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Date: October 12th, 2023

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On the basis of Article 69, paragraph 2, of the Scientific Research and Innovation Activities Act (*Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia*, 186/21 and 40/23) and the Code of Research Ethics and Integrity of the Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, the Board of Directors of the Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, at its 32nd meeting on October 12th, 2023, adopted as follows,

THE POLICY ON HANDLING BREACHES OF THE PRINCIPLES OF RESEARCH ETHICS AND INTEGRITY AT THE RESEARCH CENTRE OF THE SLOVENIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AND ARTS

Article 1

This policy establishes the procedure for dealing with violations of the principles of research ethics and integrity of the Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences And Arts (ZRC SAZU) by employees and others that use or have used ZRC SAZU premises, facilities, or resources for research or that were using ZRC SAZU premises, facilities, or resources at the time of the alleged violations.

Article 2

The principles mentioned in Article 1 are set out in the ZRC SAZU Code of Research Ethics and Integrity, or the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, prepared by the association All European Academies (ALLEA).

Violations of the principles of research ethics and integrity include:

- Fabricating and falsifying research data or research findings;
- Plagiarism: appropriating other people's work or ideas;
- Misrepresenting authorship of or involvement in a research project or publication; for example, failing to cite the (co)authors of a research work, citing inappropriate or unjustified authorship, and so on;
- Republishing substantial parts of previous publications, including translations, without due acknowledgement or citation of the original (self-plagiarism);
- Conducting research in contravention of generally accepted ethical standards (protecting the wellbeing of research participants, their personal data, natural and cultural heritage, etc.);



- Allowing the independence of research to be compromised;
- Reporting research findings in a biased manner;
- Malicious and unfounded public accusations that a person involved in research has committed breaches of ethics and integrity;
- Misleading reporting of research findings;
- Abuse of a superior position to promote breaches of research integrity among subordinates;
- Undisclosed circumstances that would show a conflict of interest in research and review procedures;
- Undisclosed or inadequate representation of parts of the research or publication generated by generative AI;
- Other actions that constitute a violation of the ZRC SAZU Code of Research Ethics and Integrity.

Article 3

The procedure for addressing an alleged violation of the principles of research ethics and integrity is initiated on the basis of a report of such a violation or at the initiative of the ZRC SAZU Committee for Ethics, Integrity, and Equal Opportunities (hereinafter the EIEO Committee).

The report must be made in writing and addressed to the EIEO Committee, and it must contain the name of the person submitting the report, the name of the person to whom the alleged infringement relates, a description of the conduct in question, and the available evidence on the basis of which the validity of the report can be verified. It may also contain a proposal as to how the harmful consequences of the infringement may be remedied.

The report may also be submitted anonymously and will be considered if it contains all the elements set out in the preceding paragraph, except the name of the person submitting the report.

The members of the EIEO Committee act as confidential persons, who may be consulted confidentially and informally by a person that has perceived a breach of the principles of research ethics and integrity at ZRC SAZU prior to submitting a report.

Article 4

The EIEO Committee shall examine the report submitted and check that it contains all the elements set out in Article 3.

If any member of the EIEO Committee is found to have a conflict of interest, he or she shall be disqualified from consideration. The EIEO Committee may, when examining the report submitted, find

- That the report is not a matter to be dealt with under the procedure laid down in these rules, in which case the report shall be rejected and the person that made the report may be advised on the initiation of appropriate procedures;
- That the report is incomplete because it does not contain all the elements laid down in Article 3(3), in which case it shall invite the person that submitted the report to complete it within a time limit that may not be less than seven days; if the person that submitted the



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report fails to complete it within the time limit set, the EIEO Committee shall reject the report;

- That the report has been compiled in accordance with the procedure laid down in these rules and that the report contains all the elements as laid down in Article 3 of these rules; in this case, the report shall be forwarded to the Director of ZRC SAZU (hereinafter the Director), and he or she shall be invited to appoint a Report Review Panel to consider the report.

Article 5

The Report Review Panel for examining the report shall be appointed by the Director at a proposal from the EIEO Committee within seven working days of receipt of the proposal.

The Report Review Panel shall be composed of three persons: at least one member of the EIEO Committee and at least one person with expertise in a field that allows for a more detailed examination of the report. The composition of the panel shall take into account gender balance.

The Report Review Panel may also include persons that are not employees of ZRC SAZU. Persons invited to serve on the Report Review Panel are obliged to disqualify themselves if a conflict of interest is disclosed. In this case, the Director shall appoint a new member or members at the proposal of the EIEO Committee.

The Report Review Panel must act impartially and in accordance with the highest standards of research integrity.

