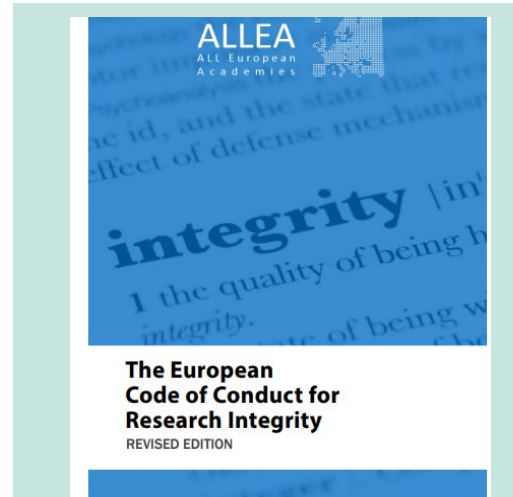


Building European Research Integrity Governance Models for the future

Isidoros (Dorian) KARATZAS

EUROPEAN RESEARCH ETHICS and INTEGRITY LANDSCAPE

Research Integrity
at national and EU
Level: from
traditional to new
roles

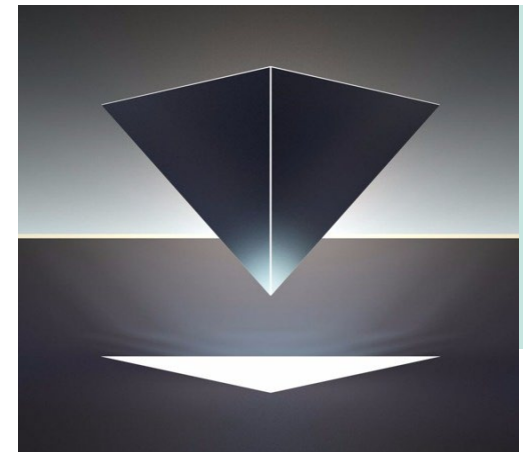


**ERA Policy
Agenda
2025-2027 and
ERA Action 18**

Current
Developments

Horizon Europe
RE and RI
Obligations in the
Grant Agreement

- Ethics and Integrity Support Projects
- Project SIMPLIFY



key stakeholders
and support to
policy

Conditions towards an Integrity roadmap

1. The Systems we have in place have a price tag (funds and human resources)

2. While designing future policies, we should not forget the old challenges (PFF)

3. Expanding definitions of RI and RCR

4. In designing new policies/strategies we should remain flexible (targeted flexibility). Try-Fail-Learn-Try again

5. Justified failure should be embraced. Fear of failure is a hurdle in adopting innovative and collaborative strategies

6. Identify the weak links in the system. Are they constant? Do they involve with a changing research environment

7. New technologies (new challenges) are a catalyst for improvement – INCO element

8. Rethink/redesign the communication and reward systems

9. Adopt policy language when RI talks to power

10. In designing research policies, RI experts must have a seat on the table.

11. Promoting RI and RCR is more difficult but (possibly cheaper, also in social terms) than punishment

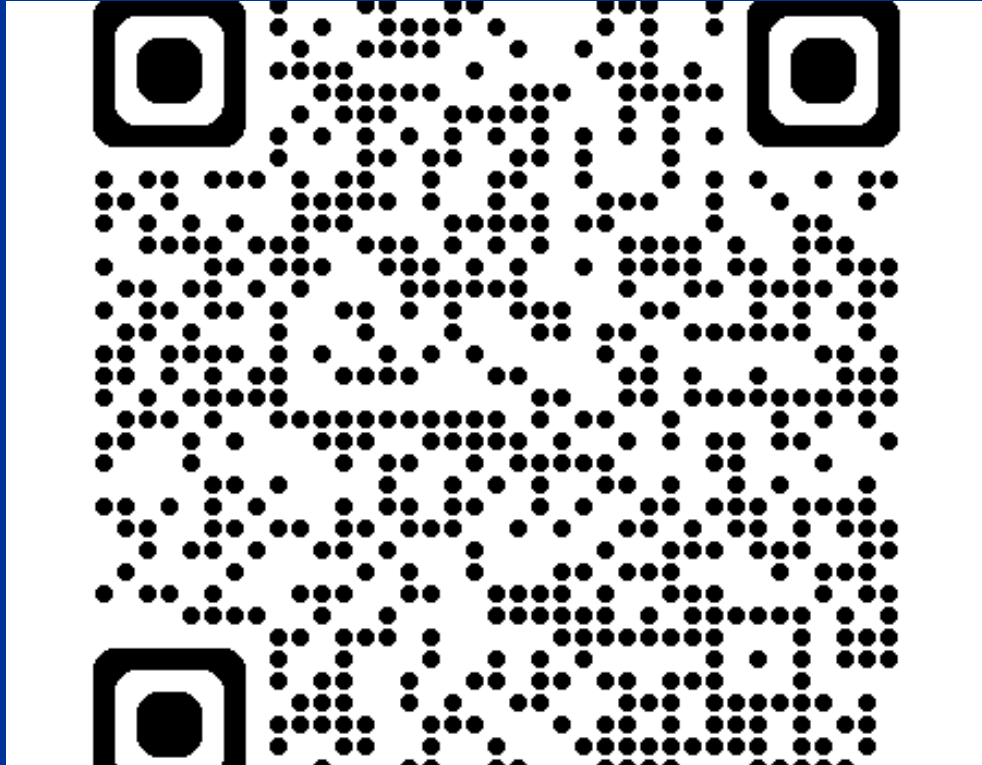
The Bourbon raser

The Bourbons forget nothing and learn nothing

The research community also remember (almost) everything in RI and must put lessons learnt into realistic innovative policies that talk to power



The ERA Policy



Pact for R&I

long-term vision for ERA

ERA Policy Agenda 2025-2027

3-year aspiration and mission

**Policy
Narrative**

**ERA
Structural
Policies**

**ERA
Actions**

THE PACT

1. VALUES AND PRINCIPLES FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

(1) Agree on a common set of values and principles for research and innovation in the Union as set out below, and apply them in their internal research and innovation systems, in close collaboration with stakeholders. These values and principles should also be promoted by the Member States and the Union in their interactions with third countries in order to achieve a level playing field and common framework conditions.

Upholding values

