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SOPs4RI

D7.4: Results from survey of research funding organisations

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Project title: Standard Operating Procedures for Research Integrity

Project acronym: SOPs4RI

Grant Agreement no.: 824481

Lead contractor for this deliverable: University of Essex



The project leading to this application has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 824481.

Coordination and Support Action
H2020-SwafS-03-2018

Project full title

“Standard Operating Procedures for Research Integrity”

Project acronym

SOPs4RI

Grant Agreement no.

824481

D7.4: Results from survey of research funding organisations

Editors:	Nick Allum, Miriam Bidoglia, George Gaskell, Abigail-Kate Reid
Version:	1.0
Dissemination level ¹ :	PU
Authors:	Nick Allum, Miriam Bidoglia, George Gaskell, Abigail-Kate Reid
Reviewer:	Magdalena Roszczyńska-Kurasińska
Due date of deliverable:	31 August 2022
Actual submission date:	25 August 2022
Start date of project:	1/1/2019
Duration:	48 months
Organisation name of lead contractor for this deliverable:	University of Essex (UESSEX)

¹This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 824481

PU – Public; PP – Restricted to other programme participants (including the Commission Services); RE – Restricted to a group specified by the consortium (including the Commission Services); CO – Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services).

Document metadata

<i>Version</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Modification reason</i>	<i>Modified by</i>
0.1		First draft	N Allum, M Bidoglia, G Gaskell, A-K Reid
		WP partner review	M Roszczyńska- Kurasińska
		Review of deliverable	M Sørensen
1.0		Final version	N Allum, M Bidoglia, G Gaskell, A-K Reid

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Acknowledgement

The authors would like to express our gratitude to the survey respondents who took the time to share their knowledge and opinions with us. We would also like to thank our reviewer. All errors and omissions remain the responsibility of the authors.

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Executive summary

This report presents the main results from the survey which was carried out in the context of Work Package 7 of the Standard Operating Procedures for Research Integrity (SOPs4RI) project. The SOPs4RI project is collating and developing a broad range of tools that research performing and funding organisations may use when developing and implementing research integrity promotion plans (RIPPs). The aim of these plans is to create environments where all research can, and will be, carried out with integrity. Organisations providing funding are a key part of the research ecosystem and, through the specification of preconditions for applicants and grant recipients, could play a leading role in the promotion of research integrity policies in RPOs. This survey contributes to the overall aims of the project by adding to mapping of this research ecosystem, exploring which policies exist within funding organisations and the challenges and constraints they face in respect of promoting and monitoring research integrity policies in RPOs.

A particular concern for this study is to examine RFO staff's awareness of and attitudes towards the recently updated requirements for applicants for Horizon Europe funds. These requirements stipulate that all applicants must sign up to the ALLEA European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity and have in place responsible research procedures, policies and structures to foster responsible research practices, prevent questionable research practices and research misconduct, and to handle allegations of breaches of the principles and standards in the Code of Conduct.

The survey study draws on 86 responses from staff involved in the management or administration of research grants within research funding organisations. The key findings are:

- **ALIGNMENT WITH EUROPEAN CODE OF CONDUCT** Research funding organisations surveyed claim that they are at least moderately closely adhering to European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity standards already, with 72% of respondents judging that their organisation's current policies and practices align very, or extremely, closely. While only 62% had heard of the new RI funding requirements in Horizon Europe, 85% of all respondents said they approve of the policy changes.
- **WRITTEN RI POLICIES** Almost all RFO staff responding said that their organisation had a written RI policy or code for advising their panel members when assessing research applications, and 86% had the same for researchers themselves. Fewer than half of respondents said that their organisation had a written code or policy for RPOs overseeing the researchers who have been awarded grants.
- **COMPLIANCE** Most respondents say that their organisation is monitoring compliance with some or all of its policies/codes. RFO staff believe that only around one half of RPOs and funded researchers are following these codes very or extremely closely. More often than not, RFO policies do not require that training be provided to staff by RPOs or carried out by researchers as a condition of receiving funding.

- **RESPONSIBILITY** While 95% of RFO respondents think that RPOs should have *a lot* of responsibility for safeguarding the integrity of research with slightly fewer (92%) attributing the same level of responsibility to researchers, they feel that only 16 and 37% respectively are actually taking that level of responsibility for RI. This represents a perceived 'responsibility gap'.
- **INTEGRITY BREACHES** Most respondents reported that their organisation has policies in place to deal with breaches of its policies or codes. Over half of respondents report that their organisation has been made aware of serious breaches of integrity by researchers who have received their funding within the last 5 years. Most cases were dealt with at least moderately appropriately according to RFO staff. 44% were handled very appropriately with room for improvement in just over half of the integrity breaches RFOs were informed about.

1. Introduction

1.1 Abbreviations

Below we present a list of abbreviations that will be used in this report:

RI – Research Integrity

RPO – Research performing organisation

RFO – Research funding organisation

ECoC – European Code of Conduct

WP – Work Package

AAPOR – American Association for Public Opinion Research

1.2 Terminology

Below we present a glossary of the terms that are going to be utilized in this report:

Code: a document guiding the members of an organisation on ethical standards and how to achieve them. Ethics/integrity codes are formal documents sending a message about moral standards guiding professional behaviour by providing principles, values, standards, or rules of behaviour.

Guideline: a statement of principles or issues to consider when performing a task, aimed to guide courses of action. Guidelines give direction and help users make decisions. They are often created based on the consensus of experts after detailed evaluation and assessment of available evidence. They may include checklists.

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): a detailed, written instruction, aimed to achieve uniform action step-by-step. SOPs prescribe specific actions; they liberate users from decision-taking by ensuring that the procedure is followed. They may come in the shape of a ‘decision-tree’/flow-diagram, similar to what is referred to as an algorithm in clinical contexts.

Toolbox: a structured collection of easy-to-use SOPs and guidelines that RPOs and RFOs can use when developing their own Research Integrity Promotion Plans.

Research Integrity Promotion Plan (RIPP): a document describing how a specific institution will ensure, foster and promote responsible research practices, avoid detrimental practices, and handle misconduct. It is the intention that RPOs and RFOs should form their own RIPPs in order for them to take disciplinary, organisational and national differences into account.

1.3 About SOPs4RI

SOPs4RI (Standard Operating Procedures for Research Integrity) is a four-year (2019-2022), multi-partner transdisciplinary project funded by the European Commission (H2020-SwafS-03-2018, Grant Agreement no. 824481). The project has 13 partners in 10 European countries, and is coordinated by Aarhus University (AU). The project's homepage can be found here: <https://www.sops4ri.eu/>. SOPs4RI has also been preregistered on the Open Science Framework: <https://osf.io/49fbk/>

Objectives

The Standard Operating Procedures for Research Integrity (SOPs4RI) project aims to contribute to the promotion of excellent research and a strong research integrity culture aligned with the principles and norms of the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity. The overall objective is to create a toolbox to support and guide research performing organisations (RPOs) and research funding organisations (RFOs) in fostering research integrity and consequently preventing, detecting and handling research misconduct and questionable research practices. The project focuses on providing Standard Operating Procedures and guidelines that enable RPOs and RFOs to create and implement Research Integrity Promotion Plans (RIPPs). SOPs4RI will thus stimulate European organisations involved in performing and funding research to foster responsible conduct of research through organizational measures and policies. SOPs4RI takes a mixed-method, co-creative approach to the identification, development and empirical validation of SOPs and guidelines. The expected end-users of the tools provided by SOPs4RI are decision makers within RPOs and RFOs, e.g. university senior management (vice chancellors, deans, heads of administration), university academic councils, boards and directors of funding agencies, and their extended administrations. The identification, modification and development of SOPs and guidelines will take national, disciplinary, and organisational differences into account, and the final toolbox will enable RFOs and RPOs to create RIPPs in accordance with the needs of their organisation.

1.4 About this deliverable

Deliverable 7.4 reports findings from the RFO Survey conducted as part of the SOPs4RI project.

