

ZBSA Code of Conduct for Research Integrity

To ensure and strengthen high-quality research, integrity should pervade all research phases. The principles of research integrity are based on

Honesty – to ensure the trustworthiness of research,
Transparency – to ensure the credibility of scientific reasoning, and
Accountability – to ensure the reliability of research.

Moreover, a responsible conduct of research requires that everyone involved in the research process follows high standards for conducting research.

1. Research planning and conduct

Research projects should be planned, conducted and documented in a manner that allows the research to be examined and – when relevant – reproduced. Researchers should note if there are particular issues requiring permits, approvals, etc.

2. Data management

Data and primary materials should be retained, stored and managed in a clear and accurate form that allows the result to be assessed, the procedures to be retraced and – when relevant and applicable – the research to be reproduced. The period for retaining primary material and data should be determined by current practices applicable. However, data should in general be kept for a period of at least five years from the date of publication.

3. Publication and communication

Researchers have a right and an obligation to publish and communicate their results. Research should be published in an honest, transparent, and accurate manner. Researchers should provide readers with all relevant information, e.g. on limitations in the data analysis, role of study sponsor, previous publication, re-use of data and results, etc. Researchers should give appropriate and accurate references to the work of others.

4. Authorship

Attribution of authorship should in general be based on the following four criteria: **a)** substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work, or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work, and **b)** drafting the work or revising it critically for important intellectual content, and **c)** final approval of the version to be published, and **d)** agreement to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved. Contributions that do not meet the criteria for authorship should be appropriately acknowledged. All authors are responsible for the content of the publication; however, responsibility should be assessed based on an author's individual role in the research project.

5. Collaborative research

All collaborating partners should take responsibility for the integrity of the collaborative research. They should establish agreements on all relevant areas of the research project and specify how responsible conduct of research will be ensured and applied.

6. Conflicts of interests

A conflict of interest is a situation in which financial or other interests have the potential to compromise or bias professional judgement. All parties involved with the research in question should disclose any conflicts of interest, and assessors of research and research proposals who have a conflict of interest should withdraw from any involvement in the process.

Research integrity, teaching, training and supervision

Sustaining and developing a culture of research integrity is fundamental for research in general and for encouraging adherence to responsible conduct of research. To ensure this proactive and positive approach to research integrity, researchers should engage in research integrity learning and subsequent teaching, training and supervision and be aware of their role as mentors and role models in the endeavour to promote high integrity in research.

Breaches of the responsible conduct of research

Researchers should be aware of their obligation to maintain confidence in research by adequately addressing suspected breaches of responsible conduct of research. It is important for the scientific community's and the public's perception of research trustworthiness that reasonable suspicions of breaches of responsible conduct of research are brought forward and dealt with.