Promoting Integrity as an Integral Dimension of Excellence in Research

PRINTEGER Newsletter – Edition 1/2016

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Dear readers,

We are delighted to present the first edition of the PRINTEGER newsletter. As of now, the PRINTEGER consortium informs you twice per year in a newsletter about the progress of the project and upcoming events.

In this first newsletter, we are giving you a brief overview of the progress of PRINTEGER since the kick-off in September 2015. Furthermore, you will have the possibility to read an interview with PRINTEGER project coordinator Professor Hub Zwart on the importance of research integrity.

We hope you will enjoy reading this issue!

Current Topics

1. **Interview**

2. **PRINTEGER results**

3. **External Dissemination Activities**

4. **Upcoming Events**

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1. Interview

Interview with PRINTEGER coordinator Professor Hub Zwart

Hub Zwart, coordinator of the PRINTEGER project, is Professor of Philosophy at the Faculty of Science (Radboud University Nijmegen), director of the Institute for Science, Innovation and Society and scientific director of the Centre for Society and the Life Sciences (CSG).

Professor Zwart, the EU project PRINTEGER aims at promoting integrity as an integral dimension of excellence in research. What does research integrity mean? How do you define research integrity?

For me, research integrity is a multi-dimensional concept. First and foremost, research integrity is an integral part of the scientific method, the scientific ethos. Reliability, trustworthiness, accuracy, sensitivity, responsibility, carefulness, precision, trans-parency, commitment, etc.: that is what science really is all about. A researcher must be a reliable source of information. Also, collaboration and mutual learning is important in science, so trust is important. At the same time, we have to be aware of the fact that we have our shortcomings and blind spots, especially the ones we ourselves are not aware of. Therefore, we have to expose ourselves to the judgements of others. We have to be skeptical towards ourselves, so that self-surveillance and self-monitoring and life-long learning are as important as peer review. But perhaps the most important thing is the Socratic awareness that, in many ways and in many situations, we are unable to know exactly what integrity is. In other words, for me integrity is first of all a challenge: we researchers are exposed to integrity challenges, and some of them are quite new; and we have to come to terms with them, individually, but also collectively.

Why is research integrity such an important topic?

Science is changing, science is adrift. Science used to be a small-scale artisanal practice, but this is no longer the case. Research is conducted on an international level, by large-scale networks and consortia. Intelligence, but also responsibility, has become distributed. Science is becoming big science, is becoming anonymous. Automation, computerization and robotics are important developments. The individual autonomous research is becoming marginalized and replaceable. Large-scale funding is becoming a decisive issue. It is against this backdrop that integrity issues have to be addressed. Concerns about these developments are summarized under the heading 'integrity'. We have to redefine what integrity entails in the era of big science. We need a macro-ethics, an ethics which enables researchers to address integrity challenges in complex situations affected by global dynamics.

PRINTEGER is a project funded by the European Commission. Why is it important to discuss research integrity at a European level?

Research integrity has always been an important issue for European scholars. We build on an impressive tradition, including important key documents such as Weber's Science as a vocation or Husserl's The Crisis of the European Sciences or Lyotard's The post-modern condition. At the same time, research is becoming a global, planetary endeavor. We cannot simply export European ideas from the past to others regions or to new podiums. Rather, what we need is an international mutual learning process. But building on the European tradition, we can and

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should significantly contribute to such a process. Science is basically a progressive force, intended to contribute to building a better world, but at the same time we know that science and technology can be disruptive and that collateral damage will occur. This means that we need researchers who are committed to this dimension, who care for integrity of research and who are sensitive to the societal dimension of research. Science can only flourish insofar as scientist critically consider the integrity dimension of their work, but this has become a complex task, in view of the various (often conflicting) claims and expectations to which scientists are exposed, so that research has become one of the "impossible professions", as Freud once phrased it. This means that scientists have to be empowered to address these challenges in an effective and responsible way. To this process, PRINTEGER intends to contribute.

How will PRINTEGER contribute to the promotion of a research culture in which integrity is a crucial factor?