Ethics and integrity of research and innovation: researchers, research processes and the research and innovation system overall should comply with strict ethics and integrity rules and practices, which are the foundation of responsible and trustworthy research free from undue influence, a prerequisite for achieving excellence, and underpin the responsibility of researchers to guard against biases and methodological shortcuts;

Freedom of Scientific research

.....
https://ec.europa.eu/info/news/commission-adopts-proposal-pact-research-and-innovation-europe-2021-jul-16_en

11 ERA Structural Policies

- ✓ **Enabling open science via sharing and re-use of data, including through the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC)**
- ✓ **Strengthening sustainability, accessibility and resilience of research infrastructures in the ERA**
- ✓ **Strengthening gender equality and inclusiveness in the ERA, notably with an intersectional approach**
- ✓ **Making research careers more attractive and sustainable, and support mobility**
- ✓ **Reforming research assessment**
- ✓ **Upscaling knowledge valorisation capacities and activities**
- ✓ **Implementing the Global Approach to R&I**
- ✓ **Making the strategic energy technology (SET) plan a key thematic component of the ERA**
- ✓ **Improving the articulation between R&I and higher education within the ERA and unleashing the full potential of European R&I ecosystems**
- ✓ **Enhancing trust in science through citizen participation, engagement and science communication**
- ✓ **Improve EU access to excellence**

8 ERA ACTIONS

- ✓ Applying equity in open science
- ✓ Advancing the European Science for Policy (S4P) ecosystem
- ✓ Facilitating and accelerating the responsible use of AI in science in the EU
- ✓ Enhancing research security
- ✓ Accelerating R&I investments for Europe's industrial transformation and competitive sustainability
- ✓ Accelerating new approach methodologies (NAMs) to advance biomedical research and testing of medicinal products and medical devices
- ✓ Developing a coherent and coordinated framework for a European approach to integrity and ethics in R&I in the face of emerging challenges
- ✓ Empowering R&I: A new era in research management

DEFINITION(s)

Standards of Good scientific Practice

Honest, transparent communication (towards peers, students, institutions, funders, public)

Reliability in joint work, impartial judgment

Independence, openness to professional review, fair and responsible treatment of junior researchers

