



Policy, Ethical and Legal Frameworks for Research Integrity in **East** Africa

11th Annual National Research Ethics Conference, 15 September, 2021

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Co-Founder-ARIN**

Inspiring responsible and ethical research capacity in and for Africa

Introduction

- Africa is home to nearly 20% of the world population
 - Endowed with natural resources, cultural and religious diversity
 - Burden of disease remains high
 - Increase in clinical research and complexity
 - Optimal research participants needed
 - RECs for robust review
- Awareness of & mature RE systems
- Limited awareness of and support for RI



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Research Ethics-Historical Development

- Need for local ethical review, (Declaration of Helsinki, 2013)
- Requirement by sponsor (Rwabihama et al., 2010)
- First REC in Africa established in 1967, Wits, SA
- Are RECs truly independent?
 - Pressure from political powers and researchers
 - Universal guidelines?
 - National regulations and health research priorities?
 - Resources-Budget, technology, training?
- Relatively well established culture for ethics review

Silaigwana, B., & Wassenaar, D. (2015)

Research Integrity-Current state

- Confusion between RE and RI
- RECs expected to play dual roles & advise on RI transgressions
- Limited levels of support and funding for RI
- Limited institutional and national structures and policies
- Opaque practices of researchers- no formal reporting systems or structures

Research Integrity in and for Africa



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Where is Africa in the RI discourse?

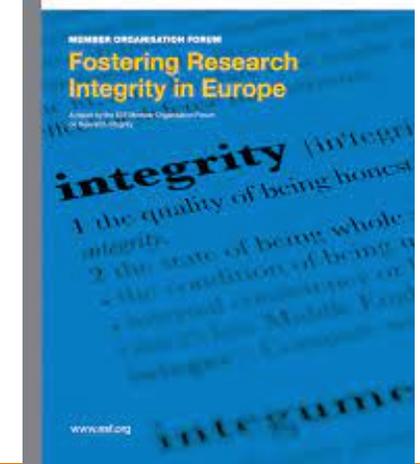
World Conference on Research Integrity Foundation (2007)



UK Research Integrity Office



- Singapore statement on RI (2010)
- Montreal statement on RI (2013)
- Hong Kong principles (2019)
- Office of Research Integrity-(ORI) USA
- UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO)- UK
- Canada Panel of Responsible Conduct of Research
- Australian Council Policies and codes on Research Integrity
- Asian Pacific Research Integrity Network (APRIN)
- European Network Research Integrity Offices (ENRIO)
- Netherlands Research Integrity Network (NRIN)
- Asia Pacific Research Integrity Network-Japan



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On Africa Soil for the first time in 15 years



7th WCRI in 2022

Fostering Research Integrity in an Unequal World

Plenaries:

- Data, research, and integrity in the time of a global pandemic (COVID-19)
- Towards a Cape Town statement on fair and equitable partnerships
- How enhanced data quality can boost innovation
- Fostering research integrity: perspectives from African researchers (**official launch of ARIN!!**)
- Important work by early and mid-career researchers
- Impact of research assessment and institutional ranking on research integrity

Focus Track:

- Cape Town Statement on diversity, equity and fairness in research contexts

Pre-conference Workshops, Symposia, Concurrent Sessions Doctoral Forum, Meet-the-Experts Sessions, Poster Sessions



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WORLD CONFERENCES
ON RESEARCH INTEGRITY

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Research Integrity in and for Africa

- **Why doesn't Africa invest in research?**
- The 10/90 gap
- scientific output in the region of 2% of global production
- Overreliance on donor funding for research
- Unequitable partnerships and funding opportunities

Research Integrity in and for Africa

- **Is research the present-day carrot of the colonial masters?**
 - Decolonisation
- Unprecedented increase in international collaborative
 - Perverse incentive for QRP
 - Hyper-competition and excessive pressure to publish
 - Young researchers are vulnerable
 - Inequalities in research partnerships and collaborations
 - Researchers' professional standards and practices remain neglected