Integrity challenges should become an issue for all departments and institutes committed to doing quality research. Academic deliberations should not only address issues of methodology or funding opportunities, but also integrity conflicts. Such deliberations should not be out-sourced to special committees, etc. but rather should become an integral part of the actual research practice. Future and early stage researchers must be trained, not only in new technologies and methodologies, but also in identifying and addressing integrity challenges. So, yes, integrity should become part of the collective research culture. Integrity should not be seen as an external supervising gaze, but as something which is fully embedded in the research practice.

Where do you see the main strengths of the PRINTEGER consortium?

For me, the main strength is that integrity challenges are addressed on various levels. We acknowledge that integrity challenges and misconduct have become a concern for managers. But it is also a concern for researchers themselves, and for educators of future researchers. It is an issue of concern for journals, but also for authors. So, for me the strength is, first of all, the fact that integrity is addressed from multiple perspectives. What we initiate is a mutual learning process involving multiple voices. Also, what I find important is that it is not a purely academic project (reflecting on integrity), nor a purely technical project (designing tools to counteract 'misconduct'). Rather, it combines, in a cyclical way, interpretation (hands-off reflection) with interaction (creating podiums for mutual learning) and implementation (developing educational tools and policy advice in a hands-on way). Finally, I see it as a strength that, rather than claiming that we already know what integrity is, we start from the awareness that there is a tension or gap between the formal (often rather predictable) discourse on integrity and the actual challenges to which researchers are exposed in daily practice.

What are the target groups of PRINTEGER and how will you involve stakeholders into the project?

First of all, researchers and research leaders who are actively involved in designing, conducting and publishing research. But also managers and funders of research. And finally students and teachers involved in developing educational programs. But these target groups are not merely the recipients of our results. Rather they are involved as sources of information and inspiration. In short, we hope that, increasingly, we will become their target group.

What would you like politicians to do in order to promote integrity as an integral dimension of excellence in research? And what kind of contribution can the science community make to promote integrity?

First of all, it is important that politicians and managers build on a clear awareness of what

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science is and should be. Let me give an example. This morning I had to fill in a questionnaire by our national research funding agency (NWO) concerning the results of one of our projects. In this questionnaire, academic articles were registered as "products", while academic journals were referred to as "magazines". It is just an anecdotal example, but such headings are symptomatic. They indicate that apparently this funding agency has lost contact with the field and no longer knows what science is about. This estrangement is reflected by the inadequacy of the language. For me, an academic article is not a product and a journal is not a magazine. What I mean is this: research must be managed by people who know what research and what research integrity is. By calling an article a "product" and a journal a "magazine", something has already gone astray.

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2. PRINTEGER Results

2.1 News from WP 1 Project Management and Coordination

PRINTEGER kicked-off in Nijmegen in September 2015

The kick-off meeting of the PRINTEGER project was held at the campus of Radboud University Nijmegen (RU) on 28-29 September 2015. We had guest appearances of the Head of the University Board, Prof. Dr. Gerard Meijer, as well as the Dean of the Science Faculty, Prof. Dr. Stan Gielen. Also, Dr. Isidoros Karatzas, Head Ethics and Research Integrity of the European Commission, joined us for a substantial part of the meeting, as well as Hannelis Linders, Head of the RU Academic Integrity Board. The sessions of the kick-off meeting were very useful, and all members are looking forward to make this project a success and meaningful for the European Community.

Further information: Photos of the kick-off meeting

2.2 News from WP 2 What is Integrity? Multidisciplinary Reconnaissance

Inventory of key documents on research integrity available

The team of the University of Tartu (CEUT) compiled a general list of policy documents addressing integrity and misconduct from all over the world. The number of documents included is impressive, consisting of more than hundred documents. The inventory is a list including the following information: organisation that produced the document, name of the document, date, region, target group, type of the document (e.g. guidelines, statement, report), whether following the policy stated in the document is mandatory, and whether the document describes procedures for dealing with alleged misconduct.

In the second stage of the work the focus was more concretely on countries represented in the project. With the help of project partners, more detailed information was added about the documents of research institutions and national policies of participating countries: purpose of the document; whether the document describes rules, principles and/or values; definition of misconduct (if available); possible sanctions, and process of formulating the document (if available). The inventory is a living document and can grow during the project.

