

Resolution No. 3/2016
of the General Assembly of the Polish Academy of Sciences
of December 1, 2016

on the Research Code of Conduct

Pursuant to Article 15 section 2 item 10 of the act of April 30, 2010 on the Polish Academy of Sciences (Journal of Laws of 2016 item 572 and 1311), the General Assembly of the Polish Academy of Sciences decides as follows:

§ 1

The General Assembly of the Polish Academy of Sciences adopts the Research Code of Conduct drawn up by the Scientific Ethics Committee, which constitutes an appendix to the resolution.

§2

Resolution No. 10/2012 of the General Assembly of the Polish Academy of Sciences of December 13, 2012 regarding the Research Code of Conduct is no longer in force.

§3

The Resolution enters into force on the day it is adopted.

PRESIDENT
OF THE POLISH ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

Jerzy Duszyński

SUBSTANTIATION

Pursuant to Article 39 section 3 of the act of April 30, 2010 on the Polish Academy of Sciences (Journal of Laws of 2016 item 572 and 1311), the competences of the Scientific Ethics Committee include drawing up the *Research Code of Conduct*.

The members of the Committee prepared the draft of the *Code* at the Committee's meetings from January to May 2016, and in January 2016 they addressed the representatives of the academic and higher education community - the Conference of Vice-Chancellors of Academic Schools in Poland and the Main Council of Research Institutes - with a request to submit comments and proposals for amendments to the current version of the *Code*. The Committee adopted the final version of the draft *Code* at its meeting on May 23, 2016.

On June 7, 2016, the Chairman of the Scientific Ethics Committee Prof. Andrzej Zoll submitted the draft of the *Research Code of Conduct* to the President of the Polish Academy of Sciences, Prof. Jerzy Duszyński.

Pursuant to Article 15 section 2 item 10 of the Act of April 30, 2010 on the Polish Academy of Sciences, the General Assembly of the Academy adopts the *Research Code of Conduct*.

Appendix to Resolution No. 3/2016 of the
General Assembly of the Polish Academy
of Sciences of December 1, 2016

Research Code of Conduct

Issue II

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1. PREAMBLE

1. The Research Code of Conduct is based on the basic principles of ethics, recognized in our cultural circle as natural and universally binding. Recognition of these principles has been accepted as a foundation, without the need to analyze the source of this conviction. The basic principles of ethics are considered here to be respect for human dignity and life in all its manifestations, truthfulness, honesty, the obligation to observe the accepted obligations and recognize the right to freedom of beliefs and property rights. The individual conscience is the guardian in matters of ethics, while the assessment of facts and external actions violating the rights of others is subject to the judgment of reliable bodies.

2. Ethical values, standards of scientific integrity and good practices in science highlight the ethical and social responsibility of researchers. Researchers must be aware of their special responsibility towards society and mankind in general.

3. The research code of conduct sets out the principles introduced by the scientific community in the belief that the basic duty of a researcher is to adhere to the established principles and integrity in scientific work. The Code defines the criteria for good practices and determines ethical violations in the conduct of research work and establishes the procedures for proceedings that should be applied should scientific dishonesty be revealed. The changing external and internal conditions, such as the popularization of higher education, the increasing number of researchers, the need to apply for research grants, the parametrization of evaluations of researchers and scientific institutions, and conflicts of interest accompanying the commercialization of research results, incline to draw special attention to the intensifying in recent years phenomena such as courtesy reviews, plagiarism, multi-jobbing, unjustified quoting of works and using the resources of the institutions where one works for one's own purposes.

4. Maintaining high standards in science is essential not only for upholding the internal cohesion of research but also for its credibility and social authority. Attention to authority and not succumb to pressure is important for scientists to preserve social trust.

2. UNIVERSAL RULES AND ETHICAL VALUES IN SCIENTIFIC WORK

The basic, universal principles and ethical values on which the integrity and credibility of science are based refer to the representatives of all scientific disciplines, without exception. It must be required that they are observed by scientists and institutions where they conduct their research, as well as those who finance the studies and work in the field of organizing scientific life, both in their mutual relations and in contacts with the outside world.

