Path **2** Integrity

M4 Research groups work as transparently and as openly as possible!
(cf. ECoC 2017, pp. 6–7)

Description and background

This learning unit:

- *Introduces (future) researchers to norms in research collaborations*

- *Builds the competency to set common goals and norms in research collaborations*

- *Challenges (future) researchers to choose norms, which all research partners agree on when working collaboratively*

- *Emphasises openness and transparency*

An advocate for research integrity

Kristina Bliznakova

Keywords

Roles and responsibilities; research agreements; transparency; openness; research groups; research collaboration; common goals

This unit has been prepared for disciplinary learning groups.

Learning objectives

1 *Listen actively and present own wishes, aims and goals*

2 *Accept and learn to respect others' wishes, aims and goals*

3 *Practice understanding and being understood in a dialogue*

4 *Learn to discard arguments that cannot be justified*

Learning stages

1 *Become familiar with the topic*

2 *Face an interesting problem*

3 *Write down your wishes, aims and goals*

4 *Discuss and come to an agreement*

5 *Reflect on reaching an agreement*

> **"Research collaborations open doors for joint scientific activities that can provide amazing results that benefit our society."**
> **(Kristina Bliznakova, an advocate for research integrity)**

M4 Path2Integrity

1 Become familiar with the topic:

Homework (before the unit starts) or reading session

Read the paragraph on collaborative working in "The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity".

Discuss the meanings of any unknown words.

Look up the Path2Integrity comic "Building a Foundation".
What does it show? Which values play a role in building a foundation for collaborative work?

European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity

Building a Foundation (Path2Integrity)

2 Face an interesting problem:

To learn about research integrity in research groups, please select an example from your discipline. Choose a situation in which collaborative work is common. Here are two possible examples:

1. "To promote more female speakers at high-level European conferences, three partners decided to work together on project X3. X3 supports high-level conference hosts by conducting and publishing the results of a survey about the most pressing needs of women while they are at conferences."

2. "To tackle health challenges in Europe, 15 institutions from different European countries support an experiment with different randomised trials to improve patient care."

These examples are similar in that they refer to collaborative teams pursuing scientific results using known and state-of-the-art research procedures. If one of these examples is relevant to you, you are welcome to use it. If not, please select an equivalent example from your discipline. Write it down in one or two sentences.

3 Write down your wishes, aims and goals:

1 **Working alone, imagine that you take on the role of a researcher in the example you have chosen. Flesh this out in detail. What are your tasks and responsibilities?**

2 **You do not know who your partners will be. Write down which research practices they might use that would jeopardise the research collaboration.**

3 **Consider what you would need from your project partners so as not to step into this pitfall.**

4 **Write down on what you and your partners should agree together in advance of the project so that you can confidently start your project without hesitation or discomfort.**

Be transparent and open!

What are the roles and responsibilities of the different partners in research collaborations?

Think about processes such as research reporting on findings and problems, collecting and storing information, changing research design or models etc.
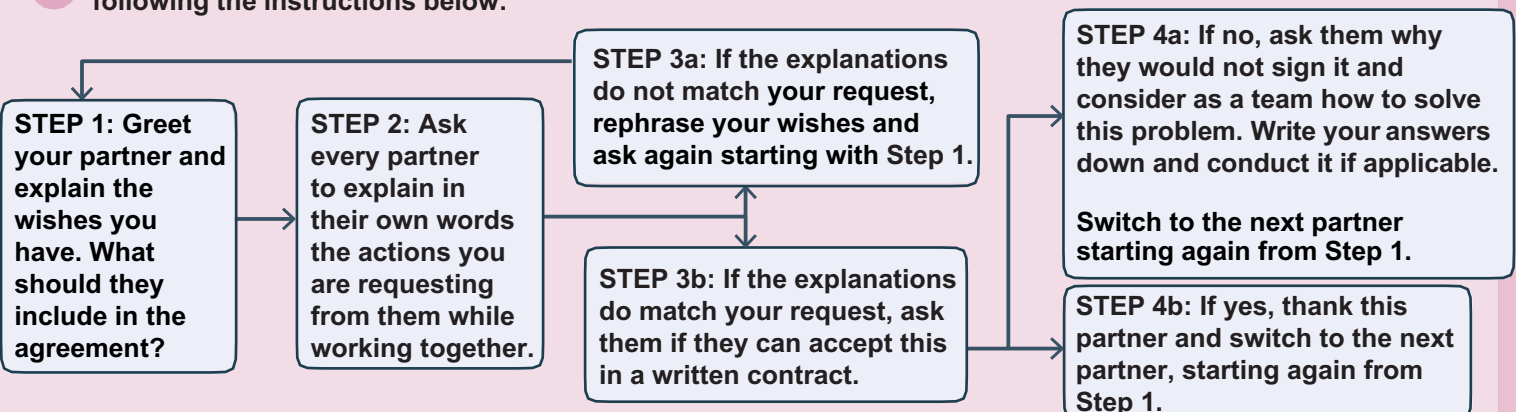
In addition, think about intellectual property rights and ownership issues for research data and publication.

When does the collaboration start? When does it end? To which code of conduct should the different partners adhere?

4 Discuss and come to an agreement:

In groups of two or three, go through the next steps:

Present your request for collaborative work to each other, starting with one partner and following the instructions below:

STEP 1: Greet your partner and explain the wishes you have. What should they include in the agreement?

STEP 2: Ask every partner to explain in their own words the actions you are requesting from them while working together.

STEP 3a: If the explanations do not match your request, rephrase your wishes and ask again starting with Step 1.

STEP 3b: If the explanations do match your request, ask them if they can accept this in a written contract.

STEP 4a: If no, ask them why they would not sign it and consider as a team how to solve this problem. Write your answers down and conduct it if applicable.

Switch to the next partner starting again from Step 1.

STEP 4b: If yes, thank this partner and switch to the next partner, starting again from Step 1.

5 Reflect on reaching an agreement:

As a class, discuss:

- What did different groups agree on, and why?
- What was challenging in the process?
- If groups could not come to an agreement, how did they proceed?
- Why is an agreement necessary in research collaborations?