

JERRI



JOINING EFFORTS FOR RESPONSIBLE RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

USER BRIEFING FOR POLICY MAKERS AND FUNDERS

TODAY'S INNOVATION SYSTEMS STRUGGLE TO DELIVER SOLUTIONS TO SOCIETAL PROBLEMS

TOGETHER WE CAN ADVANCE INCLUSIVE RESPONSIBLE INNOVATION ECO-SYSTEMS THAT OPERATE FOR AND WITH SOCIETY!

POLICY MAKERS and **FUNDERS** can make a significant contribution to the emergence and stability of pioneering coalitions for responsible research and innovation (RRI).

This user brief highlights five key aspects based on our experiences in the JERRI project, which investigated the transition to responsible innovation ecosystems from the perspective of applied research organisations:

RRI EVIDENCE

There is scientific evidence that RRI practices such as ethical reflection, gender sensitivity, open sharing of data and citizen participation advance research and innovation excellence and relevance which are key drivers within our organisations. Funders can help change-agents within our organisations to foster the transition to RRI by funding studies that provide such evidence and promoting them in highly visible ways within their own funding portals.

RRI EVALUATION

RTOs depend on competitive funding and are

therefore highly receptive to the evaluation criteria for public funding. Funders should keep up the pressure by systematically linking their funding rules to RRI. Already, specific requests for RRI-related information, e.g. on data protection, gender and ethical aspects, have raised awareness. However, in order to foster deep changes, just ticking boxes is not enough. To inspire learning, contractors should be engaged in a constructive dialogue with qualified evaluators or dedicated contact persons. In addition, integrating RRI into the excellence part of research proposals rather than confining it to specific sections will help spread the perception of RRI as a natural component of research excellence. In any case, it is vital that evaluators are qualified in RRI.

RRI COMMUNICATION

RRI can make significant contributions to pressing issues in public debates and on policy agendas such as harnessing the benefits of emerging technologies in accordance with societal values or advancing progress towards the sustainable development goals (SDGs). Rather than emphasising RRI as such, policy actors should highlight the contributions it can make as a core competence for addressing these issues.

RRI ORCHESTRATION

On our JERRI learning journey, we realised that each RRI dimension makes a specific contribution to the overall goal of creating desirable impact for and with society. It is crucial that these specificities do not disappear under a fuzzy RRI umbrella concept. At the same time, **the full potential of RRI only unfolds when all dimensions interact**, e.g. societal engagement and science education go hand in hand with open data, while ethics reflection and gender perspectives reinforce each other. Funders should encourage such RRI orchestration wherever possible and actively counteract "RRI silos".

RRI MAINSTREAMING

Embedding RRI into organisational structures is an iterative process that requires patience, stamina and persistence. Projects like JERRI that **directly support institutional change** are extremely helpful as they provide space for experimentation that is not usually available in RTOs. Funders should be aware that organisational change can happen in unexpected ways and allow for deviations from project plans. Funding units with specialised RRI agendas are important enablers for advancing RRI knowledge and practices. In addition, however, **RRI practices should be**



embedded within all types of research and innovation activities. RRI approaches like the participation of society or impact reflection require skills, time and resources. Funders should provide specific funding for RRI-related activities within classical research projects (e.g. gender reflection workshop, citizen conference). Often the type of funding needed for RRI deviates from classical research contracting practices. Funders should work together with pioneering contractors to discuss solutions to critical issues such as, e.g. the payment of lay participants, or open contracts.

CONTACT

Dr. Philine Warnke

Phone +49 721 6809-326
 philine.warnke@isi.fraunhofer.de

Fraunhofer Institute for Systems and Innovation Research ISI

Breslauer Strasse 48
 76139 Karlsruhe | Germany

Drs. ing. Joram Nauta

Phone +31 (0)88 866 29 36
 joram.nauta@tno.nl

TNO - innovation for life

Leeghwaterstraat 44
 2628 CA Delft | Netherlands

BACKGROUND

Europe's two largest applied research organisations TNO in the Netherlands and Fraunhofer in Germany embarked on a joint learning process in JERRI to **create impacts together with society that are socially desirable, sustainable and ethically acceptable**. In short: responsible research and innovation (RRI). Our motivation is to renew our societal license to operate by aligning our research and innovation activities more closely with society's needs and values. To this end, both organisations working together over a period of 3 years:

- set goals for organisational change towards RRI within and across the key aspects ethics, gender, societal engagement, open science and science education
- identified barriers to and enablers for such a change

- implemented a number of pilot activities to advance towards these goals
- generated long-term transformation pathways to reach these goals
- documented and compared the lessons learnt

During this process, we realised that, in order to take RRI to the next level, pioneering R&I actors need to form coalitions to jointly advance systemic change. Due to their mediating role in innovation systems, Research and Technology Organisations (RTOs) can act as powerful facilitators in such coalitions, but real progress can only be made through aligned action.

Learn more at:

WWW.JERRI-PROJECT.EU



INSTITUT FÜR HÖHERE STUDIEN
 INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDIES
 Vienna



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