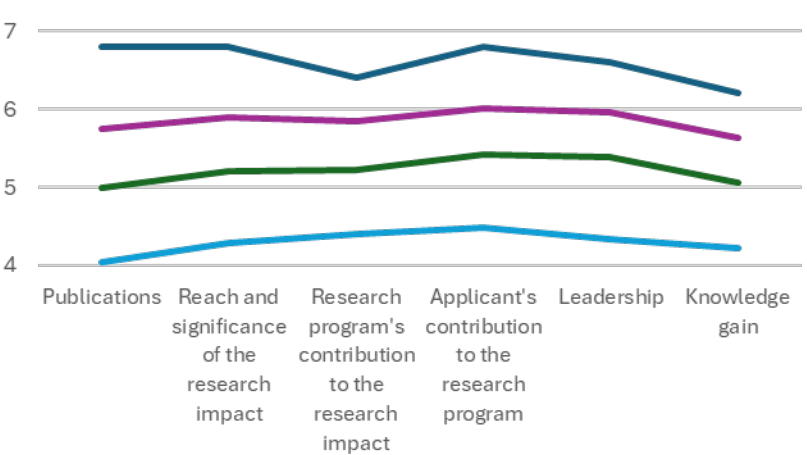
Leadership A 2023



Leadership A 2024



Leadership A 2025

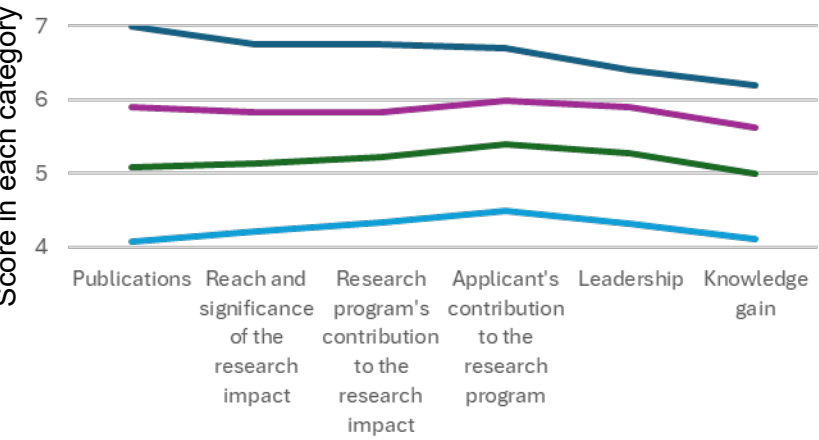


Overall score of 7 Overall score of 6 Overall score of 5 Overall score of 4

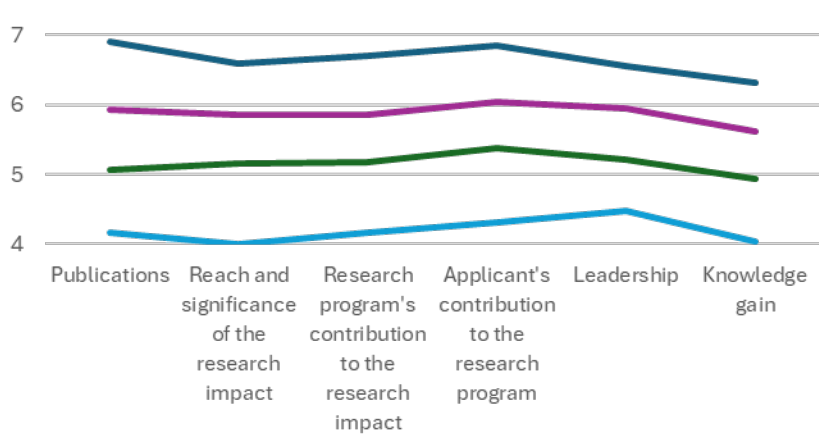
# National Scoring Profile (2023 – 2025) – Leadership B applications

2023							2024							2025						
Number (%) of applications in category	Publications	Reach and significance of the research impact	Research program's contribution to the research impact	Applicant's contribution to the research program	Leadership	Knowledge gain	Number (%) of applications in category	Publications	Reach and significance of the research impact	Research program's contribution to the research impact	Applicant's contribution to the research program	Leadership	Knowledge gain	Number (%) of applications in category	Publications	Reach and significance of the research impact	Research program's contribution to the research impact	Applicant's contribution to the research program	Leadership	Knowledge gain
4 (1.3%)	7	6.75	6.75	6.7	6.4	6.2	8 (2.1%)	6.9	6.6	6.7	6.85	6.55	6.325	5 (1.3%)	6.92	6.68	6.64	6.6	6.68	6.44
129 (40.3%)	5.905	5.835	5.825	5.997	5.909	5.617	177 (45.5%)	5.925	5.861	5.863	6.05	5.949	5.615	211 (53.0%)	5.862	5.903	5.89	6.029	5.982	5.657
162 (50.6%)	5.093	5.132	5.232	5.401	5.272	4.998	187 (48.1%)	5.068	5.166	5.183	5.387	5.211	4.934	156 (39.2%)	5.028	5.153	5.234	5.39	5.232	4.959
24 (7.5%)	4.071	4.223	4.335	4.5	4.315	4.108	16 (4.1%)	4.163	4	4.163	4.313	4.475	4.038	26 (6.5%)	3.994	4.333	4.223	4.371	4.387	4.154
1 (0.3%)	3.2	3.8	3.4	4.4	3.6	2	1 (0.3%)	3.2	3	3.8	4.2	3.8	3	0 (0.0%)	0	0	0	0	0	0
0 (0.0%)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0%)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0%)	0	0	0	0	0	0
0 (0.0%)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0%)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0.0%)	0	0	0	0	0	0

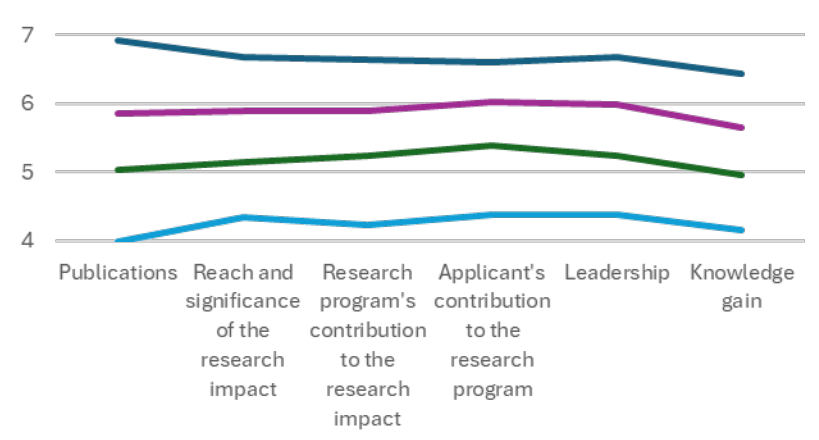
Leadership B 2023



Leadership B 2024



Leadership B 2025



— Overall score of 7 
 — Overall score of 6 
 — Overall score of 5 
 — Overall score of 4

# Publication Profile of Successful 2021-2025 NHMRC Applicants (National Data)

	h-index (average)					Citation count (average)					Pubs by author (average)					Citations per pub (average)				
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
EL1	12	13	12	13	14	846	1,895	1,047	958	1,006	35	29	28	32	32	21	41	33	32	31
EL2	21	24	22	23.378	23	2,256	3,425	2,464	5,278	2,876	81	66	66	65	67	38	49	37	64	42
L1	38	34	35	32.5	36	6,332	6,530	6,200	8,893	9,536	176	108	109	111	125	43	66	68	72	94
L2	47	46	47	50.382	53	9,337	11,637	12,781	15,303	14,011	248	196	164	177	238	36	70	72	93	68
L3	66	66	66	73.237	76	20,133	19,497	24,081	25,497	37,195	368	268	302	359	368	55	74	76	72	94

