



National Forum on Research Integrity

Terms of Reference

This document outlines the terms of reference for the National Forum on Research Integrity.

Role

The organisations¹ who endorsed the “National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity In Ireland”² in 2014 agreed to the following four commitments:

- 1. Commitment 1** – We are committed to ensuring the highest standard of integrity in all aspects of our research, founded on basic principles of good research practice to be observed by all researchers and research organisations.
- 2. Commitment 2** – Education and promotion of good research practice are the foundations of research integrity. We are committed to maintaining a national research environment that is founded upon a culture of integrity, embracing internationally recognised good practice and a positive, proactive approach to promoting research integrity. This will include support for the development of our researchers through education and promotion of good research practices.
- 3. Commitment 3** – We are committed to working together to reinforce and safeguard the integrity of the Irish research system and to reviewing progress regularly.
- 4. Commitment 4** – We are committed to using transparent, fair and effective processes to deal with allegations of research misconduct when they arise.

The primary role of the Forum is to promote and raise awareness of these commitments within the Irish research system and to external stakeholders, and to enable the actors within the system to align with those commitments.

¹ Irish Universities Association, Institutes of Technology Ireland, Dublin Institute of Technology, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, Higher Education Authority, Quality and Qualifications Ireland, Science Foundation Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, Health Research Board, Royal Irish Academy, Teagasc and the Irish Research Council.

² <http://www.iua.ie/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/National-Policy-Statement-on-Ensuring-Research-Integrity-in-Ireland-2014.pdf>

Responsibilities

Key responsibilities of the Forum include:

- a) Supporting the implementation of research integrity policies and processes in a harmonised manner across the research performing organisations;
- b) Supporting national research funders in implementing harmonised research integrity statements in grant conditions and associated assurance processes;
- c) Supporting the development and roll-out of research integrity training programmes for staff and students in the research performing organisations;
- d) Monitoring international developments and policy in the area of research integrity, and periodically reviewing the terms of reference of the Forum and research integrity policy and practice in Ireland in this context;
- e) Communicating the importance of research integrity to the Irish research community and to the general public;
- f) Sharing experiences on the number and types of research misconduct that have been dealt with through formal mechanisms within the institutions;
- g) Engaging nationally and internationally in forums considering research integrity and related issues and make recommendations as appropriate to policy development, review and implementation.

Chair and Deputy Chair

The Chair will be Professor Anita Maguire, Vice President for Research and Innovation, University College Cork. The Deputy Chair will be Dr. Jennifer Brennan, Director of Research, Development & Innovation, Technological Higher Education Alliance (THEA).

Secretariat

The secretariat will be provided jointly by the Irish Universities Association (IUA) and the Technological Higher Education Association (THEA).

Membership

Members will be nominated representatives of the main research-performing organisations, research-funding organisations, and other relevant stakeholder organisations in Ireland (one per organisation):

Research Performers	Dublin City University Maynooth University National University of Ireland Galway University of Limerick University College Dublin University College Cork University College Cork Trinity College, The University of Dublin Technological University of Dublin Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland Cork Institute of Technology Waterford Institute of Technology Marine Institute Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies
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Research Funders	Health Research Board Science Foundation Ireland Dept. Agriculture, Food and the Marine Environmental Protection Agency Teagasc* Enterprise Ireland Irish Research Council
Other Stakeholders	Royal Irish Academy Higher Education Authority Quality and Qualifications Ireland Irish Universities Association Technological Higher Education Alliance

* Teagasc is present as both a research-funding and a research-performing organisation

There are no time limits on the term of appointment of a nominated representative. Organisations can change their nominated representative at any time by writing to the Secretariat. The nominated representative can send an alternate to meetings when they are unable to attend themselves.

Frequency of Meetings

The Forum will meet twice annually. The Chair may call meetings more frequently if deemed necessary or on the joint request from two or more Forum members. Except in situations to consider matters of urgency, all meeting dates will be communicated at least three weeks in advance. Remote attendance at meetings will be possible, subject to the availability of the Secretariat's video/phone-conferencing facilities.

Transparency and Communications

The membership, meeting dates, agendas, minutes and associated documents, and reports of the Forum will be uploaded by the secretariat to the IUA extranet.

Documents will be circulated in advance of meetings via email and stored on the IUA extranet.

The secretariat will maintain a page about the Forum on the IUA website at <http://www.iaa.ie/research-innovation/research-integrity/>. The membership of the Forum and any public documents which it creates will be published on this page.

Agreement of Recommendations

The Chair shall determine when consensus has been reached on matters discussed at Forum meetings. However where

there is a considerable difference of opinion that must be reflected in the minutes of the meeting.

Sub-Groups

The Forum will convene two sub-groups:

- **Funders sub-group**, comprising of representatives from the main research funding agencies. Chaired by Dr. Maura Hiney from the Health Research Board, this temporary sub-group will work on a harmonised research integrity policy across the Irish research funders.
- **Implementation sub-group**, comprising of representatives from the research performing organisations. Prof. Maguire will chair the group in the interim, with support from the Secretariat. This group will focus on the practical issues around implementation of RI policies within the research performers relating to both staff and students (recalling that the majority of PhD candidates in Ireland are students not staff) and the development/roll-out of suitable training programmes for both students and staff members.

The Forum may establish additional working groups as and when required, whether short-term or otherwise.

Reporting

The Forum shall report annually to the Innovation 2020 Implementation Group. Forum members will report internally in their own organisations.

Date of Last Review

4th February 2019