

N NEW HORIZON

Final Conference Session 6: Reflecting on the philosophy of RRI

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Executive summary

This session revolved around the theoretical grounding of RRI and whether there was a need for recalibrating our understanding of research and innovation, and discuss RRI not in terms of science policy.

Merve Yorulmaz in her impulse presentation called for a (re) politicization of science and placing emphasis more in the realm of excellence when discussing RRI.

Erik Fisher, one of the panelists, suggested that the question of “who benefits” from research and innovation should be central to such re-politicization.

The panel of discussants agreed and suggested that excellence should be redefined and potentially conceptually broadened to include societal aspects of R&I. Thus, a focus on procedural values were

suggested: learning, building capacities, finding common ground, ability to learn and listen to make incremental improvements that would lead to the restoration of political discussions and open debates about science, research and innovation. Discussion also revolved around conceptualizing RRI in terms of ethics were at all useful, or was it an obstacle to theorize RRI.

The panel agreed that a narrow understanding of ethics may be limiting, but ethics as considering social impacts and effects may be a useful avenue to conceive of the (re)politicization of R&I.