To enable researchers to deliver trustworthy research in line with the fundamental principles of the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity (*reliability, honesty, respect, and accountability*) it is paramount that all stakeholders in the research system foster an environment which facilitates responsible research practices. Both public and private RFOs have the responsibility to put appropriate policies, supporting governance arrangements, facilities, and procedures in place. The goal of the survey then, is to explore current arrangements and integrity issues from the point of view of staff involved in the management and distribution of grant funding and to identify where RFOs feel the onus of responsibility should, and does, lie for achieving these aims.

For the purposes of this survey, Research Integrity was defined to participants as “the attitude and habits of researchers in conducting their research according to appropriate ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards. It describes an approach for conducting and organising good scientific work.” This definition was used in WP6 for the survey of researchers and has its origin in the European Network for Research Ethics and Integrity (<https://eneri.eu/what-is-research-integrity/>)

Here, we report the main findings of the survey. Chapters 2 and 3 present the methodology and the sample composition. Chapter 4 explores awareness of and approval for Horizon Europe policy changes. Chapter 5 reports on existing policies within research funding organisations for RPOs, for individual researchers and for panel members assessing grant applications. Chapter 6 explores where RFOs think responsibility for RI should, and currently does, lie. Chapter 7 highlights RI issues and measures in place to respond to them. Finally, Chapter 8 provides recommendations as a result of our findings. Full survey questions and a codebook of results can be found in the appendices.

2. Methodology

2.1 Sampling

A non-probability, purposive sampling method was used with participants selected according to their job roles in RFOs. A list of people who had roles in such organisations was sourced from personal contacts and mailing lists to which members of the project team had access through professional connections. This was augmented by snowball sampling: invitees were encouraged to distribute the survey to their personal and professional connections in similar roles. The criterion for inclusion was that respondents should be involved in the management or distribution of research grants working in either research performing or research funding organisations in Europe. To ensure that this criterion was met, the survey questionnaire included screening items that asked the respondent to describe their job role. This allowed us to discard cases that were out of scope with regard to our population of interest. Most of those discarded were staff working in RPOs on research administration.

2.2 Survey Development

Survey topics were developed with a working group comprised of WP7 personnel: Daniel Pizzolato, Borana Taraj, Teodora Konach, Maura Hiney, Noemie Aubert Bonn. Survey items were developed in detail by George Gaskell, Abigail Reid, Miriam Bidoglia and Nick Allum. Pilot tests of the questionnaire were carried out by the development team with members of the SOPs4RI project team who were not involved in the design of this survey study. Following several design iterations, both before and after pilot testing, the final version was fielded online using Qualtrics. In common with the WP6 IRIS study, all questions were in English, which is one of the official languages of the EU and one in which much academic research is published.

2.3 Field operations

The survey was conducted entirely online, in English, using the Qualtrics platform.

A mailing list of 361 people working in research funding distribution and administration was compiled by members of the WP7 team. An initial email inviting recipients to participate in the survey was distributed to this list on 4th May 2022 using the mail merge function in Microsoft Word. All communication was individually addressed as far as possible. Those with no name were addressed “Dear Colleague”. Invitees were encouraged to share the survey link with suitable colleagues. All of the original mailing list members were mainly working in RFOs within the European Research Area.

Two subsequent reminder emails were sent on 11th and 19th May. Separately, the survey was shared via EARMA (approximately 20 personalised emails and a link in social media) on 23rd May. A link to the survey was also shared on the home page of the SOPs4RI website, twitter and LinkedIn accounts

between 27th May and 14th June and a QR code linking to the survey was added to literature and slides at the 7th World Conference on Research Integrity in Cape Town, South Africa between 29th May and 1st June.

The invitation included information about the project, its funder, and a contact for the study, with links to the survey. In addition, it included the scope and purpose of the research, how their personal data would be used, who would have access to it, the benefits of participation, and respondents' right to withdraw at any time, including instructions on how to do so.

The survey ran from 4th May 2022 and was officially closed on 14th June 2022.

2.4 Survey Response

86 staff from Research Funding Organisations responded to the survey.

The bulk of responses (37) came from the first email sent, followed by 19 from the first reminder and 23 from the second, with this approach together making up 92% of total responses. The remaining 8% of responses were received after the introduction of additional modes of distribution.

2.5 Data storage/ availability

Data was downloaded from Qualtrics on closing the survey. The survey was not linked to names or email addresses however any potential identifying information (such as IP address, job titles and uploaded policies) has been removed from the data. An open access version of this data will be available on OSF and through the UK Data Archive.

2.6 Research Ethics

Ethical approval for conducting the survey was obtained from the London School of Economics Ethics Committee (LSE research ethics protocol no. 66105). Documentation can be found on OSF: [OSF | Pilot testing \(WP7\)](#)

The sample for analysis consists of 86 respondents working in Research Funding Organisations who are responsible for the management or administration of research grants. Stated job roles show a wealth of relevant experience and include responses from senior researchers, advisors, analysts, and policy officers; scientific managers and project officers; research managers; programme directors; heads of strategy, analysis, awards, ethics & integrity, research, evaluation and legal teams; as well as chairs / directors of research councils, amongst others.



Figure 1 Word cloud of respondent job titles

We asked respondents to select their main responsibilities with respect to the distribution of research grants. 75% have positions involving management and strategy, 54% are responsible for the administration of grant applications and 33% are involved with the administration of received grants.

We also asked respondents to confirm how familiar and relevant research integrity is to their job roles.

Trustworthy research requires integrity. In this survey we want to ask you about research integrity and how it relates to your role. By research integrity we mean the attitude and habits of researchers in conducting their research according to appropriate ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards. It describes an approach for conducting and organising good scientific work. Thinking about what you do, please indicate below how research integrity feels to you?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unfamiliar						Familiar
Irrelevant to my role						Relevant to my role

92% say that RI is relevant to their role, with 62% selecting the most relevant option on a 7-point scale from irrelevant to my role to relevant to my role.

97% say that the concept of research integrity is familiar to them in their role, with 58% selecting the furthest option on a 7-point scale from unfamiliar to familiar.

Please note that when interpreting all of the findings in this report that this is not a representative sample and therefore results cannot be generalised beyond the group of respondents to our survey. When we discuss RFOs we mean the particular respondents working within research funding organisations who responded to our survey.

4. RFO support for Horizon Europe policy

4.1 Introduction

Over the coming years Horizon Europe will be the most significant research funding body in Europe. Under its new scheme for 2022-2027, the European Commission's Horizon Europe funding programme requires that all participants must explicitly sign up to the ALLEA European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity and have in place responsible research procedures, policies and structures to foster responsible research practices; prevent questionable research practices and research misconduct; and to handle allegations of breaches of the principles and standards in the Code of Conduct. This required actions is part of the new application process. We wanted to understand how aware RFOs are of these changes, the level of approval for them and what impact they think the changes will make. We also wanted to get a sense of where organisations are already and consequently the possible impact of having to meet these new requirements to obtain funding.

4.2 The survey question

- *Before participating in this survey were you aware that this requirement existed? Yes / No*
- *To what extent do you approve or disapprove of this policy development by the European Commission? (Strongly disapprove / Somewhat disapprove / Neither approve nor disapprove / Somewhat approve / strongly approve)*
- *How likely do you think it is that these measures will improve research integrity amongst applicants and recipients of Horizon Europe funding? (Not at all likely / Moderately likely / Very likely / Extremely likely)*
- *How closely do your organisation's current policies and practices align with the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, as adopted by Horizon Europe, in terms of principles and procedures in place? (Not closely at all / Moderately closely / Very closely / Extremely closely)*

4.3 Results

Reassuringly, all research funding organisations surveyed claim that they are at least moderately closely adhering to European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity standards already, with 72% of respondents judging that their organisation's current policies and practices align very, or extremely, closely.

While only 62% are aware of these changing funding requirements, overall staff working in RFOs are very positive about them, with 85% approval (somewhat or strongly approve) – with many expressing approval without previously being aware of the changes. 98% think that it is at least moderately likely these changes will improve RI (54% very or extremely likely).