*\*Interpret with care; averages may be skewed by outliers*

# Publication data – overall quality & international collaboration (2023-2025) National Data

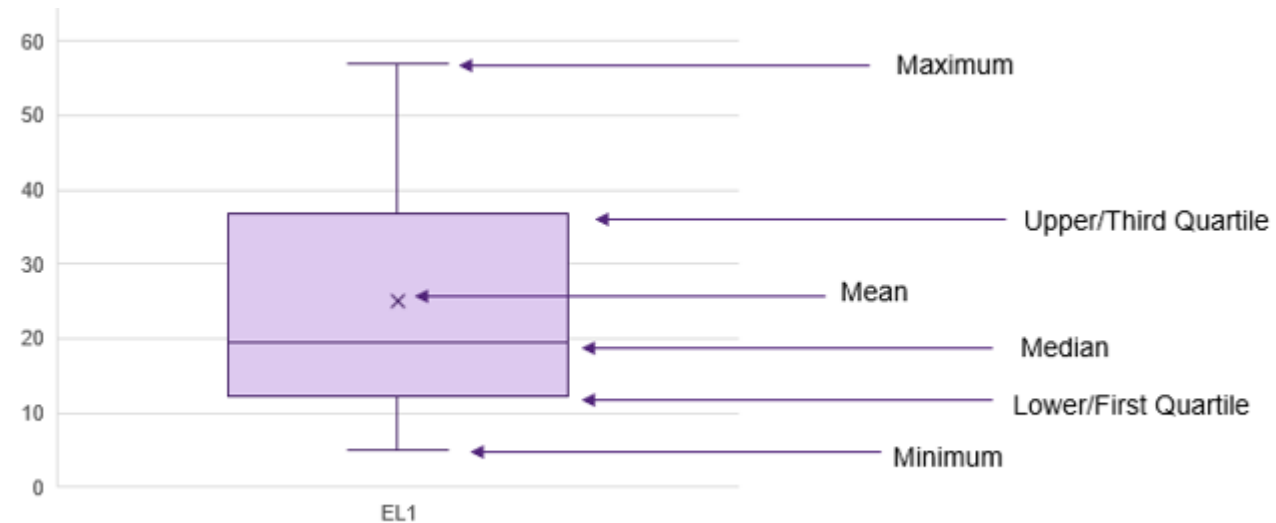
These data show depth of quality of the publication profile.

It is not enough to have one or two good papers; that quality must translate through your publication profile.

	Outputs in Top 1 citation percentile* (%)			Outputs in Top 5 citation percentile* (%)			Outputs in Top 10 citation percentile* (%)			Publications in Q1 Journal Quartile by CiteScore* (%)			International Collaboration (%)			Academic- Corporate Collaboration (%)		
	2023	2024	2025	2023	2024	2025	2023	2024	2025	2023	2024	2025	2023	2024	2025	2023	2024	2025
EL1	5	4	3	14	15	14	23	24	26	74	76	79	44	47	48	4	4	3
EL2	4	4	4	14	17	15	24	27	26	78	79	79	56	48	54	3	4	5
L1	6	5	6	18	16	18	30	27	28	82	77	78	56	44	57	7	7	6
L2	6	7	5	17	20	15	28	32	26	80	83	78	51	52	50	7	7	5
L3	6	5	5	16	16	15	27	26	25	80	79	81	50	48	51	6	6	6

*\*Field-weighted*

# How to Read a Box & Whisker



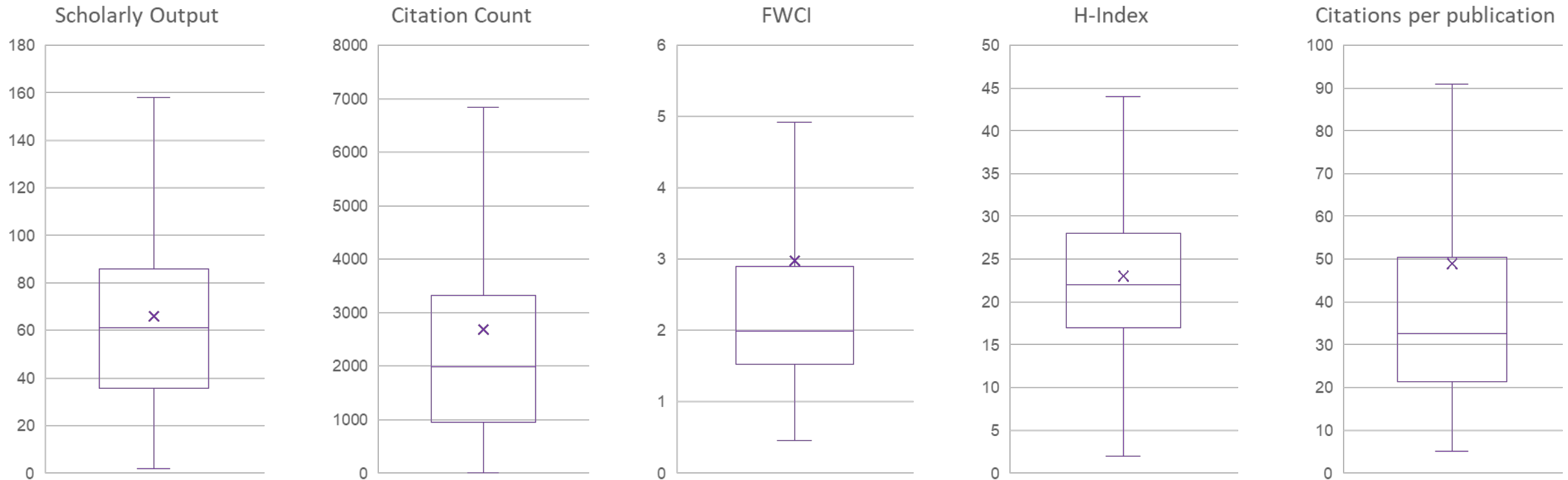
# Publication Benchmarking – Successful EL1 Recipients (2023–2025, National Data)



