APEC Guiding Principles for Research Integrity

Human Resources Development Working Group
APEC Guiding Principles for Research Integrity

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The document must be attributed as the APEC Guiding Principles for Research Integrity.

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Introduction

Research generates and organises knowledge by the systematic investigation and study of materials and sources. The value and positive impact of research is dependent on trust. Upholding the principles of research integrity makes research trustworthy.

The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) is an economic forum comprised of 21 member economies. There are cultural differences across APEC economies and varying approaches towards undertaking research in each of these economies. Research is increasingly an international activity, with collaborative exchanges becoming more commonplace. Research practices that prioritise integrity are essential as these activities expand on a global scale. The absence of a shared set of principles for research integrity is seen as a barrier to increased researcher mobility and collaboration between researchers in APEC economies.

The APEC Guiding Principles for Research Integrity provide guiding principles and responsibilities shared by researchers, institutions, and funders or sponsors of research in APEC economies. The APEC Guiding Principles for Research Integrity are non-binding and may be adopted, endorsed or adapted by researchers, institutions, funders, sponsors and others involved in the research endeavour to guide trustworthy and responsible research. The APEC Guiding Principles for Research Integrity are intended to provide a common language of what is meant by research integrity within APEC economies. The APEC Guiding Principles for Research Integrity are also intended to enable greater mobility and exchange of research and researchers between APEC economies.

The APEC Guiding Principles for Research Integrity were produced by Dr Daniel Barr and Dr Paul Taylor of RMIT University, Australia with significant contributions made by colleagues and participants from across the APEC economies. A desktop review of the research integrity systems across APEC economies was conducted as well as a series of face-to-face consultations with representatives from the research integrity systems of selected APEC economies including Chile, Peru, Viet Nam, Indonesia and Malaysia. A modified Delphi process of iteration with experts from across APEC economies that comprised two online surveys and a face-to-face workshop was undertaken to generate a near to consensus set of guiding principles and responsibilities for research integrity. This process included defining, selecting and ranking the principles and responsibilities that were seen to be the most important for trustworthy and responsible research.

The development of the APEC Guiding Principles for Research Integrity was sponsored by the Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment and was approved by the RMIT University human research ethics committee (Approval 21609-08/18).
Guiding Principles for Research Integrity

The guiding principles underpin all aspects of the trustworthy and responsible conduct and administration of research.

Guiding Principle 1. Honesty
- Being truthful and free of deceit

Guiding Principle 2. Responsibility
- Fulfilling the duties and obligations for trustworthy and responsible research
- Being accountable for actions or decisions
- Complying with relevant laws, regulations and standards

Guiding Principle 3. Rigour
- Being careful, thorough and critical

Guiding Principle 4. Transparency
- Being open and sharing of ideas, processes, methods, data, findings and outcomes
- Demonstrating a willingness for work to be scrutinised
- Disclosing and managing conflicts of interest

Guiding Principle 5. Respect
- Demonstrating due regard for the research endeavour, for the values, cultures, opinions and rights of others, for animals and the environment

Guiding Principle 6. Fairness
- Behaving and treating others impartially and justly without favouritism or bias
- Acknowledging the work of others

Guiding Principle 7. Diversity
- Recognising and being inclusive of diverse peoples, cultures, knowledges, perspectives and experiences

APEC Guiding Principles for Research Integrity| 5
Meeting the Guiding Principles for Research Integrity

The guiding principles form the basis for responsibilities in the conduct and administration of research.

