



TUTKIMUSEETTINEN
NEUVOTTELUKUNTA
FORSKNINGSETISKA
DELEGATIONEN

FINNISH NATIONAL BOARD ON
RESEARCH INTEGRITY TENK

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Action plan for the term 1 February 2019–31 January 2022

The Finnish National Board on Research Integrity TENK was established in 1991 for handling ethical issues concerning scientific research and for promoting research integrity (Decree on the Advisory Board on Research Integrity, 1347/1991). The Board's secretariat works in connection with the Federation of Finnish Learned Societies (TSV) in Helsinki.

Tasks and composition of the Board

According to the decree, the tasks of the National Board on Research Integrity TENK as appointed by the Ministry of Education and Culture (OKM) are: 1) to present proposals and issue statements to the authorities on legislative matters regarding research integrity and other questions; 2) to work as a specialist body in examining issues involving research integrity; 3) to take initiatives in promoting research integrity and to advance discussion on research integrity in Finland; 4) to follow the international development of the field and actively participate in international cooperation; and 5) to provide information pertaining to research integrity issues.

The current members of TENK were appointed on 5 December 2018 by the Ministry of Education and Culture (OKM) for the term 1 February 2019 to 31 January 2022. The composition of the Board is as follows:

- Dean **Riitta Keiski** (University of Oulu), Chair,
- Professor **Erika Löfström** (University of Helsinki), Vice Chair,
- Chief Researcher **Kari Hämäläinen** (VATT Institute for Economic Research),
- General Counsel **Matti Karhunen** (VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland Ltd)
- Development Director **Leena Liimatainen** (JAMK University of Applied Sciences)
- Specialist **Susanna Näreaho** (Metropolia University of Applied Sciences)
- Professor **Riitta Salmelin** (Aalto University),
- Programme Director **Sirpa Thessler** (Natural Resources Institute Finland),
- Clinical Lecturer **Alexi Tornio** (University of Helsinki) and
- Professor **Risto Turunen** (University of Eastern Finland).

Chancellor emerita **Krista Varantola** was appointed as an expert in the Board. The Board's secretary is the TENK Secretary General, Docent **Sanna-Kaisa Spoof**.

In 2019–2021, the TENK secretariat will be responsible for the operation of the European Network of Research Integrity Offices (ENRIO), following the Secretary General's appointment as the chair of ENRIO.

Resources of the Board

TENK's operational appropriations come from the revenue of the Veikkaus gaming funds allocated by the OKM for TSV. The work that the members of the Board do in addition to their regular jobs forms a significant part of TENK's activities.

In the spring of 2019, the secretariat of the Board consisted of Secretary General Spoof, Specialist **Iina Kohonen** and part-time Coordinator **Terhi Tarkiainen**. In the years 2019–2021, the secretariat will also include a Coordinator of International Affairs as funded by a special internationalisation grant from the OKM. The Coordinator and the part-time Web Editor of the *Responsible Research* project, led jointly by TENK and the Committee for Public Information (TJNK), are also regarded as part of TENK's secretariat until the end of 2019. The Board may also hire other temporary workers or purchase services within the bounds of its project and other funding. TENK/TSV may participate as a partner in EU projects or other initiatives, in particular in the field of research ethics or responsible research, and the activities of the ENRIO network.

TSV provides TENK with most of the infrastructure it needs, such as office space, network connections, financial administration services and secretarial services. The completion of the electronic workspace at TSV and the inclusion of TENK's document management into that workspace will be expedited. TENK will increase its collaboration within TSV, especially with the Open Science Coordination and other operatives of responsible research in Finland.

During this term, TENK's secretariat has a particularly demanding set of tasks to succeed in, both on the national and international levels. At the same time TENK's principle tasks, such as monitoring research misconduct, are clearly increasing in Finland. It is thus crucial to ensure that TENK has enough resources for carrying out its official duties, such as issuing statements within the time limit, and for meeting its other objectives. After 2019, TENK will need more human resources for communication tasks.

The secretariat will maintain and advance its skills with regard to current developments in the field. It is also important to ensure that salary levels are in line with the demands of the job.

Strategic objectives and tasks

TENK will promote responsible conduct of research (RCR) by drawing up and revising national guidelines and recommendations, as well as influencing international recommendations in the field of research integrity. TENK will emphasise awareness and education in the promotion of research integrity and in the prevention of research misconduct. TENK has a social responsibility for the quality of scientific research in Finland.

In accordance with its permanent objectives, TENK will

1. ensure an operating culture that follows the principles of research integrity,
2. practise awareness-raising and promote education related to research integrity,
3. develop the investigation process involving allegations of misconduct,
4. streamline networking on both the national and international levels and influence international developments in the field,
5. develop the interactive distribution of information and
6. embed good international practices in the Finnish research integrity culture, as well as raise awareness of tried and tested Finnish research integrity guidelines.

