1st Workshop of the ESF MOForum on Peer Review

10-11 March 2008
NWO, The Hague, Netherlands

AGENDA

Monday 10 March 2008 - 9:00 – 17:20

9:00 – 9:30: Welcome coffee

9:30 – 12:00: **PLENARY SESSION 1: Setting the scene**

CHAIR: PETER NIJKAMP

Welcome, **Peter Nijkamp**, President, NWO

Peer Review and the Quality of European Research, **Raimo Väyrynen**, Chairman, Science Advisory Board, ESF

Resume of the international conference 'Peer review – its present and future state' (Prague, 2006) **Josef Syka**, President, Czech Science Foundation

MO Forum on Peer Review – aims and activities; **Patricia Vogel**, MO Forum on Peer Review

Discussion

10:30 – 11:00 Coffee break

Keynote:
Research grants peer review ten years on – what's new and what is déjà vu?, **Fiona Wood**, Centre for Higher Education and Management Policy, University of New England, Armidale, Australia

Discussion

12:00 – 13:00 Lunch

13:00 – 15:00 **PLENARY SESSION 2: Peer Review standards across borders and cultures**

CHAIR: VALERIO VERCESI

Identification of shared approaches in peer review processes across Europe will be a key feature for the further development of the European Research Area and for the consolidation of the European research community to move toward the Global Research Area (GLOREA). To realise this objective firstly current best practice that already exists should be understood and shared, promotion of quality monitoring to further improve processes should be encouraged, applicants and reviewers should receive consistent guidance for their respective roles through appropriate training and feedback, and finally transparency of procedures must be assured. Evolving to a shared model will enable research funding across borders, facilitate international collaborations and promote consistency of funding decisions. The definition of some standards should help harmonise different national and research domain cultures without losing the necessary diversity.
The following issues will be discussed:

- What are common challenges of identifying standards
- Which peer review practises could be aligned for potential sharing
- How findings of the session relate with draft principles of peer review
- Peer Review practices as viewed by applicants, referees and managers

Keynotes:

ISO 9001 accreditation of peer review within EPSRC, **Douglas Niven**, Senior Business & Quality Manager, EPSRC, UK

Challenges and Opportunities Facing Peer-Review: A vision for Ensuring Its Strategic National Value; **Toni Scarpa**, Director, Center for Scientific Review, National Institutes of Health, US

Discussants:

- *Peer Review in the first transnational call of Nano Science ERA NET*, **Paul Schuddeboom**, STW-NWO
- *Monitoring the quality of peer review in FP7 through surveys, observer feedback, and the new redress procedures: results and lessons learned*, **Alan Cross**, DG Research
- *An integrated management approach to guide peer review at the FNR;* **Frank Bingen**, FNR, Luxemburg
- *Training for referees and panel chairs*, **Anna Ledin**, The Swedish Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning

Discussion

15.00 – 15.30 Coffee break

15.30 – 17.20 **PLENARY SESSION 3: Reviewing specific types of proposals: interdisciplinary and breakthrough research; networking & collaborative activities; and investments in research infrastructure**

CHAIR: FIONA WOOD

There is widespread feeling that each of these three types of proposals requires specific treatment for several reasons. Interdisciplinary and breakthrough research involves high risks which conventional evaluation criteria and peer review processes do not fully and properly accommodate. Proposals for networking activities pose a problem as assessing their added value requires different criteria than assessing research as such. Proposals for research infrastructure address very diverse issues, from their contribution to the quality and progress of research to sustainability and financial investment. Their assessment poses a challenge to a standard peer review processes, because of scale and high costs, because the science may not follow the traditional hypothesis-led model, and because they often serve an international community.

The session will consider what conditions need to be created for the three types of proposals to be assessed in a fair and effective way. The following issues will be examined:

- How to formulate requirements and corresponding criteria specific for these types of projects?
- How to communicate these specific requirements and criteria to applicants and reviewers?
- What type of experts do we need?