Avoid misconduct and correct when encountered

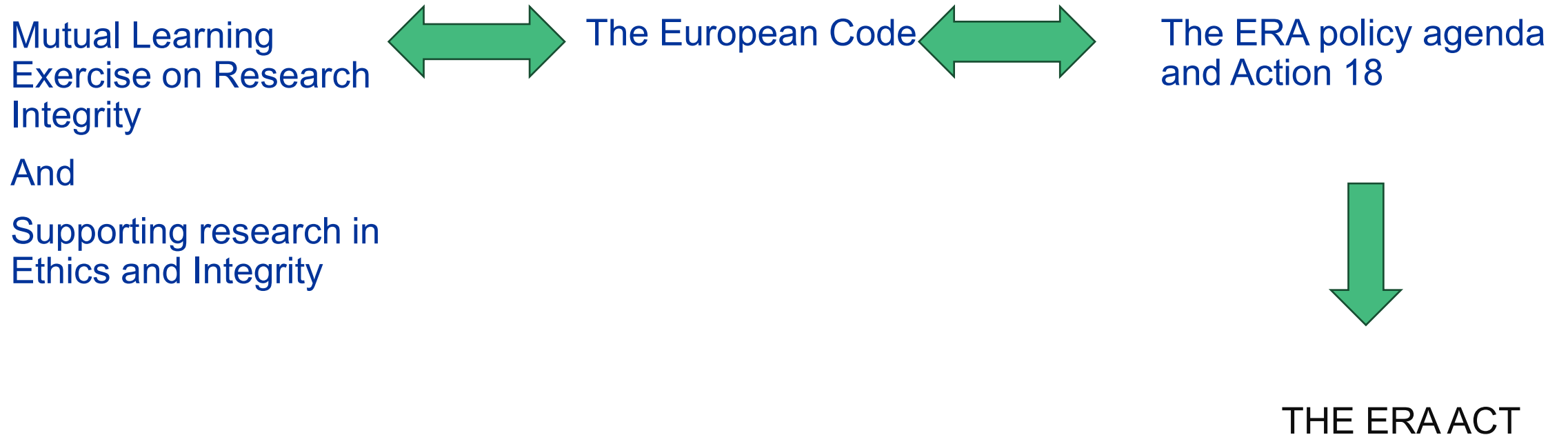
The expanded definition(s) of Integrity as a complex system

- Cape Town Statement for Inclusive equitable research and research integrity
- The Global code of conduct for equitable partnerships in research
- Austrian HE Quality Assurance Act
 - Promoting a positive culture, Integrity beyond compliance in scientific artistic teaching and research endeavor

.....

OBLIGATION TO STICK TO THE BASICS and accommodate emerging needs and policy priorities – Human and budgetary costs

Towards a trustworthy governance framework



Governance Models to use/consult at EC level

Multi-level governance gives expression to the idea that multiple levels of authority interact within a system, and it shows how closely domestic and international authority are linked.

Network governance is a form of coordination where organic relationships are more dominant than internal structures in a pluricentric system with independent actors in close interaction

Reflexive governance in essence involves participatory and deliberative processes which seek reflection on core principles and normative goals of the governance system and on the structure of the institutions deployed to achieve those goals



Tensions

National levels

Statutory vs soft law

National and EU levels

Integrity : a national competence

Horizon Europe

Shared responsibility :
rules for participation
and signatory
responsibility



Cross border Governance

GAPS

Jurisdiction

National investigations vs cross border

Training and awareness gap

Education requirements

Culture/Practice

Building TRUST

Trust substitutes for contract when certain structures are still needed/are not present

Trust building through sustained contacts, transparent procedures, pre-agreed targets and methodologies and confidence in institutions through a set of shared SOP (for example)

The innovative approach of peer to peer reviews – to build trust and good practice

ERA ACTION 18

1

Main planned outcomes

- Development of a coordination structure (European platform) connecting existing networks on ethics and integrity.
- Detailed roadmap of actions and performance indicators.
- Practical guidelines, operational toolboxes, and standard operating procedures.
- Pilot joint training actions on research ethics and integrity.

