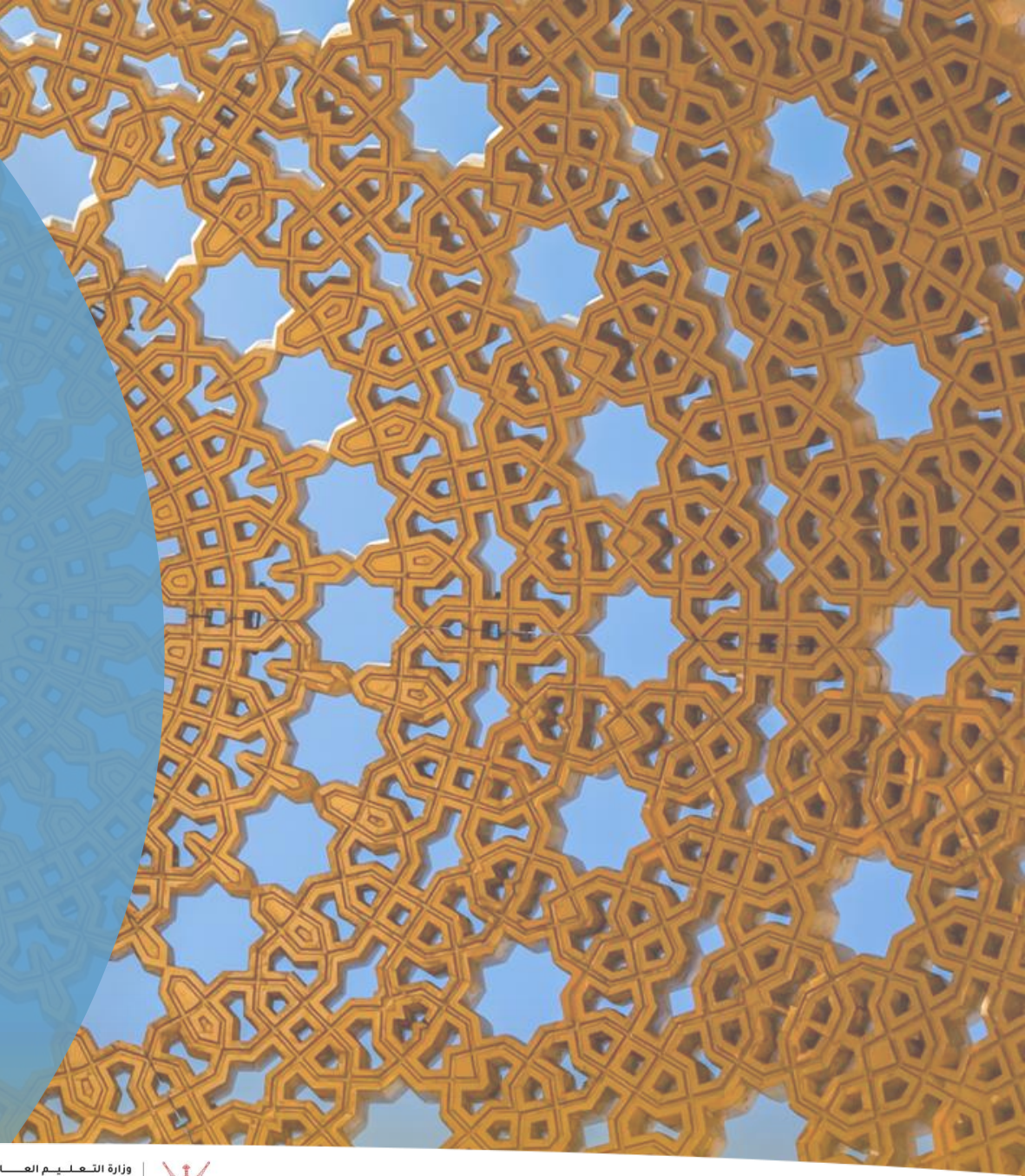
Freedoms and Responsibilities in Science Round Table

Muscat Global Knowledge Dialogue and Third ISC General Assembly

26 January 2025 | Muscat, Oman



Contents

Session Chair

QUARRAISHA ABDOOL KARIM

President The World Academy of Sciences (TWAS); Associate Scientific Director of CAPRISA, ISC Fellow.

Outgoing CFRS Chair

ANNE HUSEBEKK

Physician and professor in immunology. Rector (Vice-Chancellor) of UiT The Arctic University of Norway 2013-2021. ISC vice-president, CFRS chair 2022-2024, ISC Fellow.

Incoming elected CFRS Chair

MARCIA BARBOSA

Theoretical physicist, first chair of the IUPAP Working Group on Women in Physics, she also served as vice-president of IUPAP. During her tenure as director of the Brazilian Academy of Sciences, Marcia played a key role in the creation of an Ethical and Conduct Code.

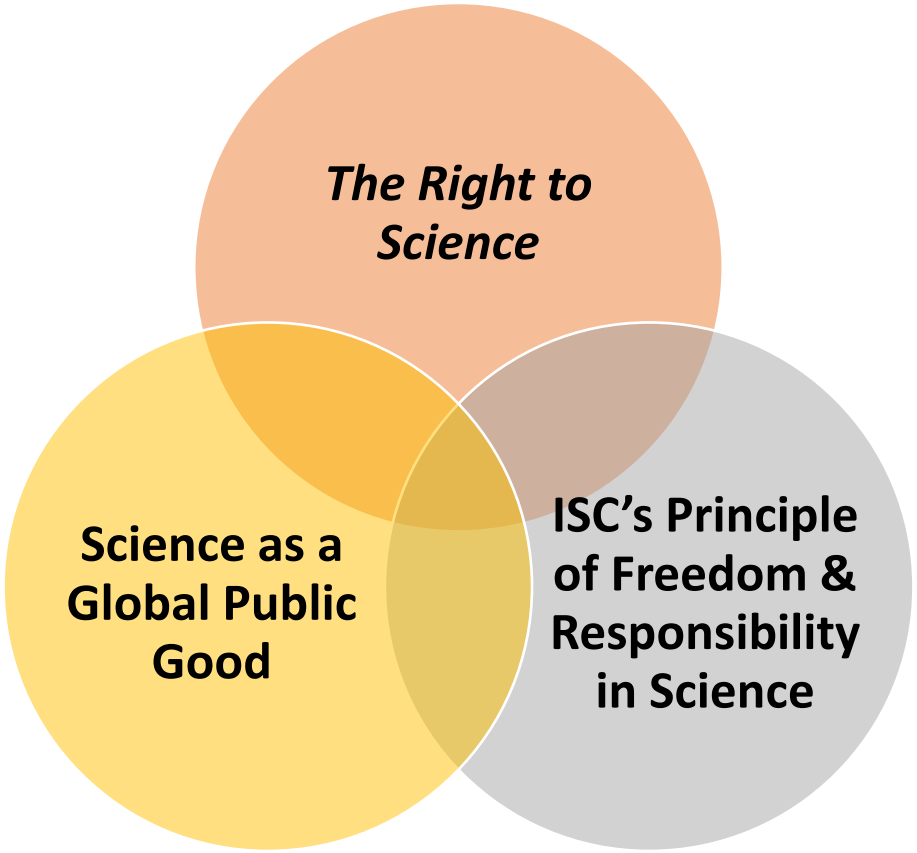
“Scientific freedom and responsibility and the protection of scientists”

The work of CFRS

1. **Promote the principles for freedom and responsibility in science**
2. Protect individual scientists and science systems
3. Work for science in the time of crisis
4. Promote gender equality and diversity in science
5. Restore TRUST in science as a basis for science as a global public good

VISION

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



MISSION

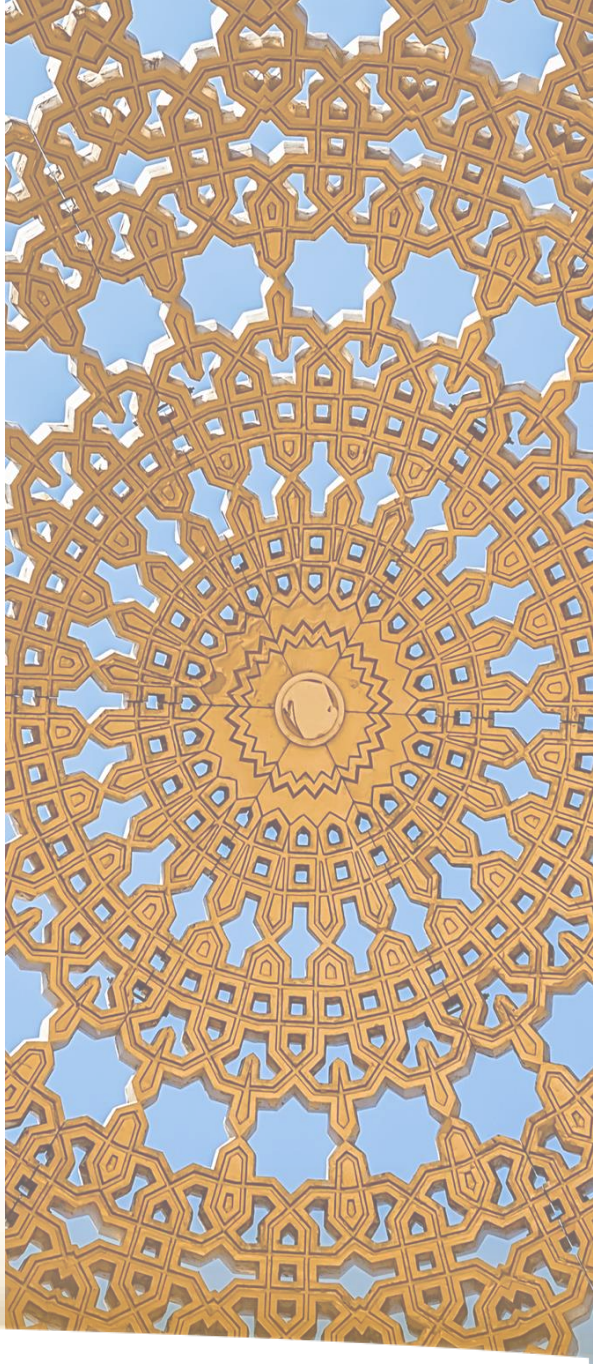
The mission of the Council is to be the *global voice for science*