These universal principles include:

- 1) conscientiousness in presenting the aims and intentions of the planned or conducted research, in presenting research methods and procedures and interpreting the obtained results, as well as in providing information on the possible threats and well-grounded predictions on the benefits and possible applications;
- 2) credibility in conducting research, criticism of one's own results, meticulousness, attention to detail and reliability in presenting research results;
- 3) not using own scientific authority when speaking about topics outside one's own area of competence;
- 4) objectivity: basing interpretations and conclusions solely on facts, verifiable reasoning and data that can be confirmed by others;
- 5) independence from external influence on conducting research, both in terms of commissioning studies or expert opinions, as well as from influences from political, ideological or economic pressure groups;
- 6) openness in discussions with other scientists about own research, which is one of the key conditions for progress in science, and contributing to the aggregation of knowledge by publishing these results, as well as in the fair transmission of this knowledge to the general public;
- 7) transparency of scientific research documentation guaranteeing the availability of data after the publication of research results;
- 8) responsibility displayed in relation to research objects; research on a living being can

only be conducted when it is necessary and always respecting human dignity and animal rights, based on the consent expressed by the relevant bioethical committees;

9) fairness and integrity in the substantive and ethical assessment of other researchers' work, and in the assessment and recognition of scientific achievements of those who actually deserve it, expressed in the correct provision of sources and honest recognition of their participation in scientific achievements;

10) courage in opposing views that are contrary to scientific knowledge and practices inconsistent with the principles of scientific integrity;

11) concern for future generations of scientists manifested not only in efforts to develop their students' scientific development but also in instilling in them the binding standards and ethical norms.

3. GOOD PRACTICES IN SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

The term "good practices of scientific research" incorporates detailed, universally understandable and possible to introduce in individual scientific units rules of reliable proceedings relating to the conduct, presentation and evaluation of scientific research to ensure compliance with ethical requirements. Every researcher, since the beginning of his/her activity, should be aware of these rules and know what consequences their violation brings.

Responsibility for promoting and applying good practices rests with the scientific community as a whole, that is on participants in the research process, on scientific institutions and on governmental and non-governmental agendas operating in the field of science.

The principles of good practices should be observed particularly in the following areas of activity:

- 1) dealing with scientific data;
- 2) research procedures;
- 3) authorship and publication of research results;
- 4) reviewing and opinions;
- 5) forming a young team;
- 6) relations with society;

- 7) avoiding conflicts of interests.

These practices may be subject to cultural differences; definitions, traditions, legal regulations and institutional provisions may differ significantly in individual scientific disciplines. Therefore, each scientific unit should, if necessary, supplement it in accordance with its legal requirements or traditions, thus creating its own set of good practices and demand they be applied by its employees. This also applies to institutions that sponsor research as well as scientific publishing houses. The absence of such internal rules of conduct lowers the credibility of the institution.

3.1. PRACTICES ON WORKING WITH SCIENTIFIC DATA

All original source data, that is the original research results on which publications were or will be based, and in some cases also samples or materials from research, should be scrupulously documented and securely archived in a manner that prevents manipulation and ensuring their availability after publishing these studies for a period that is relevant to the given discipline.

3.2. PRACTICES CONCERNING RESEARCH PROCEDURES

1. All research should be preceded by an analysis of the accompanying risk and the effects that the research results can have on society and the environment.
2. When applying for research funds, feasible research aims should be formulated, and during the research, every effort should be made to achieve them.
3. Research carried out on people should be done in a way that maintains human dignity and respect for his autonomy.
4. Research facilities such as organisms, the natural environment and cultural goods should be treated with due respect and care.

5. The health, safety and well-being of both co-workers and people not directly related to the conducted research cannot be put at risk.
6. Researchers should be aware of the need for balanced management of resources for research.
7. Clients or research sponsors should be made aware of the ethical and legal obligations that bind researchers and the possible limitations arising therefrom.
8. In special cases, justified by other provisions, the researcher should maintain the confidentiality of data or test results if such requirements are set by the client or employer.

3.3. AUTHORSHIP AND PUBLISHING PRACTICES

1. The researcher should publish the results of his/her research and their interpretations reliably, clearly and accurately, in such a way that they can be repeated by other researchers.
2. The authorship of a scientific publication must be based solely on a creative and significant contribution to research, and thus on a significant contribution to the initiation of the scientific idea, concept creation and research design; on significant participation in data acquisition, analysis and interpretation of results and significant contribution to sketching and writing the article or its critical proofreading in terms of intellectual content.
3. Acquiring financial resources, providing equipment and training in its application, data collection or general supervision of a research group - on their own, do not constitute a claim to co-authorship. All authors bear full responsibility for the published content, unless otherwise specified (e.g. they are only responsible for a specific part of research in the area of their specialty). It is advisable that the nature of their contribution be specified when providing the affiliation of the authors.
4. The order of giving names should comply with the custom in force in a given scientific discipline and be accepted by all co-authors at an early stage of preparing the publication.