Implementation modalities

- Pilot Training;
- Conferences;
- Communication and dissemination activities;
- Survey;
- Mapping of existing initiatives and networks;
- Identifying synergies with other ERA actions;
- Collaboration with existing initiatives and networks.

ERA ACTION 18

2

Milestones (implementation process)

2025

- Initiating a network.
- Drafting annual action plan including timeline for mapping initiatives, identifying synergies with other ERA Actions and existing networks.

2026

- *Establishment of the European Coordination Platform (meeting of the ERA Action community on Ethics and Integrity);*
- *Defining aims, roles and governance;*
- *Mapping relevant thematic initiatives and actions to establish the network;*
- *Drafting the action plan including synergies with other ERA Actions and collaboration with existing networks (ENRIO, EUREC, Embassy of Good Science, etc.);*

2027

- *Implementation of the action plan;*
- *Implementation of the practical guidelines and toolboxes, including pilot joint training;*
- *Stock-taking of implementation of the activities and defining further steps;*
- *Annual evaluation reports, feedback surveys, recommendations for improvement;*
- *Promoting of the network good practices and dissemination of the outcomes: meetings, conferences, social media.*

ERA ACTION 18

3

- *Drafting practical guidelines and toolboxes, including pilot joint training;*
- *Stock taking dedicated to exchanges of good practice and identification of new approaches to ethics by design and research integrity;*

ERA Action 18 current state (examples)

Create national RI and RE information platforms including a national registry of contact points

- description of roles
- what support is available
- adjudication procedures

Measure and monitor RE and RE including the production of a RI/RE Barometer

- define common indicators for RE/RI culture, awareness, institutional capacity etc

Develop National roadmaps for RE and RI

- identify gaps
- share vision
- coordination structures
- steps to improve

Cross Border Governance

Example of a basis for bridging gaps

Luhmann's Trust as a complexity reduction

Trust allows actors to participate and act in dedicated areas of interest without being able to confirm legal/operational/contractual frameworks themselves

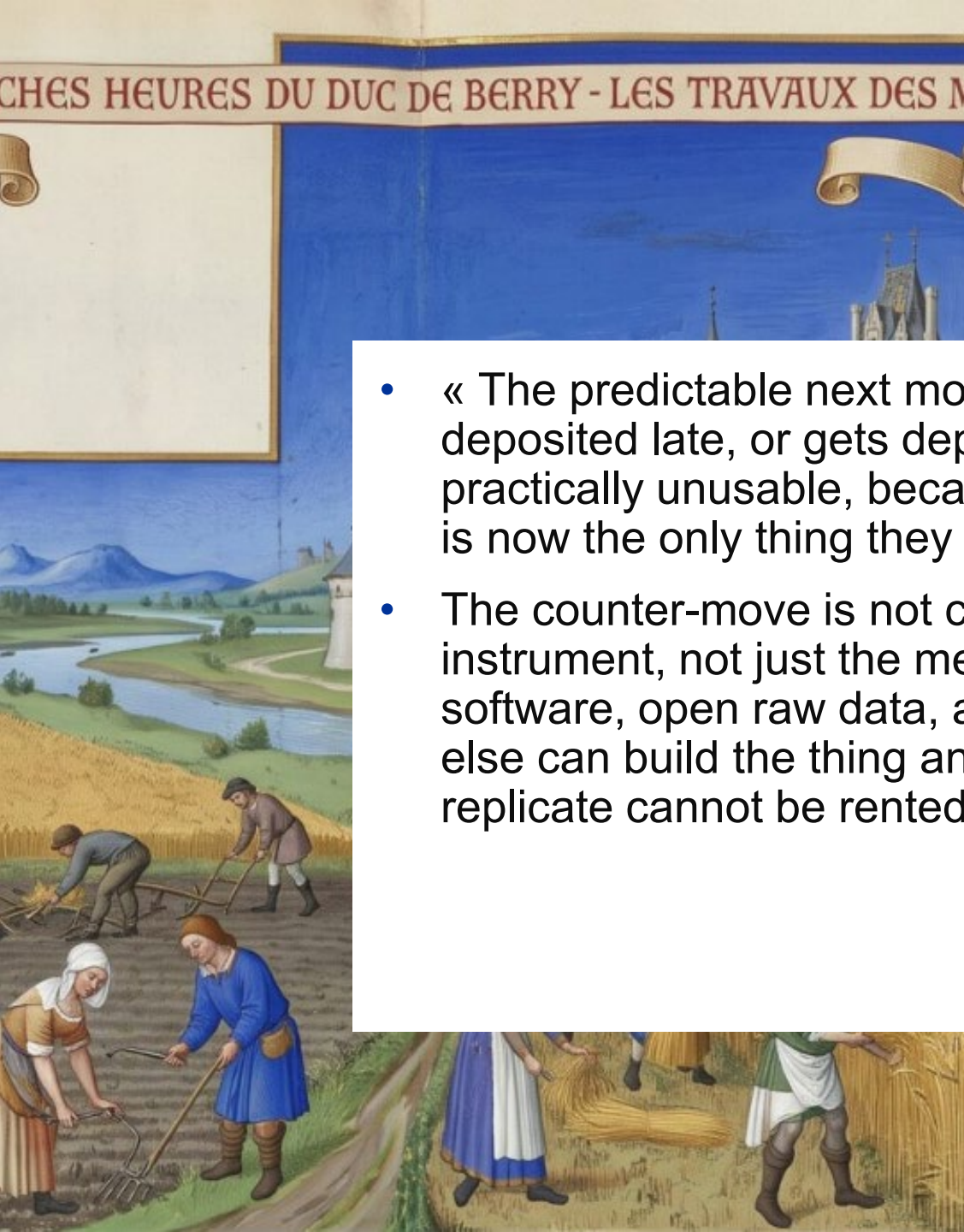
Building TRUST based on confidentiality anonymity, reciprocity and respect in (for example) cross border integrity committees.....