Respondents did express some potential issues with these changes:

- *"The European Commission should directly inform heads of research institutions of these needs. Furthermore, I believe that it is necessary to finance much more scientific research on research integrity, in order to know the European reality and identify new best practices."*
- *"Unfortunately the EC cannot check compliance, so I am not sure how many organisations actually comply with the requirements."*
- *"Sometimes policies are helpful, and sometimes they just add a layer of law and admin; I feel my organisation has all it takes to facilitate and secure RI. Most likely adding an EU code of conduct will not be helpful in addition to what is already in place."*
- *"The EU, and the European research community in general, needs an independent body to deal with research integrity. From my experiences at the ERC, I know that adequately responding to breaches and complaints is extremely time-consuming and requires a lot of expertise, which is not always available at all institutions, at all levels."*
- *"Not sure whether pan European codes of conduct work - they must go hand in hand with the national code in order to be effective. Which takes precedence in a case?"*
- *"We think that different roles of actors in RFI should be (better)reflected in policy for research integrity and RRA."*

However, it was also seen as a potential benefit:

"I think it's a good start with the ALLEA code. It gives us a tool to talk about RI."

5. RFO policies internally and externally for funded organisations

5.1 Introduction

Obtaining a full picture of the research environment through which integrity can be encouraged, facilitated and protected, involves drawing on the perspective of RFOs and their expectations of both RPOs and researchers that they fund. Through its previous work (including a systematic literature review and consultations with researchers, research funders and policy makers, interviews, Delphi surveys and focus groups) the SOPs4RI project recommends that RFOs consider where changes to their procedures could support the development of RI policies in RPOs to enhance research integrity. For example, it is recommended that RFOs require that the RPOs who are awarded funding have a working RIPP in place which includes building a healthy research environment and research ethics structures; providing adequate supervision, mentoring, and RI training; and establishing procedures for data management, research collaboration, the declaration of interests, and the handling of breaches of RI. With that in mind we were interested in establishing what policies are currently in place, whether training in different aspects of RI is a requirement of receiving funding, and how closely RFOs believe their policies are being followed.

5.2 The question

- *Does your organisation have a written policy/code on research integrity requirements for researchers applying for funding?*
 - *Does this policy require that researchers working on the project you are funding will have completed training in the following areas? (Research ethics; research conduct; data management; declaration of interests; diversity & inclusion)*
 - *In practice, how closely do you believe recipients of your funding are complying with your policies?*
-
- *Next, does your organisation have a written policy/code for advising research performing organisations on how to promote research integrity in research carried out in their organisations?*
 - *Does your organisation's policy require that research performing organisations provide training to their staff in the following areas? (Research ethics; research conduct; data management; declaration of interests; diversity & inclusion)*

- <i>In practice, how closely do you believe research performing organisations are complying with your policies?</i>
- <i>Lastly, does your organisation have a written policy/code on internal procedures to guide <u>panel members and project officers</u> (peer reviewers, evaluators) in assessing applications?</i>
- <i>Does your organisation's policy/code for panel members and project officers include guidance on the following? (Research ethics; research conduct; data management; declaration of interests; diversity & inclusion)</i>
- <i>In practice, how closely do you believe your panel members and project officers are complying with these policies when assessing applications?</i>
- <i>Do you require that your own staff who are involved in administering grant applications or awards are trained in the following areas? (Research ethics; research conduct; data management; declaration of interests; diversity & inclusion)</i>
- <i>Does your organisation monitor compliance with its written policies/codes?</i>

5.3 Results

As shown in Table 1, almost all RFOs responding said that their organisation had a written policy or code for advising panel members when assessing research applications, and 86% had the same for researchers themselves. Fewer than half of respondents said that there was a written code or policy for RPOs overseeing the researchers who have been awarded grants.

Where written policies exist, we asked if training in any of five RI areas (research ethics; research conduct; data management; declaration of interests; or diversity & inclusion) was a feature of those policies. More often than not, RFO policies do not require that training be provided to staff by RPOs or carried out by researchers as a condition of receiving funding. Higher percentages of internal staff are required to carry out training in these areas, but (with the exception of declaring interests) this is still only a requirement for less than half of RFOs administering grants.

In at least three-quarters of cases, RFOs are providing guidance in all RI areas to panel members assessing grant applications, with the exception of diversity and inclusion. Guidance on declaration of interests is provided in 90% of cases. Results show however that for 1 in 4 organisations providing funding, no guidance is provided on research conduct or data management to panel members judging applications, and for 1 in 5, there is no guidance on research ethics.

Table 1 RFO Policy and Training Requirements for Researchers, RPOs, Panel Members and RFO staff (n=86)

Research Integrity Policy	Researchers		RPOs ^a		Panel members ^b		RFO staff ^c	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
RFO has a written RI code	59	86	32	48	64	96	-	-
Policy requires training in research ethics	17	29	10	31	50	81	28	44
Policy requires training in research conduct	17	30	10	31	45	73	24	38
Policy requires training in data management	18	31	11	34	46	75	30	47
Policy requires training in declaration of interests	23	40	10	31	56	90	35	55
Policy requires training in diversity & inclusion	9	16	3	9	37	60	30	47

^a Policy requires RPO to provide training to staff in each of the areas

^b Policy includes guidance in each of the areas specified

^c Staff administering awards must be trained in each of the areas

Most respondents say that their organisation is monitoring compliance with some or all of its policies/codes (83%). Of the very few who did not do so, this was either due to it not being considered part of the remit, because they had trust in others, or because they didn't have the resources to do so.

For the most part, where they exist, RFOs believe that their codes are being complied with, at least moderately closely by their own staff, as well as by researchers and organisations in receipt of funding. Figure 2 below shows how closely researchers who have received grant funding; research performing organisations housing those researchers; and panel members/project officers assessing funding applications, are complying with RFO policies, as assessed by RFO staff. RFOs believe they themselves are complying more closely with these codes than researchers and RPOs, with 44% of RPOs and 56% of researchers believed to be following codes very or extremely closely, compared with 74% of RFOs.

Respondents gave insight into approaches and issues relating to RFO integrity policies.

- *"Our approach is to require recipients to align with the National Policy Statement on RI and The European Code. This is outlined in our GT&Cs also."*
- *"My role involves management and strategy on an advisory expert basis from the perspective of humanities and social sciences (some of the aspects of the questionnaire requires administrative input, which is not under my responsibility). The Research Council of [redacted] is undergoing the reorganization procedure. As the result, the special expert committee will be established and the component of the research integrity issues will be definitely strengthened.... It should be mentioned, that general competencies of the decision-makers responsible for allocation funds (e.g., Ministry of Education, Science and Sports, Ministry of Economy and Innovation) are rather poor in this field. It is also worth mentioning, that a special position of the Ombudsperson [redacted] is established [redacted]"*
- *"What I think is missing is the awareness on the part of the board of the institution of the importance of research integrity and its procedures. The European Commission should have the strategic role of increasing this awareness."*
- *"All these dimensions of integrity will be addressed in our application and funding process. But in your questionnaire you chose to focus on "completed training" while our policy will focus on the results of training as a competence. Maybe a RPO can focus on completed training in their operation with policy, but we think this would be wrong focus for policy for a RFO."*

