

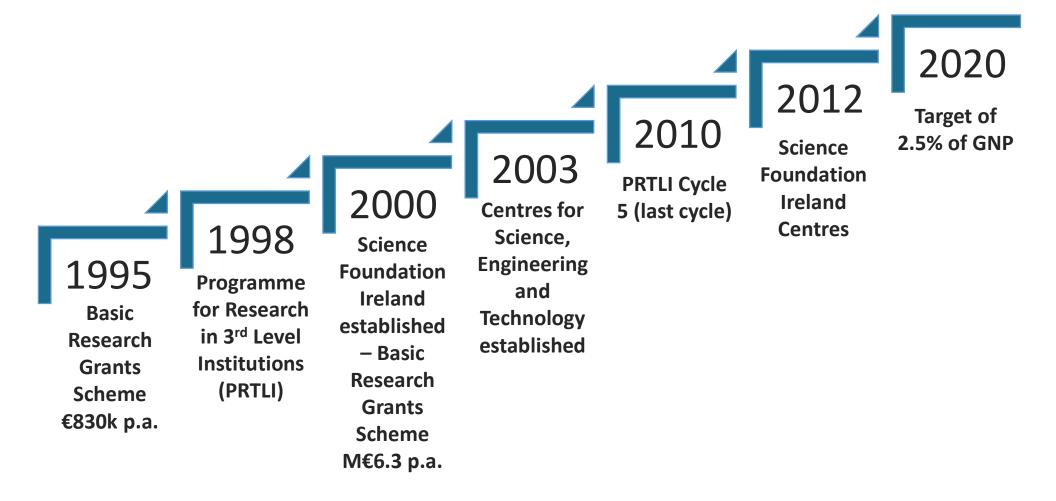
R&I in Ireland



- Ireland is a small EU-MS with a population of 4.76M
- Publically-funded research activity is concentrated within the 25 Higher Education Institutes and two specialist state research performing organisations (Agriculture and Marine Research)
- Six main funding agencies
- EU Innovation Scoreboard 2017 classifies Ireland as a Strong Innovator, leading in:
 - Innovation in SMEs
 - Employment impacts of innovation
- Accords with government policy to invest in research for economic and societal benefit
 - Increased focus on supporting research activities in industry often collaborative with higher education

Research System Development in Ireland





Starting a Dialogue About Research Integrity



- 2010: Royal Irish Academy publication "Ensuring Integrity in Irish Research" – outcome of a policy workshop
- 2011: IUA established a working group of funders, research performing organisations (RPOs) and stakeholders
 - Led by Professor Ray O'Neill, Maynooth University
- 2014: Launched the "National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland" in June 2014
 - OECD misconduct definitions
 - Aligned with European RI Code



http://www.iua.ie/wpcontent/uploads/2014/06/National-Policy-Statement-on-Ensuring-Research-Integrityin-Ireland-2014.pdf

National Research Integrity Forum

Established June 2015

- Chaired by Professor Anita Maguire, University College Cork
- Deputy Chair Dr. Jennifer Brennan, Technological Higher Education Association
- Funders, research performers and stakeholder organisations
- Voluntary body

December 2015

- Tasked with responsibility for research integrity in Irish Government R&I strategy 'Innovation 2020'
- Report annually to Innovation 2020 Action Group





https://dbei.gov.ie/en/Publications/Innovation-2020-Progress-Reports.html

Main Responsibilities



- 1. Supporting the implementation of research integrity policies and processes in a harmonised manner across the research performers;
- 2. Supporting national research funders in implementing harmonised research integrity statements in grant conditions and associated audit processes;
- 3. Agreeing a process and format for the public dissemination of the outcome of research integrity investigations having regard to existing regulations relating to misconduct and discipline in the research-performing organisations, and the Terms and Conditions of grants awarded by the research funding organisations;

Main Responsibilities



- 4. Supporting the development and roll-out of research integrity training programmes for staff and students in the research performers;
- 5. Monitoring international developments and policy in the area of research integrity, and making appropriate recommendations for adjustments in research integrity policy and practice in Ireland;
- 6. Communicating the importance of research integrity to the Irish research community and to the general public.