In complex systems reputation is a currency of trust

Reputation building vs punishment

[Reputation, a universal currency for human social interactions |The Royal Society](#)





“Reputation is a rent, not a reward”

The Weimar of knowledge – la
bottega

- « The predictable next move is that data stops being deposited, or gets deposited late, or gets deposited in forms that are technically open and practically unusable, because the group that collected it has worked out that it is now the only thing they own....
- The counter-move is not complicated, only unfashionable: keep publishing the instrument, not just the measurement. Open hardware, open acquisition software, open raw data, and enough methodological detail that someone else can build the thing and disagree with you. A design that anyone can replicate cannot be rented out. »

Against red tape: integrity as an innovation accelerator requires adapting the RI language for policy inputs

Misconduct, retractions, paper mills
and irreproducibility are a red tape.
They are the hurdles to “first-mover”
advantage

A sandbox is not a playground.
It's a highly protected
environment to test limits and
provide feedback

Towards non static governance models
accepting that the adjacent possible
cannot be predicted.

Regulatory agility is an enabling
constraint. FAIR principles are
accelerators

Talking the talk and walking the walk

[d41586-020-02847-8.pdf](#)

Research Integrity as a process of Systems Integrity

- Redundancy : Integrity does not rely on a single point of failure. Governance that allows a « three eyes » approach

- Traceability: creates a process that the system components can trust

- Feedback loops: communication within the governance structures .i.e electronic lab notebooks, 'too good' data, power dynamics, support to early career researchers



A governance to suit the Kantian Whole

the whole exists for and by means of the parts

Researchers as Autonomous Agents, able to act on their own behalf

Responsibility is nested and reciprocal across levels
(researcher,lab,institution,funder,policy actors)

Agents require fast feedback to orient and act

Traceability and negative results repository

Accountability is localised to maintain system function (feedback and corrective loops)

An open method of coordination gives rise to co-designed innovations (Austrian examples)

Institutional policy does not entail ethical behaviour; it greatest the conditions within the ecosystem (enabling constraints)



The Kantian Whole

The Office of research integrity is one of the main nodes in the process

Innovation generates new approaches/structures (Austrian Network of Ombuds)

Electronic lab registries facilitate open and reproducible results – data

Institutions act as an enabling membrane providing HR, funds, training and secure infrastructures

The Ecosystem (funders/policy actors) provide/support incentives so the Whole rewards the parts for acting with integrity



Personality (as an autonomous agent) matters

But a good governance system will operate successfully
independently of personalities (the Kantian Whole)

Thank you



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