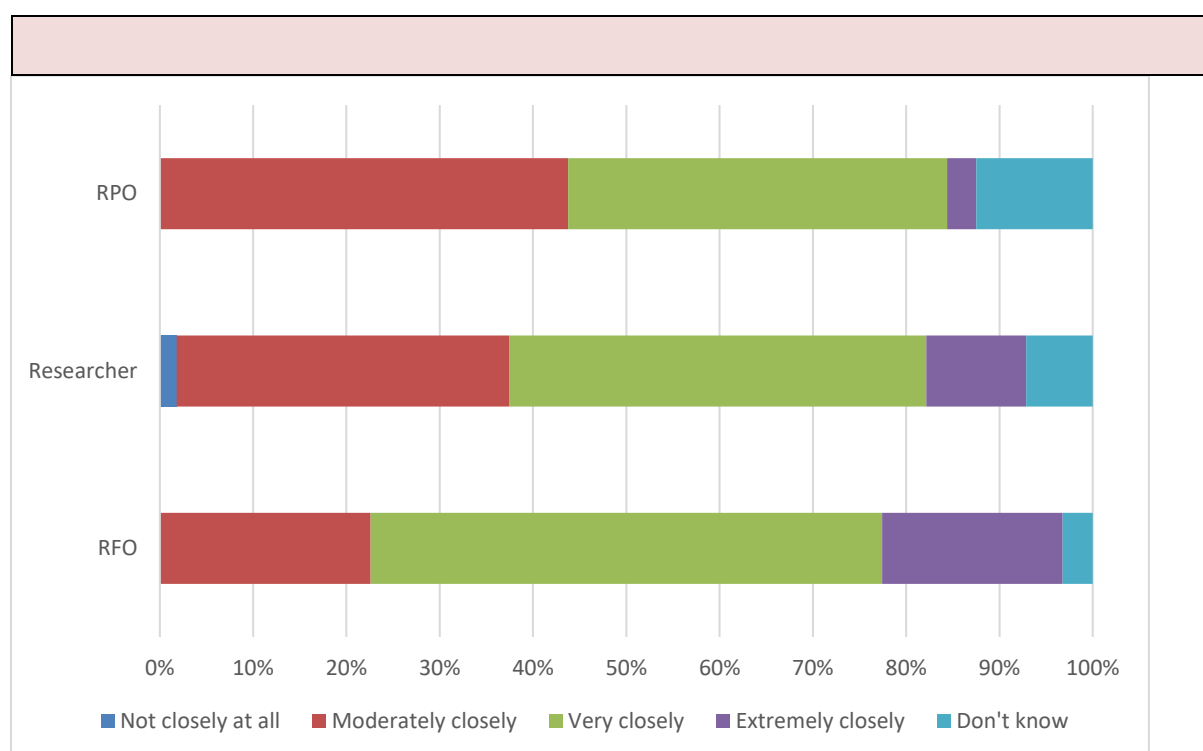


Figure 2 How closely researchers who have received grant funding; research performing organisations housing those researchers; and panel members/project officers assessing funding applications, are complying with RFO policies, as assessed by RFO staff.

6. Responsibility for Research Integrity in principle and in practice

6.1 Introduction

It is important that all actors in the research ecosystem create an environment which facilitates research that can be produced with integrity. All organisations and individuals involved in this process have some responsibility for ensuring that research is carried out in accordance with the key principles of the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity (reliability, honesty, respect, and accountability). We are therefore interested in understanding what level of responsibility research funding organisations believe they themselves should have in safeguarding the integrity of research, and how much responsibility they believe should lie with research performing organisations and the individual researchers they provide funding to.

We are interested also in learning how far in reality they believe that that responsibility is being taken, and whether the actual responsibility supposedly shouldered by each actor meets the level of responsibility expected from them.

6.2 The survey questions

The survey asked respondents the following questions:

We would like to know where you think responsibility should lie for research integrity.

- *For each of the following groups (individual researchers; research funding organisations, research performing organisations, research publishers e.g., companies, journal editors, reviewers), in your opinion, how much responsibility should they have for safeguarding the integrity of research?*

(No responsibility / Some responsibility / A moderate amount of responsibility / A lot of responsibility)

- *In your experience, what level of responsibility for research integrity do they actually take?*

(No responsibility / Some responsibility / A moderate amount of responsibility / A lot of responsibility)

6.3 Results

Our results show that overall, staff working in RFOs think that responsibility for ensuring research integrity should lie more with those in receipt of grant funding (the RPOs and their researchers) than with their own organisations providing grants for research. More than 90% think that RPOs and Researchers should have “a lot” of responsibility for research integrity, in comparison with just 55% saying the same for RFOs. All respondents did however recognise the important role of RFOs in this process, with all confirming that RFOs should have at least some responsibility, and 40% agreeing that they have “a moderate amount” of responsibility.

Figure 3 looks at the percentage of respondents who feel each group should have “a lot” of responsibility alongside the percentage of respondents who feel these groups actually *take* “a lot” of responsibility for research integrity.

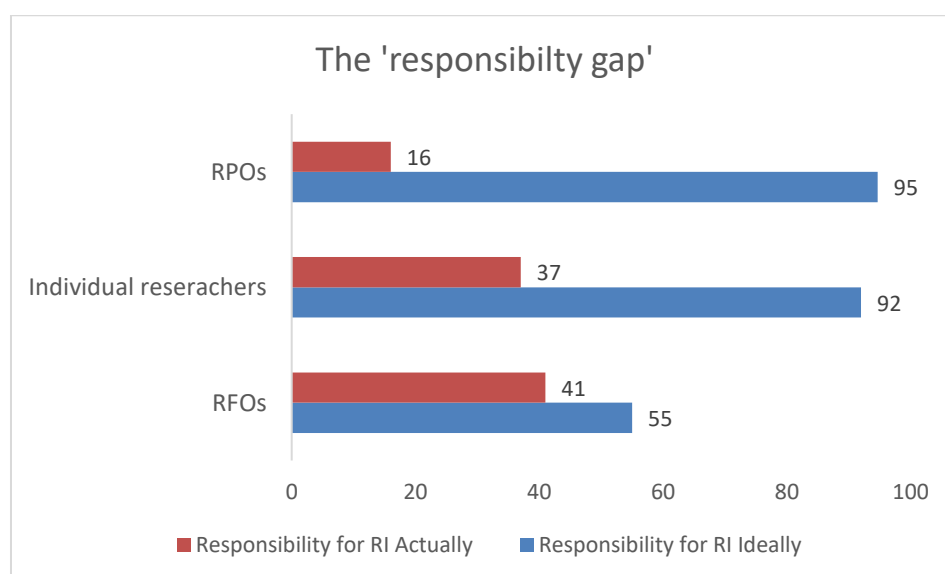


Figure 3 Percentage who think that RPOs, researchers and RFOs should have a lot of responsibility for safeguarding RI and percentage who think that they actually take a lot of responsibility for it

We see here that staff working in RFOs feel that their organisations are doing better in ensuring that research is conducted with integrity than RPOs and researchers currently are. RFOs judge that they are taking more responsibility than those they are funding, despite thinking that the responsibility lies more with external groups than with themselves. 41% of RFO staff who responded to the survey believe that in general RFOs are taking a lot of responsibility for research integrity, higher than RPOs and individual researchers.

The gap between ideal and actual levels of responsibility taken by recipients of funding is quite pronounced according to those involved in distributing the funds. While 95% of RFO respondents think

that RPOs should have *a lot* of responsibility for safeguarding the integrity of research with slightly fewer (92%) attributing the same level of responsibility to researchers, they feel that only 16 and 37% respectively are actually taking that level of responsibility for RI.

Figure 4 focuses again on the comparison between actual and expected levels of responsibility for RI, this time using all levels of responsibility (none, some, a moderate amount, a lot) showing whether each group meets or exceeds their expected level of responsibility overall, or whether they fail to do so. We do this by computing a new variable that indicates for each respondent whether the expected level of responsibility for the actor in question is greater then, equal to or less than the level at which that they actually believe each actor to behave.

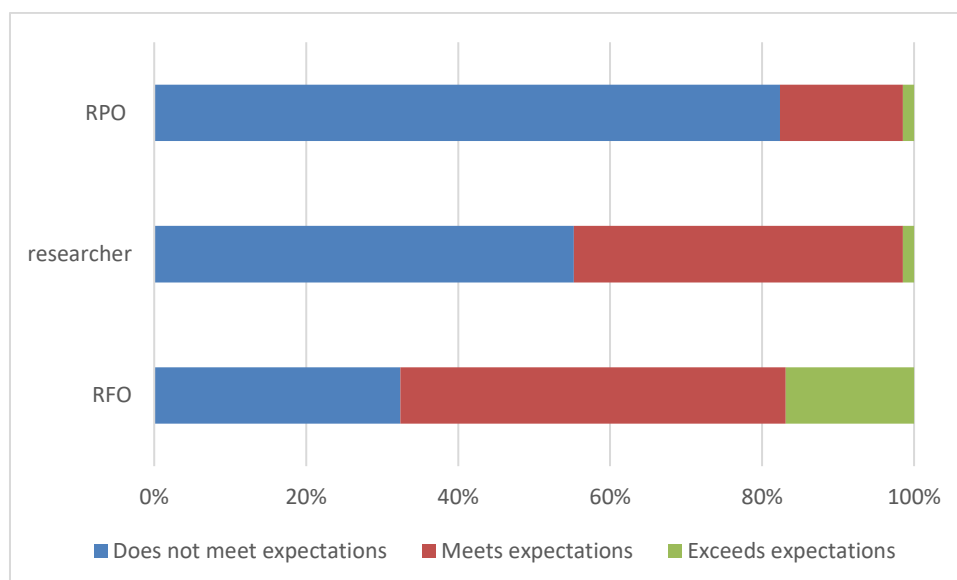


Figure 4 Whether actual responsibility for RI taken by RPOs, individual researchers and RFOs meets or exceeds expected levels, or not, as assessed by RFO staff (%)

68% of RFOs feel that RFOs are meeting or exceeding the appropriate levels of responsibility for safeguarding RI compared with less than half feeling the same way about individual researchers (45%) and only 18% thinking that RPOs are carrying out their duties here. Not surprisingly, this result closely matches that presented in Figure 3, but without restricting the comparison to ‘a lot of responsibility’ only.