Researchers, institutions and funders or sponsors of research share responsibilities to:

RS1 Adhere to the guiding principles for research integrity
RS2 Reflect on how the guiding principles apply in their work for the research endeavour
RS3 Support a culture of trustworthy and responsible research
Guiding Principle 1. Honesty

Honesty in research conduct and administration means being truthful and free of deceit

Responsibilities of Researchers

For planning and conducting research with integrity, researchers will:

RR1 Avoid and report suspected breaches of research integrity that undermine the trustworthiness of research

RR2 Pay attention to detail and use robust methodology appropriate to the aims of the research, avoiding or acknowledging biases, and ensuring that conclusions are justified by the results or arguments

RR3 Make and keep clear, accurate, secure and complete records including data, methodologies, findings and primary materials in ways that will allow verification and replication of work by others. Where possible and appropriate, share these openly and allow access and reference to these by interested parties

RR4 Comply with the relevant laws, regulations, disciplinary standards, ethics and security guidelines and institutional policies related to research integrity

RR9 Identify, disclose, carefully examine and manage financial, familial, scholarly, professional and other interests that may be a perceived, potential or actual conflict of interest

For reporting and communicating research with integrity, researchers will:

RR13 Communicate research information, methodology, data and findings truthfully, responsibly, accurately and transparently as possible in proposing, conducting and reporting research

RR14 Ensure that authors include all those, and only those, who have made and are accountable for a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution to the research, and that they agree to be listed as an author

RR15 Give credit and acknowledgement to all contributors and contributions to research

RR16 Cite other relevant work appropriately and accurately and, where applicable, obtain permission for the use of other works
Responsibilities of Institutions

For trustworthy and responsible research, institutions will:

RI1  Provide and foster an environment of research integrity that ensures trustworthy and responsible research and public trust

RI2  Make best efforts to cooperate with journals, publishers, government agencies, funders, sponsors, and other relevant parties in response to complaints about potential breaches of research integrity

Responsibilities of Funders or Sponsors of Research

For trustworthy and responsible research, funders or sponsors of research will:

RF1  Incorporate trustworthy and responsible research as a condition for obtaining and maintaining funding by researchers and institutions, and provide guidance as to the specific measures that are required

RF2  Require institutions to have procedurally fair mechanisms in place to respond to potential breaches of research integrity
Guiding Principle 2. Responsibility
Responsibility in research conduct and administration means:

- Fulfilling the duties and obligations for trustworthy and responsible research
- Being accountable for actions or decisions
- Complying with relevant laws, regulations and standards

Responsibilities of Researchers
For planning and conducting research with integrity, researchers will:

RR1 Avoid and report suspected breaches of research integrity that undermine the trustworthiness of research

RR4 Comply with the relevant laws, regulations, disciplinary standards, ethics and security guidelines and institutional policies related to research integrity

RR5 Consider the consequences and outcomes of research

RR6 Provide sound guidance and mentorship on research integrity to other researchers or research trainees under their supervision and, where appropriate, monitor their conduct

RR7 Exercise careful and responsible management of resources

RR9 Identify, disclose, carefully examine and manage financial, familial, scholarly, professional and other interests that may be a perceived, potential or actual conflict of interest

For reporting and communicating research with integrity, researchers will:

RR13 Communicate research information, methodology, data and findings truthfully, responsibly, accurately and transparently as possible in proposing, conducting and reporting research

RR17 Be accountable for contributions to publications, research proposals, reports and other works
Responsibilities of Institutions
For trustworthy and responsible research, institutions will:

RI1  Provide and foster an environment of research integrity that ensures trustworthy and responsible research and public trust

RI2  Cooperate with journals, publishers, government agencies, funders, sponsors, and other relevant parties in response to complaints about potential breaches of research integrity

RI3  Comply with relevant laws, regulations, sponsor and security requirements, guidelines and policies related to research integrity

RI4  Establish and maintain sound governance and management practices for trustworthy and responsible research

RI5  Provide and oversee ongoing training and education that promotes and supports responsible research conduct for all researchers and those in other relevant roles

RI6  Ensure mentors and supervisors of research trainees and student researchers have the appropriate skills, qualifications and resources

RI7  Ensure researchers receive appropriate recognition or acknowledgement for trustworthy and responsible research practices including supervision and mentorship

RI8  Provide appropriate and accessible resources and facilities to enable researchers to conduct trustworthy and responsible research