*Outliers excluded for ease of reading*

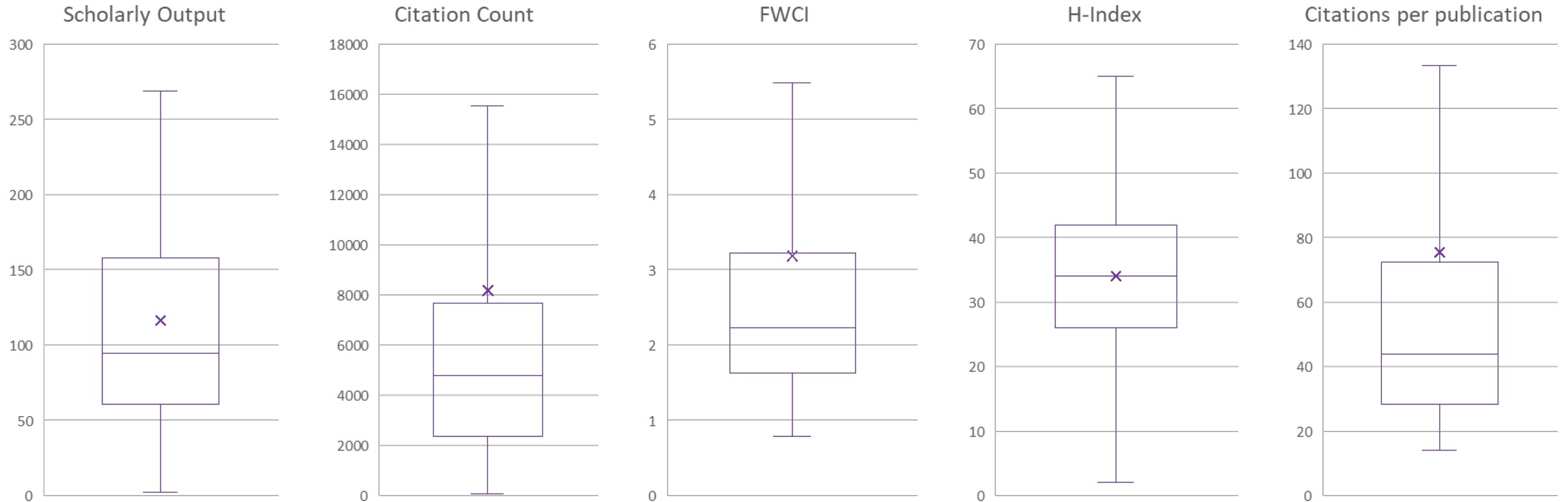


# Publication Benchmarking – Successful EL2 Recipients (2023–2025, National Data)



*Outliers excluded for ease of reading*

# Publication Benchmarking – Successful L1 Recipients (2023–2025, National Data)



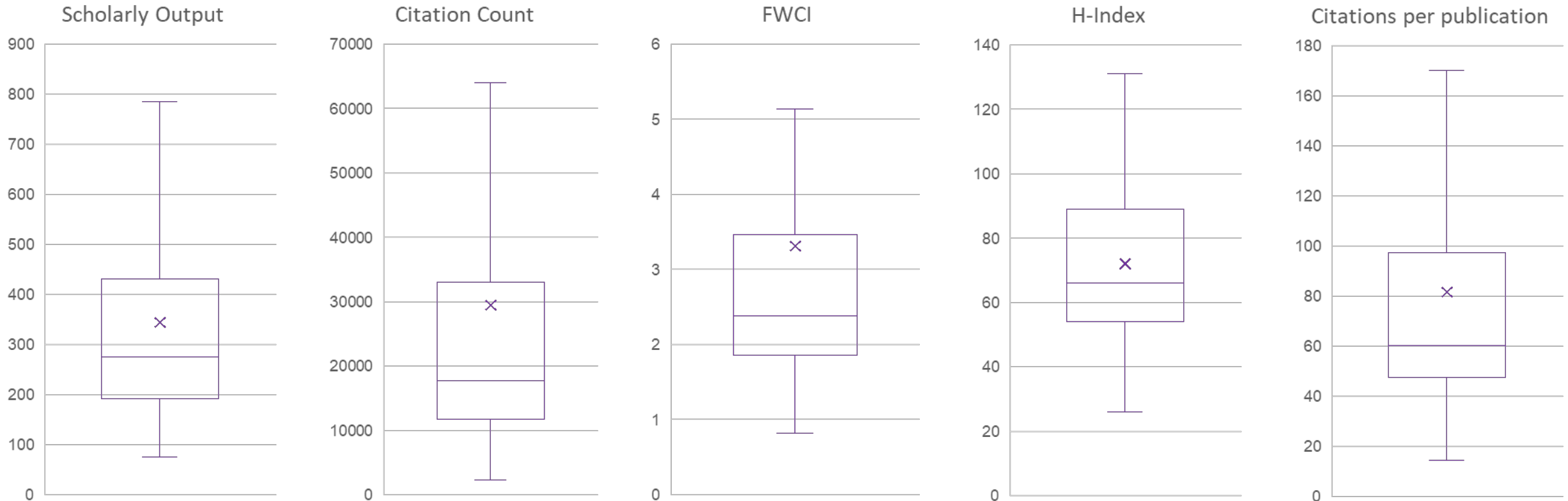
*Outliers excluded for ease of reading*

## Publication Benchmarking – Successful L2 Recipients (2023–2025, National Data)



*Outliers excluded for ease of reading*

# Publication Benchmarking – Successful L3 Recipients (2023–2025, National Data)



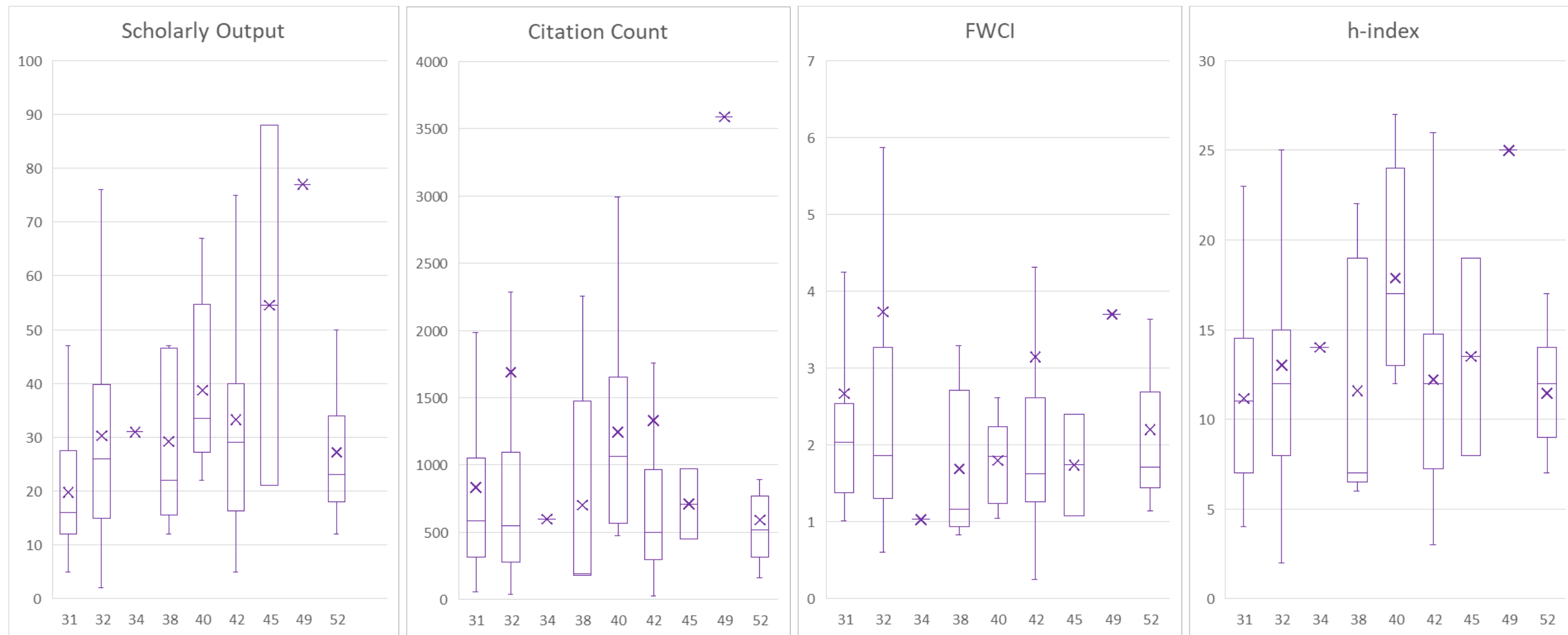
*Outliers excluded for ease of reading*

# Fields of Research (FoR) codes

The following slides offer publication benchmarking at each level by Field of Research codes