ISC will use that voice to:

i. Speak for the value of all science and the need for evidence-informed understanding and decision-making at all levels, from local to global;

ii. Stimulate and support international, inter- and transdisciplinary collaboration,

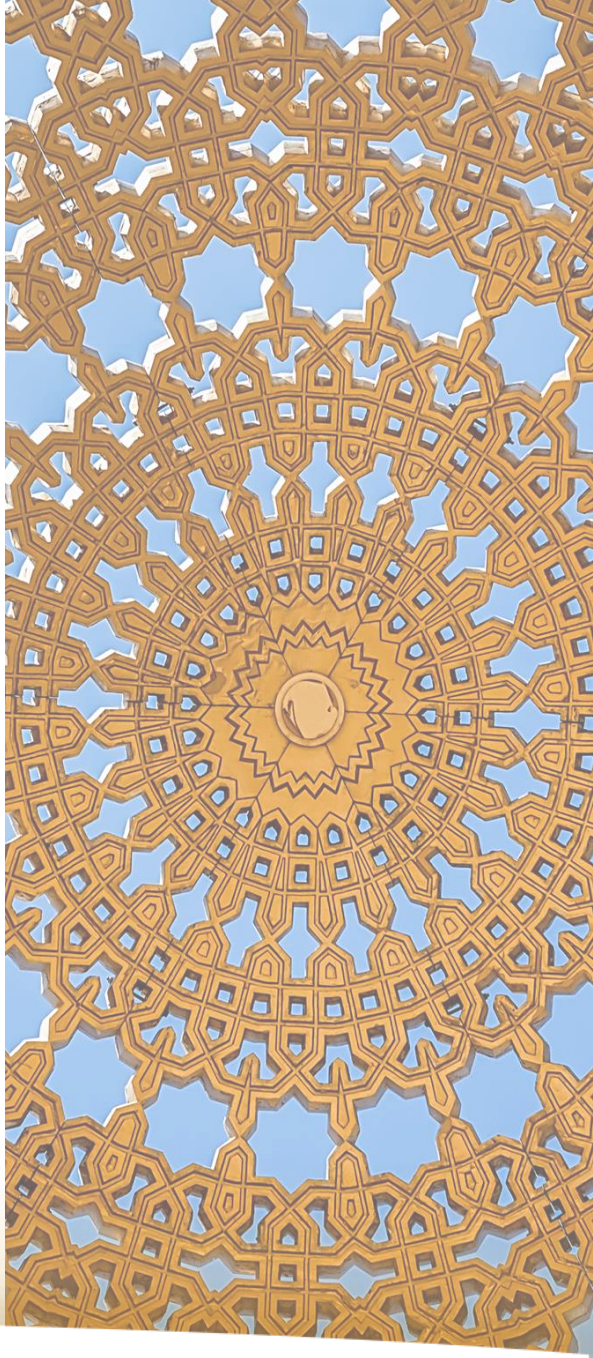
iii. Articulate scientific knowledge on issues of global concern in the public and policy domains;



iv. Promote and assist science diplomacy,

vi. Assist the scientific community and relevant stakeholders in their respective roles in the conduct of science and in the face of the evolution of science systems;

vii. Defend and promote the free and responsible practice of science

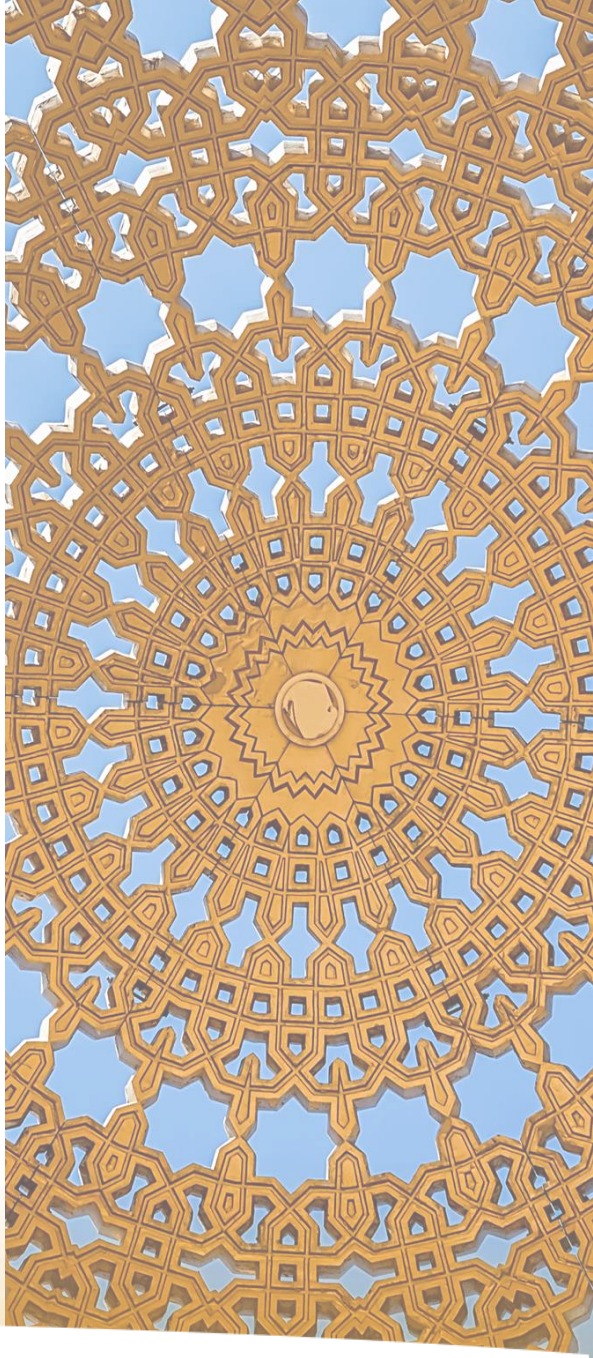


ISC's Principle of Freedom & Responsibility in Science

i. **Freedom** to access science education, training and mentoring

ii. Freedom to participate in knowledge production

iii. Freedom to promote and communicate science for the good of humanity, other life forms, ecosystems, the planet, and beyond

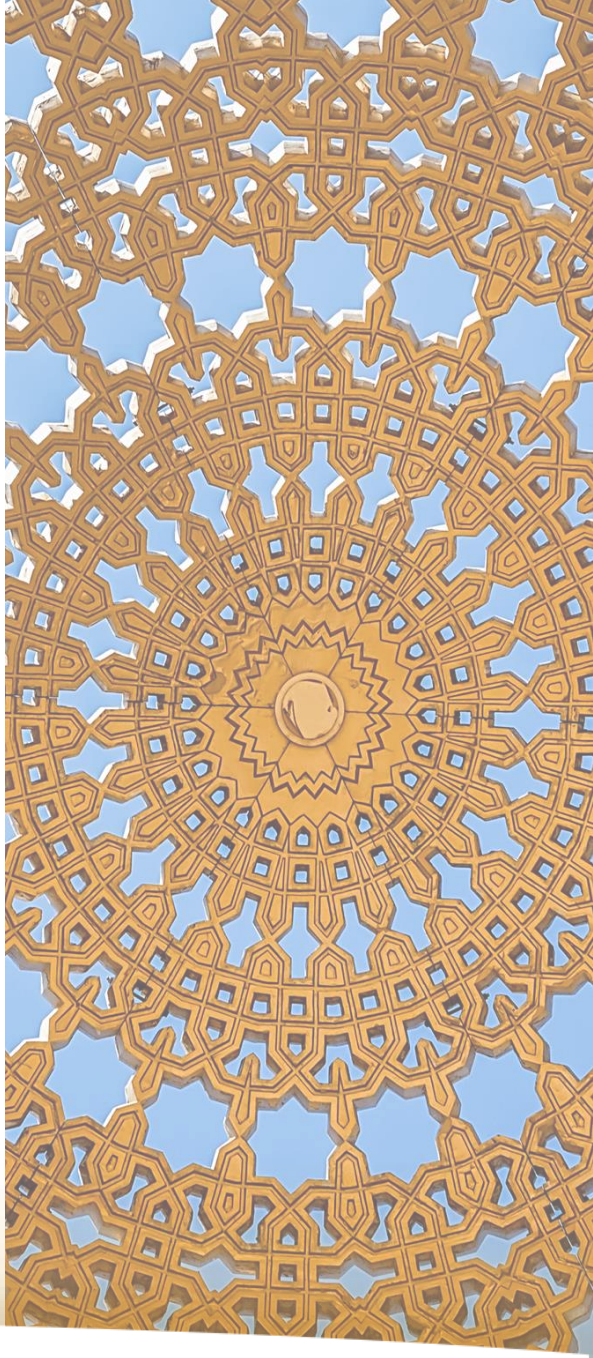


iv. **Responsibility** to promote science in ways that are equitable and inclusive of human diversity

v. Responsibility to ensure that research designs meet the standards of scientific validity and satisfy established ethical norm

vi. Responsibility to share accurate scientific information generated through theoretical, observational, experimental, and analytical approaches

vii. Responsibility to contribute to the effective and ethical governance of science