RI9  Provide frameworks that support researchers in the disclosure and management of interests

RI10 Establish, make available and use procedurally fair mechanisms to manage, investigate and resolve complaints about potential breaches of research integrity
Responsibilities of Funders or Sponsors of Research

For trustworthy and responsible research, funders or sponsors of research will:

RF1 Incorporate trustworthy and responsible research as a condition for obtaining and maintaining funding by researchers and institutions, and provide guidance as to the specific measures that are required

RF2 Require institutions to have procedurally fair mechanisms in place to respond to potential breaches of research integrity

RF3 Support and promote openness and transparency in all aspects of research

RF4 Publish policies, procedures and other guidance to promote research integrity and to ensure potential breaches of research integrity are addressed by institutions or other relevant authorities

RF5 Require institutions to provide and foster an environment of research integrity that ensures trustworthy and responsible research and public trust

RF6 Require institutions to develop and implement policies and systems to promote integrity in all aspects of the research enterprise

RF7 Provide support to researchers and institutions at a level sufficient to ensure that trustworthy and responsible research can be undertaken

RF8 Work cooperatively with others in the research endeavour to support and facilitate research integrity worldwide
Guiding Principle 3. Rigour

Rigour in research conduct and administration means being careful, thorough and critical

Responsibilities of Researchers

For planning and conducting research with integrity, researchers will:

RR2 Pay attention to detail and use robust methodology appropriate to the aims of the research, avoiding or acknowledging biases, and ensuring that conclusions are justified by the results or arguments

RR3 Make and keep clear, accurate, secure and complete records including data, methodologies, findings and primary materials in ways that will allow verification and replication of work by others. Where possible and appropriate, share these openly and allow access and reference to these by interested parties

RR5 Consider the consequences and outcomes of research

RR7 Exercise careful and responsible management of resources

RR8 Ensure that appropriate approvals are obtained prior to the commencement of research, and that conditions of any approvals are followed during the course of research

RR9 Identify, disclose, carefully examine and manage financial, familial, scholarly, professional and other interests that may be a perceived, potential or actual conflict of interest

RR10 Give fair, prompt and rigorous evaluations, and respect confidentiality when participating in peer review

For reporting and communicating research with integrity, researchers will:

RR13 Communicate research information, methodology, data and findings truthfully, responsibly, accurately and transparently as possible in proposing, conducting and reporting research

RR16 Cite other relevant work appropriately and accurately and, where applicable, obtain permission for the use of other works
**Responsibilities of Institutions**
For trustworthy and responsible research, institutions will:

RI3 Comply with relevant laws, regulations, sponsor and security requirements, guidelines and policies related to research integrity

RI4 Establish and maintain sound governance and management practices for trustworthy and responsible research

RI8 Provide appropriate and accessible resources and facilities to enable researchers to conduct trustworthy and responsible research

RI9 Provide frameworks that support researchers in the disclosure and management of interests

**Responsibilities of Funders or Sponsors of Research**
For trustworthy and responsible research, funders or sponsors of research will:

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RF4 Publish policies, procedures and other guidance to promote research integrity and to ensure potential breaches of research integrity are addressed by institutions or other relevant authorities

RF6 Require institutions to develop and implement policies and systems to promote integrity in all aspects of the research enterprise
Guiding Principle 4. Transparency

Transparency in research conduct and administration means:

- Being open and sharing of ideas, processes, methods, data, findings and outcomes
- Demonstrating a willingness for work to be scrutinised
- Disclosing and managing conflicts of interest

Responsibilities of Researchers

For planning and conducting research with integrity, researchers will:

RR1 Avoid and report suspected breaches of research integrity that undermine the trustworthiness of research

RR3 Make and keep clear, accurate, secure and complete records including data, methodologies, findings and primary materials in ways that will allow verification and replication of work by others. Where possible and appropriate, share these openly and allow access and reference to these by interested parties

