Teaching Research Integrity

sustainably

- is it possible?

8th World Conference on Research Integrity
Athens, 2nd – 5th June 2024

Dr. Michael Gommel, M.A. – Dr. Julia Verse
Helga Nolte – PD Dr. Dr. Gerlinde Sponholz
gommel@scientificintegrity.de

Our core observation

After teaching RI for many years at the same institutions, we observe that the levels of ignorance among the generations of ECRs concerning RI do not change over time and that there remains a lack of communication between them and their supervisors.

Content of the presentation

- Our core observation

- Teaching RI/GRP in Germany

- Selected GRP requirements

- Selected survey results

- Selected observations

- Possible reasons for non-sustainability

- Conclusion and questions

Teaching RI (= GRP) in Germany

- GRP regulations at all German institutions
- Ombudspersons at all German institutions
- German GRP Curriculum since 2009
- Team Scientific Integrity since 2009
- > 1.000 two-day workshops
- > 11.000 participants (PhD candidates/ECR)
- > 50 universities and non-HEI
- Three surveys regarding GRP knowledge

Selected GRP requirements

Early mandatory communication about:

- How to document the research process

- How to work "lege artis" (how not to lie about data)

- Usage rights concerning research data

- Roles and responsibilities

- Authorship criteria

- How to avoid/deal with misconduct

- Who to approach for more GRP information

Selected survey results

No communication about:

- Data storage responsibility   57 %

- Data storage duration   62 %

- Data ownership   65 %

- Lab book maintenance   71 %

- Authorship criteria   79 %

- Copying and taking data   81 %

Selected observations

- Levels of ignorance do not change over time at the same institution

- Widespread non-communication about GRP topics between supervisors and ECR

- GRP topics do not become part of formal discourse or organizational culture

- → Teaching GRP to ECR does not seem to create a self-sustaining RI communication culture in the organization

Possible reasons for non-sustainability

- General ignorance about the topic

- Importance of GRP not recognized

- "Inherited unawareness"

- Resistance against change

- Missing target groups in GRP trainings

- Non-permanent contracts

- No formal occasions for communication

Possible reasons for non-sustainability

- Bad supervision

- Lack of leadership

- Fear of loss of power over data/people

- Communication actively suppressed

- Fear of negative career repercussions

- Continued advocacy of malpractice (e.g. fake authorship, peacocking)

Conclusion

- Rules, ombudspersons, training for ECR (lack of trainers – networks, ENRIO, etc.)

- Lack of established GRP procedures

- "Inherited unawareness"

- Structural problems: few permanent positions, reduced funding for ECR training, perverse incentives

Questions

- How can we change "bad habits" and perverse incentives?

- How can we reach the supervisors?

- How to introduce "silver medals" (H. Lenk)?

- How do we counter high criminal energy – predatory publishing, Paper mills, AI, … (our system creates its own criminals)?

Teaching Research Integrity

sustainably

- is it possible?

Yes, but... maybe.

Teaching Research Integrity

sustainably

- is it possible?

Thank you for your advice!