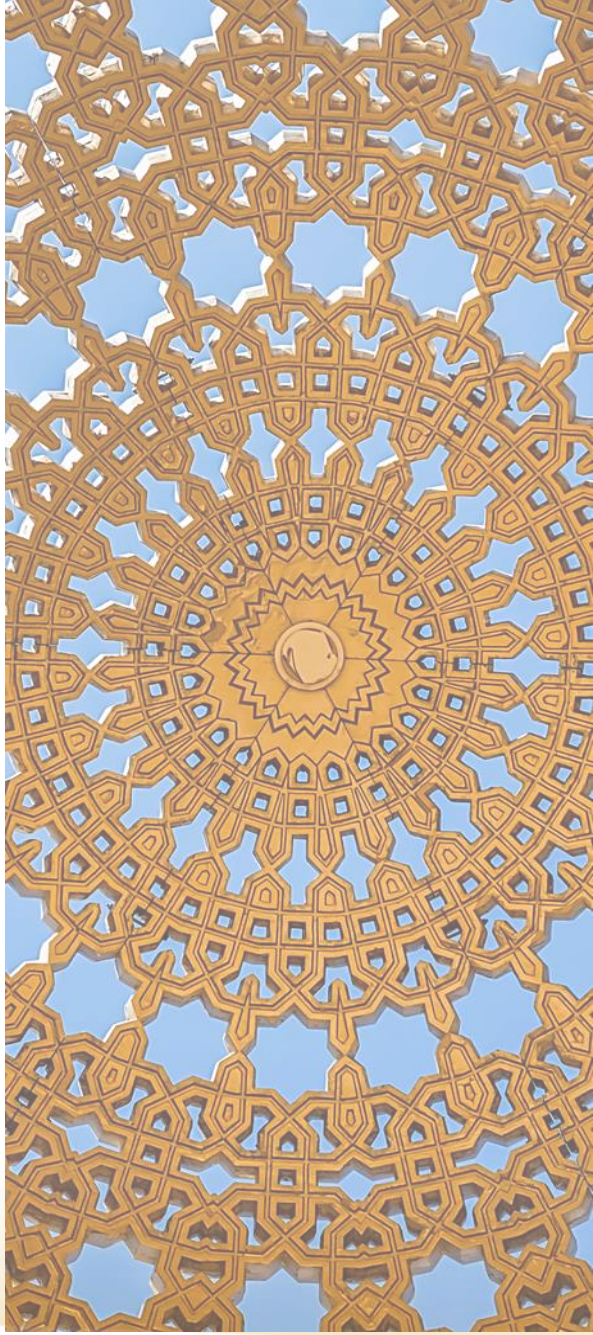


Threats to Freedom in Science

Political interference: Governments or political entities may manipulate or suppress scientific findings that do not align with their agendas.

Economic pressures: Dependency on funding from corporations or entities can lead to biased research outcomes that favor the funder's interests.

Misinformation and public distrust: The spread of misinformation can erode public trust in science, impacting policy-making and public health.

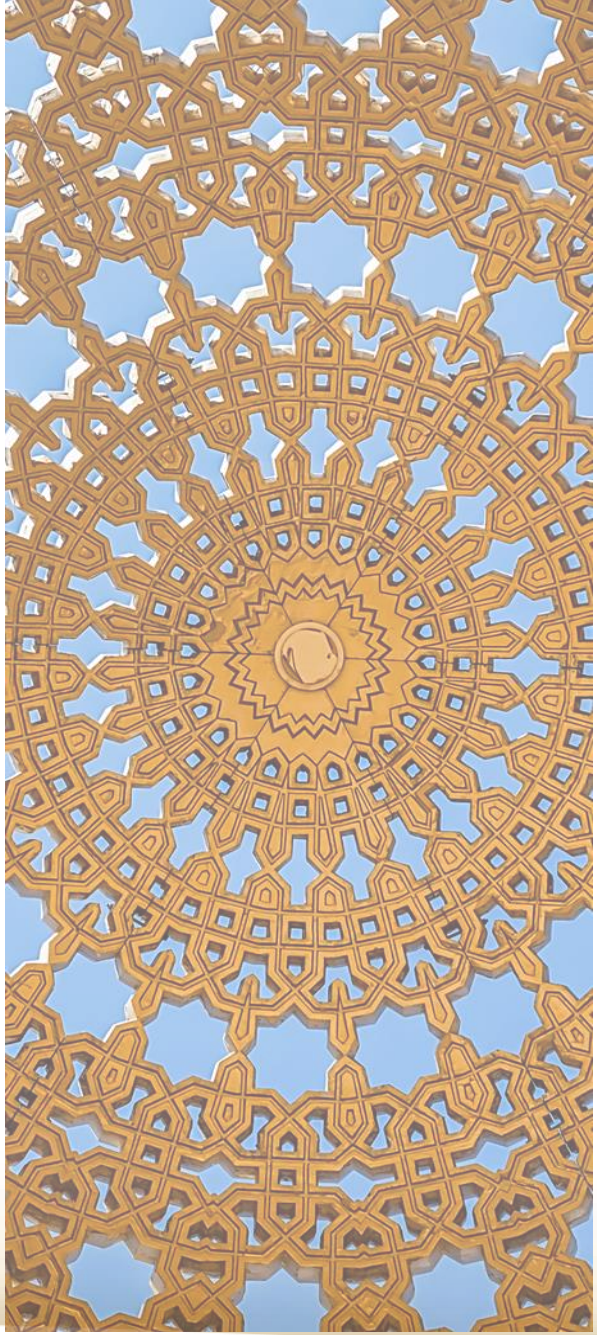


Threats to Responsibility in Science

Ethical challenges: Rapid advancements in technology and medicine present new ethical dilemmas, potentially outpacing regulatory frameworks.

Publication pressures: The 'publish or perish' culture may encourage unethical behaviors like data manipulation or ignoring negative results.

Lack of diversity: A homogenous scientific community can lead to research that overlooks the needs and conditions of diverse populations.

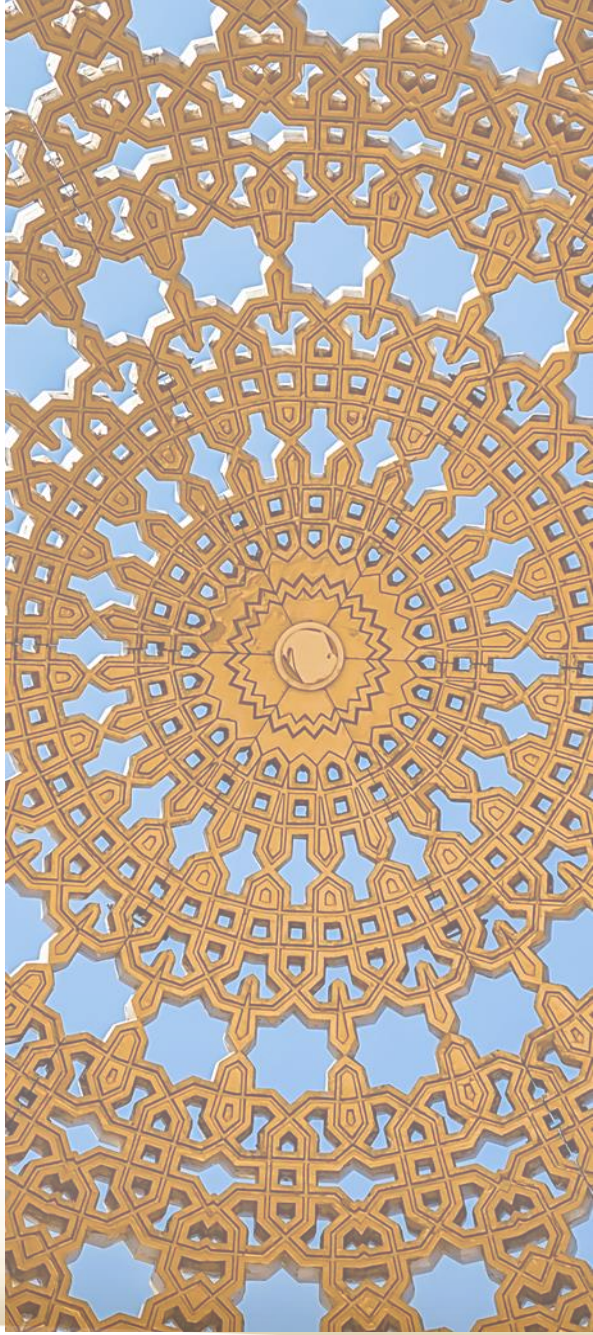


Strategies to Mitigate These Threats

Advocacy for independent funding: Promotion of funding mechanisms that ensure independence from political and commercial influence.

Strengthening ethical standards and education: Incorporation of comprehensive ethics training in scientific education and ongoing professional development.

Enhancing transparency and accountability: Implementing policies that require transparency in methodology and funding sources, and accountability in publication and peer review processes.