In order to fulfil the objectives of the 2019–2021 term, TENK's most significant tasks in addition to its basic functions are:

- Publishing and making more widely known TENK's updated guidelines on the principles of ethical research in the humanities and social and behavioural sciences, and committing research organisations to these guidelines as widely as possible.
- Analysing and utilizing the 2018 research integrity barometer data for prevention of research misconduct. Preparing to repeat the barometer survey every three years.
- Organising ENRIO's European Congress on Research Integrity in Finland in October 2020.
- Fulfilling the responsibilities involved in ENRIO's chairmanship in an exemplary fashion and developing the organisation structure of the ENRIO network.
- Developing the network of research integrity advisors and utilizing support personnel network effectively to promote responsible conduct of research in research organisations.
- Exploring the needs for information of research integrity in the international research community in Finland. Customizing information specifically in English and extending the range of foreign languages in TENK publications within resources.
- Updating the 2012 guidelines *Responsible conduct of research and procedures for handling allegations of misconduct in Finland* will be started in cooperation with the research community.
- Actively producing content for the official tenk.fi website and the electronic newsletter in collaboration with other TSV actors.

- TENK and TJNK's jointly produced *Responsible Research* website will be established and its article production is developed through visitor surveys.

In the context of the TENK budget preparation, specific areas of focus and operational priorities will also be set separately for each calendar year.

As an additional objective, TENK's operational focus could shift from monitoring research misconduct towards communication and international collaboration, i.e. to actively raising awareness of the Finnish responsible conduct of research among researchers of all ages and across all disciplines in Finland and also in Europe, and as a pilot project outside of Europe as well. ***At the same time, the integrity of Finland's internationalizing scientific community and the ethics, high quality and reliability of scientific research will continue to be safeguarded.***

TENK monitors the effectiveness of its operations and the realization of research integrity objectives, including by monitoring the quality of RCR processes carried out in research organisations and by continuing the barometer surveys of research integrity.

Here is an overview of the main tasks of TENK:

Promoting responsible conduct of research and developing RCR processes

The work on updating of *Responsible conduct of research and procedures for handling allegations of misconduct in Finland (RCR 2012 guidelines)*, which entered into force on 1 March 2013, will be started in cooperation with the scientific community. The aim is to increase the scientific community's commitment to the TENK guidelines. Ensuring that the revised RCR guidelines are in line with international research integrity guidelines such as the *European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity* by All European Academies ALLEA. TENK actively seeks to influence the development of international guidelines.

TENK will strive to issue its statements within the timeline defined by the RCR process also in the future. The RCR process is streamlined by creating templates for reporting allegations of violation of the responsible conduct of research (RCR) and for requests for statements from TENK. Attention should also be paid to the position of the person reporting the suspicion, the so-called whistleblower, at the latest in the updated RCR guidelines.

The secretariat advises researchers in research integrity problems by telephone and e-mail within their own areas of responsibility. The coordination of activities of the advisory and support personnel within research integrity (the research integrity advisers), began in 2017, will continue. Training and networking events are organised

annually for the research integrity advisers. There is a dedicated steering group for system development.

The Vastuullinentiede.fi website is developed in the TSV community to distribute research material and guidelines for research integrity and responsible research, as well as teaching and information materials related to the lifecycle of research and open science. TENK monitors research integrity education projects in Finland and worldwide.

The report of the first barometer of research integrity, which TENK commissioned from researchers at the University of Vaasa, was published in May 2019. The survey was planned and implemented as a collaboration between the University of Vaasa and TENK as part of the *Responsible Research* project. The 2018 research integrity barometer data are analysed and utilized in the TENK for prevention of the research misconduct and for increasing the effectiveness of TENK's activities. The barometer survey will be repeated in 2021 in order to monitor the questionable working cultures and breeding ground of research misconduct in the various disciplines and to assess the real number of violations of responsible conduct of research.

In cooperation with national ethical committees and other partners in the field of ethics, TENK arranges an *Ethics Day* for researchers and specialists every year. TENK also regularly organises other specialist seminars in its field and maintains regular contact with higher education institutions and representatives of various disciplines to find out their current needs for seminar topics.

The members and secretariat of TENK give lectures as part of research integrity events which are organised at many higher education institutions and other research organisations. The research integrity advisers are responsible for communicating in their own organisations. TENK's teaching materials can be found on the TENK website and are free for use as long as the source is properly referenced.

Ethical review of research in the humanities and social sciences

As one of its basic tasks, TENK coordinates and guides ethical review in the humanities and social sciences. In April 2019, a total of 61 Finnish higher education institutions and other research organisations and networks committed to following TENK's guidelines *Ethical principles of research in the humanities and social and behavioural sciences and proposals for ethical review* (2009).