RR9 Identify, disclose, carefully examine and manage financial, familial, scholarly, professional and other interests that may be a perceived, potential or actual conflict of interest

For reporting and communicating research with integrity, researchers will:

RR13 Communicate research information, methodology, data and findings truthfully, responsibly, accurately and transparently as possible in proposing, conducting and reporting research
Responsibilities of Institutions
For trustworthy and responsible research, institutions will:

RI1 Provide and foster an environment of research integrity that ensures trustworthy and responsible research and public trust

RI2 Make best efforts to cooperate with journals, publishers, government agencies, funders, sponsors, and other relevant parties in response to complaints about potential breaches of research integrity

RI8 Provide appropriate and accessible resources and facilities to enable researchers to conduct trustworthy and responsible research

RI9 Provide frameworks that support researchers in the disclosure and management of interests

Responsibilities of Funders or Sponsors of Research
For trustworthy and responsible research, funders or sponsors of research will:

RF3 Support and promote openness and transparency in all aspects of research*
Guiding Principle 5. Respect

Respect in research conduct and administration means demonstrating due regard for the research endeavour, for the values, cultures, opinions and rights of others, for animals and the environment.

Responsibilities of Researchers

For planning and conducting research with integrity, researchers will:

RR5  Consider the consequences and outcomes of research

RR8  Ensure that appropriate approvals are obtained prior to the commencement of research, and that conditions of any approvals are followed during the course of research

RR10  Give fair, prompt and rigorous evaluations, and respect confidentiality when participating in peer review

RR11  Demonstrate respect for research participants, the wider community, animals used in research and the environment

For reporting and communicating research with integrity, researchers will:

RR14  Ensure that authors include all those, and only those, who have made and are accountable for a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution to the research, and that they agree to be listed as an author

RR15  Give credit and acknowledgement to all contributors and contributions to research

RR16  Cite other relevant work appropriately and accurately and, where applicable, obtain permission for the use of other works
Responsibilities of Institutions
For trustworthy and responsible research, institutions will:

RI1  Provide and foster an environment of research integrity that ensures trustworthy and responsible research and public trust

RI3  Comply with relevant laws, regulations, sponsor and security requirements, guidelines and policies related to research integrity

RI4  Establish and maintain sound governance and management practices for trustworthy and responsible research

Responsibilities of Funders or Sponsors of Research
For trustworthy and responsible research, funders or sponsors of research will:

RF7  Provide support to researchers and institutions at a level sufficient to ensure that trustworthy and responsible research can be undertaken

RF8  Work cooperatively with others in the research endeavour to support and facilitate research integrity worldwide
Guiding Principle 6. Fairness

Fairness in research conduct and administration means:

- Behaving and treating others impartially and justly without favouritism or bias
- Acknowledging the work of others

Responsibilities of Researchers

For planning and conducting research with integrity, researchers will:

RR6 Provide sound guidance and mentorship on research integrity to other researchers or research trainees under their supervision and, where appropriate, monitor their conduct

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Responsibilities of Institutions
For trustworthy and responsible research, institutions will:

RI4 Establish and maintain sound governance and management practices for trustworthy and responsible research

RI6 Ensure mentors and supervisors of research trainees and student researchers have the appropriate skills, qualifications and resources

RI7 Ensure researchers receive appropriate recognition or acknowledgement for trustworthy and responsible research practices including supervision and mentorship

RI10 Establish, make available and use procedurally fair mechanisms to manage, investigate and resolve complaints about potential breaches of research integrity

Responsibilities of Funders or Sponsors of Research
For trustworthy and responsible research, funders or sponsors of research will:

RF2 Require institutions to have procedurally fair mechanisms in place to respond to potential breaches of research integrity

RF4 Publish policies, procedures and other guidance to promote research integrity and to ensure potential breaches of research integrity are addressed by institutions or other relevant authorities

RF7 Provide support to researchers and institutions at a level sufficient to ensure that trustworthy and responsible research can be undertaken

RF8 Work cooperatively with others in the research endeavour to support and facilitate research integrity worldwide
Guiding Principle 7. Diversity

Diversity in research conduct and administration means recognising and being inclusive of diverse peoples, cultures, knowledges, perspectives and experiences.