5. The intellectual contribution of other people who have a significant impact on the published research should be accordingly highlighted.
6. Obtained financial support, as well as other types of assistance, should be accordingly highlighted.
7. Re-publishing the same work (or significant parts of it) can only be accepted with the consent of its editors and the first publication of the work must always be mentioned. These types of studies, which are related by content in significant parts and to a significant extent, should be included in the output of the author as one item.
8. In relations with the general public and the media, the same standards of honesty and precision apply as for the publication of study results. Exaggerating the significance of research results and their practical applications is a reprehensible practice.

3.4.PRACTICES CONCERNING REVIEWING AND OPINIONS

1. Reviewers and opinion makers cannot undertake a task related to the evaluation of scientific studies, scientific achievements or research concepts of other scientists, when it goes beyond the scope of their scientific experience and competence.
2. Reviewers and opinion makers taking part in the evaluation of research projects, publications, scientific achievements, motions for taking up positions in scientific institutions or other forms of recognition should refuse to participate in the evaluation process in all these cases when there is a conflict of interest between them and the person being assessed.
3. Reviews and opinions should be meticulous, accurate and objective, and the assessments justified. Unfounded positive reviews are as reprehensible as unreasonable negative reviews.
4. Reviewers of scientific publications should keep their opinions confidential until these publications are released in print.
5. Both reviewers and editors of scientific papers cannot use the data or concepts contained in the texts provided to them without the author's consent.

3.5.PRACTICES CONCERNING THE FORMATION OF YOUNG STAFF

1. Entrusting the supervision over licensees, engineers, graduate students or Ph.D. students should be the subject of special care of the Faculty Council or Scientific Council of the scientific unit with the right to conduct the relevant types of studies. The above-mentioned councils should assess whether the qualifications of the supervisor are sufficient to guide the performance of a given work, and also whether the number of people under their guidance does not exceed a number guaranteeing the possibility of reliable supervision.
2. The supervisor of the person conducting the research should reliably fulfill his duties, and in particular, make sure that the research carried out meets all the requirements set for scientific research, and the resulting dissertation does not contain borrowings from the work of other authors.
3. The supervisor of the person conducting the research should ensure that he is familiar with the ethical principles applicable to the conduct of research, and, above all, should be a model for such a person.

3.6. PRACTICES CONCERNING RELATIONS WITH SOCIETY

1. Public statements should be characterized by attention to the credibility of science. They are bound by the same standards of honesty and precision as when publishing research results.
2. A scholar, as a citizen for whom public affairs cannot be indifferent, should take a public stance. However, he/she should adhere to the principle that his/her scientific authority can be used only in statements that fall within his competences.

3.7. AVOIDING CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS

Situations of conflicts of interest may arise in particular when:

- 1) there are non-professional connections between the assessor and the person or scientific unit subject to assessment;

- 2) there is a connection between the member of the body granting the funds and the person or the scientific unit to which the funds are allocated;
- 3) the purchase of devices, materials or services necessary to conduct research takes place in companies with which the researcher or his/her relative has financial, proprietary or managerial connections;
- 4) the work of students, Ph.D. students or co-workers, as well as the equipment of the unit, is used for work for a company with which the researcher or his/her relative has financial, ownership or managerial connections;
- 5) an employee of a scientific institution is involved in the work of a company or has shares in a company that operates in the same area as the institution in which he/she works and uses the facilities and know-how of this institution.

In the event of such circumstances, the researcher is obliged to inform his/her superior.

4. MISCONDUCT IN SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

4.1. GROSS OFFENSES

The most serious offenses, especially those that undermine the ethos of scientific research, include fabricating and falsifying research results which constitute a gross violation of the basic principles of practicing science. This includes plagiarism.

1. **Fabricating** results is based on inventing research results and presenting them as real ones.
2. **Falsification** consists in changing or omitting inconvenient data, so that the results of the research are not truly presented.
3. **Plagiarism** involves appropriating other people's ideas, research results or words without providing the correct source, which is a violation of intellectual property rights.

These offenses may appear both at the stage of submitting research proposals and applying for funds, while conducting and reviewing scientific research, as well as presenting their results at scientific conferences or at the time of publication, citing research results of other researchers, preparing expertise and popularizing science. Committing these offenses may cause the disqualification of their perpetrator as a scientist. Their disclosure must therefore lead to the initiation of disciplinary

proceedings.

Gross offenses also include **making unreliable reviews** of doctoral dissertations, habilitation dissertations, motions for professorship titles and all motions for employment in scientific institutions, as well as reviews of research projects and refusal to express an opinion or refusal of opinion, if the assessment, in the opinion of the assessor, should be negative.

It is a reprehensible and unworthy practice for a researcher to unjustifiably cite someone else's or own work or knowingly omit citing.

