

## **Reaching a Global Standard in Research Integrity**

**Monday 21 February 2011, 9.45am – 12.45pm  
AAAS 2011, Washington Convention Center**

### **Synopsis**

Fraud, fabricating results and falsification: research integrity has emerged as a critical issue in science policy in the wake of several high profile scandals in the research community. Recent alleged cases of breaches of research integrity captured significant political and public attention worldwide. This symposium is convened by the European Science Foundation to explore the challenges in establishing a worldwide consensus about research integrity. It will examine how different institutions and governments are working to enhance its delivery, through prevention and teaching, detection of cases, assessment and eventual sanction.

Reaching international understanding of the issues and impacts of fraud and falsification is essential to scientists working together; it is also important for ensuring public trust in science and scientific methodology. In looking at how to respond when research integrity standards are not respected, this session brings together international viewpoints including first hand experience of handling cases from Europe, the US and Asia. It will include an overview of educational goals and benchmarks, and the difficulties involved in protecting whistleblowers. This symposium offers a cross-section of perspectives from the level of the individual researcher to federal government.

**Moderator: Marja Makarow**, Chief Executive, European Science Foundation, France, and Professor of Molecular Biology, University of Helsinki, Finland

### **Presentation abstracts**

#### **Global Insights – Experiences of Research Integrity from the USA and Asia**

##### **Ovid Tzeng, Distinguished Research Fellow, Academia Sinica, Taiwan**

Scientific Integrity should be integrated into a scientist's routine practice at three different levels: personal, institutional, and socio-cultural. Against the defining features of research integrity across these three levels, the USA Office of Research Integrity has made a tremendous effort in assessing the problems of research misconduct in various forms and environments. Behavioural codes and institutional regulations have been studied and educational programs implemented to prevent misconducts and foster research integrity. In contrast, the rising power of research universities and institutions among some Asian countries did not pay enough attention to the general issue of research integrity, and they also did not make efforts to combat the rising trend of misconducts committed by their junior and sometimes senior scientists. What are reasons behind the lack of concern? What has been done to circumvent the problems? The situation will be examined from a global perspective, with case studies highlighting the efforts being made to foster integrity among scientists in the region.

### **The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity: Prevention and Treatment**

**Laura Marin, Science Officer, European Science Foundation, France**

European researchers are increasingly collaborating across borders, making a common understanding of the demands of research integrity essential. Marin will discuss how the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity has been developed to act as a reference point for all parts of the research spectrum. It addresses proper conduct in the natural and social sciences and the humanities, giving definitions of misconduct and good research practices. The code sets a standard for the self-regulation needed from researchers and their institutions to prevent detrimental developments, and it is sufficiently inclusive to allow easy compliance with national and European legislation. It could be the basis for developing national regulations where none exist; it can complement existing codes or may enhance them. It was welcomed at the Second World Conference on Research Integrity in Singapore in July 2010 as an example of international coordination that builds a basis for a worldwide consensus about research integrity.

### **National Implementation of Research Integrity - Good Research Practice Education**

**John Galland, Director, Office of Research Integrity, USA**

The two Divisions of the Office of Research Integrity assist institutions funded by the United States Public Health Service in investigating allegations of research misconduct and in educating researchers and research administrators about research integrity. An overview of the office is presented as one federal agency's model for minimizing and investigating research misconduct, but more importantly for strengthening research through development of responsible research practices.

### **The Interplay of Selfregulation, National Guidelines and Law in the Norwegian System**

**Ragnvald Kalleberg, Member, National Commission for the Investigation of Scientific Misconduct, Norway**

Norway was the first country to establish national committees for research ethics covering all fields of research. Since their creation in 1990, the committees have focused on stimulating good research practice, preventing scientific misconduct, developing guidelines for research integrity, giving advice on specific cases and informing the research community and the public about relevant issues. Ethical guidelines are the most important element in stimulating research integrity and preventing misconduct. The present Norwegian system is complex: a national advisory board on biotechnology was created the same year that the research ethics committees were established and over the last decade four new bodies have been added. The relationship and lessons from the committees will be presented, as well as an exploration of how the complexity of the present system may have unintended consequences, such as signaling to the public that research is dangerous and generate fragmentation and tensions between the eight national institutions.

### **The Conciliatory Approach: Mediation and the Role of the Ombudsman**

**Ulrike Beisiegel, President, University of Gottingen, and Former Ombudsman for the German Research Foundation, Germany**

After a severe case of scientific misconduct in 1997 the German Research Foundation (DFG) appointed a commission to make recommendations for 'good scientific practice'. The resulting report proposed that safeguarding research integrity is principally a task of self-government within the scientific community. Fostering good scientific practice has been defined as an institutional task with chief executives owning the responsibility for implementation. The ombudspersons are central figures in this system of self-regulation. These independent mediators have proven personal

integrity and are appointed in each scientific institution in the country. Since 1999 the DFG has had a national committee of independent ombudspersons as a mediating authority accessible to all scientists in Germany for questions on good scientific practice and scientific misconduct. In contrast to the Office of Research Integrity in the USA, the Ombuds-Committee does not conduct its own investigations but brings cases of serious concern to the attention of the involved institutions. A report on the first ten years of experience of this committee has now been published. The report's findings will be presented giving a picture of the number of proceedings dealt with, the nature of the cases and the ways they have been handled, as well as the lessons learned about the system of mediation and self-government.