

**International
Science Council**

The global voice for science

Committee for Freedom and Responsibility in Science

ISC Members' Meeting
11 May 2023
Paris



FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY IN SCIENCE AND WHAT IT MEANS FOR ISC MEMBERS

Session Goal

Mutual information sharing on FRS issues of concern to inform ISC approach and priorities

Objectives:

- Identification of current and emerging concerns and trends related to Freedom and Responsibility in Science
 - Articulation of current and proposed responses to FRS issues and concerns.
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1. Welcome and introduction to the session
 2. Presentation on the work of the FRS portfolio
 3. Small Group discussions on current and emerging trends and concerns related to FRS.
 4. Report back from Rapporteurs
 5. Plenary discussion (10 mins)



Anne Husebekk



Gong Ke

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COMMITTEE FOR FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY IN SCIENCE



OUR VISION

The vision of the council is to advance science as a *global public good*

ISC's Principle
of Freedom &
Responsibility
in Science

Science as a
Global Public
Good



OUR MISSION

The mission of the Council is to be the *global voice for science*

PRINCIPLE OF FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY

The free and responsible practice of science is fundamental to scientific advancement and human and environmental wellbeing. Such practice, in all its aspects, **requires freedom of movement, association, expression and communication** for scientists, as well as **equitable access to data, information, and other resources** for research. It requires responsibility at all levels to carry out and communicate scientific work **with integrity, respect, fairness, trustworthiness, and transparency**, recognizing its benefits and possible harms.

In advocating the free and responsible practice of science, the Council promotes equitable opportunities for access to science and its benefits, and opposes discrimination based on such factors as ethnic origin, religion, citizenship, language, political or other opinion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, or age.



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COMMITTEE FOR FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY IN SCIENCE



Anne Husebekk



Françoise Baylis



Melody Burkins



Saths Cooper



Robert French



Gong Ke



Robin Grimes



Karly Kehoe



Staffan Lindberg



Roy MacLeod



Joyce Nyoni



Sayaka Oki



Krushil Watana

CFRS CASE WORK

CFRS monitors individual and generic cases of scientists whose freedoms and rights are restricted **as a result of carrying out their scientific research**, and provides assistance in such cases where its intervention can provide relief and support activities of other relevant actors.

Actions are determined on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the sensitivity and severity of the situation, views of the relevant ISC Members:

- Letters: private or open letters sent by CFRS Chair or ISC President to relevant ISC Members, institutions, or Heads of States
- Announcements: public comments about cases on social media and the ISC website
- CFRS Statements and ISC Positions: a statement or public position adopted by the CFRS and endorsed by the ISC Governing Board.
- Commentaries: e.g. opinion pieces, editorials, letters to the editor, news pieces, blogs.



International Science Council ✓
@ISC

We are concerned by reports that threats to scientific freedom are increasing.

The rigorous practice of science is essential for addressing the challenges facing society, and scientists must have intellectual freedom.

council.science/current/news/s...



Freedom and Responsibility in Science

For progress to be equitable and effective, scientists must have the right to scientific freedom, with due respect and protection from all states and governments around the world.

3:51 PM · May 27, 2021 · Twitter Web App

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THREATS TO FREEDOM

The most common type of case referred to CFRS are **threats to the freedom of expression and movement of individual scientists**. These cases include scientists who are perceived as threatening to entrenched economic interests, such as scientists working in health and climate change, who are subject to ongoing legal harassment, toxic abuse via social media, threatened with physical violence.

Scholars and researchers whose work is perceived as being at odds with the messaging of certain governments experience targeted harassment, harsh jail sentences, often forced to flee their country, kidnapping, even murder.

Alarming new threats include increased opportunities for the surveillance of research, teaching and discourse.

THREATS TO RESPONSIBILITY

Threats to the responsible conduct of science include actions by individual scientists, scientific organisations and state actors which compromise the integrity, respect, fairness, trustworthiness, and transparency of scientific research.

Scientists have a responsibility to practise science in ways that meet globally **recognized standards and so serve the global public good**. The beneficial application of new scientific knowledge also depends on responsible scientists. New discoveries will be used by societies in accordance with their own values and power structures. Scientists have a responsibility to think about the uses to which their work might be put, and to **advise stakeholders of the risks and benefits of these applications**.

“In protecting researchers, research organizations must create an enabling environment for the free and responsible practice of science: Defend institutional autonomy from external influence; Protect staff from coercion, threats and pressures, including from political, religious and commercial interests.”

