

Fostering a responsible research culture through national guides for institutional self-governance

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NREC have recently published a guide for research performing organisations outlining institutional responsibilities for research ethics and integrity. Hopefully, the Norwegian guide can serve as inspiration for similar initiatives in other countries.

The World Conferences of Research Integrity (WCRI) have provided many relevant resources. However, such general guidances must also be incorporated into specific national systems. This guide is an attempt to provide such a framework for Norway.

Since 1990 NREC has provided guidance and resources to support research performing organisations (RPOs) in their work on research ethics and integrity. According to the Norwegian Research Ethics Act (2017), both researchers and RPOs must ensure that research is conducted in accordance with recognised research ethical norms. The Act primarily focuses on training and handling of potential violations. This guide provides a broader framework for institutional responsibility also related to their social responsibility.



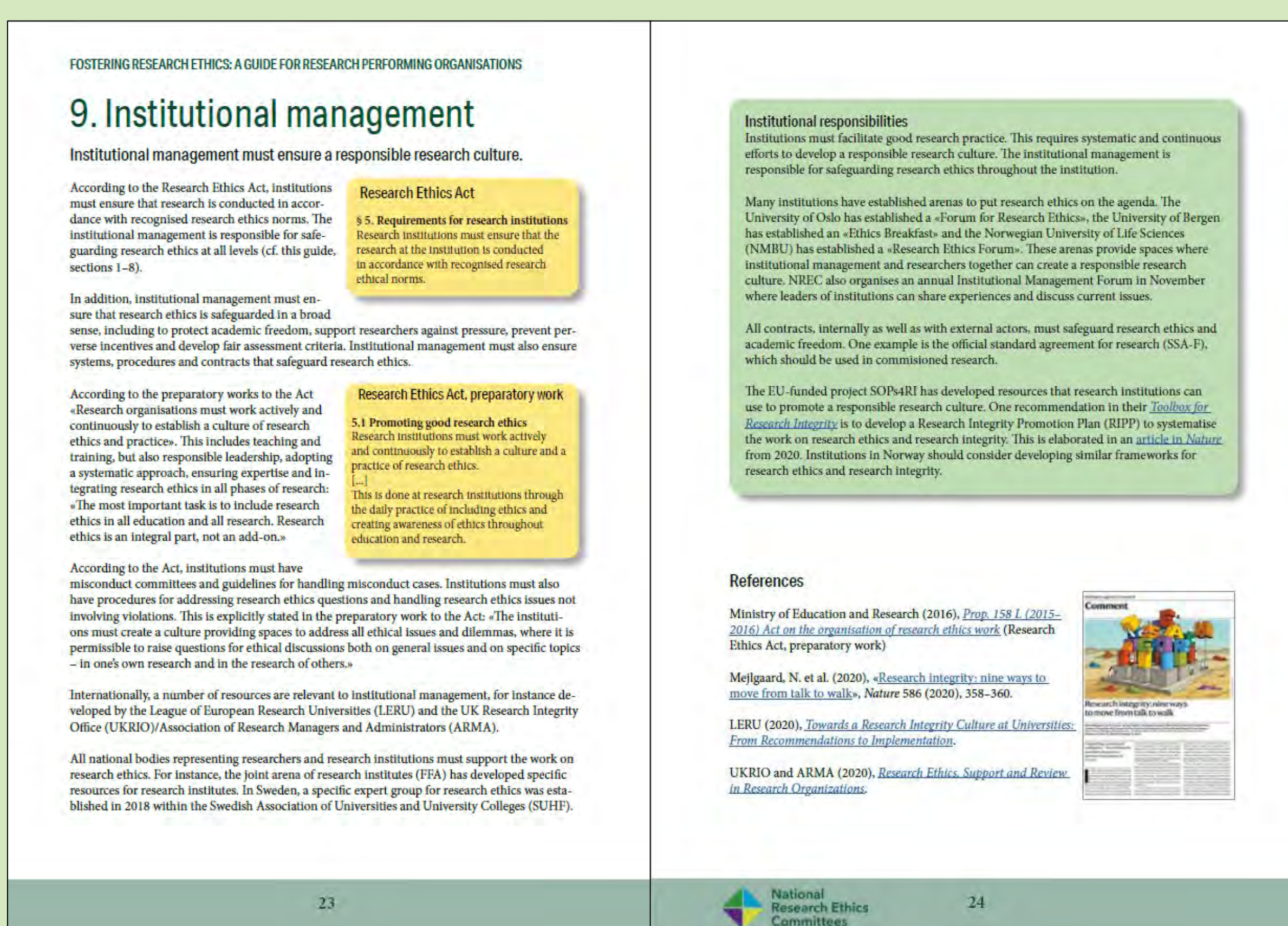
Roles and responsibilities

1. Education and training
2. Supervision and mentoring
3. Research community
4. Research support
5. Research leaders
6. Research ethics committees
7. Resource persons
8. Handling misconduct cases
9. Institutional management



It is important to engage the research community in fostering responsible conduct of research (RCR). The RPOs must also develop a responsible research culture (RRC). Both RCR and RRC are necessary to maintain society's trust in research.

The guide consists of nine sections, describing different roles and responsibilities. Both the research community and the institutional management must assess which sections and examples are relevant to their work.



Hopefully, the Norwegian guide can serve as inspiration for other initiatives, providing specific solutions to institutional challenges in a national context. Because of differences in legal and regulatory frameworks, each country must develop their own guides to secure harmonization and adherence. Different actors can facilitate this process, for instance national research ethics committees, academies, or funding organisations.

The World Conferences of Research Integrity (WCRI) could facilitate dialogue and harmonisation between different national initiatives.