7. Evidence of Research Integrity Issues in Funded RPOs

7.1 Introduction

Research funding organisations are a key part of the ecosystem that surrounds the production of high quality research. We are interested to know from the point of view of those distributing funds for research, what research integrity problems they are aware of, and what measures they have in place for responding to them. With fewer than 1 in 5 respondents thinking that RPOs are meeting the levels of responsibility they should hold for safeguarding the integrity of research, what issues are arising? Are they aware of integrity breaches, and how are they managed? Are changes needed to existing policies, or should new policies be introduced to protect against this?

Previous work by the SOPs4RI project led to recommendations that RFOs should clearly describe adequate procedures on how to deal with potential breaches of research integrity standards by RFO's internal staff, committee members, and peer reviewers, with transparent procedures to make an allegation, to detect, and to handle such RI breaches. Accordingly, we also asked about integrity breaches internal to the organisations distributing funds.

7.2 The question – external breaches

- *If a breach of your policies or codes was found, does your organisation have procedures for dealing with that?*
- *We are now interested in your experience of research integrity breaches within the organisations that you fund. Has your organisation been made aware of serious breaches of research integrity by researchers you have granted funding to within the last 5 years?*
- *Thinking about the most recent integrity breach, in your opinion how appropriately was this case handled by the researcher's organisation?*
- *Were you informed about the outcome of the case by the organisation you had given funding to?*
- *Were there, or will there be, any changes to your existing policies, or new policies introduced, as a result of this integrity breach?*

7.2.1 Results

Most (88%) respondents reported that their organisation has policies in place to deal with breaches of its policies or codes (5% don't know). Almost 60% of respondents report that their organisation has been made aware of serious breaches of integrity by researchers who have received their funding within the last 5 years. Most cases were dealt with at least moderately appropriately according to RFO staff, however only just over half thought that these cases had been handled very or extremely appropriately so there remains room for improvement. In almost two-thirds of cases, the RFO had been informed of the outcome of the most recent integrity breach by the relevant RPO.

As a result of these breaches, just 24% planned to introduce new policies or make changes to their existing ones, with nearly twice as many not intending to (46%). 30% of respondents did not know. We gave respondents the opportunity to elaborate on their answers to this section of the survey using free text format. Below are the comments offered.

Respondents gave insight into the types of breaches they are experiencing:

- *"One of the most common breaches has to do with Conflicts of Interest"*
- *"We have found some conflicts of interests, also some misuse of data (using data without citing etc). Mostly minor cases."*

And how they are managed:

- *"Our organisation has a regular control mechanism that randomly checks the projects and there is a reporting system that helps to identify integrity breaches. The cases are discussed by a panel and by a special integrity/ethics committee in our organisation."*
- *"We recommend that PI contacts the relevant Ethics Committee if it appears that approval has not been sent to us in time."*
- *"Breaches have been investigated thoroughly by a commission. sentences are spoken against individual researchers, not against organisations (e.g. universities)"*
- *"Generally, we have been informed at the appropriate point and kept up to date during review/investigation procedures."*

As well as possible issues:

- *"Serious breaches are against law and as such should be assessed by police, courts etc. In such cases it's very difficult to find an appropriate way of acting for the RFO, should we evaluate the case at all? what if our conclusions are different? etc."*

7.3 The question – internal breaches

- *And now, we are interested in your experiences of integrity breaches within your own organisation.*
- *Has your organisation been made aware of serious internal breaches during the evaluations of applications for funding within the last 5 years (as an example this might include panel members or project officers failing to declare conflicts of interest in an application for research funding)?*
- *Thinking of the most recent integrity breach, was this case managed using existing policies within your organisation?*
- *Were there, or will there be, any changes to your existing policies, or new policies introduced, as a result of this integrity breach?*

7.3.1 Results

Within RFOs, serious breaches were reported by 29% of respondents. These had been dealt with using existing policies in at least 82% of cases, with no move to change what is in place already.

One respondent reported:

- *“Due to clear internal rules, who is allowed to manage which grants, which are very similar to those for external reviewers, panel members, etc., internal breaches are difficult and could usually be detected (too) easily. It is an issue (also external integrity breaches) that the vast majority of the staff of my organization takes very seriously.”*

8. Recommendations for RFOs

The findings of this study of RFOs can be read as a ‘wake up call’ for the key stakeholders in the research eco-system – RFOs, RPOs and researchers. As reported from this survey, the perspective of the RFOs is that while RPOs and researchers should be shouldering responsibility for research integrity, in practice many are falling short in their commitment and actions. By the same token, some may interpret the findings as showing that RFOs have not used their leverage to impose conditions on RPOs and researchers with respect to requirements for RI training provision and uptake.

Is the research eco-system ready for research integrity; what will be the consequences of the ‘responsibility gap’ between RI ideals and the practices for the medium term impacts of the Horizon Europe RI policies?

What are the options for change? One approach would be to follow the model of the USA with a parallel to the Office for Research Integrity, providing active monitoring of RPOs with penalties for misdemeanours. With 27 EU Member States and other countries participating in Horizon Europe and a very large number of research projects, the administrative resource implications would be considerable, inevitably reducing the funds available for research.

An alternative could be a European Commission sponsored inquiry into the European research eco-system. The inquiry would bring together the key stakeholders including the EC, European academies, the major research institutions, and representatives of RFOs. The objective would be to produce a Research Integrity Governance Road Map with say a three year plan for the delivery of an integrated RI focussed eco-system.

9. Appendices

9.1 Appendix I. Questionnaire

☐ Start of Block: Introduction

Q1.1 Thank you for agreeing to participate in this survey on research integrity. Every response is valuable and will contribute towards improving the quality of research in the future. We appreciate your insights.

This is a survey for those involved in the management or administration of research grants. This could include working at a funding organisation or an organisation receiving research funding. You can find out more about our project [here](#) and our ethical review outlining how we will protect your data [here](#).

We appreciate that many of you will be under time pressure with pressing commitments. In recognition of this the structure of the survey allows for most questions to have straightforward response options. If you have time, we have added text boxes for you to add any comments that you think are pertinent. We will analyse both the closed and open text questions with assiduous attention. We ask that you do not include any information in your comments that could identify individuals or specific organisations.

Due to the varied research systems across Europe, we recognise that some questions may not make sense in some contexts. Please feel free to leave any question that does not make sense, or to interpret it in the context of your environment. Alternatively add a commentary in the text box provided.

Your participation is entirely voluntary and by clicking the arrow below you consent to take part. You are free to exit the survey at any time without needing to give a reason. You are free to decline to answer any particular question you do not wish to answer for any reason. If you initially decide to participate but change your mind later, you are free to withdraw by sending an email to the team at sops4ri@essex.ac.uk. You do not have to provide us with reasons for the termination of your participation. When you withdraw from the study, all your confidential data will be destroyed. If your data has already been analysed, the results will be used but the source of the data will not be retrievable. In line with the open access movement, we will make a fully anonymised data publicly available for use for research purposes. No identifying information will be contained in this dataset. For any queries relating to the management of this data, please contact the data manager Professor Nick Allum (nallum@essex.ac.uk). There are no direct personal benefits of participation in this study. However, by participating, you will contribute to the development of effective guidelines for research integrity, which will help research organisations, including your own institution, to

foster research integrity and avoid and handle research misconduct.