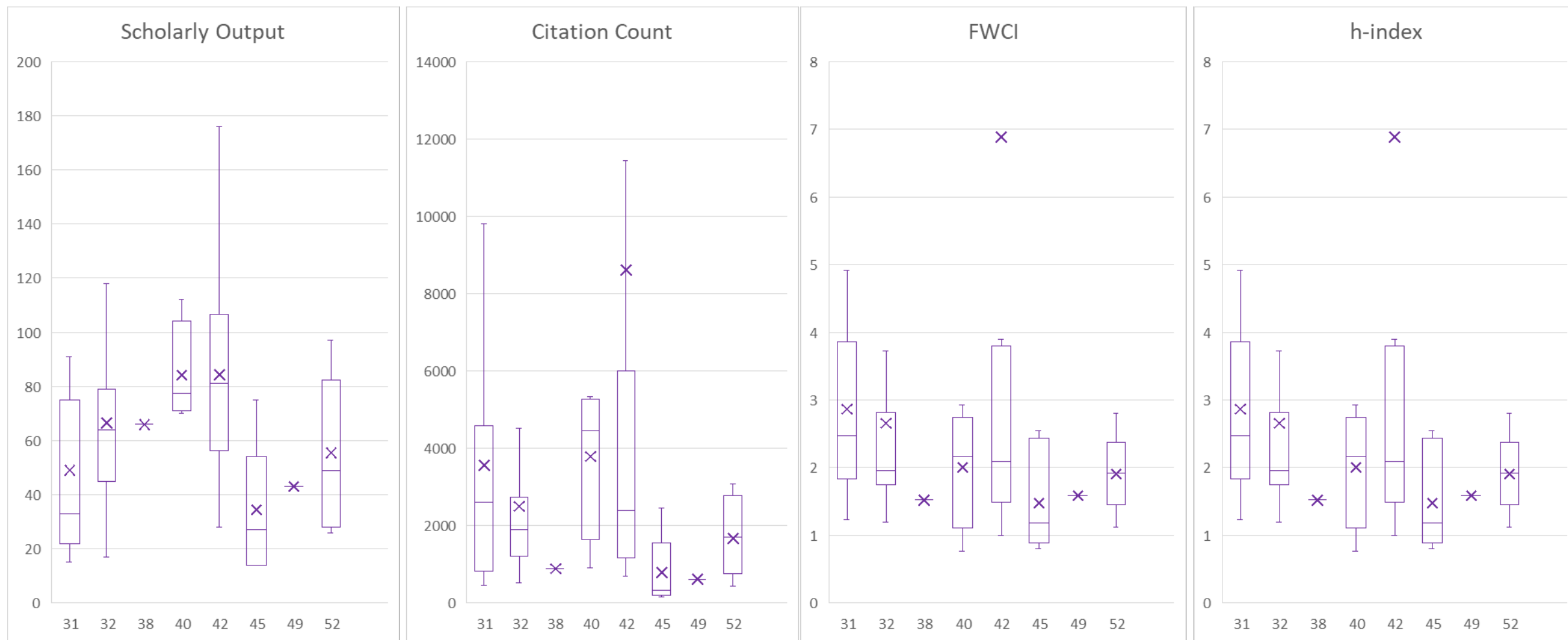
FoR 2020 2-digit code	FoR Division
31	BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES
32	BIOMEDICAL AND CLINICAL SCIENCES
34	CHEMICAL SCIENCES
38	ECONOMICS
40	ENGINEERING
41	ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES
42	HEALTH SCIENCES
45	INDIGENOUS STUDIES
49	MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES
52	PSYCHOLOGY

# Publication Benchmarking by FoR – EL1 (2022–2024, National Data)



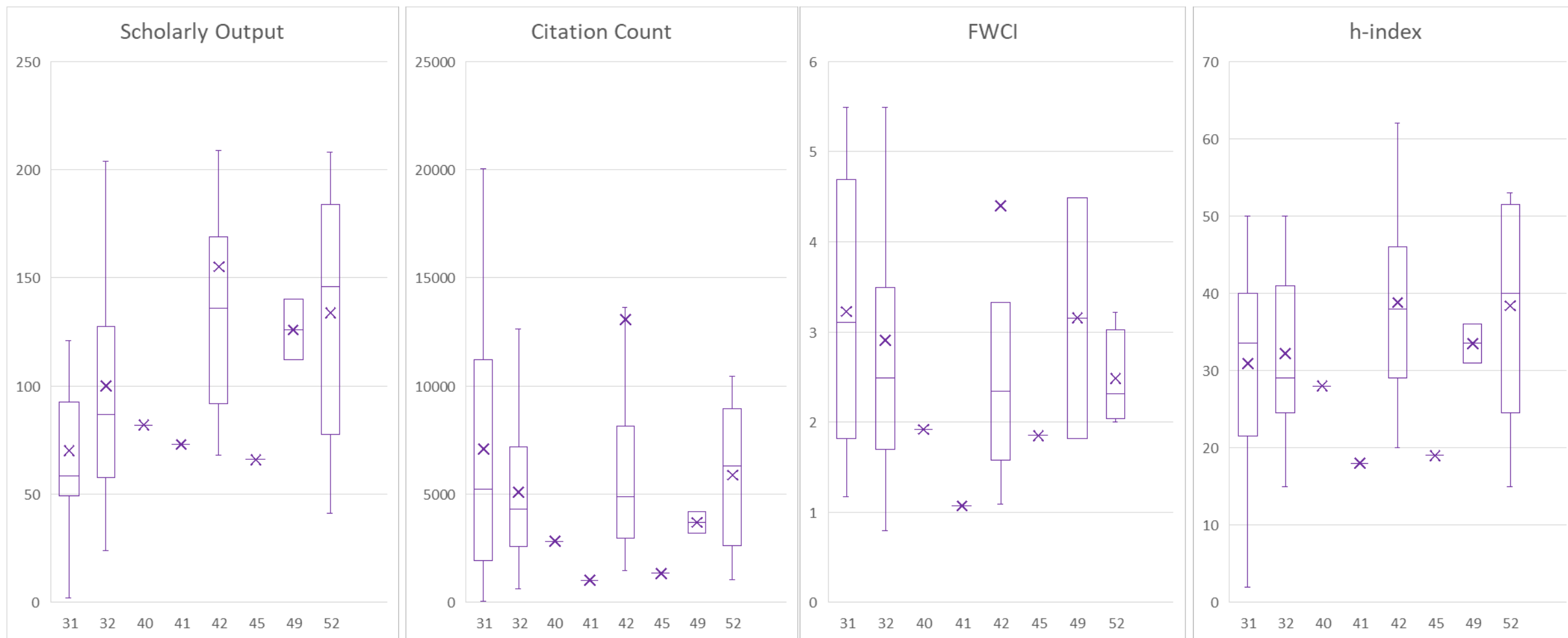
*Outliers excluded for ease of reading*

# Publication Benchmarking by FoR – EL2 (2022–2024, National Data)



*Outliers excluded for ease of reading*

# Publication Benchmarking by FoR – L1 (2022–2024, National Data)



*Outliers excluded for ease of reading*



# Publication Benchmarking by FoR – L2 (2022–2024, National Data)



*Outliers excluded for ease of reading*

# Publication Benchmarking by FoR – L3 (2022–2024, National Data)



*Outliers excluded for ease of reading*

# Publication Profile and the Top 10 Publications

## **Your publication profile matters.**

- Benchmark to give yourself an idea of competitiveness and choose your top 10 carefully.
- Make sure your top 10 demonstrate quality, peer recognition, outcomes and impact.
- Your overarching statement must position your reviewer within the context of your top 10. Use these characters carefully to pitch to your track record within the context in which you undertake your research.

## Impact and Leadership

- Strong scores in impact and leadership can carry an application across the cut-off if knowledge gain is low.
- Impact Statements that focus on a specific research program appear to be better received, so we recommend not structuring this as a career summary (per comms Grant Reviewers).
- Leadership - articulate what you contributed not just what roles you held and what was achieved
- See the [UQ R&I website](#) for helpful guides and resources.