Participation in the Report Review Panel is purely voluntary, without remuneration.

Administrative and technical support for the activities of the Report Review Panel is provided by the ZRC SAZU Administration. The archives of the Report Review Panel are kept at the ZRC SAZU Administration.

Article 6

The Report Review Panel shall examine the report and, in the event of any ambiguity, shall invite the person that submitted the report to clarify the report or to provide additional supporting evidence within a time limit to be set by the ZRC SAZU Board of Directors.

The Report Review Panel shall invite the person accused of the offence to explain the matter and to submit the relevant evidence within a period to be fixed by the ZRC SAZU Board of Directors, which shall not be less than 14 days. The Report Review Panel shall inform the person that lodged the complaint of the status of the proceedings.

The Report Review Panel may request that the ZRC SAZU bodies provide it with views, data, documents, or other material it needs for its work, subject to the provisions on the protection of personal data.

The Report Review Panel may also ask other natural or legal persons that have information necessary for its decision in the procedure to provide further explanations or evidence.

The Report Review Panel may, if necessary, interview the persons concerned or proposed witnesses, and it shall draw up a record of the interviews.



Article 7

The EIEO Committee and the Report Review Panel are obliged to treat as confidential all information contained in the materials that they become aware of in the course of their work and to protect the personal data of those involved in the proceedings before the EIEO Committee.

Any person that is accused of violating the principles of research ethics and integrity is presumed innocent until proven otherwise.

ZRC SAZU is obliged to take all necessary measures to protect the rights of persons submitting reports and persons whose actions are the subject of ongoing proceedings. None of them shall be deprived of their professional or other opportunities.

Article 8

The examination procedure must be completed no later than six months after the appointment of the Report Review Panel.

On the basis of the evidence adduced, the Report Review Panel shall establish all the relevant facts and give a written opinion on the infringements alleged in the report. The opinion, which shall contain a summary of the proceedings and the facts established and an opinion on the infringement reported, shall be sent by the ZRC SAZU Board of Directors to the person that lodged the complaint and to the person accused of the infringement, who shall be given a period of not less than seven days in which to respond to the opinion.

If the Report Review Panel finds a violation of the principles of research ethics and integrity, it shall recommend action against the offending party to the Director.

The Report Review Panel shall conclude its consideration of the report with a written opinion, which must be reasoned and contain the following elements:

- A summary of the hearing and the facts, and an opinion on the infringement reported;
- A response to the allegations made in the response to the opinion and, if any, recommendations for action.

The content of the opinion shall be communicated to the Director, the EIEO Committee, the person that submitted the report, and the person accused of the infringement.

In arriving at its opinion, the Report Review Panel shall take into account the nature and extent of the infringement and, in particular, the following circumstances:

- Whether the infringement was committed intentionally or negligently;
- Whether it was a one-off infringement or whether it represents a pattern of behavior by the person that committed the infringement;
- The impact of peer pressure on the misconduct, and the impact of the misconduct on research findings;
- The impact of the infringement on the research participants, on the work of other researchers, and on the reputation of the institution;
- The wider social consequences of the infringement;



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- The extent to which the person that committed the infringement has participated in the proceedings, acknowledged the inappropriateness of his or her behavior, and expressed regret for it;
- The position of the person that committed the infringement at ZRC SAZU, in particular whether he or she holds a managerial position or is an advisor;
- Other systemic and personal circumstances.

The Report Review Panel may propose the following measures to the Director:

- Sanctions under the Employment Relations Act and the employment contract, and a written warning;
- Mandatory attendance at training on good practices in research integrity;
- Public disclosure of the unethical practices and breaches of research and academic integrity that have been identified in the process, including in English where appropriate;
- Informing all those that have a legitimate interest in being informed of the infringement: coauthors, the research funder, the employer if the infringer is also employed outside ZRC SAZU, national and international research associations in which the infringer is active, and so on;
- Informing the journals or publishing houses that have produced the publications that the infringement relates to and requesting that relevant organizations exclude these publications from bibliographies, scoring, and consideration for funding and titles;
Reporting the infraction to the relevant law enforcement authorities if it is suspected that a crime has been committed;
- Claiming compensation if the unethical behavior has caused damage to property;
- Other measures justified by the specific circumstances of the case.

Article 9

The Director shall inform the EIEO Committee and the Report Review Panel of the conclusion of the procedure and the measures taken.

Article 10

These Regulations shall be published on the internal website of ZRC SAZU and shall enter into force on the day following their publication.

Dr. Drago Perko

Chairman of the ZRC SAZU Board of Directors