



Opening new horizons

## FWO and Research Integrity

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# European Level

- **Science Europe: dedicated Work Group**  
→ ***FWO task leader mapping exercise***

# Flemish Commission for Scientific Integrity (VCWI)

- A commission for dealing with RI at Flemish level
- Initiative from FWO in 2011: VCWI
- Start of VCWI: 7 October 2013
- Hosted by the Royal Flemish Academy of Belgium for Science and the Arts (KVAB)
- Its role:
  - advise in general
  - second opinions on concrete cases



# Flemish Commission for Scientific Integrity (VCWI)

- Supervision Committee:
  - Members (9) from the founding institutions
    - the 5 Flemish universities
    - the 2 academies: KGAB and KVAB
    - the 2 funding agencies: IWT and FWO
  - Mandate: designation of members VCWI and supervision
- VCWI:
  - 3 members from
    - Positive and applied sciences
    - Biomedical sciences
    - Human and social sciences
  - 1 chair (one of the 9 scientific members)
  - 1 member for legal advice (without a vote)
  - 1 secretary (without a vote)
  - Members are appointed for 4 years; term once renewable

## RI within FWO

- In the application process highly questionable practices already might occur
- Also violations during research funded by FWO is to be reported
- FWO sees to respect of its rules and intervenes
- Principle: FWO's researchers are (in)directly funded by FWO, but under the disciplinary authority of their host institution

# RI within FWO

- Task Force 2014-2015: FWO + Flemish universities
- Recommendations on
  - Raising awareness
  - Training > *host institutions*
  - Detection > *host institutions*
  - Sanctioning



# RI within FWO

- **Raising awareness**
  - Clause on RI in call, application & funding agreement
  - Profiles for coPIs, researchers and host institutions
    - What they are expected to do
    - What they are entitled to
  - RI is part of standard information on FWO (info sessions, guidance for reviewers and applicants, ...)

# RI within FWO

- **Sanctioning**
  - General Regulation
  - Specific regulations
    - Procedures for communicating violations and decisions making
    - The types of sanctioning (from warning to retraction of funding/dismissal)



# Broadening RI within FWO?

- **Societal impact**
  - General applicable rules on RI and ethics
- **Fundamental research programmes** (fellowships and projects)
  - Only scientific relevance and impact
- **Strategic Basic Research programmes** (fellowships and projects)
  - Scientific impact
  - Economic / societal impact
- **TBM (Applied Biomedical Research)**
  - Late stage translational research
  - Medical impact
  - Size of the patient population
  - Saving opportunities in social/medical (public) insurance

# Broadening RI within FWO?

- **Scope of RI is growing:** societal impact, research waste, involvement stakeholders (patients), ...
- **FWO:**
  - Funds research in all domains, *with their specificities*
  - Use of generic criteria:
    - Scientific impact
    - Societal/economic/health impact (SBO – TBM)
  - But also:
    - State of the art
    - Methodology
    - Power calculation (TBM)
    - Scientific relevance
    - Coverage of ethical issues
    - Proof of sufficient number of patients, of ability to get results to patients (TBM)
    - Proof of involvement of stakeholders in preparatory stage and after (TBM)
  - Budgetary constraints: drive for focus on essential research (?)
  - Peer Review: external (2 reviewers per application) + internal reviewers in panel (up to 18) with diverse expertise
    - (e.g. TBM: clinical + methodologists)
  - Review of the reports on ongoing and finalized research
  - Publication of experiments/trials also if results negative?



## More information about the FWO

[www.fwo.be](http://www.fwo.be)

Information about FWO's operation, regulations,  
scientific prizes and appeals...

All publications are free to download

[www.geschiedenisfwo.be](http://www.geschiedenisfwo.be)

Module about FWO's history

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