4.2. OTHER MISCONDUCT

In addition to gross violations of scientific integrity, there are many other inappropriate behaviors that emerge when conducting scientific research. The list cannot be closed. However, the following should be mentioned:

- using in the course of scientific research the contribution of other people, students, Ph.D. students, collaborators without the appropriate financial compensation or without highlighting this contribution;
- allowing the co-authorship of a paper of people who did not make a sufficient intellectual contribution to its creation;
- allowing for the appearance of scientific research that has nothing to do with a reliable cognitive process.

All forms of persecution and discrimination against students, co-workers, improper use of funds for research and non-disclosure of conflicts of interest are punishable. These negative phenomena also include protectionism when hiring new employees.

4.3. GENERAL RULES OF CONDUCT IN THE CASE OF DETECTING MISCONDUCT

The main responsibility for dealing with revealed cases of abuse falls on employers who employ scientists, namely universities, research institutes and public and non-public research centers.

Student's violations of ethics should be corrected immediately and receive a warning from the academic supervisors.

All allegations of dishonesty in conducting scientific research must be properly explained, and if their

validity is confirmed - the existing facts and circumstances should be investigated in detail to take appropriate corrective and disciplinary actions, in accordance with the applicable legal provisions. It should be ensured that people with extensive experience in the field of science associated with the detected abuse also participate in the proceedings.

Reactions to non-ethical behavior in science should depend on the seriousness of the abuse, whether it was committed intentionally, its effects and other aggravating or mitigating circumstances.

Improper proceedings in cases of revealing misconduct, such as: failure to report the detected misconduct, attempts to cover up a case, retaliation on whistleblowers or violation of appropriate procedures should be classified as a gross violation of the basic ethical principles in scientific research.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Guidelines for dealing with cases of violation of the principles of scientific integrity

1. Procedure for reporting an allegation

The person who detected the misconduct or gained reasonable suspicion that an act incompatible with ethics in science was committed, is obliged to report the issue to the manager of the unit in which the research is conducted (the vice-chancellor in the case of a university, the director of the institute in the case of research institutes or the manager of the unit in the case of other scientific units) or to the competent disciplinary spokesperson, and when there is a conflict of interest at the management level - to the head of the superior instance (e.g. to the supervisory body). The report should contain a clarification of the allegation, its detailed justification, signature and contact details. The identity of the person reporting the misconduct (the so-called whistleblower) is not subject to disclosure until disciplinary proceedings are instituted.

In the event that the reporter considers this to be more appropriate - the allegation may be reported to the Scientific Ethics Committee to its Chair, who may ask the reporting person for additional explanations. If it finds that in light of the circumstances set out in the report, the allegations are reasonable, they are forwarded to the head of the unit in which the alleged offender is employed in order to institute the proceedings.

In special cases, the Scientific Ethics Committee may, on its own initiative, direct cases concerning violations of scientific ethics by the employees of universities, research institutes and scientific units of the Polish Academy of Sciences to the competent bodies of these units with the recommendation to conduct an explanatory proceeding. Information on the results of this investigation is forwarded to the Scientific Ethics Committee immediately.

2. Investigation

The explanatory proceedings, the purpose of which is to determine whether the initiation of disciplinary proceedings is justified, is carried out by the disciplinary spokesperson. If the information provided to the disciplinary spokesperson concerns a gross violation of scientific ethics (item 4.1 of this Code), the disciplinary spokesperson is obliged to initiate ex-officio explanatory proceedings. In other cases, the initiation of the explanatory proceedings takes place at the request of the body appointing the spokesperson, that is the vice-chancellor of the university or the council of the

scientific research institute or the institute of the Polish Academy of Sciences, and also when the disciplinary spokesperson considers this to be appropriate.

It is extremely important to provide the spokesperson with the proper working conditions. Explanatory proceedings should be particularly insightful, meticulous, conducted in accordance with the procedures in force in the institution and with respect for the accused's right, with accuracy and objectivity. Participants in the investigation should disclose all circumstances, including those that may cause a conflict of interest. The documentation on all aspects of the investigation is to be detailed. The person against whom a charge has been lodged should be notified without delay of instituting the investigation. They should be provided the possibility to present explanations and the right to legal aid.

An important condition for maintaining the highest standards in these cases is strict confidentiality of the investigation and limiting the circle of persons informed about the proceedings, as well as the proper protection of documentation, to protect the persons involved in the proceedings, provided that this does not harm the proceedings or the health and safety and interest of the proceeding's participants. The necessary disclosure of information to third parties should take place on the condition that these persons are obliged to keep confidentiality, unless they are already obliged to do so due to their function. The explanatory proceedings should end with a confidential report containing the findings and recommendations on how to proceed. A copy of the report is received by the reporting person and the accused person.