The work of CFRS

1. Promote the principles for freedom and responsibility in science
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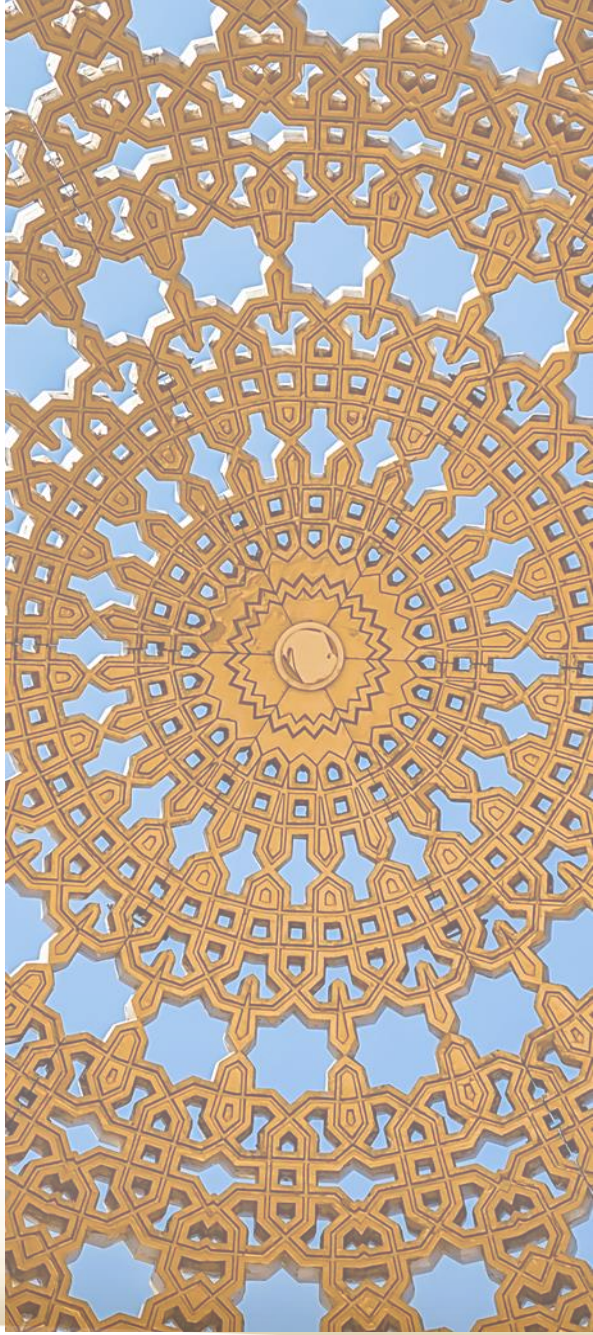
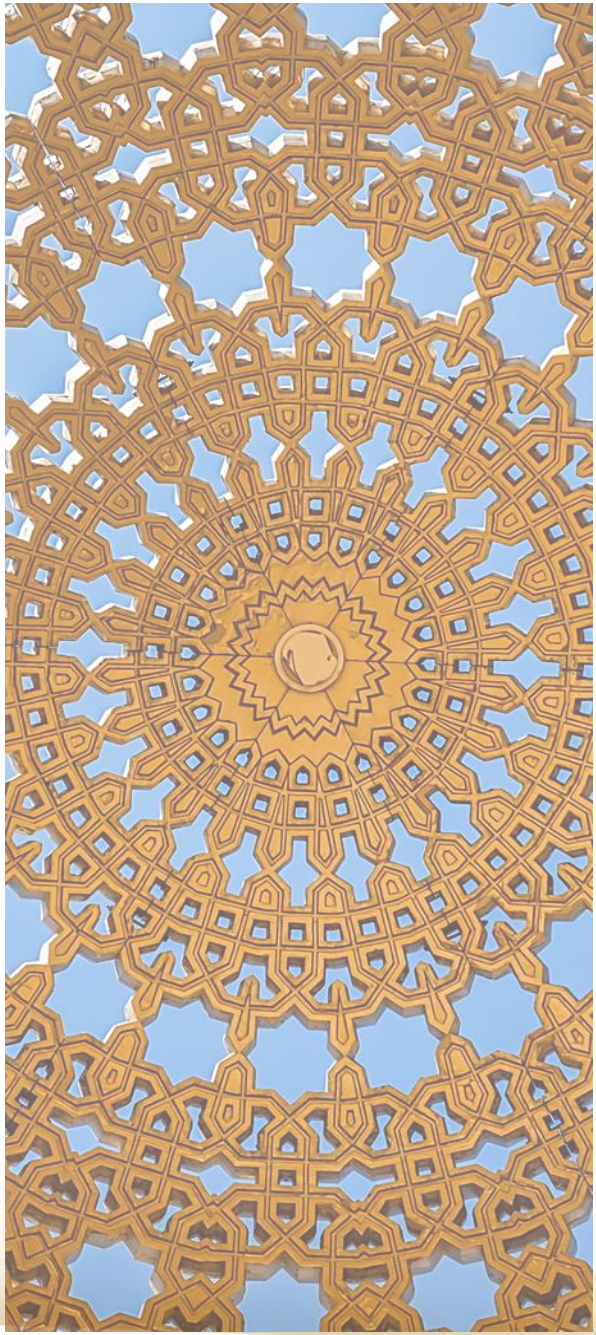


Vice-President for Freedom and Responsibility in Science

Prof. Dr. Marcia Barbosa

Country of work: Brazil

Primary scientific domain: Natural and formal sciences



ISC Senior Science Officer
CFRS Executive Secretary

VIVI STAVROU

ISC Senior Science Officer and Executive Secretary of the Committee for Freedom and Responsibility in Science.

International Science Council – Freedom and Responsibility in Science

Vivi Stavrou

January 2025 | Muscat, Oman

COMMITTEE FOR FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY IN SCIENCE


Anne Husebekk


Françoise Baylis


Melody Burkins


Saths Cooper


Robert French


Gong Ke


Robin Grimes


Karly Kehoe

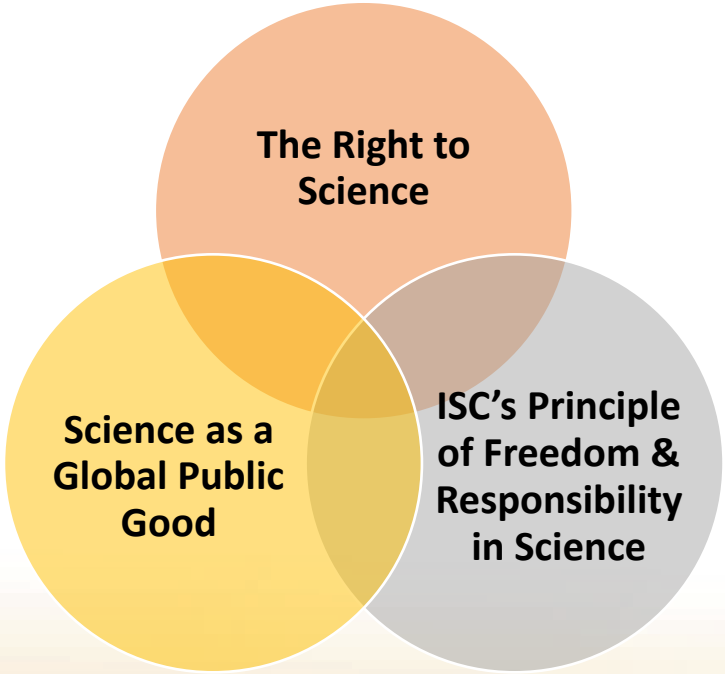

Staffan Lindberg


Roy MacLeod


Joyce Nyoni


Sayaka Oki


Krushil Watana



The Right to Participate in and Benefit from Science

Right to participate in science

This right presumes a right to basic scientific literacy, and a right to scientific education, training and mentoring.

- A right to **participate in generating diverse forms of knowledge** through the study of natural and social phenomena
- A right to **challenge established knowledge** about natural and social phenomena when generating and communicating new models, conjectures, hypotheses and ideas, and the uses to which this knowledge has been or may be put.
- A right to **collaborate and engage in scientific dialogue** and research across national, political, regional and other boundaries.
- A right to **communicate** both positive and negative findings.
- A right to form **professional societies and associations**.
- A right to advocate for the **responsible use** of science.

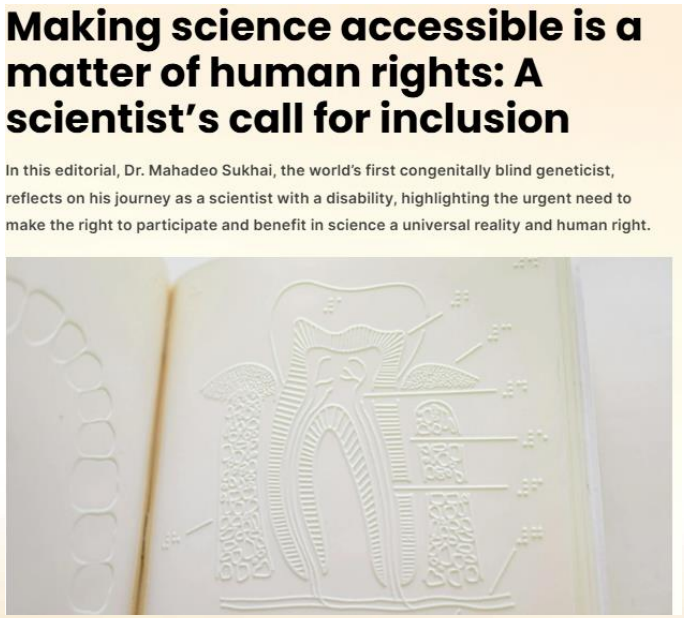
Reclaiming science as a human right: Comment from the UN Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights

Advancing the right to science: A call for legal protections and inclusive participation

The Right to Participate in and Benefit from Science

Right to enjoy the benefits of science

- A right **not to be excluded** from the benefits of science on the basis of unjust discrimination
- A right to **equitably access information, data, and other resources** necessary to enhance scientific knowledge, teaching and research.
- A right to **apply scientific knowledge** for technological developments for the good of humanity and the planet.

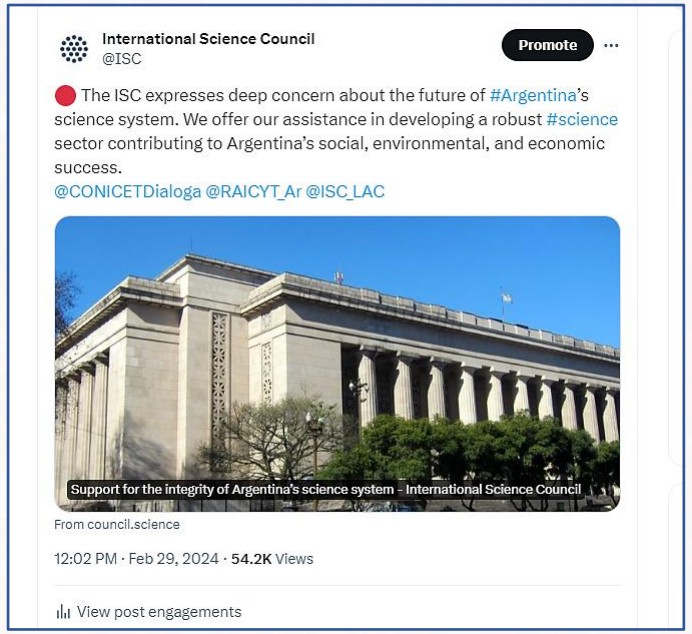


CFRS Case Work

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.

