https://dspace.org/

The adoption of ORCID within WITS University

Mafisa, Mamello

2026-10
University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg
https://hdl.handle.net/10539/50241
Mafisa, M. (2026). The adoption of ORCID within WITS University. [Presentation, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg]. WIReDSpace. https://hdl.handle.net/10539/50241

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

Wits is #1 in Africa
No Surveys. No Perceptions. Just Facts.
READ MORE

The adoption of ORCID within WITS University

Mr Mamello Mafisa
Wits University, Research Innovation Office, South Africa

INTRODUCTION

There are several persistent ID (PID) used by researchers, such as ORCID, Google Scholar, Scopus ID, and Web of Science Researcher ID that enables accurate attribution of research outputs, improved discoverability, and interoperability between systems. ORCID (Open Researcher and Contributor Identifier) is a non-proprietary 16-digit alphanumeric code that uniquely identifies researchers and enables users to record their research professional activities.

This case study examines the journey embarked by the University of Witwatersrand (WITS) in the adoption of ORCID to address external reporting, researcher visibility, and institutional benchmarking. The aim of the study was to investigate how ORCID could be effectively implemented and what change management strategies were used to achieve sustainable adoption among WITS researchers .

METHODS

A mixed-methods case study design was employed with real observations during the ORCID implementation targeting academic staff between 2020 and 2026. The implementation process was analyzed and assesed across two phases focusing on ORCID data quality,change management, and adoption rate. The study combined:

Quantitative data

•Number of authenticated ORCID iDs linked to academic staff on the Human Resource system annually.

Qualitative data

•Stakeholder feedback from the Research Office, Marketing, Library, Information Systems, and Faculty Human Resource representatives

•Project implementation documents, reports, and internal communication platforms.

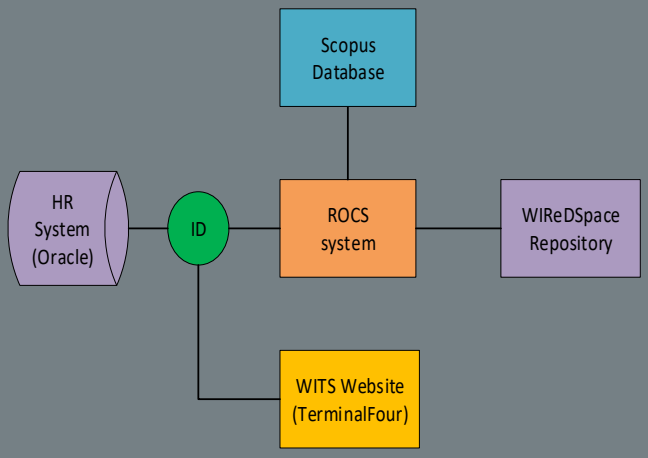


Figure 1. Wits University ORCID integration

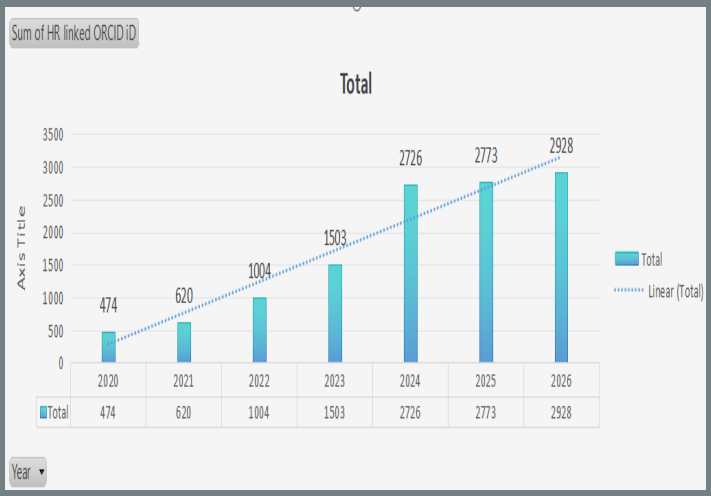
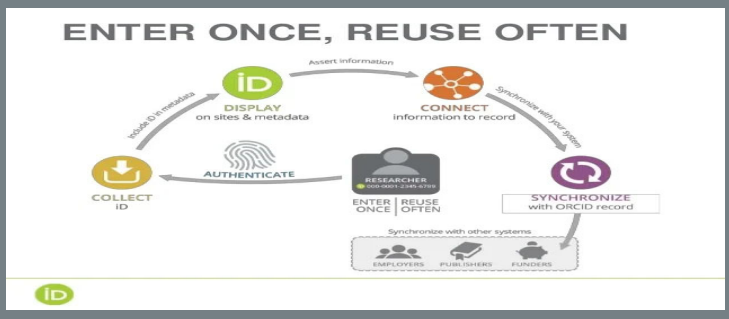