## Knowledge Gain (30%)

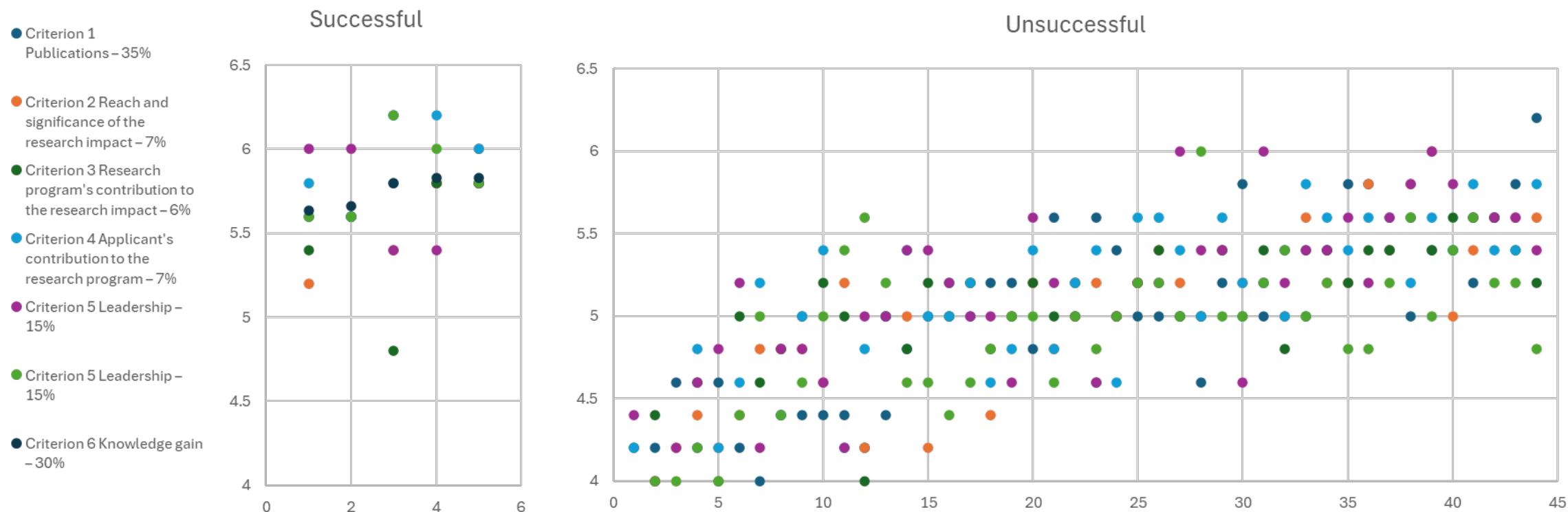
- The reviewers may not be from your field – cognate but not expert.
- Therefore:
  - Do not underestimate the benefits of a well-crafted, engaging application that appeals to a broad audience
  - Do not confuse broad appeal with reduced ambition of the proposed program of work
- In all rounds, for all categories and levels, the lowest scores have typically been in Knowledge Gain, so addressing the Assessment Criteria in the project description is fundamental.
- See the [UQ R&I website](#) for helpful guides and resources.

# Scores across assessment criteria need to be tight

- Successful applicants have paid attention to all parts of their proposal.
- You have a greater chance of success if your scores are strong across the board and there are no major weaknesses.
- All sections matter. For example, strong scores in impact and leadership can carry an application across the cut-off if knowledge gain is low.

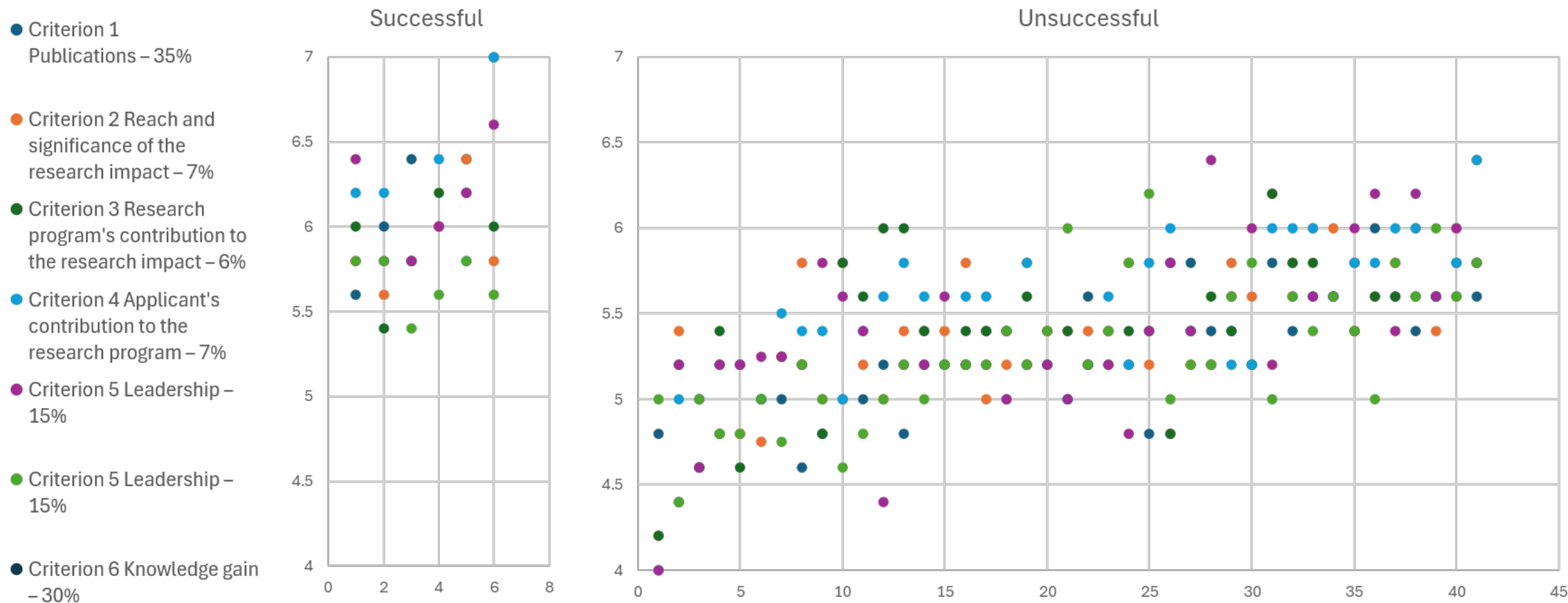
See next slides....

