



Freedom2Research

Researchers are supposed to be free to choose their own research questions, to perform whatever kind of investigations they want, to publish the results they gain without anyone meddling (except their peers). However, as the Freedom2Research tool reveals, a great number of "forces" have an impact on the extent to which you really are independent.

What can have an impact on my research?

Similar to any physical object, there are always forces that have an impact on you when you perform research. If you know which ones they are, their strength and their current direction, you can make good use of them or handle their impact.

Funding is one of the most evident forces, and in combination with knowledge about your competition it will give you insights into both opportunities and challenges. Even if you're not into patenting, a survey of patent databases may give you a view of which researchers and companies are active in which areas. Trends in public opinion and new laws and regulations are other examples of forces that can have an impact on both methods and focus.

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- Applying** for research funding and wanting to know more about potential competitors and partners
- Attracting new long-term **partners** from academia, private companies, the public sector and NGOs
- Developing new ways for your research to be **utilised**, for example through new kinds of intermediaries
- Rethinking your **image** on the web regarding how you frame your research and how it can be applied and what kind of value it provides to society
- Looking into new areas with which to intersect in order to increase **citations**
- Performing a **risk analysis** regarding methods central to the research

What does the Freedom2Research tool consist of?

The Freedom2Research (F2R) tool consists of three parts: (1) support in defining your research area, (2) a set of questions that helps you to survey a larger area than you probably otherwise would when looking for relevant research material and partners/competitors, and (3) a list of useful Internet---based tools and information sources.

F2R is a tool that aims to help individual researchers and research groups to identify opportunities and challenges in an ever---changing world. Such an analysis is an excellent part of a yearly innovation strategy planning process and can be performed by both individuals and groups.



1. Research Definition

You probably already have some keywords that you use when searching for relevant information or categorising your own articles, but here we try to widen the scope in order to identify the trends that can be found in closely related areas.



2. Intelligence Questions

Who funds your research, today and tomorrow? Who are your competitors at universities and companies? Who is using the same methods and materials as you? Is there any new legislation on the way? How about public opinion, is it shifting? And many more questions...



3. Tools and Information Sources

The answers to these questions can be found in structured sources such as reference and patent databases as well as in the growing number of social media sites. You can also use smart tools, such as RSS and Twitter, to keep you constantly in the loop.

How is the Freedom2Research tool development conducted?

The F2R tool was initially developed based on experiences of similar tasks. Later on we started to collaborate with the Chalmers Library in order to refine it. We have also begun looking into how parts of the surveillance and analysis work can be automated.