CFRS actions:

- No action without consultation with the relevant ISC members
- Letters: private or open letters sent by CFRS Chair or ISC President to relevant ISC Members, institutions, Heads of States relevant Ministries
- 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, published by members of CFRS and invited experts
- Announcements: public comments and news pieces about cases on social media and the ISC website.



CFRS ACTIONS

- ISC position on the role of universities in enabling responsible discussion and upholding rational debate in times of crisis (Jul 2024)
- ISC updated position on academic boycotts (Jul 2024)
- Open letter: Support for the integrity of Argentina's science system (Feb 2024)
- ISC statement on protecting science in times of crisis (Nov 2023)
- Joint statement with IAP: Statement on Protecting the Autonomy of National Academies of Science (Dec 2023)
- Statement on concerns over regressing scientific freedoms in Nicaragua (May 2023)
- Statement on concerns over escalation of extreme violence in Sudan (Apr 2023)
- Science in Exile Declaration (Jun 2022)
- Statement against exclusion of women from higher education in Afghanistan (Dec 2022)
- Statement on concerns for scientists in Iran (Mar 2022)
- International Science Council Statement on Ukraine (Feb 2022)

CFRS Case Work

- **Current portfolio of <u>38</u> cases around the world**
  - Severe crises/existential threats: 8
  - General state interference: 8
  - State targeting of individuals: 6
  - Political hostage-taking/imprisonment: 5
  - Related to freedom of expression: 4
  - Attacks on autonomy: 3
  - Related to trust in science: 2
  - Non-state attacks on individuals: 1
  - Related to misconduct: 1

- **Observing global declines in scientific and academic freedoms**
  - V-DEM Academic Freedom Index, SAR Free to Think Report Series

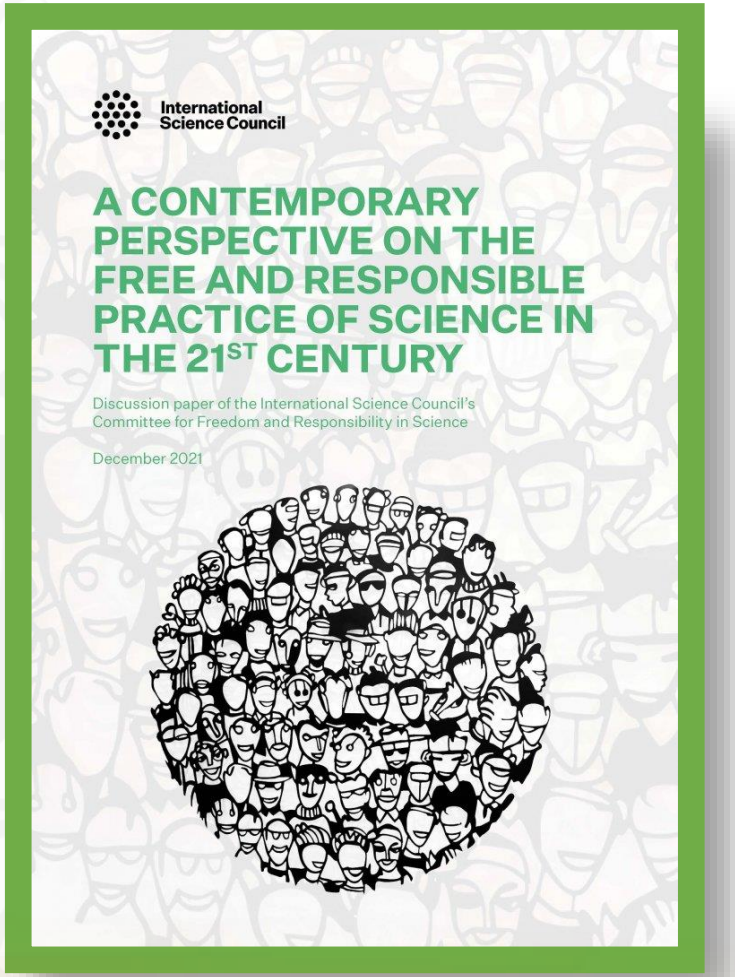
- **Driven by increasing:**
  - <u>Political interference</u>: interference in institutional autonomy and research agendas; state-sponsored suppression and targeting.
  - <u>Economic pressures</u>: interference from economic vested interests manipulating or suppressing scientific findings, funding dependencies biasing research agendas and outcomes
  - <u>Ideological division</u>: Attacks and harassment.
  - <u>Geopolitical conflicts:</u> Restrictions on movement and collaboration; crises and existential threats to science systems.

- Exacerbated by rising misinformation and public distrust, fraud and misconduct, unclear ethical norms, systemic discrimination.

CFRS PROJECTS

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

1. CFRS Discussion Paper, **A Contemporary Perspective on the free and responsible practice of science in the 21st Century**
    - Renewal of the ISC Principles of Freedom & Responsibility in Science
    - ISC Interpretation of the Right to Science
        - 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
    - In progress:
        - ISC Position on Funding Transparency
        - CFRS consultations on the definition of science



2. Science in Times of Crisis

- Actions and statements from the ISC **Committee for Freedom and Responsibility in Science**
- ISC-IAP-TWAS **Science in Exile Network**
- **Joint ISC-IAP DECLARATION** - *Supporting at-risk, displaced and refugee scientists: A call to action*
- **Science Stakeholders Crisis Group Meeting**s: a time-limited, multi-stakeholder platform for information exchange and support during crises, such as in Afghanistan (2021) and Ukraine (2022). Two ISC-ALLEA co-convened conferences with accompanying reports.
- **Science-based advocacy**: blogs and podcasts focusing on impact of crises on scientists and scientific institutions and systems

A Policy Framework for Science in Times of Crisis

ISC Working Paper: Protecting Science in Times of Crisis. How do we stop being reactive, and become more proactive? 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.

"*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)

Category	Case study
Violent Conflict: refers to crises wherein at least two parties deploy physical force to resolve competing interests.	Russian invasion of Ukraine (2022)
	ISIS occupation of Mosul University, Iraq (2014-2017)
Disasters: refers to a serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society at any scale due to hazardous events interacting with conditions of exposure, vulnerability and capacity, leading to one or more of the following: human, material, economic and environmental losses and impacts.	Cape Town University Library Fire, South Africa (2021)
	Natural Science Museum Fire, Brazil (2018)
	Japan: Fukushima Nuclear Disaster (2011)
Historical examples of crisis recovery: refers to actions taken by specific countries and/or regions to rebuild scientific infrastructure and preserve cultural heritage following a crisis.	War in the Balkans (1991-1999)
	Japan: World War Two (1939-45)

Protecting Scientists and Research in Times of Crisis: how can we do better?

Crisis: Violent Conflicts | Climate-induced migration | Disasters | Pandemics

Improve Preparedness → Enhance Response → Ensure Stronger Recovery

Increasing number of refugees and **displaced scientists** worldwide

How do we ensure **not losing them** to science?

- Develop an **international action** and **support framework** for refugee and **displaced scientists**
  - Who?
- **Clarify benefits** of maintaining **scientists active** during a crisis
- **Commit to global agenda on refugees** to improve **coverage of the scientific refugee** community's **needs**

Insufficient attention in developing **encompassing risk management strategies** within the science sector

How do we **protect** the **infrastructures, research data, collections**, etc.?

- **Build capacity in managing and monitoring risk** in the science sector
- Increase **engagement with scientific communities in disaster risk management**
- Improve **resourcing** for **prevention** and **emergency response**
- **Expand international crisis response** framework **to better integrate science**

https://futures.council.science/publications/science-in-times-of-crisis

Actors: Research and higher-education institutions | Academies and disciplinary bodies | Funders of research | Governments | Publishers | International organizations

CENTRE FOR SCIENCE FUTURES | International Science Council

Protecting Scientists and Research in Times of Crisis: how can we do better?

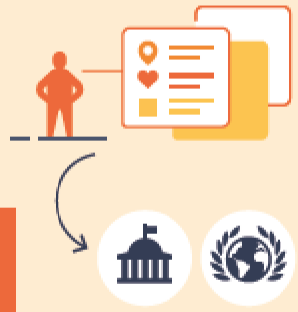
Crisis: Violent Conflicts | Climate-induced migration | Disasters | Pandemics

Improve Preparedness | **Enhance Response** | Ensure Stronger Recovery

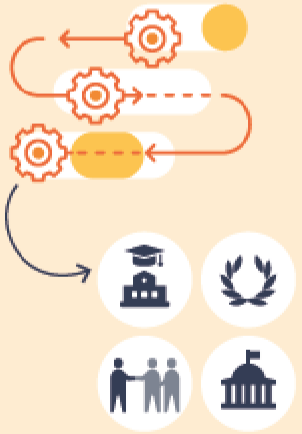
The longer scientists remain inactive, the likelier it is that they will be **lost to science**

How can international science institutions best **support them during the acute crisis phase?**

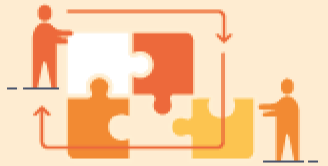
- Create **secure platforms** for **collecting** and **sharing comprehensive data** on scientists and their needs



- Develop **contextual** and **flexible support mechanisms** that adapt to the **needs** of **scientists**



- Where possible **maintain** or **adapt funding streams** to include affected countries



- **Ensure adequate exchange** and **coordination** between organizations supporting affected scientists

- Design new mechanisms **enabling affected scientists to maintain activity** during the crisis **at home** or **abroad**

https://futures.council.science/publications/science-in-times-of-crisis

Actors: Research and higher-education institutions | Academies and disciplinary bodies | Funders of research | Governments | Publishers | International organizations

CENTRE FOR SCIENCE FUTURES | International Science Council

Protecting Scientists and Research in Times of Crisis: how can we do better?