Speakers:

- *Reviewing breakthrough, high-risk and interdisciplinary research proposals*; **Riitta Mustonen**, Academy of Finland, Vice-President Research
- *Can the three-dimensional evaluation method be aligned for potential standardisation - The case with networking and infrastructure projects,* **Ozlem Ekici**, TUBITAK
- *Reviewing network proposals*; **Erik Arnold**, Managing Director, Technopolis Ltd

- *Era-Instruments: activities and peer review of infrastructure projects*, **Cas Maessen**, NWO

Discussion

17.20 – 18.20 Drinks

20.00 Dinner

Tuesday 11 March 2008 – 9:00 – 16:30

9.00 – 12.30 **PLENARY SESSION 4 A AND B International Peer Review and the sharing of resources at the European level**

As discussions at the Conference on Peer Review in Prague and at the recent ESF Science Policy Conference 'Is ERA a first step to GLOREA (Global Research Area)? ERA from an international perspective' (Strasbourg, 28-29 November 2007) show, a need for an internationalisation of peer review is seen to be growing in Europe and a necessary step in furthering the development of the ERA. Highlighted amongst the conclusions of both Conferences were the harmonisation of peer review across Europe and the creation of European standards. Also frequently stated in the discussions was that a platform for European countries to share scientific expertise (variously called European panels, a common pool of reviewers in Europe or a European data base of peers) has become a necessity. A coordinated European approach will enable the better use of researchers' efforts and counteract the referee fatigue, while ensuring high scientific quality of funded research and increasing international collaboration.

This session will aim at answering the following questions:

- Why international peer review is needed, what are its advantages and challenges for researchers (both applicants and reviewers) and research managers?
- What conditions should be fulfilled to ensure their efficient functioning? What principles of peer review are essential in an international environment?
- How should referees and review panel members for international peer review be selected?
- How can international peer review resources be shared at the European level?
- What activities enabling sharing international peer review resources have been recently undertaken in Europe?

9.00 – 10.30 **SESSION 4 A: International review panels and referee colleges;**

CHAIR: TONI SCARPA

Introduction: Perspectives of European collaboration in Peer Review, **John Marks**, ESF

Speakers:

- *HumVIB (Cross-national and Multi-level Analysis of Human Values, Institutions and Behaviours) EUROCORES Programme Panel,* **Brian Francis,** Lancaster University
- *HERA ERANET: European Peer Review College in the Humanities*, **John Caughie**, AHRC
- *Experiences of the 1st ERC call*, **Ben Tubbing**, DG Research

Communiqué

- *The Development of International Peer Review in Central Europe*, **Elod Nemerkenyi,** OTKA, Hungary

Discussion

10.30 – 11.00 Coffee break

11.00 – 12.30 **SESSION 4 B: The sharing of resources at the European level**

CHAIR: ALAN CROSS

Communiqué

- *ANEP-ESF benchmarking project*, **Victoria Ley Vega de Soane,** ANEP

Speakers:

- *Use of information tools for evaluation of research activities -the case of Slovenian Research Agency*, **Tomaž Boh** Slovenian Research Agency (ARRS)
- *ESF Peer Review Support and the Pool of Reviewers*, **Nina Kancewicz-Hoffman**, **Valerie Allspach-Kiechel**, ESF

Discussion

12.30 – 13.30 Lunch

13.30 – 14.45 **SESSION 5: Developing an action plan for the European Peer Review**

CHAIR: ANDREW BOURNE

Introduction to the session: how we will work; **Chair**

Summary of discussions and recommendations from sessions 2, 3 and 4 with a focus on proposals for future joint actions; **Rapporteurs**

14.00 – 14.45 **Interactive session**

In the plenary meeting room participants are invited to circulate around three teams (one for each session) asking questions, suggesting new ideas and signing up to participate in future joint actions.

Session teams (rapporteurs in bold)

Session 2: **Sofie Björling** (VR, Sweden), Valerio Vercesi (INFN, Italy), Andrew Bourne (EPSRC, UK)

Session 3: **David Cox** (MRC, UK)**,** Patricia Vogel (NWO, the Netherlands), Berry Bonenkamp (NWO, the Netherlands)

Session 4: 4A - **Oonagh Ward** (HRB, Ireland), 4B - **Monique van Donzel,** Nina Kancewicz-Hoffman (ESF)

14.45 – 15.15 Coffee break

15.15 - 16.30 **PLENARY SESSION 6: Summary and Conclusions**

CHAIR: MARJA MAKAROW

Reports from Session 5; **Rapporteurs**

Adoption of action plans and summary; **Chair**

16.30 **CLOSING of the Workshop**