Task leader: University of Tartu (CEUT)
Further information: PRINTEGER Website
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Legal analysis: Can scientific misconduct be legally qualified according to currently applicable law?

At Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB), the team of legal researchers comprising Prof. Dr. Serge Gutwirth and Prof. Dr. Gloria González Fuster has started working on Task II.4 Legal analysis, devoted to a mapping of the legal framing of scientific misconduct - as part of the multidisciplinary mapping of research integrity and misconduct of WP2. In this context, VUB researchers are taking stock of existing research projects and literature, and investigating the legal instruments and notions relevant for the field both at a European level and in the national legal frameworks of the partner's Member States.

Task Leader: Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB)
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Deviance in science: A criminological analysis

Prof. Dr. Jenneke Christiaens and Marijke Van Buggenhout (VUB) have started working on the Deviance in Science chapter in task 2.5. In this task, we will take stock of relevant criminological debates to analyse the criminological dimensions of scientific deviance: (1) characterising scientific misconduct as a deviance; (2) understanding scientific deviance as a process where individual, situational and macro dimensions interact.

Task Leader: Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB)
Contact: Prof. Dr. Serge Gutwirth, serge.gutwirth@vub.ac.be

Research integrity as an organisational responsibility

Work on task 2.6 has started, where we will take stock of current literature on organisational conditions for misconduct and integrity and discuss the application on research conducting organisations.

Taks Leader: Oslo and Akershus University College (HIAO)
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2.3 News from WP 6 Dissemination & Communication

First local stakeholder panel meetings

As a part of the Dissemination and Communication work package, small advisory stakeholder panels have been set up by the partners. These local panels will guarantee that the project remains connected to real concerns in research organisations and provide a fresh look at the project. The panels have to assure that the project's strong work-floor focus is maintained throughout the project and will provide a voice in priorities and demarcations of the project for the work floor.

First scoping meetings took place between September 2015 and February 2016. The partners introduced PRINTEGER and the stakeholders demonstrated their interest in the project and expressed their ideas as well as recommendations on the topic. After the meetings, short reports were drafted.

PRINTEGER website and social media online

The PRINTEGER website as well as Facebook and Twitter accounts were launched in November 2015.

Website   http://printeger.eu

https://www.facebook.com/printeger

@PRINTEGER

Task Leader: University of Bonn (UBO)
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PRINTEGER flyer available

In February 2016, PRINTEGER printed material was produced. The flyer is available on our website.

Please click here to access the flyer.

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3. External Dissemination Activities

Presentations

- **October 15, 2015**: Science Europe, Brussels (BE)
  The PRINTEGER Project – Presentation by Ellen-Marie Forsberg (HIAO)

- **October 28, 2015**: Vlaamse Commissie Voor Wetenschappelijke Integriteit (VCWI), Brussels (BE)
  Het PRINTEGER project : een korte presentative – Presentation by Serge Gutwirth (VUB)

- **November 26, 2015:** European Network of Research Integrity Offices (ENRIO), Athens (GR)
  PRINTEGER project presentation by Hub Zwart (RU)

- **January 7, 2016**: Rotary Rijk, Nijmegen (NL)
  Responsible Research and Innovation – Presentation by Hub Zwart (RU)

- **February 3, 2016**: Good Research Council Network (GRECON), Swindon (UK)
  Introduction to PRINTEGER and Bristol's involvement – Presentation by Ruud ter Meulen and Zuzana Deans (UNIVBRIS)

Further information: PRINTEGER website

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4. Upcoming Events

PRINTEGER Events

- **March 7/8, 2016**:   Project meeting WP2 and WP3, Brussels
- **March 9, 2016:**   1st PRINTEGER Advisory Board Meeting, Brussels

Further information: PRINTEGER website

With kind regards,

PRINTEGER Consortium

Radboud University

Vrije Universiteit Brussel

universität bonn

University of BRISTOL

Universiteit Leiden

Imprint

Publisher of the newsletter: PRINTEGER Consortium

The publishers do not assume liability with respect to the accuracy and completeness of the information provided.

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