ESF Member Forum on Scientific Integrity

Working Group 2; Code of Conduct

Members: Drenth (chair), Dahlen, Davis, Hadchouel, Hüttemann, Salo.
History ESF Member Forum

- First World Conference on *Research Integrity, fostering responsible research*, Lisbon, 16-19 Sept. 2007.
- Proposal project *European Co-ordinated Approach to Research Integrity* (ESF, ALLEA, UKRIO). Funding EC rejected (May 2008), decision to go ahead anyway with own means.
- After Madrid: Establishing ESF Member Forum on Research Integrity with four Working Groups:
  - Raising awareness
  - Code of Conduct
  - Setting up national structures
  - Furthering research on RI
Working Groups

- First meeting of the four working groups: Amsterdam, 23 May, 2009
- Joint meeting WG 2 and WG 3: Amsterdam, 11 Sept. 2009
- Joint meeting four working groups: Strasbourg, 27 Oct. 2009
- Various between and within group communications through e-mail and telephone.
Code of Conduct (WG 2)

- Two parallel lines of consultation: European Academies of Sciences, and ESF Members (funding agencies, research councils and academies)
- First discussion paper (P.J.D.Drenth, Science and Integrity) discussed in meeting of Allea’s standing committee on science and ethics, Berlin, 26-27 March ’09, and commented on by members WG2
- Second draft (P.J.D.Drenth, Scientific Integrity: Code of Conduct) subject of discussion of special meeting of (representatives of) ALLEA’s member academies, Berne, 29-30 June, 2009, and of meeting Working Group 2, Amsterdam, 11 Sept. 2009
- Various comments and suggestions by members of WG2 and by academies that could not attend the Berne meeting were received throughout the consulting period
- All resulting in present proposal Code of Conduct
Essence CoC

- CoC is a canon for self regulation, and not a body of law
- The Code confines itself to standards of integrity while *conducting* research. The much wider socio-ethical responsibility of the scientist is left out of consideration
- The Code represents an agreement on a set of principles and priorities at a given point in time
- Initially the document addresses itself to the European scientific community. Hopefully it will offer building stones for a globally accepted code
Principles of scientific integrity

- Applies to all fields of science and humanities
- Ethics in conducting research is part of a wider socio-ethical responsibility of the scientist
- Principles of scientific integrity (honesty, reliability, objectivity, impartiality and independence, open communication, duty of care, fairness, responsibility for future science generations) are universal
Misconduct

- Violating norms of scientific integrity is harmful for science, for individuals and society, and for trust in science
- Two most serious violations are *fabrication* and *falsification*
- *Plagiarism* is another serious violation.
- So is improper *dealing* with infringements, and gross negligence of good research *management* and of the duty to *further* research integrity
- Part of what is defined as *questionable* research practice (i.e. falsification in statu nascendi) is also a fundamental violation of integrity norms
- These infringements are fundamental violations, and should be rejected universally
Good practices

Other forms of objectionable practices refer to:
- Data practices
- Research procedures:
  - Proper research procedures
  - Responsible research procedures
- Publication-related conduct
- Reviewing and editorial issues

Guidelines are offered; they are presented in a general style. Unlike fundamental principles and violations (which are part of universal Code of Conduct) these procedural rules must allow for national/regional/disciplinary differences and cannot claim catholicity
Dealing with allegations of misconduct

- Mostly: responsibility within employer institute
- Some countries: national body
- Many countries: national body, advisory or court of appeal
- Need for fair and due process, that is uniform and sufficiently rapid and leads to proper outcomes and sanctions
- Principles following closely OECD report
International collaborative research

- Importance of an internationally accepted Code of Conduct
- What to do with alleged research misconduct in international collaborative research?
- In large scale formal research projects or programmes: recommendations of OECD Global Science Forum Co-ordinating committee for facilitating international misconduct investigations to be followed.