



# Why do we need Estonian Code of Conduct for Research Integrity?

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# Outline

1. Why do we need **codes of conduct**?
2. Why do we need a code of conduct for **research integrity**?
3. Why do we need Estonian code of conduct for **research integrity**?
4. Who? What? For whom?



# 1. Question

Why do we need **codes of conduct**?



# What is a code of conduct?

- A code of conduct is a written document which reflects the values/norms which a representative of the profession should follow.
- It is an **agreement** between the representatives of a profession.



# Functions of a code of conduct

- It expresses the shared opinion of a professional community of their obligation to follow certain ethical standards and principles.
- it gives the members an “excuse” to confront the others’ potential pressure to behave unethically
- it helps to create an environment where ethical conduct is a norm



# Functions (continuation)

- it functions as a guideline or reminder how to behave in a certain situation.
- the drafting and complementation of a code of ethics gives the representatives of a profession a good opportunity to practice ethical reflection.
- it is an educational instrument that can be used at seminars, workshops, courses or professional meetings.
- it gives a signal to the public that this profession is seriously devoted to responsible conduct.



## 2. Question

Why do we need a code of conduct for  
**research integrity?**



# What is research integrity?

- **Integrity** (*integer*) – wholeness (terviklikkus)
  - Level of attitudes: Holding a coherent set of values
  - Level of action: Living up to these values

**Integrity**: the coherence between one's attitudes and actions.

**Research integrity**: the coherence of the scientist's **professional values** and actions.





# Aims of Science as a Profession

*Science is a profession in which individuals **cooperate** together in order to **advance human knowledge**, **eliminate ignorance**, and **solve practical problems**.*

(Resnik 2005: 37).

Science has two types of goals (Ibid, 35)

- **Epistemic goals**

- Quest for truth
- The elimination of ignorance

- **Practical goals**

- Involves solving problems in engineering, medicine, economics, agriculture, and other areas of applied research.
- Promotion of human health and happiness, technological power, the control of nature, etc.



# What can integrity be attributed to?

Is research integrity – a property of ...

- Research findings
- **Individual researchers**
- Institutions/organizations
- Science as a social system



# Is integrity the other side of the coin of misconduct?

- **Integrity**
  - Holding a coherent set of values (attitudes)
  - Living up to those values (actions)
- **Lack of integrity**
  - Failure to hold a coherent set of professional values
  - **Misconduct** – failure to live up to those values
- **Trustworthiness** – integrity viewed from outside
  - Living up to one's commitments (actions)
  - Having the proper motivation to do so (attitudes)



## 3. Question

Why do we need Estonian code of conduct for **research integrity**?



# Why two documents?

- The Code of Conduct for Research Integrity is meant to complement the **Estonian Researcher's Code of Ethics** (Eesti teadlaste eetikakoodeks) adopted by the Estonian Academy of Sciences in 2002.
- The new document is needed because the development of research has brought forth new themes and perspectives not reflected in the previous Code of Ethics and we need the institutional perspective.



# What is new?

- The new Estonian Code of Conduct for Research Integrity has two levels that define the responsibility of **researchers** and **research institutions**.
- The model for this division is the Danish Code of Conduct for Research Integrity (2014).



# The responsibility of the institutions

- All research institutions should continuously support and promote research integrity at the institutional level.
- Researchers alone cannot ensure research integrity. For researchers to behave ethically, necessary conditions have to be created at the level of the organisation and the system.





# Estonian Code of Conduct for Research Integrity

- It has been created as a framework document applying to the whole of Estonian research.
- All institutions are invited to develop their own **policies** and **procedures** for promoting research integrity within each institution, decide how to enforce the principles of research integrity and how to deal with cases of misconduct.





# The Estonian Code of Conduct consists of

- core values of research
- standards of research
- examples of problematic cases
- explanations of terms
- list of other codes for research integrity in Europe and the world



# Standards and values in the Estonian Code

The chapter of **standards** has been divided into parts corresponding to stages of research: planning, conduct of research, publishing of research results, researcher in the institution

The **values** expressed in standards: freedom, responsibility, responsibility, honesty, objectivity, respect, caring, equity, openness, cooperation.



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# Ways of promoting research integrity

- **Education:** formal instruction (courses, seminars) and informal instruction (mentoring).
- **Policy development:** guidelines for the conduct of research.
- **Policy enforcement:** procedures for reporting, investigating, and adjudicating violations of research policies. Fair punishments-proportional to violations.
- **Leadership:** leaders set an example of ethical conduct for others. They should demonstrate their commitment to ethics through both words and deeds, be role models.

These ways together help to build an **ethical culture** within an institution.