Figure 2. Wits University ORCID iD linked staff statistics

BEST PRACTICE FOR ORCID INTEGRATION (Orcid,2026)

- ✓ **Collect authenticated ORCID iDs only!**
- ✓ **Display authenticated iDs.**
- ✓ **Add data to your researchers' ORCID records.**
- ✓ **Read data from your researchers' ORCID record,**
- ✓ **Synchronize the information flow between your system and ORCID.**



KEY RESULTS

- ✓ **ORCID-linked researchers grew by 621% between 2020-2026.**
- ✓ **Automated synchronization enhanced researcher visibility.**
- ✓ **Cross-functional collaboration was critical to adoption success.**
- ✓ **ORCID strengthened institutional research publication reporting.**
- ✓ **Authenticated ORCID sign-in improved data quality and reduced reporting errors.**

Benefit	Outcome
✓ Researcher identification	✓ Improved accuracy
✓ Reporting	✓ Improved ROCS and DHET reporting
✓ Publication visibility	✓ Automated display of researcher publications on WITS website
✓ System integration	✓ Greater interoperability
✓ Institutional profiling	✓ Enhanced researcher discoverability

RESULTS

Phase 1 of the ORCID implementation project provided a free text field for updating ORCID iD within the Human Resource (HR) system. It resulted in poor data quality after the launch because inputs were not validated, and this caused data inconsistency when reporting to the Department of Higher Education & Training (DHET) using the Research Outputs Collection System (ROCS). According to 2024 Research Outputs sector report,Wits accounted for 7.72% of the total accredited units of research publications.

Phase 2 of the ORCID roll-out introduced an internal ORCID portal that authenticated and authorized users with the external ORCID website as shown in Figure 1, and ORCID iDs were automatically updated overnight into the Human Resource system, which resulted in consistent and improved data quality. Through this integration, the researcher's publications were automatically displayed on the Wits public-facing website to increase researcher visibility.

Figure 2 shows that linked ORCID iD has increased from 471 in 2020 to 2928 in 2026, out of a total of over 5000 Wits academic staff.There was a collaborative communication effort by faculty human resources, marketing research office, and library staff that encouraged researchers to link their ORCID iDs. Maintaining correct affiliation of ORCID iD helps institutions with University Ranking systems.

CONCLUSION

ORCID plays an important role in the publication life cycle, enabling researchers to link their publications and funding received throughout their careers, and allowing information sharing across systems. The Wits University ORCID implementation demonstrates that successful ORCID adoption requires sustained institutional change management efforts and active monitoring.

REFERENCES

1.Integration Best Practices, Retrieved June 2026, from https://info.orcid.org/documentation/integration-best-practices/

2.Research Visibility Platforms, Retrieved August 2026, https://libguides.wits.ac.za/c.php?g=677037&p=11413136

3.ORCID guide, retrieved April 2026, from https://libguides.wits.ac.za/c.php?g=677037&p=11413134

4.The sector report on evaluation of the 2024 Universities' research outputs (2026, March). Retrieved July 2026, from https://www.dhet.gov.za/Policy%20and%20Development%20Support/2024%20Research%20Outputs%20Sector%20Report.pdf