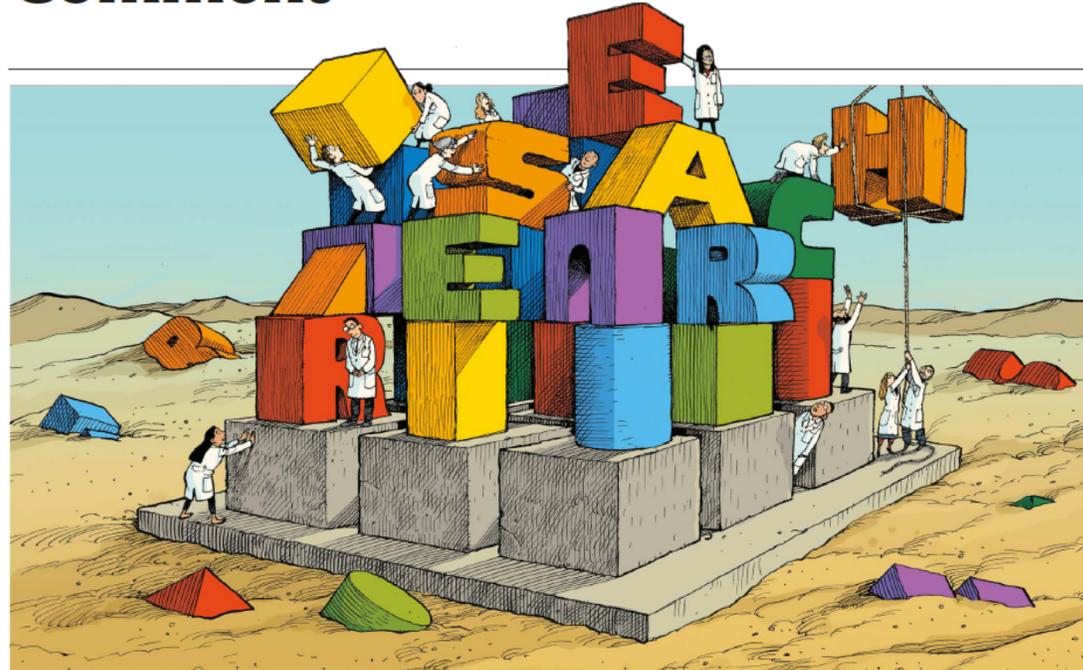
Promoting RI in and for Africa

- Mentorship/awareness/structures/systems for RI
- National, regional or continental guidelines
- Institutional structures/support systems for RI
- “Pockets” of initiatives:
 - National guidelines (Uganda)
 - Training programmes at universities (South Africa)
 - Training and awareness programme (Nigeria)
 - Funded projects at institutional level (Ghana, Kenya)
 - Networking and Individual champions (ARIN)



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Walking the talk



Research integrity: nine ways to move from talk to walk

Niels Mejlgaard, Lex M. Bouter, George Gaskell, Panagiotis Kavouras, Nick Allum, Anna-Kathrine Bendtsen, Costas A. Charitidis, Nik Claesen, Kris Dierickx, Anna Domaradzka, Andrea Reyes Elizondo, Nicole Foeger, Maura Hiney, Wolfgang Kaltenbrunner, Krishma Labib, Ana Marušić, Mads P. Sørensen, Tine Ravn, Rea Ščepanović, Joeri K. Tjldink & Giuseppe A. Veltri

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Walking the talk

BETTER RESEARCH: THREE AREAS, NINE TOPICS, MANY ACTIONS

Area	Topic	Action*
Support	Research environment	Ensure fair assessment procedures and prevent hypercompetition and excessive publication pressure.
	Supervision and mentoring	Create clear guidelines for PhD supervision (such as on meeting frequency); set up skills training and mentoring.
	Integrity training	Establish training and confidential counselling for all researchers.
Organization	Ethics structures	Establish review procedures that accommodate different types of research and disciplines.
	Integrity breaches	Formalize procedures that protect both whistle-blowers and those accused of misconduct.
	Data practices and management	Provide training, incentives and infrastructure to curate and share data according to FAIR principles.
Communication	Research collaboration	Establish sound rules for transparent working with industry and international partners.
	Declaration of interests	State conflicts (financial and personal) in research, review and other professional activities.
	Publication and communication	Respect guidelines for authorship and ensure openness and clarity in public engagement.

* See Supplementary Table S1 for full descriptions.

Mejlgaard, Niels, et al.2020

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Variables of Research Integrity

Research Management Programme in Africa (ReMPro Africa)



Institutional Leadership

Institutional leadership for research management at senior levels within African institutions



Sustainability

Sustainable research management function in African institutions



Standards

Standards of Institutional support for research that is widely recognised in Africa