Crisis: Violent Conflicts | Climate-induced migration | Disasters | Pandemics

Improve Preparedness | Enhance Response | **Ensure Stronger Recovery**

The **science and research sector** is **rarely prioritized** in **national** and **international rebuilding efforts**

How do we change this ?

- **Communicate** the **value of science** for post-crisis recovery and growth **to policy-makers** and **society**
- **Link science** with existing flagship **emergency** and **recovery funds**
- **Expand existing recovery frameworks** in the **cultural** and **higher education** sectors **to better integrate science** institutions

Recovery phases offer the **opportunity to transform science and research practices** and institutions of affected countries

How do we ensure that these changes further science as a global public good?

- Develop **twinning** and **partnerships to support** the development of **affected scientists** and **institutions**
- **Advance** the **open science agenda**
- **Improve protection, storage** and **curation** of **research data**

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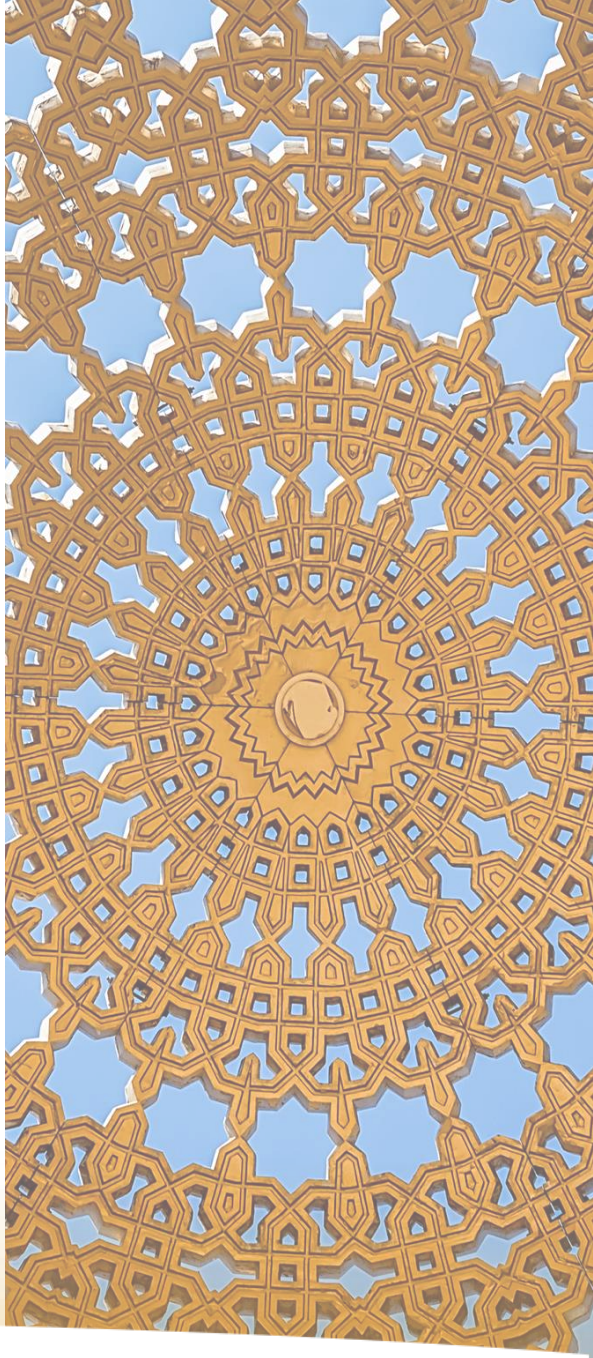
CENTRE FOR SCIENCE FUTURES | International Science Council

POLICY DEVELOPMENT: Data Policy for times of crises

The Committee on Data (CODATA) of the ISC and UNESCO have partnered to explore how the principles of open science as outlined in the 2021 UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science could guide efficient and effective policies for data sharing in times of crisis taking into account existing international policies and action frameworks.

The UNESCO-CODATA Data Policy for Times of Crisis Facilitated by Open Science project has designed a factsheet, a guidance document, and a checklist to assist policymakers, scientists and other stakeholders to design the most efficient data policies for times of crisis not only addressing immediate response needs but also preparedness and long-term recovery (UNESCO Open Science Toolkit).

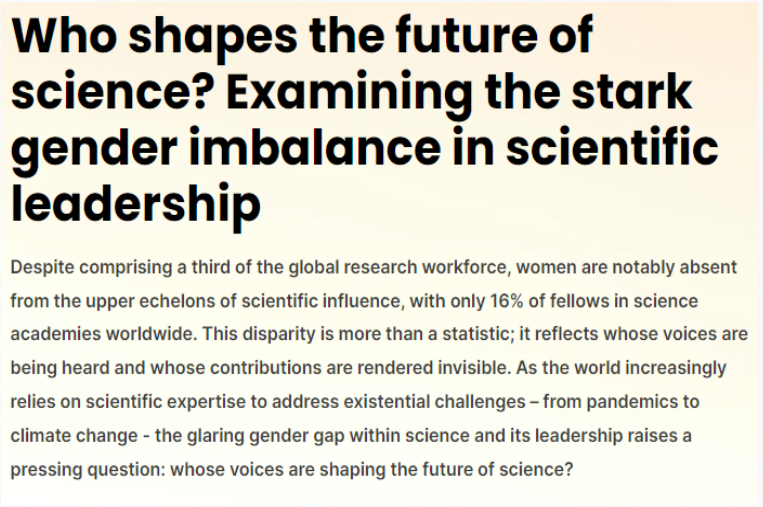


3. Women Scientists Around the World: Strategies for Gender Equality

Joint ISC, InterAcademy Partnership (IAP) and the Standing Committee for Gender Equality in Science (SCGES) global study on gender equality in scientific academies and international scientific unions.

Study analyses the drivers and barriers to women's participation through quantitative and qualitative data collection, building on surveys and recommendations from 2015 and 2020.

The study examines the effectiveness of existing gender equality initiatives and will provide evidence-based recommendations for future actions, strengthening the mechanisms of systemic monitoring and evaluation by ISC and IAP members



Speaker

ILYAS SALIBA

Since 2013, Ilyas has focused on human rights, civic space, academic freedom, and fieldwork safety and ethics. At GPPi, he co-developed the Academic Freedom Index (AFi) and further refined guidelines for qualitative country case studies on academic freedom. He is a member of the advocacy advisory board of Scholars At Risk Europe and serves on the board of the Alliance for Critical and Solidary Scholarship. Ilyas has co-authored three books and contributed several articles on academic freedom in academic journals and edited volumes

Speaker

SETENEY SHAMI

Founding Director-General of the Arab Council for the Social Sciences and also Program Direct at the Social Science Research Council. She is an anthropologist and obtained her BA from the American University of Beirut and her MA and PhD from the University of California, Berkeley.

Safeguarding Knowledge in the Arab Region – The Arab Council for the Social Sciences

Muscat Global Knowledge Dialogue

January 2025 | Muscat, Oman

Contents

Arab Regional Approach to Freedom and Responsibility

- The Arab Spring uprisings (2010-2011; 2019-2020) produced an opening up of academic freedom, especially for the social sciences and new media, followed by a closing up of public and knowledge production spaces concurrent with the renewed rise of authoritarianism.
- In general, countries of the region lack the enabling environment for academic freedom: university autonomy, strong professional associations, specialized legal services, independent judiciary, free press.

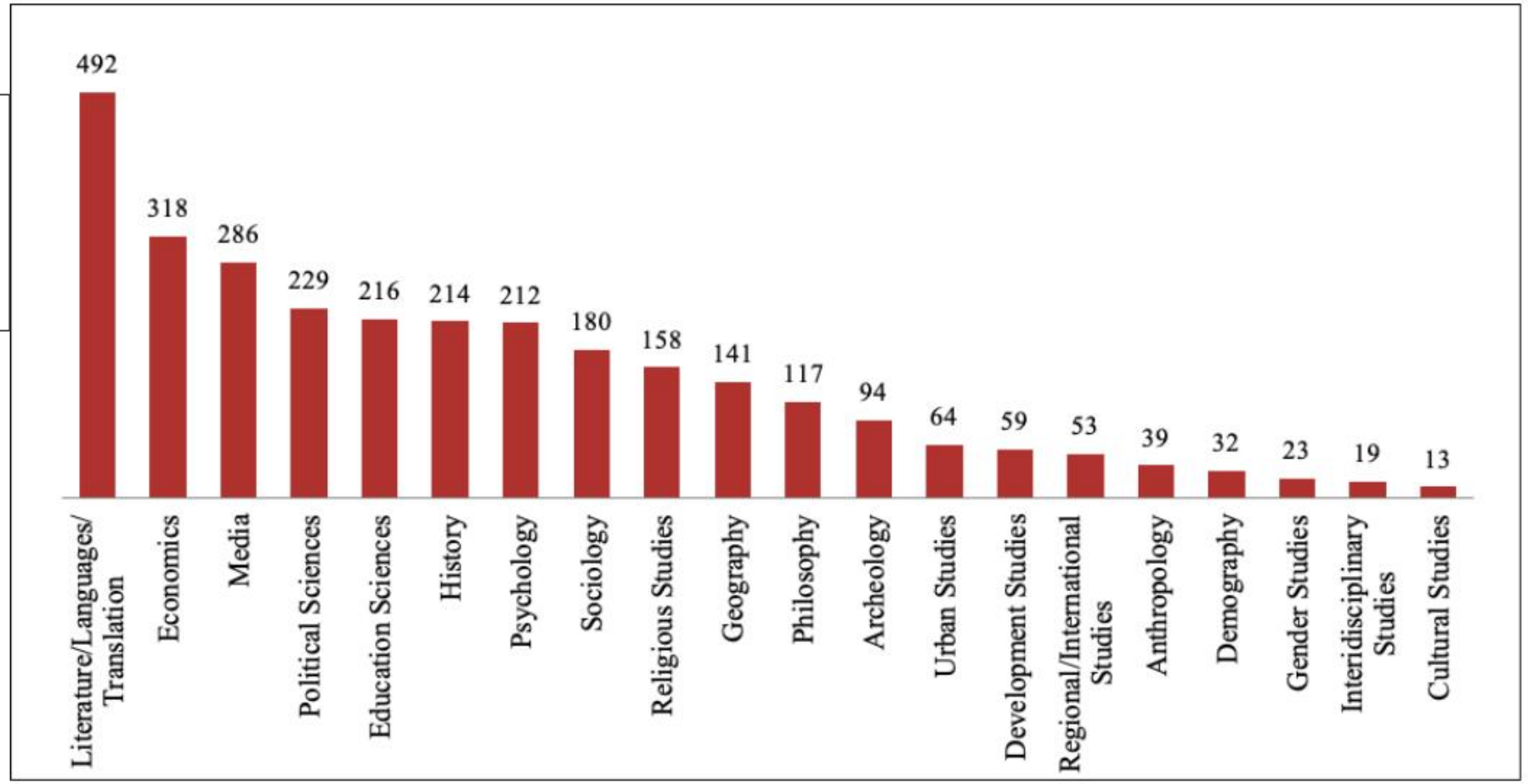
Arab Regional Approach to Freedom and Responsibility