The Standard Operating Procedures for Research Integrity (SOPs4RI) has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation program under grant agreement No. 824481

The survey has been approved under the LSE research ethics protocol (no. 66105)

Q1.2 To help us analyse your responses, we are first interested in finding out about your role and the type of place that you work.



Q1.3

Are you employed in a research funding organisation (your organisation distributes research funds), or a research performing organisation (your organisation receives research funds)?

(If your organisation is both research performing and research funding, please select the option that applies most closely to your current role).

- ☐ Research Funding Organisation (1)
- ☐ Research Performing Organisation (2)

Page Break

Q1.4 What is your occupational title?



Q1.5 Please select your main responsibilities with respect to the distribution of research grants.

Please select all that apply.

- ☐ Management and strategy (1)
- ☐ Administration of grant applications (2)
- ☐ Administration of received grants (3)

☐ End of Block: Introduction

☐ Start of Block: Responsibility



Q2.1

Trustworthy research requires integrity. In this survey we want to ask you about research integrity and how it relates to your role. By research integrity we mean the attitude and habits of researchers in conducting their research according to appropriate ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards. It describes an approach for conducting and organising good scientific work.

Thinking about what you do, please indicate below how research integrity feels to you?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (3)	<input type="checkbox"/> (4)	<input type="checkbox"/> (5)	<input type="checkbox"/> (6)	<input type="checkbox"/> (7)	<input type="checkbox"/>
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<input type="checkbox"/> Unfamiliar	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Familiar
<input type="checkbox"/> Irrelevant to my role	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Relevant to my role



Q2.2 We would like to know where you think responsibility should lie for research integrity. For each of the following groups, in your opinion, how much responsibility should they have for safeguarding the integrity of research?

	No responsibility (1)	Some responsibility (2)	A moderate amount of responsibility (3)	A lot of responsibility (4)
Individual Researchers (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Research Performing Organisations (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Research Funding Organisations (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Research Publishers e.g., companies, journal editors, reviewers (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Q2.3 In your experience, what level of responsibility for research integrity do they actually take?

	No responsibility (1)	Some responsibility (2)	A moderate amount of responsibility (3)	A lot of responsibility (4)	I don't know (5)
Individual Researchers (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Research Performing Organisations (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Research Funding Organisations (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Research Publishers e.g., companies, journal editors, reviewers (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

☐ End of Block: Responsibility

☐ Start of Block: RFO formal policy/code

Q7.1 In the next set of questions we would like to find out about policies and codes relating to research integrity for: researchers you are funding or considering funding; the organisations who are employing those researchers; and lastly, panel members and project officers within your own organisation who are evaluating funding applications.



Q7.2 Does your organisation have a written policy/code on research integrity requirements for researchers applying for funding?

- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)
- ☐ I don't know (3)

Display This Question:

If Does your organisation have a written policy/code on research integrity requirements for research... = Yes



Q7.3 Does this policy require that researchers working on the project you are funding will have completed training in the following areas?

	Yes (1)	No (2)	I don't know (3)
Research ethics (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Research conduct (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Data management (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Declaration of Interests (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Diversity & inclusion (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Display This Question:

If Does your organisation have a written policy/code on research integrity requirements for research... = Yes



Q7.4 In practice, how closely do you believe recipients of your funding are complying with your policies?

- ☐ Not closely at all (1)
- ☐ Moderately closely (2)
- ☐ Very closely (3)
- ☐ Extremely closely (4)
- ☐ I don't know (5)



Q7.5 Next, does your organisation have a written policy/code for advising research performing organisations on how to promote research integrity in research carried out in their organisations?

- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)
- ☐ I don't know (3)

Display This Question:

If Next, does your organisation have a written policy/code for advising research performing organisa... = Yes



Q7.6 Does your organisation's policy require that research performing organisations provide training to their staff in the following areas?

	Yes (1)	No (2)	I don't know (3)
Research ethics (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Research conduct (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Data management (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Declaration of interests (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Diversity & inclusion (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Display This Question:

If Next, does your organisation have a written policy/code for advising research performing organisa... = Yes



Q7.7 In practice, how closely do you believe research performing organisations are complying with your policies?

- ☐ Not at all closely (1)
- ☐ Moderately closely (2)
- ☐ Very closely (3)
- ☐ Extremely closely (4)
- ☐ I don't know (5)



Q7.8 Lastly, does your organisation have a written policy/code on internal procedures to guide panel members and project officers (peer reviewers, evaluators) in assessing applications?

- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)
- ☐ I don't know (3)

Display This Question:

If Lastly, does your organisation have a written policy/code on internal procedures to guide panel m... = Yes



Q7.9 Does your organisation's policy/code for panel members and project officers include guidance on the following?

	Yes (1)	No (2)	I don't know (3)
Research ethics (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Research conduct (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Data management (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Declaration of interests (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Diversity & inclusion (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Display This Question:

If Lastly, does your organisation have a written policy/code on internal procedures to guide panel m... = Yes



Q7.10 In practice, how closely do you believe your panel members and project officers are complying with these policies when assessing applications?

- ☐ Not closely at all (1)
- ☐ Moderately closely (2)
- ☐ Very closely (3)
- ☐ Extremely closely (4)
- ☐ I don't know (5)

Page Break



Q7.11 Does your organisation monitor compliance with its written policies/codes?

- ☐ Yes, all policies (1)
- ☐ Yes, some policies (2)
- ☐ No (3)
- ☐ I don't know (4)

Display This Question:

If Does your organisation monitor compliance with its written policies/codes? = No



Q7.12 Please tell us the main reason why you do not monitor compliance?

- ☐ We trust recipients of funding to follow our policies (1)
 - ☐ We would not consider it appropriate (2)
 - ☐ We do not think it is important (3)
 - ☐ We do not have the resources (4)
 - ☐ I don't know (5)
 - ☐ Other (please specify below) (6)
-



Q7.13 Do you require that your own staff who are involved in administering grant applications or awards are trained in the following areas?

	Yes (1)	No (2)	I don't know (3)
Research ethics (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Research conduct (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Data management (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Declaration of interests (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Diversity & inclusion (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Q7.14 If a breach of your policies or codes was found, does your organisation have procedures for dealing with that?

- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)
- ☐ I don't know (3)

☐ End of Block: RFO formal policy/code

☐ Start of Block: RFO breaches



Q8.1 We are now interested in your experience of research integrity breaches within the organisations that you fund. Has your organisation been made aware of serious breaches of research integrity by researchers you have granted funding to within the last 5 years?

- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)
- ☐ I don't know (3)

Display This Question:

If We are now interested in your experience of research integrity breaches within the organisations... = Yes



Q8.2 Thinking about the most recent integrity breach, in your opinion how appropriately was this case handled by the researcher's organisation?

- ☐ Not appropriately at all (1)
- ☐ Moderately appropriately (2)
- ☐ Very appropriately (3)
- ☐ Extremely appropriately (4)

Display This Question:

If We are now interested in your experience of research integrity breaches within the organisations... = Yes



Q8.3 Were you informed about the outcome of the case by the organisation you had given funding to?

- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)
- ☐ I don't know (3)

Page Break

Display This Question:

If We are now interested in your experience of research integrity breaches within the organisations... = Yes



Q8.4 Were there, or will there be, any changes to your existing policies, or new policies introduced, as a result of this integrity breach?

- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)
- ☐ I don't know (3)

Q8.5 If you would like to add comments or observations on your experience of research integrity breaches by individuals or organisations that you have funded, please use the text box below.

Please be careful not to include any identifying information.

☐ End of Block: RFO breaches

☐ Start of Block: RFO breaches internal



Q9.1 And now, we are interested in your experiences of integrity breaches within your own organisation. Has your organisation been made aware of **serious internal breaches** during the evaluations of applications for funding within the last 5 years (as an example this might

include panel members or project officers failing to declare conflicts of interest in an application for research funding)?

- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)
- ☐ I don't know (3)

Display This Question:

If And now, we are interested in your experiences of integrity breaches within your own organisation... = Yes

And If a breach of your policies or codes was found, does your organisation have procedures for deali... = Yes



Q9.2 Thinking of the most recent integrity breach, was this case managed using existing policies within your organisation?

- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)
- ☐ I don't know (3)

Display This Question:

If And now, we are interested in your experiences of integrity breaches within your own organisation... = Yes



Q9.3 Were there, or will there be, any changes to your existing policies, or new policies introduced, as a result of this integrity breach?

- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)
- ☐ I don't know (3)
-

Q9.4 If you would like to add comments or observations on your experience of any internal integrity breaches within your funding organisation when evaluating applications and managing grants to researchers, please use the text box below.

Please remember not to include any identifying information.

☐ End of Block: RFO breaches internal

☐ Start of Block: Horizon

Q5.1 Thank you for your responses so far. The final set of questions relate to one of the major sources of research funding in Europe, the European Union. Under its new scheme for 2022-2027, the European Commission's Horizon Europe funding programme requires that all participants must sign up to the ALLEA European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity and have in place responsible research procedures, policies and structures to foster responsible research practices; prevent questionable research practices and research misconduct; and to handle allegations of breaches of the principles and standards in the Code of Conduct. In these final few questions we would like to ask your opinion about this.



Q5.2 Before participating in this survey were you aware that this requirement existed?

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)



Q5.3 To what extent do you approve or disapprove of this policy development by the European Commission?

- ☐ Strongly disapprove (1)
- ☐ Somewhat disapprove (2)
- ☐ Neither approve nor disapprove (3)
- ☐ Somewhat approve (4)
- ☐ Strongly approve (5)



Q5.4 How likely do you think it is that these measures will improve research integrity amongst applicants and recipients of Horizon Europe funding?

- ☐ Not at all likely (1)
- ☐ Moderately likely (2)
- ☐ Very likely (3)
- ☐ Extremely likely (4)

Q5.5 Do you have any other thoughts on Horizon Europe and this policy development? If so, please tell us here.



Q5.6
How closely do your organisation's current policies and practices align with the European

Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, as adopted by Horizon Europe, in terms of principles and procedures in place?

- ☐ Not closely at all (1)
- ☐ Moderately closely (2)
- ☐ Very closely (3)
- ☐ Extremely closely (4)

Display This Question:

If How closely do your organisation's current policies and practices align with the European Code of... != Extremely closely

Q5.7

Please tell us here about the areas in which your organisation would need to develop to align your current practices with the principles of the European Code of Conduct (reliability, honesty, respect and accountability), if you would like to do so.

Display This Question:

If How closely do your organisation's current policies and practices align with the European Code of... != Extremely closely

And Please select your main responsibilities with respect to the distribution of research grants. P... = Management and strategy

JS

Q5.8 You told us that your role involves management and strategy. Were you to align your policies with Horizon Europe's policies, approximately what percentage increase in resources would be required to do so?

Display This Question:

If How closely do your organisation's current policies and practices align with the European Code of... != Extremely closely

And Please select your main responsibilities with respect to the distribution of research grants. P... = Management and strategy

Q5.9 About how many full-time equivalent staff would that be?

Display This Question:

If Please select your main responsibilities with respect to the distribution of research grants. P... = Management and strategy

And How closely do your organisation's current policies and practices align with the European Code of... = Extremely closely

Q5.10 Approximately how many full-time equivalent staff are supporting research integrity within your organisation?

☐ End of Block: Horizon

9.2 Appendix II. Invitation text

4th May 2022

Dear ,

We are writing to invite you to participate in a 10/15 minute on-line survey as we understand that you are professionally involved in research grant awards and/or administration. We hope that you will be able to give us the benefit of your experience about the opportunities and constraints for the promotion of research integrity (RI).

Much has been written on research integrity with reports of questionable or detrimental research practices (QRPs) calling into question the truth and trustworthiness of science. This online survey is a component in the [SOPs4RI project](#), funded by the European Commission. The project is conducting a health check on RI in the context of the EC's Horizon Europe requirement for both applicants and their organisations to commit to policies and practices to support RI.

We have conducted focus groups and co-creation workshops to define the elements of RI and to identify best practice (see our article published in Nature '[Research integrity: nine ways to move from talk to walk](#)') and have recently completed a survey of some 60,000 active researchers in 30 countries, the findings of which will be published soon.

Our current focus is on the policies and practices of research funding organisations and research administrators in research performing organisations - key actors in the research eco-system.

The survey has been approved under the LSE research ethics protocol (no. 66105) and is fully compliant with GDPR. All responses will be anonymised and no references will be made regarding individuals or institutions in reports on the survey. Those participating in the survey will be sent a link to the report.

We are sending this invitation to some 400 professionals and are keen to hear from as many people and organisations as possible. Please feel free to share the link to the survey with colleagues in similar roles.

Informed consent

Your participation is entirely voluntary and by clicking the link below you consent to take part. You are free to exit the survey at any time without needing to give a reason. You are free to decline to answer any particular question you do not wish to answer for any reason. If you initially decide to participate but change your mind later, you are free to withdraw by sending an email to the team at sops4ri@essex.ac.uk. You do not have to provide us with reasons for the termination of your participation. When you withdraw from the study, all your confidential data

will be destroyed. If your data has already been analysed, the results will be used but the source of the data will not be retrievable. In line with the open access movement, we will make a fully anonymised data publicly available for use for research purposes. No identifying information will be contained in this dataset. For any queries relating to the management of this data, please contact the data manager Professor Nick Allum (nallum@essex.ac.uk).

There are no direct personal benefits of participation in this study. However, by participating, you will contribute to the development of effective guidelines for research integrity, which will help research organisations, including your own institution, to foster research integrity and avoid and handle research misconduct.

[Please click here to take the survey.](#)

The survey will close on **Wednesday 18th May**.

Finally, if you have any questions regarding this survey do contact us at the email address below.

With thanks and best wishes,

George Gaskell and Nick Allum on behalf of the [SOPs4RI project](#)

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11th May 2022

Dear,

We wrote to you last week to invite you to participate in a 10/15 minute on-line survey about research integrity, drawing on your professional experience regarding the opportunities and constraints for the promotion of research integrity (RI) through your organisations.

We have had a great response already and we apologise for contacting you again if you are one of those who have kindly completed the survey. By simply sending a reply to this email you will be deleted from our mailing list. Please feel free to forward the survey to your colleagues in similar roles if you wish to do so.

If you would like to take the survey but have not had a chance as yet, you can do so here for one more week:

[Please click here to take the survey.](#)

About the survey

Much has been written on research integrity with reports of questionable or detrimental research practices (QRPs) calling into question the truth and trustworthiness of science. This online survey is a component in the [SOPs4RI project](#), funded by the European Commission. The project is conducting a health check on RI in the context of the EC's Horizon Europe requirement for both applicants and their organisations to commit to policies and practices to support RI.

We have conducted focus groups and co-creation workshops to define the elements of RI and to identify best practice (see our article published in Nature '[Research integrity: nine ways to move from talk to walk](#)') and have recently completed a survey of some 60,000 active researchers in 30 countries, the findings of which will be published soon.

The survey has been approved under the LSE research ethics protocol (no. 66105) and is fully compliant with GDPR. All responses will be anonymised and no references will be made regarding individuals or institutions in reports on the survey. Those participating in the survey will be sent a link to the report. The survey will close on **Wednesday 18th May**.

Informed consent

Your participation is entirely voluntary and by clicking the link to the survey you consent to take part. You are free to exit the survey at any time without needing to give a reason. You are free to decline to answer any particular question you do not wish to answer for any reason. If you initially decide to participate but change your mind

later, you are free to withdraw by sending an email to the team at sops4ri@essex.ac.uk. You do not have to provide us with reasons for the termination of your participation. When you withdraw from the study, all your confidential data will be destroyed. If your data has already been analysed, the results will be used but the source of the data will not be retrievable. In line with the open access movement, we will make a fully anonymised data publicly available for use for research purposes. No identifying information will be contained in this dataset. For any queries relating to the management of this data, please contact the data manager Professor Nick Allum (nallum@essex.ac.uk).

There are no direct personal benefits of participation in this study. However, by participating, you will contribute to the development of effective guidelines for research integrity, which will help research organisations, including your own institution, to foster research integrity and avoid and handle research misconduct.

Finally, if you have any questions regarding this survey, do contact us at the email address below.