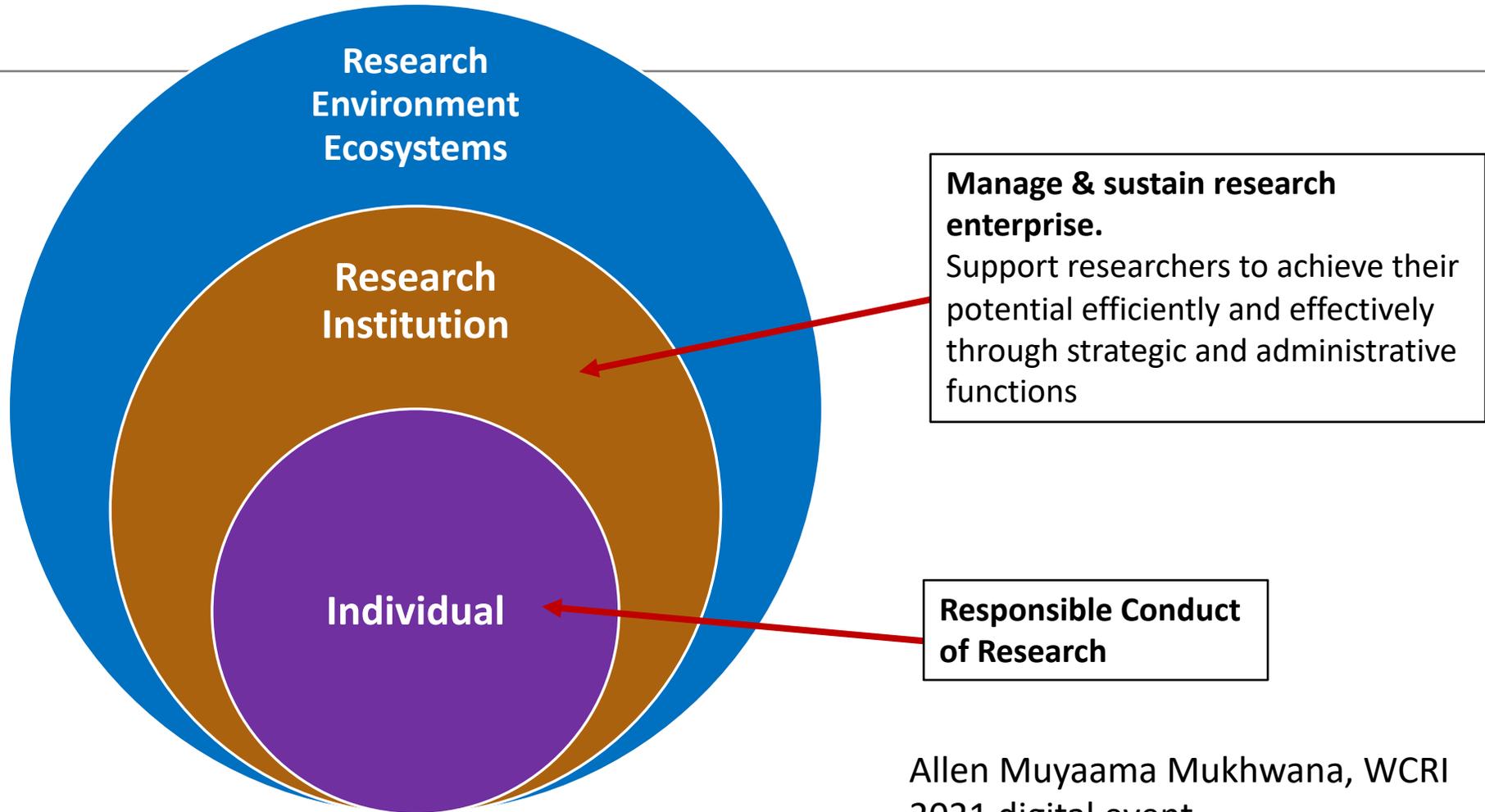
Individual Capacity

Capacity building programmes established for individuals in key research management functions

The African Academy of Sciences (AAS)

<https://www.aasciences.africa/sites/default/files/Publications/ReMPRO.pdf>

Institutional Responsibility



Allen Muyaama Mukhwana, WCRI
2021 digital event

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Conclusion

- RE and RI are both critical and integral to health research
 - National and institutional structures and systems
 - Financial and human resource investment
 - Nurturing a supportive environment for RCR
 - Awareness, co-creation and co-ownership
- Africa must participate in shaping global discourse in RI
- The debate on RI remains incomplete without the voice and contribution from Africa
- Nothing about us, without us, is for us

IF YOU WANT TO GO FAST,
GO ALONE.

IF YOU WANT
TO GO FAR,

go
TOGETHER.

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Acknowledgements

Fellow ARIN steering committee members



Limbanazo Matandika, Malawi



Christa van Zyl



Weebale Nnyo

Thank you!

Asante



<https://www.ethixpert.org.za>



<https://africanresearchintegritynetwork.wordpress.com>

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