

Research integrity in a competitive context

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In France there is not yet a structure to control research integrity at the national level. A working group including several research institutions is currently preparing a national chart for integrity in research.

As for CNRS the COMETS is analyzing the changes occurring in the missions assigned to the researchers pushing them to deviate from strict integrity : the very strong pressure to perform at the level of excellence ; the implicit necessity to publish in high impact reviews ; the duty to put on innovation and patents.

In such a competitive context, inappropriate behavior covers a broad spectrum of misconduct types beyond falsification, fabrication of data and plagiarism : misappropriation of results, misconduct in publications and misuse of CNRS umbrella for propaganda, etc. The COMETS published recommendations on how to deal with such cases, distinguishing easy and complex cases. In the latter case an adhoc committee is appointed including a COMETS observer.

In addition the COMETS is concerned by conflicts of interest : CNRS recently adopted a chart on deontology of the scientific evaluator, in complement of the national chart of expertise.

Finally the COMETS convinced CNRS to engage in an in-depth policy for open access on publications and for open data ; he also encouraged researchers not to waive all their rights to publishers when submitting their articles.