- The social sciences are especially challenged due to fragmented scholarly communities, weak research infrastructures, limited capacity of universities to absorb available talent and the inequalities built into North-South funding flows.
- Definition of ‘sensitive’ topics differ from one country to the next e.g., gender and sexuality in some countries and labor rights in another.
- Conflict and violence negatively impact academic freedom, and in some instances, violence resulted in the complete breakdown of higher education systems, if not “scholasticide”.

Research Infrastructure in the Arab Region

- The Council's "Arab Social Science Monitor" (ASSM) documents trends in the humanities and social sciences in the region.

Figure 1: Number of universities offering social sciences/humanities degrees in the Arab region (out of 1,377 universities)



Source: ASSM 2021a.

Research Infrastructure in the Arab Region

- There is a leap in the number of private universities and research centers in the region, most of whom have limited or no social science programs.
- There is a lack of policies on academic freedom in the Arab region, especially in university settings (both private and public).
- Satellite campuses in the Arab region complicate our understanding of academic freedom: while they offer studies in critical humanities and social sciences, they often must work around the laws of the local context.
- Researchers in the Arab region often prefer to publish in English or French to gain more recognition and status, but also to avoid silencing and censorship.
- Many Arab researchers have been forced to leave the region due to ongoing crises, necessitating the creation of new networks linking diaspora and region-based scholars.

What the ACSS is doing

- The ACSS Board of Trustees has a sub-committee on “Academic Freedom, Rights and Societal Responsibility”
- Safeguarding Knowledge in the Arab Region Program:
    - Consultations/Interviews with academics and institutions to better understand their experiences with academic freedom; challenges they face; and policies that exist to safeguard knowledge.
    - Mapping of academic freedom violations in the Arab region.
    - Working Group with researchers working on gender/sexuality, environment and pandemics in Egypt, Palestine, Lebanon, and Morocco.
- Promoting a culture of Research Ethics (which is crucial for responsible research) through trainings and individual and institutional grants
- Scholars Collaborative Grants on “Academic Freedom and Knowledge Production in the Arab Region”.

www.theacss.org

Speaker

SAJA AL ZOUBI

Co-leader of GYA At Risk Scholars Initiative, Global Young Academy. Development Economist and Lecturer at Politics and Development Studies, Saint Mary's University, Canada.

Speaker

RANA DAJANI

Rana Dajani is currently a Yidan Global Fellow at Harvard Graduate school of Education, a professor of molecular biology at the Hashemite University in Jordan.

UNESCO Speakers

KONSTANTINOS TARARAS

Programme specialist for UNESCO's Inclusion, Rights and Intercultural Dialogue Section in Paris, contributing to a wider range of the Organization's human rights-related activities

AMINA HAMSHARI

UNESCO's Regional Advisor in Doha for the Gulf States States and Yemen, is dedicated to scientific freedom, focusing on emergency preparedness and the safety of scientists in the Arab States. Her work ensures resilience and sustainability for scientific endeavours during crises.

ADVANCING SCIENTIFIC FREEDOM AND THE SAFETY OF SCIENTISTS: DEVELOPING AN ASSESSMENT TOOL AND PREPARING FOR A REGIONAL LANDSCAPE REVIEW ON EXISTING POLICY AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS

Muscat Global Knowledge Dialogue

January 2025 | Muscat, Oman

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Recommendation on Science and Scientific Researchers (RS|SR)

- Standard-setting instrument for values-driven science ecosystems
- Adopted by all UNESCO Member States
- Subject to a four-yearly monitoring cycle (previous 2021; next 2025)
- Intended to influence the development of national laws and practices
- Basis for the new programme on freedom and safety of scientists

RS|SR 10 Key Areas

Key area 1
Science for UN ideals

Key area 2
Science and society

Key area 3
Research informing policy

Key area 4
Science as a common good

Key area 5
Inclusivity and non-discrimination

Key area 6
Human rights standards

Key area 7
Scientific freedom and responsibility

Key area 8
Scientific integrity and ethics

Key area 9
Human capital

Key area 10
Enabling environment

UNESCO Programme & Call to Action on the Freedom and Safety of Scientists

- **Maintain a close engagement with Member States** through ministerial and technical level policy dialogues
  - ➢ *Work on an Assessment tool & collect good practice*
- **Data collection, analysis and monitoring** gaps and gather evidence on trends & challenges
  - ➢ *Global observatory and periodic reports*
  - ➢ *Statutory reporting*
- **Enhance institutional capacities on the ground**
  - ➢ *Replicate the Sida project experience*
- **Advocate and raise awareness** (the Call to Action)
  - ➢ *Leverage appropriate spaces incl. WSF2024, CILAC2024, UN Human Rights Council, UN HLPF, UN GA, etc.*
- **Forge alliances** with broad range of stakeholders
  - ➢ *Expand the network of partners*

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CALL TO ACTION ON THE FREEDOM AND SAFETY OF SCIENTISTS

Preamble

We, the Member States of UNESCO,

Recognizing that science, technology and innovation are essential to consolidate peace in the world and to accelerate progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), advancing the well-being of societies, especially their vulnerable segments, and reducing poverty, hunger and global disparities,

Recognizing the role of reliable science to address the pressing challenges of our times, including climate change and other human-system processes exceeding planetary boundaries, inequalities, and digitalization,

Acknowledging that science can only thrive and be trusted within research and innovation ecosystems that promote openness[1] and safety, where science is preserved, respected, nurtured, developed and diffused and ideas and knowledge are generated and exchanged freely,[2]

Acknowledging the vital importance of human capital for a sound and responsible science system[3] and to that end, the need for an enabling environment with adequate human, financial and institutional capacities, inclusive, non-discriminatory and safe work conditions and stronger investment in the protection of scientific researchers,

Recalling the importance of creativity, autonomy and freedom of scientific research[4] as well as the rights to share in scientific advancement and its benefits and to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from scientific production, as enshrined in article 27 paragraphs 1 and 2 respectively of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,

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[1] Ref.: paragraph 5, Recommendation on Open Science.
[2] Ref: article 15 paragraph 2, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.
[3] Ref.: UNESCO General Conference (2017), Resolution 39 C/85.