# UQ Scores 2025 Emerging Leadership 1 (Cut-off 5.671)



*NB. Some points are overlapping.*

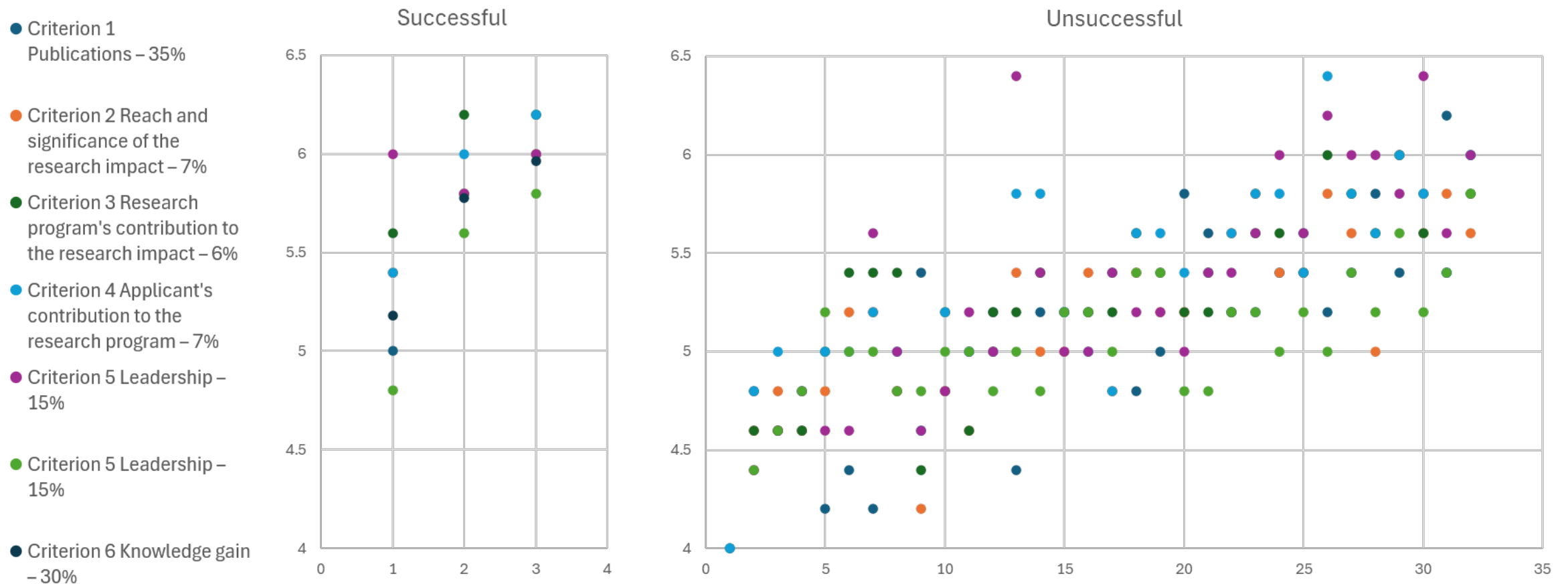
# UQ Scores 2025 Emerging Leadership 2 (5.884 cut-off)