Early Lessons



- Different expectations & levels of engagement around the table
- Making clear that the Forum is only for oversight and guidance –
 the RPOs are responsible and autonomous
- Lack of clarity around the interface between research ethics & research integrity
- Different ideas about what the role of Research Integrity Officer is and what type of person should take it on i.e. academic or management staff
- Making it clear that the Forum is not a place to discuss individual cases of misconduct

Solutions



- Devising and publishing clear Terms of Reference for the Forum, i.e., what we "do" and "don't do"
- Establishing two sub-groups:
 - 1. Implementation Sub-Group (RPOs only) a good place for an open discussion between RPOs and agreement on issues before discussion at the RI Forum. RPOs who had advanced their RI procedures shared their knowledge with all RPOs. Continuous process lessons learned from cases are feeding back into the Forum's knowledge
 - 2. Funders Sub-Group harmonising RI clauses in funders T&Cs and call documents

Solutions



- The Forum has worked through a series of Position Papers:
 - 1. Research Ethics & Research Integrity Overlap
 - 2. Research Integrity Officer Role and Reporting Structure
 - 3. RI Statistics format for publication
 - 4. Guidelines for the Investigation of Research Misconduct
- Many of the RPOs have joined the UK Research Integrity Office
- Reporting: A consolidated national report of research misconduct investigations will be published annually by the Forum

Training



- The Forum has put in place a minimum level of research integrity training (online provider Epigeum) for research performers
- Three year pilot, starting January 2018
- Provides access for 15,000 users (>50% of those eligible)
- Each research performer is allocated a number of user access tokens (based on a formula around research student and staff numbers)
- The cost is underwritten by the research funders, with a contribution from the representative bodies IUA and THEA.
- Now all research performers have access to a minimum, highquality level of training – some have chosen to deliver in a blended format with face-to-face training events
- Delivery of this is a key objective in Innovation 2020

Awareness-Raising

- The Forum hosted its inaugural national event on 3rd February 2017
- Fully booked (130 attendees)
- Keynote Speakers:
 - Prof. Nick Steneck, University of Michigan
 - James Parry, UK Research Integrity Office
- Training event for RIOs on the preceding day
- Event on RI and Open Research planned for autumn 2018





http://www.iua.ie/wpcontent/uploads/2017/06/National-Forum-on-Research-Integrity-Seminar-Report-Feb-2017-web-version.pdf

Future Work



- Revising our National Policy Statement on RI in accordance with the European Code of Conduct on Research Integrity
- Publishing the first national statistics report on research misconduct investigations – a major step forward in transparency
- Monitoring the impact of the online RI training now available to all research performing organisations
- Examining the interface between RI and Open Research
- Supporting the reinforcement of robust Conflicts of Interest policies with respect to research
- Establishing appropriate methods to assure research funders and regulatory agencies that policies and procedures to support RCR are in place in the research performing organisations

Challenges



- Resourcing and supporting Research Integrity
 Officers
 - Defining the role of RIO and ensuring that they engage as a peer group
 - Recognising that RIOs will come and go, a continuing layer of senior admin support in RPOs is essential to retain institutional learning
- 2. Ongoing debate on the "carrot vs. stick" approach to creating a culture of RRI in Ireland.
 - e.g. "carrot" = funders making RI training mandatory for all awardees and including a mandatory section on RI in proposals.
 - e.g. "stick" = funders auditing research projects to identify breaches of integrity

Some recent issues



- What sanctions are applied to PhD Supervisors / Post-doc Mentors where their research team member has been found guilty of research misconduct?
- What can an RPO do when a former employee is under investigation for research misconduct or has been found guilty of it?
- Is it possible to define different categories/levels of research misconduct to enable panels to respond appropriately and facilitate an even approach across different investigations?
- Challenges of inter-institutional research, especially international collaboration
- Identifying the best composition of investigation panels

Conclusions



- Ireland is at an early stage in terms of a national approach to RI, but we have made substantial progress
- The National RI Forum is driving that progress, inspired by the desire to make Ireland an exemplar of Responsible Conduct of Research
- Government buy-in in terms of the Innovation 2020 Actions tasked to the Forum is a key enabler
- In many cases, advancing a national approach is not about "reinventing the wheel" but about enhancing what is already in place locally
- The Forum is an exemplar of research performers, funder and other stakeholders working together to advance a common goal



Thank You!

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http://www.iua.ie/research-innovation/researchintegrity/