CASE PORTFOLIO

- CFRS is currently monitoring **21 generic** cases and **10 individual** cases
 - Severe crises/existential threats: **6**
 - State targeting of individuals: **6**
 - General state interference: **5**
 - Political hostage-taking/imprisonment: **5**
 - Related to freedom of expression: **4**
 - Attacks on autonomy: **2**
 - Related to trust in science: **2**
 - Non-state attacks on individuals: **1**
- Global declines in scientific and academic freedoms (E.g. V-DEM Academic Freedom Index, SAR Free to Think Report)
- Crises and existential threats to the integrity of science systems and cultures
- Rising fraud and misconduct in science

CFRS PROJECTS: MAY 2023

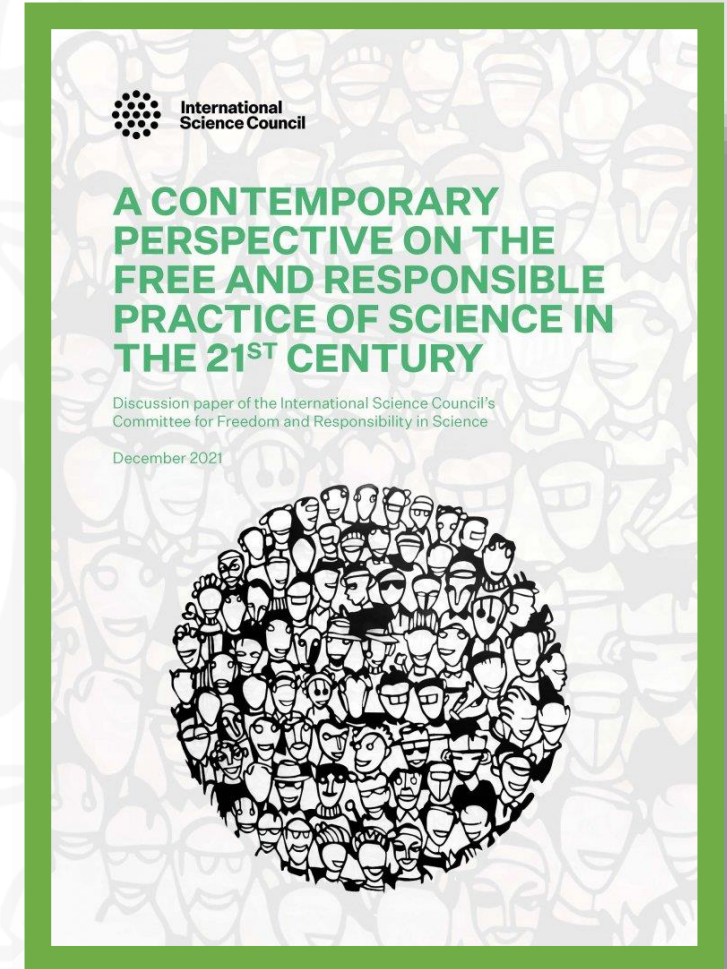
CFRS runs projects and leads a broad range of ISC projects concerning freedom and responsibility in science.

1. CFRS 21st Century perspectives Discussion Paper
2. Science in Times of Crisis
3. Gender Equality in Science



A CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVE ON THE FREE AND RESPONSIBLE PRACTICE OF SCIENCE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

1. CFRS Discussion Paper, A Contemporary Perspective on the free and responsible practice of science in the 21st Century
 - ISC-Nature podcast series on Diversity in Science
 - ISC-Nature podcast series on Scientific Freedom and Responsibility: What freedom and responsibility mean today, and why they matter for the scientific community
 - UNESCO Report on Scientific Freedom in Africa
 - ISC-UNESCO Conference on Scientific Freedom and Responsibility



THREATS TO THE INTEGRITY OF SCIENCE SYSTEMS AND CULTURES

Science in times of crisis



SCIENCEINEXILE

Joint ISC-IAP DECLARATION

Supporting at-risk, displaced and refugee scientists: A call to action

ISC PODCAST

Science in Times of Crisis

What living in a world of crisis and geopolitical instability means for science and scientists

SiE stakeholder's crisis group meetings - a time-limited, multi-stakeholder platform for information exchange and synergizing support efforts during the initial phases of the crisis, and to prepare for future crises – Afghanistan 2021; Ukraine 2022


Jointly organized conferences:

- *June 2022: Conference on the Ukraine Crisis: Responses from the European higher education and research sectors.* 15 June 2022 (ISC, Science for Ukraine, ALLEA and Kristiania University Oslo)
- *March 2023: 2nd Conference on the Ukraine crisis - One year into the Ukraine war: exploring the impact on the science sector and support initiatives* (ALLEA, ISC, partners Science Europe, NRF Ukraine, Young Scientists Council of Ukraine)

JUNE 2022 & MARCH 2023 CONFERENCES ON THE IMPACT OF THE WAR IN UKRAINE ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENCE SECTORS



International Science Council  @ISC · Aug 31

 Out today: the report from our joint conference with [#ScienceForUkraine](#), [@ALLEA_academies](#) and [@hkristiania](#) on the responses from the European higher [#education](#) and [#research](#) sectors to the [#Ukraine](#) crisis.

Read the 7 key recommendations here 
council.science/publications/u...



[#ScienceForUkraine](#) 



International
Science Council

20-22 MARCH, 2023
09:00 CET | 08:00 UTC

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Academies



A POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR SCIENCE IN TIMES OF CRISIS

“Member states should develop policies for the protection and preservation of research objects, scientific infrastructure and scientific archives, including in instances of conflict.”

UNESCO Recommendation on Science and Scientific Researchers (2017)

“The international science community should start planning how best to prepare the country’s research infrastructure for the end of the war. Long-term partnerships that focus on capacity-building will be crucial, particularly in the areas of management, monitoring and policy. These collaborations must try to sustain day-to-day research as much as possible now, so that the research community can hit the ground running and be much more effective as soon as the conflict ends. ” Nature 614, 593-594 (2023)

ISC Desk Review: **Scientific Solidarity, Inclusion, and Resilience - Preparing, Protecting and Rebuilding Science in times of Crisis**

- To better understand the strategic and policy priorities/challenges in science which, if addressed, would have the biggest impact on improving science’s ability to prevent, prepare for, respond and rebuild in the face of crisis (policy frameworks & case studies: Brazil, South Africa, Iraq, Ukraine, the Balkans, Japan)

Next steps: bring in relevant partners, policy for science development with UNESCO.

GENDER EQUALITY IN SCIENCE: FROM AWARENESS TO TRANSFORMATION

Phase one of this project has ended with the launch of the following publications.

- *Inclusion and Participation of Women in Global Science Organisations*
- *A Global Approach to the Gender Gap in Mathematical, Computing, and Natural Sciences: How to Measure It, How to Reduce It?*

Phase two of this project has begun with,

1. ISC partner, the Standing Committee for Gender Equality in Science, moving forward with analyses and events aimed at taking forward the recommendations coming out of the 2019 Gender Gap in Science project and the 2020 report.
2. The consideration by project partners to run the survey, 'Women for Science: Inclusion and Participation in Academies of Science' (a joint ISC-IAP project, conducted by GenderInSite and published by the Academy of Science of South Africa) every 5-years. The first iteration of the survey was conducted in 2016 – a unique baseline from which to measure change and the lack of it.

Small Group discussions on current and emerging trends and concerns related to FRS.

1. Break up into small groups. Appoint a rapporteur and prioritise a maximum of **3 points** for each response to the questions. The rapporteur will present to the plenary, document responses on a Word doc and send to vivi.stavrou@council.science **(20 mins)**
2. Plenary report back from Rapporteurs **(10 mins)**
3. Plenary discussion **(10 mins)**

Please discuss the following questions in your small groups.

1. What are the FRS issues or concerns that you are currently dealing with as an individual scientist, science administrator or as a scientific organisation? If relevant, please mention discipline, institution/organisation, country or world region.
(e.g., issues relating to freedom of movement, association, expression, communication, access to data/research, or discrimination, political interference, irresponsible conduct and fraud, broad trends such misinformation, etc.)
2. What broad patterns have you observed recently (over the last two years) regarding FRS? (e.g., changes in the types of issues that are brought to your attention, changes specific to particular regions or disciplines, changes in the number and severity/urgency of issues, or changes in your focus and response, etc.)
3. How do you respond to such issues and concerns? If relevant, please indicate if the response is at the level of individual scientists, science organisations or institutions.
(e.g., raise awareness through public statements and social media, publish articles, engage in direct communication with authorities, offer support, develop guidelines and protocols, etc.)
4. What would you like to see the ISC do or change in its approach to FRS?

Work with the ISC to advance the free and responsible practice of science



Vivi Stavrou

CFRS Executive Secretary
ISC Senior Science Officer

The Council is funded by contributions from its members, philanthropic donations and external grants for specific scientific activities.

It is headquartered in Paris, France.



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