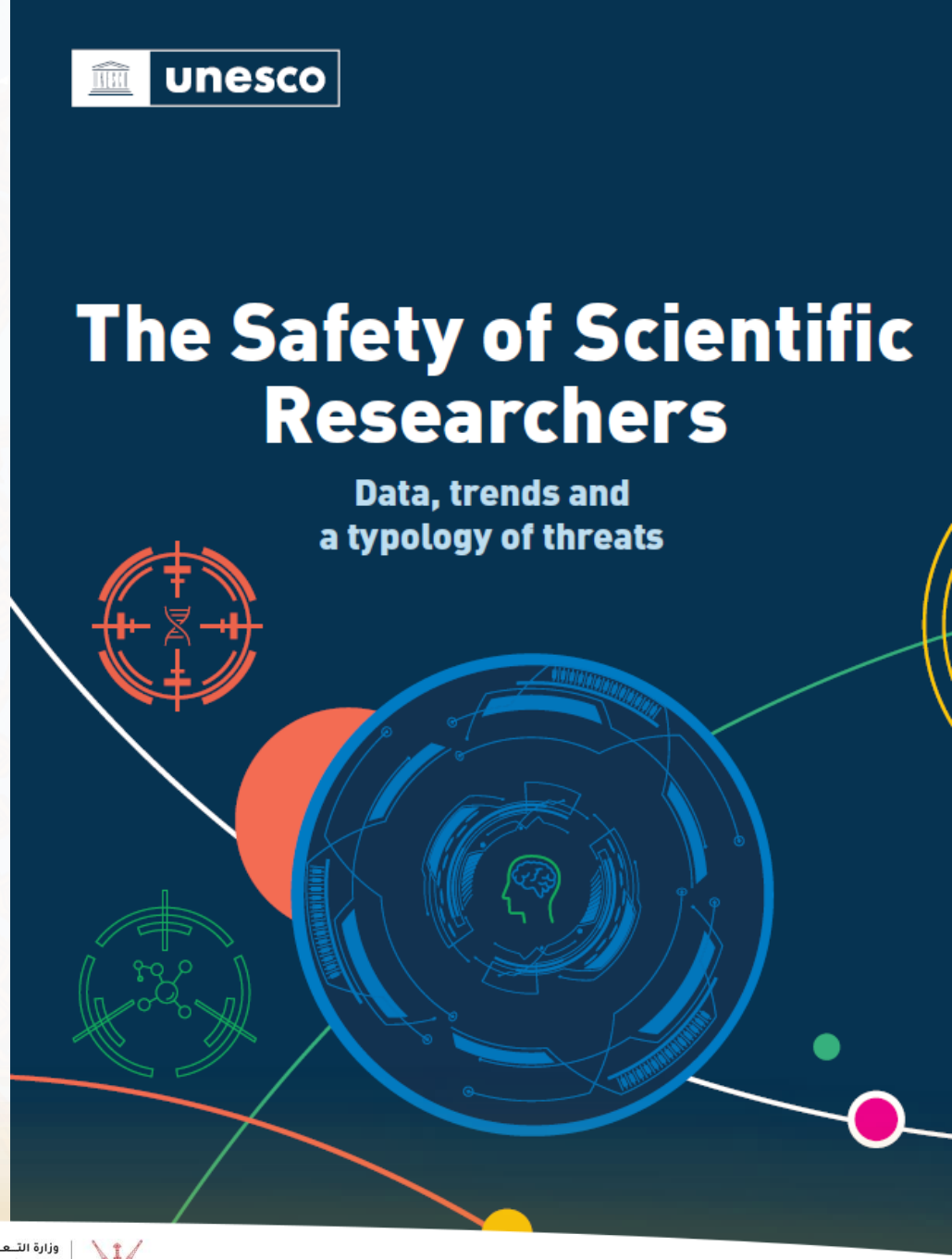
Features of the UNESCO Assessment Tool

- **A broad scope**:
  - Covering explicitly both freedom and safety
  - Encompassing scientific research in and outside academia
  - Emphasizing discrimination and other vulnerability factors
  - Leveraging the links with other *Key areas* of the RS|SR
  - Putting the spotlight on policy and practice
  - Global analysis
- **Purpose:**
  - Conduct a situation analysis with Member States
  - Trigger policy change
- **Experience:**
  - Positive experience of the Readiness Assessment Methodology under the Recommendation on the Ethics of AI

Considerations/Selection criteria

- **Safety:**
  - bodily or physical harm
  - financial damage
  - psychological harm

- **Freedom:**
  - freedom of expression and communication
  - freedom of association
  - freedom of access to data and information
  - freedom of movement



Examples of proposed indicators

Perception: Level of trust of the public in science

Outcome: Total and share of reported events of harassment by sex of reporter, education level and field of study or educational programme

Process: STI policy instruments with a focus on regulations on protecting and promoting academic freedom and the freedom of scientific research

Outcome: Percentage of researchers who reported being harassed online in the past 12 months because of their work/research.

Perception: Researchers' perspectives on their right to express themselves freely and openly on the ethical, human, scientific, social or ecological value of certain projects

Outcome: Level of precariousness in research careers
Outcome: Existence of safety training programmes

Process: STI policy instruments to foster the link between protecting science and scientific researchers in the context of emergencies, including in instances of conflict

Slide with texts only

The ISC **General Assembly** is the premier occasion for ISC Members and Affiliated Bodies, Fellows and partners from all domains of science and regions of the world to meet for cross-disciplinary, strategic discussions on challenges and priorities for **international cooperation** in science.

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The ISC General Assembly meets in ordinary session every four years.

- View the **programme**
- See other **participants**
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- Read **practical** information

The ISC General Assembly meets in ordinary session every four years. The ISC General Assembly meets in ordinary session every four years.

2 REGIONAL LANDSCAPE REVIEW

Reviewing existing policy and regulatory frameworks in the region

Amina Hamshari
Regional Advisor for Social and Human Sciences -UNESCO Doha Regional Office

Al Aqsa University in Gaza city, Palestine, February 2024

Freedom and safety: a striking reality for the scientists worldwide

Between 2020 and 2024, Scholars at Risk (SAR) documented the following number of attacks on higher education communities :

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Number of Attacks	341 *(Free to Think, 2020)*	332 *(Free to Think, 2021)*	391 *(Free to Think, 2022)*	409 *(Free to Think, 2023)*	391 *(Free to Think, 2024)*

Freedom and safety: a striking reality for the scientists in the region

Mosul, 2014–2015
International Science Council. (2024).
Protecting Science in Times of Crisis.

- 875,000 civilians displaced
- Ideological oppression for those who remained
- Mosul University: Seized in 2015, 75% of its infrastructure destroyed
- A curriculum rejecting science, pluralism, and academic freedom

Gaza, 2024
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. (OHCHR-2024, April)
UN experts deeply concerned over scholasticide in Gaza.

- Systemic Destruction of Education:
  - Over 80% of schools and universities damaged or destroyed.
  - 625,000 students left without access to education
  - Over 1 million children in need of mental health support

Freedom and safety: A dramatic evolution of terminology and typology of threats on science ecosystems

SHOLASTICIDE/EDUCIDE/EPISTEMICIDE – SCIENTICIDE- ACADEMIDE

- **Scientific ecosystems** : not anymore a hidden war target - Research infrastructure: Universities, research centers, national archives, documentation centers and health infrastructures became obvious war targets
- **Scientific human capital** including in the health sector as well: killings, physical and psychological violence, disappearances; imprisonment; prosecution; loss of position and expulsion from study; improper travel restrictions; other severe or systemic issues

Regional landscape review

Objectives

1. Reviewing the existing policy and regulatory frameworks in the region on the Freedom and Safety of Scientists
2. Identifying the key challenges, gaps and strengths.
3. Elaborate national and regional actionable recommendations in parallel to the development of the Readiness Assessment Methodology
4. Anticipating regional cooperation mechanisms to protect scientific ecosystems, the freedom and safety of scientists

Scope

The Arab region: ideally 10 countries to capture the diversity of the context

To serve as a regional pioneering pilot and share lessons learned with other world regions.

Regional landscape review - Methodology

Objectives

1. Overall Framework of the 2017 Recommendation and the Programme of Action on the Freedom and Safety of Scientists
2. Sensitizing interested stakeholders on the occasion of the ISC General Assembly
3. Exchanging on the objectives, scope, approach, methodology and expected outcomes for an impactful review

Regional landscape review - Methodology

Key areas of focus:

1. Legal and Policy Frameworks: Examination of laws, regulations, and policies
2. Institutional Environment: Analysis of the role of academic and research institutions in supporting or hindering scientific freedom and the safety of scientists
3. Funding and Resources: Availability and distribution of funding for scientific research.
4. International and regional collaborations: Impact of international partnerships on scientific freedom and safety.
5. Anticipating, preventing, monitoring and solidarity mechanisms for personal safety: Incidents of harassment, threats, or violence against scientists.
6. Freedom of Expression: Ability of scientists to freely communicate their findings and opinions.

Regional landscape review - Methodology

Literature Review

•Gather Existing Research: Collect and review existing studies, reports, laws, statutes, policy documents (Cross Cutting and Sector-Specific), articles on the topic, case Analysis, understanding the current knowledge base and identify gaps

•Identify recurring themes such as legal and policy frameworks, institutional support, funding, and international collaborations.

Data Collection

•Surveys and questionnaires to scientists, academic institutions, and relevant organizations to gather firsthand information about their experiences and perceptions.

•Interviews with key stakeholders, including scientists, policymakers, and representatives from scientific organizations.

•Secondary Data from government reports, international organizations, and academic publications.

Regional landscape review - Methodology

Analysis

•**Qualitative and quantitative analysis**: from interviews and open-ended survey responses to identify common themes and insights + statistics based on surveys and secondary sources.

Synthesis and Reporting

•**Integrate** qualitative and quantitative findings to provide a comprehensive overview of the landscape.

•**Identify key issues and opportunities** related to the freedom and safety of scientists.

•**Provide actionable recommendations**

Validation and Review

- Launch and validation workshops

- Peer Review by experts in the region and beyond to ensure accuracy and credibility + **Stakeholder Feedback**

Dissemination

- Publish the Report and publicize the final report amongst the general public, policymakers, the scientific community and media

- Present Findings at conferences, workshops, and other relevant fora.

Proposed structure of the Landscape Review

1. Objectives
2. Methodology
3. Legal, regulatory and policy mapping per country
4. Sectoral case-analysis across the region
5. Typology of risks observed
6. Key recommendations and opportunities
7. References

Potential Tools to Support Member States in Protecting Scientific Ecosystems, Freedom and the Safety of Scientists

1. Rapid Assessments : Conduct prompt evaluations to address emerging challenges and identify immediate needs within research sectors.
2. Emergency Preparedness and Mitigation Plans : Develop strategies to ensure the resilience of scientific ecosystems during crises.
3. Intergovernmental Coordination Mechanism : Establish a framework to monitor and ensure compliance with research standards across all relevant sectors.
4. Researcher Mobility : Scholarships for cross-border collaboration and solidarity
5. Enhance exact data collection and analysis of threats, Monitoring and Evaluation Systems in times of conflicts and crisis.

Palestinian doctor Ahmed Al-Mughraby, head of plastic surgery department at Nasser [illegible]al, Gaza

حـــــوار المعـرفـــة العالمي مســـقط

Muscat Global Knowledge Dialogue

International Science Council

وزارة التـعـلـيـم العـــالـي
و البحـث العـلـمي والابتكـــار
Ministry of Higher Education
Research & Innovation

Thank you!

Contact us at **rssr@unesco.org**

Group discussions

Each group will be addressing three key questions

January 2025 | Muscat, Oman

Key Questions

1. What are your and what are your organisation or institution's main FRS priorities/challenges, and what has been their impact on scientists and science organisations/institutions?

2. What are the main ways in which you / your organisation or institution responds to address these? + Examples of past actions

3. UNESCO Assessment Tool:

- How to strengthen complementarities with existing tools?

- How to find a balance between comprehensiveness and user-friendliness?

- What could be the main principles or criteria for selecting indicators?

Group Feedback

Rapporteurs please send group responses and recommendations to vivi.stavrou@council.science

Open discussion

26 January 2025 | Muscat, Oman

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Muscat Global Knowledge Dialogue

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و البحـث العـلـمي والابتكـــار
Ministry of Higher Education
Research & Innovation

Thank you!

Contact us at **secretariat@council.science**

vivi.stavrou@council.science

Gustav Kessel

Gustav.kessel@council.science