With thanks and best wishes,

George Gaskell and Nick Allum on behalf of the [SOPs4RI project](#)

sops4ri@essex.ac.uk

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19th May 2022

Dear,

We wrote to you previously to invite you to participate in a 10/15 minute on-line survey about research integrity, drawing on your professional experience regarding the opportunities and constraints for the promotion of research integrity (RI) through your organisations.

We would like to let you know that the survey will remain open due to increased interest and so you still have time to complete it if you wish to do so. If you have already completed the survey we thank you for supporting our research and apologise for contacting you again. By simply sending a reply to this email you will be deleted from our mailing list.

[Please click here to take the survey.](#)

If you have any issues accessing the survey please do get in touch.

About the survey

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9.3 Appendix III. Data tables

Responsibility re distribution of grants - management & strategy		
	n	%
No	20	25
Yes	59	75
Total	79	100

Responsibility re distribution of grants - admin, grant applications		
	n	%
No	36	46
Yes	43	54
Total	79	100

Responsibility re distribution of grants - admin, received grants		
	n	%
No	53	67
Yes	26	33
Total	79	100

How familiar research integrity is to role		
	n	%
Unfamiliar	1	1
2	0	0
3	0	0
4	1	1
5	9	12
6	20	27
Familiar	43	58
Total	74	100

How relevant research integrity is to role		
	n	%
Irrelevant	2	3
2	0	0
3	1	1
4	3	4
5	8	11
6	14	19
Relevant	46	62

Total	74	100
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Aware of Horizon funding programme RI requirements		
	n	%
Yes	38	62
No	23	38
Total	61	100

Approval for policy development by EC		
	n	%
Strongly disapprove	2	3
Neither approve nor disapprove	7	12
Somewhat approve	19	32
Strongly approve	32	53
Total	60	100

Likelihood of Horizon improving RI in funding recipients		
	n	%
Not at all likely	1	2
Moderately likely	26	44
Very likely	26	44
Extremely likely	6	10
Total	59	100

How closely current practices align with ECoC		
	n	%
Moderately closely	16	28
Very closely	36	63
Extremely closely	5	9
Total	57	100

RFO has written integrity code for researchers		
	n	%
Yes	59	86
No	7	10
I don't know	3	4
Total	69	100

RFO requires researchers to complete training in research ethics		
	n	%
Yes	17	29

No	35	60
I don't know	6	10
Total	58	100

RFO requires researchers to complete training in research conduct		
	n	%
Yes	17	30
No	32	56
I don't know	8	14
Total	57	100

RFO requires researchers to complete training in data management		
	n	%
Yes	18	31
No	33	57
I don't know	7	12
Total	58	100

RFO requires researchers to complete training in declaration of interests		
	n	%
Yes	23	40
No	30	52
I don't know	5	9
Total	58	100

RFO requires researchers to complete training in diversity & inclusion		
	n	%
Yes	9	16
No	39	67
I don't know	10	17
Total	58	100

How closely recipients of funding are complying with RFO policies		
	n	%
Not closely at all	1	2
Moderately closely	20	36
Very closely	25	45
Extremely closely	6	11
I don't know	4	7
Total	56	100

Research Funding Organisation has written integrity code for RPOs		
	n	%
Yes	32	48

No	30	45
I don't know	5	7
Total	67	100

RFO requires RPO to provide training in research ethics		
	n	%
Yes	10	31
No	14	44
I don't know	8	25
Total	32	100

RFO requires RPO to provide training in research conduct		
	n	%
Yes	10	31
No	14	44
I don't know	8	25
Total	32	100

RFO require RPO to provide training in data management		
	n	%
Yes	11	34
No	13	41
I don't know	8	25
Total	32	100

RFO requires RPO to provide training in declaration of interests		
	n	%
Yes	10	31
No	13	41
I don't know	9	28
Total	32	100

RFO requires RPO to provide training in diversity & inclusion		
	n	%
Yes	3	9
No	17	53
I don't know	12	38
Total	32	100

How closely research performing organisations are complying with RFO policies		
	n	%
Moderately closely	14	44
Very closely	13	41
Extremely closely	1	3

I don't know	4	13
Total	32	100

RFO has written integrity code for panel members/project officers		
	n	%
Yes	64	96
No	3	4
Total	67	100

RFO provides guidance to panel members/project officers on research ethics		
	n	%
Yes	50	81
No	11	18
I don't know	1	2
Total	62	100

RFO provides guidance to panel members/project officers on research conduct		
	n	%
Yes	45	73
No	12	19
I don't know	5	8
Total	62	100

RFO provides guidance to panel members/project officers on data management		
	n	%
Yes	46	75
No	13	21
I don't know	2	3
Total	61	100

RFO provides guidance to panel members/project officers on declaration of interests		
	n	%
Yes	56	90
No	3	5
I don't know	3	5
Total	62	100

RFO provides guidance to panel members/project officers on diversity & inclusion		
	n	%
Yes	37	60
No	18	29
I don't know	7	11

Total	62	100
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How closely staff are complying with policies when assessing applications		
	n	%
Moderately closely	14	23
Very closely	34	55
Extremely closely	12	19
I don't know	2	3
Total	62	100

RFO monitors compliance with written policies/codes		
	n	%
Yes, all policies	12	18
Yes, some policies	42	65
No	7	11
I don't know	4	6
Total	65	100

Reason why RFO does not monitor compliance		
	n	%
We trust recipients of funding to follow our policies	2	29
We do not have the resources	2	29
Other (please specify below)	3	43
Total	7	100

RFO requires staff administering grants to be trained in research ethics		
	n	%
Yes	28	44
No	29	45
I don't know	7	11
Total	64	100

RFO requires staff administering grants to be trained in research conduct		
	n	%
Yes	24	38
No	32	50
I don't know	8	13
Total	64	100

RFO requires staff administering grants to be trained in data management		
	n	%
Yes	30	47
No	28	44
I don't know	6	9

Total	64	100
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RFO requires staff administering grants to be trained in declaration of interest		
	n	%
Yes	35	55
No	22	34
I don't know	7	11
Total	64	100

RFO requires staff administering grants to be trained in diversity & inclusion		
	n	%
Yes	30	47
No	28	44
I don't know	6	9
Total	64	100

RFO has procedures for dealing with breach of policies/codes		
	n	%
Yes	56	88
No	5	8
I don't know	3	5
Total	64	100

Responsibility for safeguarding RI - individual researchers		
	n	%
No responsibility	1	1
A moderate amount of responsibility	5	7
A lot of responsibility	69	92
Total	75	100

Responsibility for safeguarding RI - RPOs		
	n	%
Some responsibility	1	1
A moderate amount of responsibility	3	4
A lot of responsibility	71	95
Total	75	100

Responsibility for safeguarding RI - RFOs		
	n	%
Some responsibility	4	5
A moderate amount of responsibility	30	40
A lot of responsibility	41	55
Total	75	100

Actual safeguarding RI - individual researchers		
	n	%
No responsibility	1	1
Some responsibility	2	3
A moderate amount of responsibility	39	58
A lot of responsibility	25	37
Total	67	100

Actual safeguarding RI - RPOs		
	n	%
No responsibility	1	1
Some responsibility	14	21
A moderate amount of responsibility	42	62
A lot of responsibility	11	16
Total	68	100

Actual safeguarding RI - RFOs		
	n	%
No responsibility	1	1
Some responsibility	13	18
A moderate amount of responsibility	28	39
A lot of responsibility	29	41
Total	71	100

Serious breaches of RI by funded org within last 5 years		
	n	%
Yes	37	58.7
No	13	20.6
I don't know	13	20.6
Total	63	100.0

How appropriately was case handled by RPO		
	n	%
Not appropriately at all	2	5.6
Moderately appropriately	15	41.7
Very appropriately	16	44.4
Extremely appropriately	3	8.3
Total	36	100.0

RPO informed RFO of outcome of RI breach		
	n	%
Yes	23	62.2

No	6	16.2
I don't know	8	21.6
Total	37	100.0

Changes or new policies due to RPO RI breach - RFO		
	n	%
Yes	9	24.3
No	17	45.9
I don't know	11	29.7
Total	37	100.0



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SOPs4RI Project



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The project leading to this application has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 824481.