*NB. Some points are overlapping.*

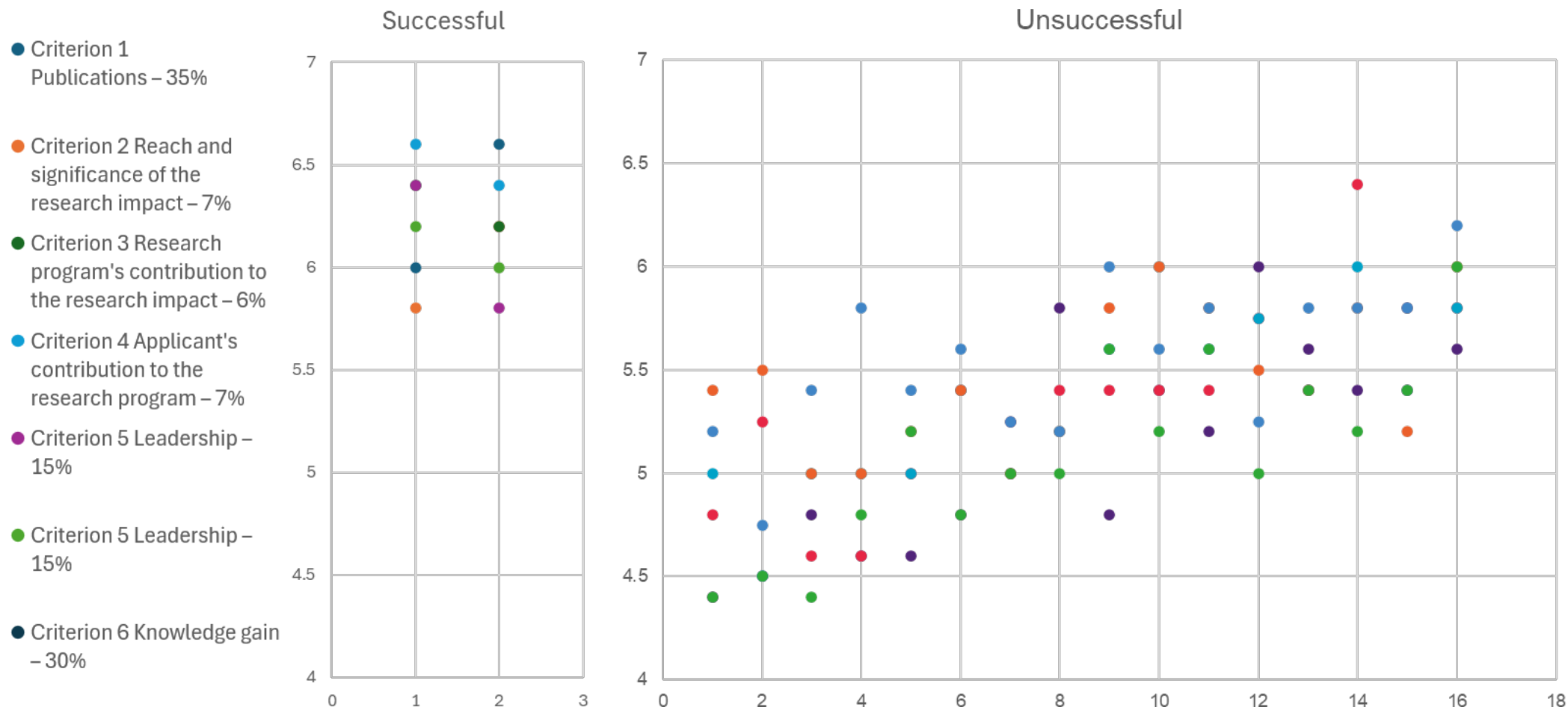


# UQ Scores 2025 Leadership 1 (A: 5.774; B: 6.038, cut-offs)



*NB. Some points are overlapping.*

# UQ Scores 2025 Leadership 2 (A: 5.774; B: 6.038, cut-offs)

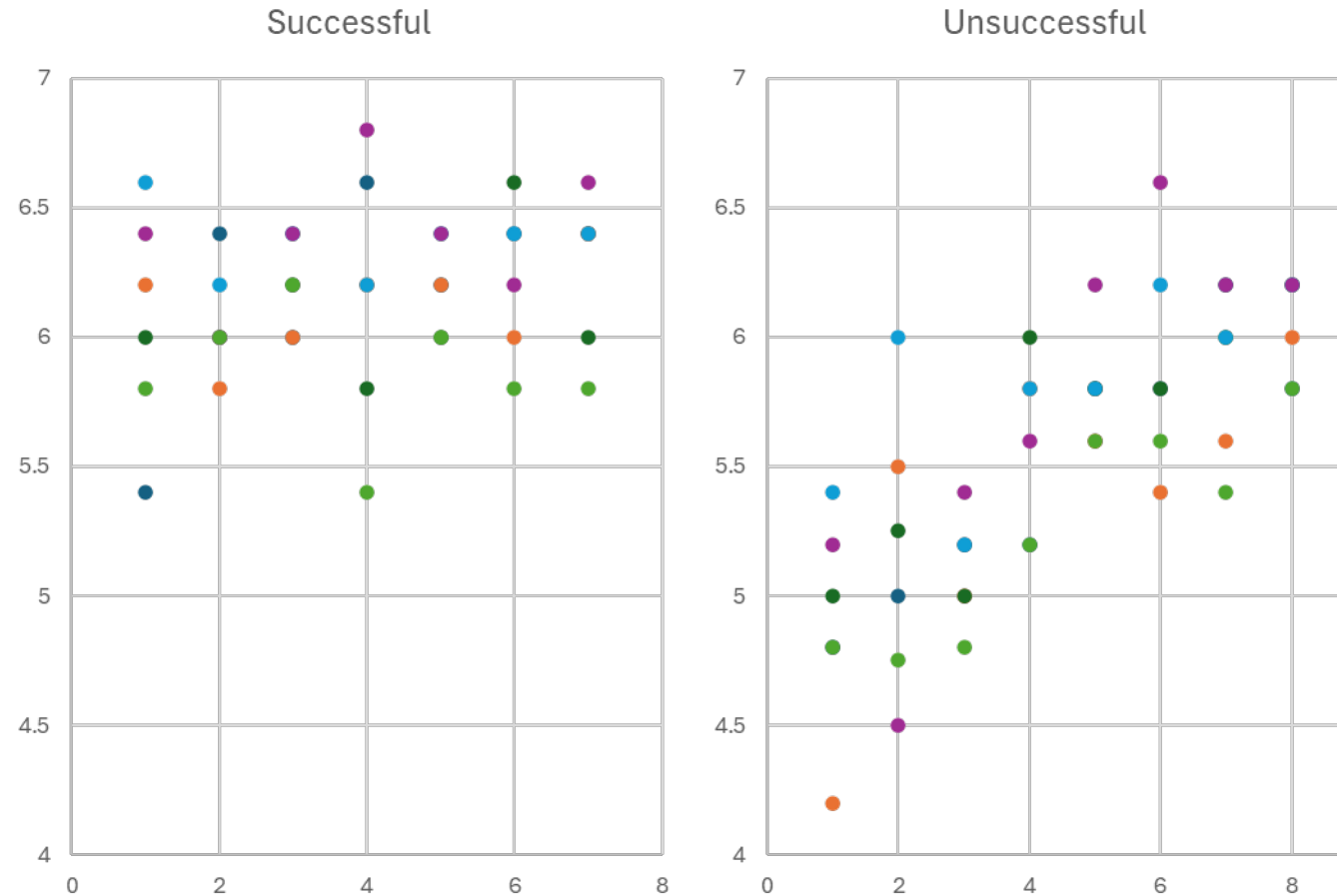


*NB. Some points are overlapping.*

CRICOS code 00025B

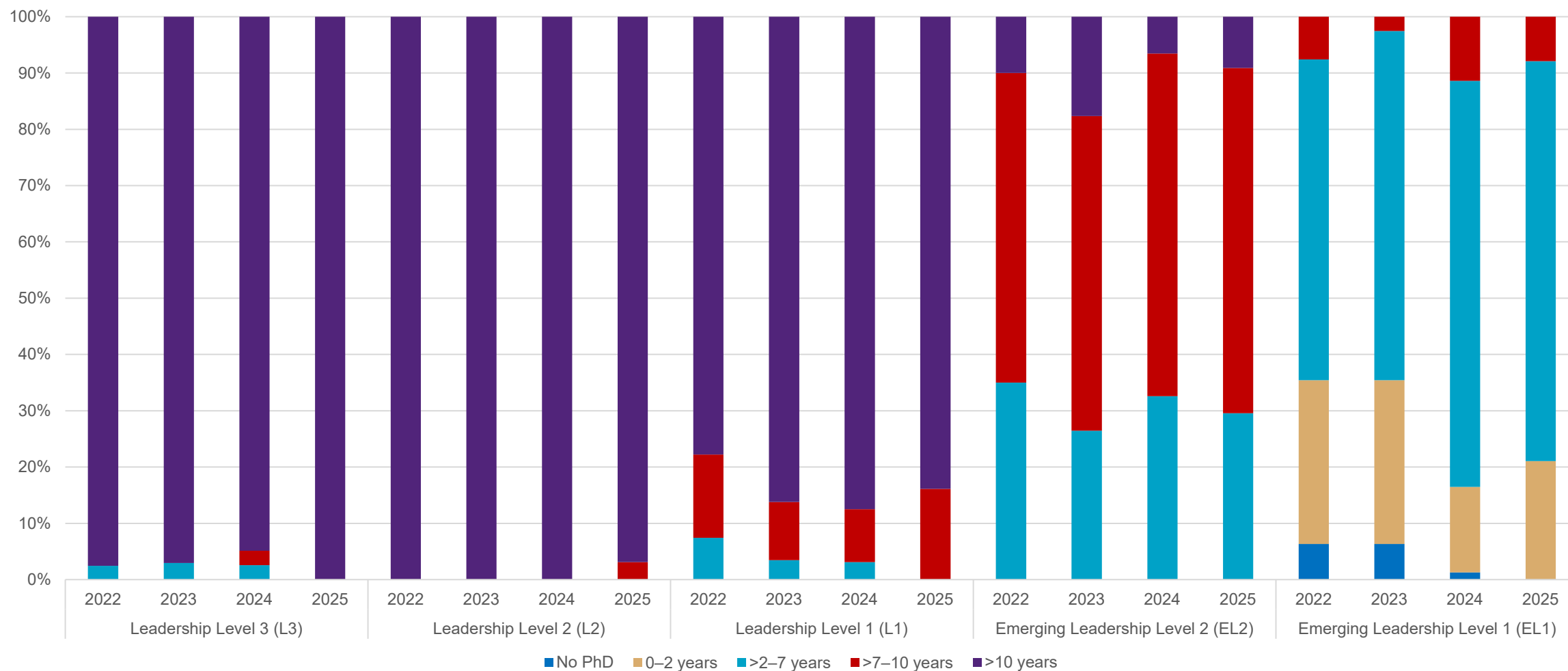
# UQ Scores 2023 Leadership 3 (A: 5.736; B: 5.864, cut-offs)

- Criterion 1 Publications – 35%
- Criterion 2 Reach and significance of the research impact – 7%
- Criterion 3 Research program's contribution to the research impact – 6%
- Criterion 4 Applicant's contribution to the research program – 7%
- Criterion 5 Leadership – 15%
- Criterion 5 Leadership – 15%
- Criterion 6 Knowledge gain – 30%