If the head of the unit on the basis of the report finds that the allegation of misconduct was unjustified, although it was put forth in good faith, the proceedings are terminated and the parties are notified. The accused person should have the right to request that the public be informed that the charges against him have been withdrawn. If, on the other hand, the head of the unit concludes that the allegations have not been made in good faith, then they take a specific disciplinary action against the person who placed them.

If the explanatory proceedings were conducted on the basis of an announcement made on its own initiative by the Scientific Ethics Committee, the results of these proceedings, without unnecessary delay, are to be forwarded to the Committee (in accordance with Article 39 section 2 of the Act of April 30, 2010 on the Polish Academy of Sciences).

3. Disciplinary proceedings

The purpose of disciplinary proceedings is to determine whether the alleged act took place and to issue a ruling with content dependent on that determination. The proceedings are conducted - according to the place of employment of the employee - on the basis of the provisions of the Act of April 30, 2010 on the Polish Academy of Sciences, the Act of July 27, 2005 Law on Higher Education and the Act of April 30, 2010 on research institutes. These provisions regulate in detail the manner in which the proceedings are conducted, the content of the decisions passed in the proceedings, the catalog of disciplinary penalties, the appeal procedure against the decision of the first instance disciplinary board, the possibility of resuming the proceedings, and the means of challenging disciplinary decisions before the court.

It should be ensured that the composition of the adjudicating disciplinary boards, while the case is being investigated, does not include persons having connections with the accused in this case, as well as with the reporting person, or who are exposed to a different conflict of interests. The head of the institution shall immediately notify, under special confidentiality, the managers of the agencies financing the project, under which the proceedings have been instituted, on the initiation of disciplinary proceedings. When granting public funds for scientific research, valid decisions of disciplinary boards in matters related to the violation of scientific ethics are taken into account. Failure to inform the managers of agencies awarding funds for research about the result of disciplinary proceedings, concealing such a proceeding, as well as ignoring signals about irregularities in the scientific unit and failure to undertake appropriate explanatory and disciplinary actions - prevents the unit from obtaining public funds for research until the appropriate corrective measures are implemented.

4. Opinions of the Scientific Ethics Committee

All the above-mentioned provisions provide for the possibility of disciplinary boards turning to the Scientific Ethics Committee for an opinion in the event of doubts regarding the classification of the offense. Due to the special legal significance of such an opinion, which then binds the disciplinary board in determining the content of violation of ethics in science, the disciplinary board should explain the reason for their doubts in detail. A motion for an opinion addressed to the Scientific Ethics

Committee should be accompanied by case files.

Appendix 2. Practices in international cooperation

Before starting research in international projects, it should be determined which country is competent to conduct an investigation in the event of a charge of ethical misconduct or violating scientific integrity, and how this should be organized; and more importantly, how to proceed if important elements of the policies of individual countries are mutually inconsistent in this respect. In such cases, it is recommended to rely on the recommendations proposed by the Coordinating Committee of the OECD Global Science Forum and the exemplary text of the International Agreement it proposes, which should form part of the formal documentation of the joint project.

Exemplary text of the Agreement on scientific integrity in undertaking international research, as suggested by the Coordinating Committee of the OECD Global Science Forum.

We, the parties, agree:

to conduct our research according to the standards of research integrity, as defined in the ‘Guidance Notes for Developing Procedures to Investigate Research Misconduct Allegations in International Collaborative Research Project’¹ and other appropriate documents, including: (specify the national codes of conduct and disciplinary or national ethical guidelines that apply);

that any suspected deviation from these standards, in particular alleged research misconduct, will be brought to the immediate attention of (all designated contact point(s)) and investigated according to the policies and procedures of (to be filled in with the body with primary responsibility), while respecting the laws and sovereignty of the States of all participating parties;

to cooperate in and support any such investigations and to accept (subject to any appeal process) the conclusions of any such investigation and to take appropriate actions.

¹ www.oecd.org/dataoecd/42/34/42770261.pdf

The document *The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity* was used to create this Code, which after many years of work was announced in 2010 jointly by the European Science Foundation (ESF) and All European Academies (ALLEA) as a benchmark for use when creating own codes in individual countries of the European Union.

The following were also used: publications of the Scientific Ethics Team of the State Committee for Scientific Research (2000) entitled *Good practice in scientific research. Recommendations* and of the Scientific Ethics Committee of the Polish Academy of Sciences (2001) entitled *Good customs in science. A set of rules and guidelines*.