In spring 2019, TENK will adopt the new set of updated guidelines. The guidelines are translated into Swedish and English. The extensive commitment of the scientific community to the guidelines will be implemented in the autumn of 2019. At the same time, this makes possible the active promotion of activities in Finland also in new, non-medical fields that have not previously been covered by the guidelines. Special attention is given to the arts sector.

TENK will continue to organise specialist seminars and discussion events in the field of humanities and social sciences to support cooperation among various ethical committees. Reports on the activities of the regional ethical committees are included in the TENK Annual Report.

It is also important to support not only the work of the ethical committees of the humanities and social sciences, but also the statistics of their activities and statements. TENK monitors the work of the committees and, if necessary, gives statements to researchers who are not satisfied with the review of their research plan provided by their own ethical committee.

International activities

The TENK secretariat will be responsible for the operation of the ENRIO network which was set up in 2008. This is due to the Secretary General's appointment as the ENRIO chair in October 2018 for a three-year term. During this time, a Coordinator of International Affairs will work in the TENK secretariat to carry out the secretarial duties of ENRIO. The main objective of the chairmanship is to transform ENRIO from a free-form network into an international association registered in Belgium. For more information on ENRIO's activities, see: www.enrio.eu.

Together with ENRIO and Aalto University, TENK organises the 1st European research integrity congress *ENRIO 2020 Congress on Research Integrity Practice*. The Congress is held in Dipoli of Aalto University, Espoo, on 5–7 October 2020. At the same time, ENRIO will hold its autumn 2020 general meeting in Helsinki.

TENK has active cooperative relationships with key European scientific organisations, networks and Nordic actors in the field. ALLEA is likely to launch the update of the 2017 *The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity. Revised edition* in the next few years. The ALLEA code binds also Finnish applicants of European research funding.

During the term of operation, collaboration between research ethics and research integrity actors will be promoted both in Europe and in Finland. If possible, a TENK representative will participate in the *NEC forums*. Where necessary, TENK will also take part in the ethical specialist networks of NordForsk. Finland will act as an initiator in launching cooperation between national actors in the field of ethical review in the humanities and social sciences in Europe.

During this chairmanship of ENRIO, TENK will support the acquisition of EU research funding in the fields of research integrity and responsible research and innovation activities, with the aim of promoting the responsible conduct of research in Finland and Europe.

Global networking will continue where possible, in connection with (for example) the study and seminar trips of the TENK secretariat. TENK will participate in the World Conference on Research Integrity in 2019 and 2021.

Information, education and networking

TENK will actively distribute information and provide advice to organisations which have signed the RCR guidelines and to its other interest groups and to the wider public. TENK will organise specialist seminars and provide information on its activities and operational models also through international forums. The most important communication channel is TENK's website www.tenk.fi. The English version of the site is being developed further to meet the needs of the international research community. The accessibility of the site and data protection issues are updated.

Together with TJNK, TENK promotes responsible research communication and research ethics in Finland by the article production and newsletter of the *Vastuullinentiede.fi* website. TSV will combine the communications and online contents of the Open Science Coordination and the Publication Forum under the brand of responsible research.

International training for trainers of ALLEA *Code of Conduct*, organised by the EU-funded Virt²Ue project, will be launched in 2020. The project partner University of Helsinki recruits from Finland primarily research integrity support personnel for training.

Finland's national ethical committees – the National Advisory Board on Social Welfare and Health Care Ethics (ETENE), the National Committee on Medical Research Ethics (TUKIJA), the Advisory Board on Biotechnology (BTNK), the Board for Gene Technology (GTLK) and TENK – have cooperated for many years. The secretariats of these committees convene regularly to exchange experiences on current research ethics and integrity issues and send their representatives to the *Ethics Day* working group.

In Finland, TENK will develop operating models for increasing dialogue not only with higher education institutions and research organisations, but also with other funding bodies for research and science as well as with scientific societies and other interest groups. TENK's objective is to hold one Board meeting at a locality with a higher education institution outside of Greater Helsinki.

TENK will take active part in discussion on research integrity in scientific and academic forums, also through scientific and popular presentations and articles and position papers. Speeches, presentations, articles and media interviews of TENK members will also play an important role in raising awareness of TENK's objectives. TENK cooperates in its communications with TSV and the Ministry of Education and Culture.

All TENK guidelines, as well as documents such as annual reports, are produced in Finnish, Swedish and English. To consolidate TENK's publishing activities and increase visibility and awareness, a series of publications, *Publications of the Finnish National*

Board on Research Integrity TENK, will be created for TENK's own guidelines, specifications and reports.

During the term to which this action plan applies, the awareness of TENK's research integrity guidelines among foreign researchers operating in Finland and around the world will be increased so that the delivered RCR guidelines are also published at least in Chinese, Russian and Spanish.

Further information can be found on the Board's website www.tenk.fi.

This action plan was approved at the meeting of the Finnish National Board on Research Integrity held on 7 May 2019.

Riitta Keiski
Chair

Sanna Kaisa Spoof
Secretary General