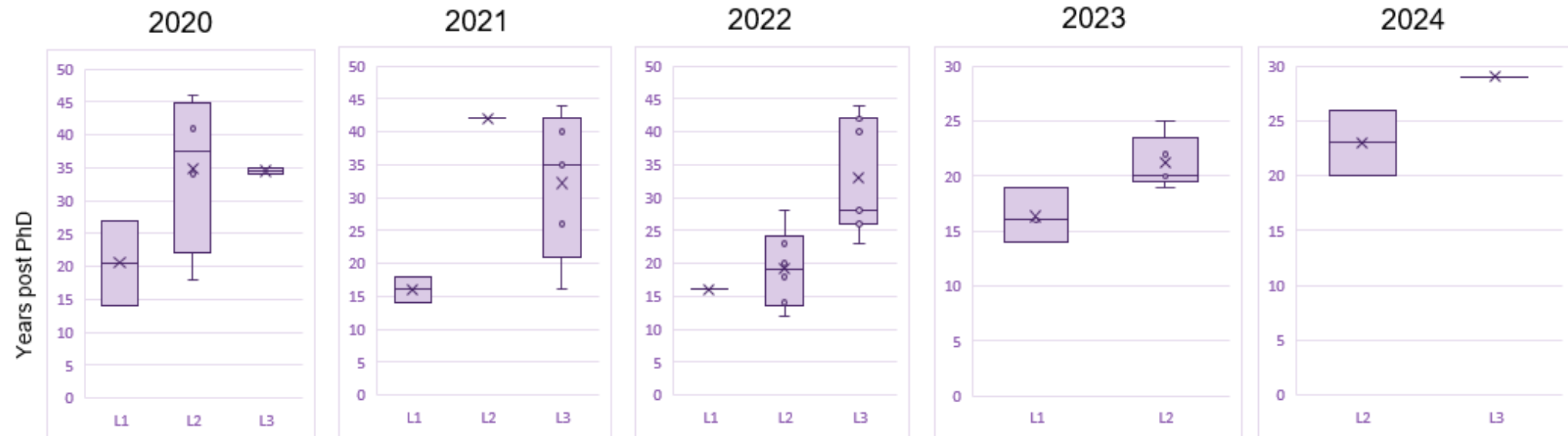
*NB. Some points are overlapping.*

# National Investigator Grant Outcomes by Career Stage 2022-2025



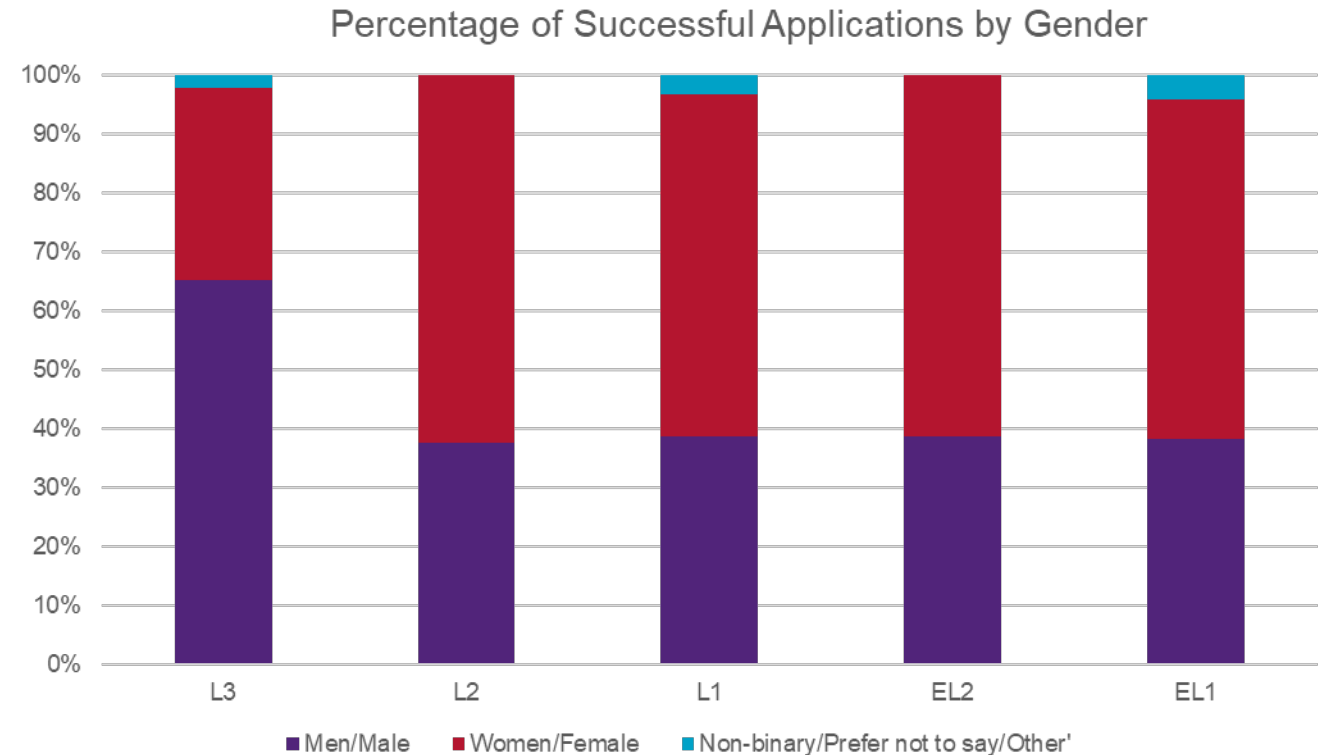
# UQ Investigator Grant Outcomes by Career Stage - Leadership

- The NHMRC does not provide individual data besides the batched data as shown in the previous slide; UQ data is used for analysis and interpretation.
- There is fluctuation in the data as the NHMRC Guidelines are relatively relaxed in the expectations for application into a Leadership level.



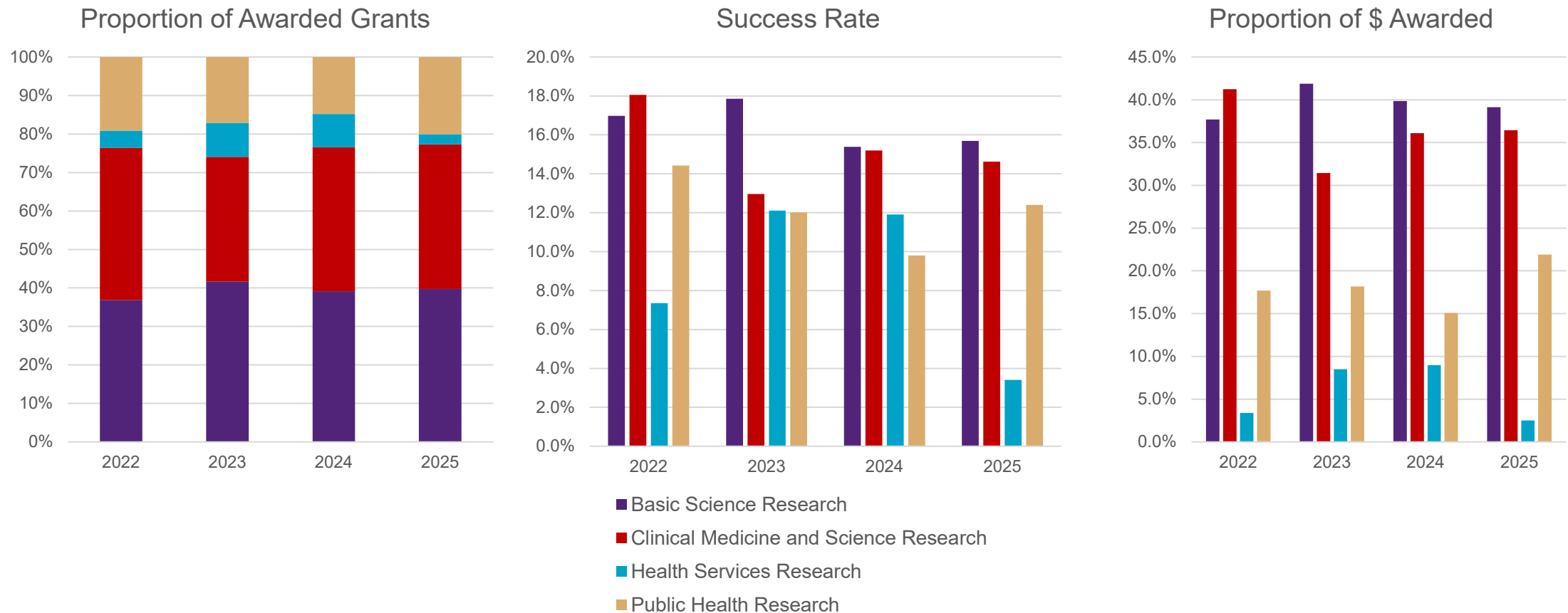
# 2025 Investigator Grant Outcomes by Gender

- From the 2024 round non-binary researchers are included alongside women in both gender equity measures.
- The NHMRC introduced measures to try to address the under-representation of female researchers in the L3 category. Details of the [NHMRC Gender Equity Policy](#) can be found [here](#).
- Nationally, female researchers remain under-represented in the L3 category.



# National Success by Broad Area of Research (2022–2025)

- Do not be discouraged if you are not applying into a clinical field.



# Caveat emptor

***Use the data wisely and inform yourself with peer review and mentorship***





# UQ R&I contacts:

nhmrc@research.uq.edu.au

## UQ R&I webpage:

<https://research.uq.edu.au/research-support/research-management/funding-schemes/national-health-medical-research-council-nhmrc/nhmrc-investigator-grants>