

N NEW HORIZON

Final Conference Session 10: RRI and institutional change

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Executive summary

This session explored the role of institutions in the implementation of RRI from different angles.

Ellen-Marie Forsberg reported from the "[RRI practice project](#)" which looked into, and tried to instigate institutional change in research funding and research performing organizations. Ellen-Marie understands institutions as both organizations and conventions and emphasized the difference between typical organizations and university organizations; the latter having a much larger operating core of research and academic staff and a small technostructure. Many people engaged in RRI are concerned about the research itself, however, the RRI keys have been seen as being about changing the technostructure of organizations. RRI needs incremental change, which eventually will happen despite resistance, but it also needs revolutionary change on organizational level. In order to achieve

RRI, Ellen-Marie suggested to work with impactful universities and international associations of universities. Horizon Europe provides openings for such changes although there remain challenges such as: New public management, production indicators, the global competitive ethos, the publishing industry, intellectual property rights. There are also many open questions: Are we able to tackle such issues, - through Horizon Europe? Or are they questions of (international) politics? Do we need new global coalitions beyond what the EC can do? Is Open Science a better instrument for this than RRI? If so, what is our responsibility as a European RRI community? Ellen-Marie concluded her presentation emphasizing that RRI is still important for the practice of research.

Jens Ørding Hansen started his presentation claiming that we still lack knowledge about the organizational characteristics that facilitate RRI and asked the question whether being a learning organization (LO) facilitates the practice of RRI. A LO, as defined by Peter Senge in “The Fifth Discipline” (1990), is an organization that has mastered five “disciplines”: (1) Systems thinking, (2) Personal mastery, (3) Mental models, (4) Shared vision and (5) Team learning. Senge claims that being a learning organization is good for business. In addition, a learning organization is also a great place to work. According to Senge, in LO everybody wins! In general, RRI refers to R&I that is aligned with the values and needs of society. Following Stilgoe et al. (2013), RRI is broken down into four component parts: (1) Inclusion, (2) Anticipation, (3) Responsiveness and (4) Reflexivity. There are many connections between LO and RRI, e.g. in systems thinking and the four dimensions; personal mastery and reflexivity; mental models and reflexivity; shared visions; team learning and learning with stakeholders. Theoretically, being an LO should make practice of RRI easier and in some respects, being an LO and conducting RRI is the same thing. Jens, concluded that the real advantage of being an LO is being an ethical organization. However, both, RRI and LO, also declare that they would be good for business. This claim, however, still needs substantiation.

Elisabeth Frankus, Anne Loeber and Erich Griessler reported results of the NewHoRRizon project which wants to promote the uptake of RRI in H2020. Together with their colleagues in NewHoRRizon they asked whether NewHoRRizon’s efforts of Social Labs and Pilot Actions resulted in opening up organisations responsible for H2020 sub-sections towards RRI? In a case study design they selected five organisations (ERC, EIT, JRC, EURATOM and MSCA) from the altogether 19 Social Labs. The results showed a mixed picture. Whereas MSCA and JRC took up the concept of RRI, there was refusal or limited uptake in EIT, EURATOM, ERC. Anne, Elisabeth and Erich suggested that the success in terms of uptake of RRI is highly depending on alignment or conflict between the RRI concept and an organisations’ “core beliefs”. The Social Labs and Pilot Actions did succeed in inducing RRI-oriented learning, i.e. broadening of (core) beliefs on what matters in (funding) research also in case of mismatch between core beliefs/RRI namely on the level of individuals involved. They also induced change on the level of organisations if strategies were not threatening / ‘luring’ out of comfort zone, into revision of beliefs and strategies were employed to anchor and embed Pilot Actions in standing practices and rules.

Petar Vrgovic and Mila Grahovac shared their experiences of implementing RRI in a higher education institution. RRI was new to the organization. The University of Novi Sad became involved in two Pilot Actions of NewHoRRizon and, as a result from that, in the [co-change project](#). In 2018, at the beginning of its involvement, the university was not familiar with the concept of RRI and also the staff was not. Today, the university has taken first steps towards institutional change towards RRI. The vice dean for science and international relations set up a working group on gender equality. This was both a surprise and a burden of people involved because of the many other duties. However, in hindsight the activity improved all professional activities. The activities started with a meeting in which RRI was explained. An RRI team of seven members in 2018 was formed; one person was responsible for each of the RRI

keys. In addition, a new key on generational issues and communication problems was invented, because the RRI team considered this missing. The approach taken was very much top down, the team members did not have specified tasks and instructions for how to realize RRI. The activities relied on people and good will. In six months, an analysis of current state of the art was carried out and measures suggested. After analysis, the team was stuck with the question what to do next, how to raise the awareness for weaknesses in the system, how to generate change. There was also a lack of qualification of the staff and it was unclear how measures could be funded. In addition, the team was at the beginning not familiar with concept RRI; there was some experience in Public Engagement, without calling these activities RRI. A milestone for the development was a Social Lab Workshop in Prague in 2018, where the RRI team could share their experiences and get advice. The most valuable advice was not to give up and that small steps count. Also using new methods, such as using dialogue for Public Engagement and Gender Equality were introduced and helpful. The next Social Lab Workshop was organized in Novi Sad. In addition, the university became partner in the co-change project. Over time through the Pilot Action, the university deepened its knowledge about RRI and things started to change in the university; changes happened in peoples minds but also on institutional level. The idea of RRI spread by the work of the RRI team members. Active work in co-change was also another step to promote RRI and the keys. Work in co-change also brought further systematisation, professionalisation and funding of activities. The top-down approach of the vice dean turned out to be a good start but it was not sustainable to continue in this way. Several people in the RRI team did not go beyond the diagnosis because of lack of time of time, motivation, experienced support and the pandemic. Today, the RRI team is satisfied with results and plans. It conducted live dialogues about Gender Equality, identified weak points in the organization and substantiated the results of diagnosis. This triggered institutional change, e.g., the establishment of a Gender Equality Board at the faculty and drafting a Gender Equality plan. Ethical procedures are working well in the faculty of agriculture, these activities should spread at other institutes. Open Access repositories are tested and recommendations are being developed. It turned out that stories and concrete exercises are better than just abstract talking about responsibility. These experiences should be widened in the institution which is not familiar with the concept. The experiences in the faculty of agriculture gained in NewHoRRizon were encouraging and the task in the co-change project is to transfer them to the entire university.