Responsibilities of Researchers

For planning and conducting research with integrity, researchers will:

- **RR2** Pay attention to detail and use robust methodology appropriate to the aims of the research, avoiding or acknowledging biases, and ensuring that conclusions are justified by the results or arguments.

- **RR5** Consider the consequences and outcomes of research.

- **RR10** Give fair, prompt and rigorous evaluations, and respect confidentiality when participating in peer review.

- **RR11** Demonstrate respect for research participants, the wider community, animals used in research and the environment.

- **RR12** Recognise and respect the diversity, rights, cultures and traditional knowledges of Indigenous and First Peoples.

For reporting and communicating research with integrity, researchers will:

- **RR13** Communicate research information, methodology, data and findings truthfully, responsibly, accurately and transparently as possible in proposing, conducting and reporting research.

- **RR14** Ensure that authors include all those, and only those, who have made and are accountable for a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution to the research, and that they agree to be listed as an author.

- **RR15** Give credit and acknowledgement to all contributors and contributions to research.

- **RR16** Cite other relevant work appropriately and accurately and, where applicable, obtain permission for the use of other works.
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RI4  Establish and maintain sound governance and management practices for trustworthy and responsible research

RI5  Provide and oversee ongoing training and education that promotes and supports responsible research conduct for all researchers and those in other relevant roles

RI6  Ensure mentors and supervisors of research trainees and student researchers have the appropriate skills, qualifications and resources

RI7  Ensure researchers receive appropriate recognition or acknowledgement for trustworthy and responsible research practices including supervision and mentorship

Responsibilities of Funders or Sponsors of Research
For trustworthy and responsible research, funders or sponsors of research will:

RF3  Support and promote openness and transparency in all aspects of research

RF5  Require institutions to provide and foster an environment of research integrity that ensures trustworthy and responsible research and public trust

RF6  Require institutions to develop and implement policies and systems to promote integrity in all aspects of the research enterprise

RF7  Provide support to researchers and institutions at a level sufficient to ensure that trustworthy and responsible research can be undertaken

RF8  Work cooperatively with others in the research endeavour to support and facilitate research integrity worldwide
Research Integrity Colour Wheel

This diagram illustrates how the APEC Guiding Principles for Research Integrity form specific responsibilities of researchers, institutions and funders or sponsors of research. Many responsibilities overlap across multiple guiding principles. This suggests that responsible and trustworthy conduct and administration of research is complex.
Acknowledgements

Sincere thanks are given to all those that participated and contributed to the development of the APEC Guiding Principles for Research Integrity. The participants of a face-to-face consensus workshop that was held on 20 – 21 November 2018 at the Australian Embassy in Tokyo, Japan, included:

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Selected References

- The “Research Integrity Colour Wheel: APEC Guiding Principles and Responsibilities” herein is based on material provided by the Australian Research Council and the National Health and Medical Research Council of the Australian Government. Reprinted with permission from the publisher.


Dedication
The APEC Guiding Principles for Research Integrity are dedicated to Dr Paul Taylor (1973 – 2018). Dr Taylor was the Lead Investigator of the research project that underpins the APEC Guiding Principles for Research Integrity who sadly passed away before its completion. Dr Taylor was instrumental in the conception and design of the APEC Guiding Principles for Research Integrity. He was excited by how the APEC Guiding Principles for Research Integrity would support trustworthy research and strengthen collaborations. Dr Taylor was a thoughtful and inspiring leader in the field of research integrity and a dear friend to many.

A collection of photos of Dr Paul Taylor at the 5th World Conference on Research Integrity held in 2017 in Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Presented with permission from the Taylor family.