Building a deliberative ethical governance for research: ETHNA System

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ETHNA

1. Design an Ethics Governance System:

- Ready to use by Research Performing Organisations (RPOs) and Research Funding Organisations) RFOs.

- Able to promote a responsible and ethical research and innovation at the core of the organisations

- Capable of organisationally supporting and accompanying research staff.

2. Foster institutional changes in organisations in the "publish or perish" era that will ensure as much as possible research and innovation environments that live up to society's legitimate expectations.

ETHNA System
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10.3030/872360

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1 January 2020

End date
30 June 2023

Funded under
Develop the governance for the advancement of responsible research and innovation by all stakeholders, which is sensitive to society needs and demands and promote an ethics framework for research and innovation

Overall budget
€ 1 490 718,75

EU contribution
€ 1 490 718,75

Coordinated by
UNIVERSITAT JAUME I DE CASTELLON
🇪🇸 Spain

"Only by putting into practice institutional changes can we contribute to science with and for society in EU. Our goal is to bring ethics from theory into practice."

Elsa González, project coordinator

ETHNA System in a Nutshell

The EU funded ETHNA System project is in the process of developing and **implementing a flexible ethical governance system** for the use of responsible research and innovation (RRI) in Research Performing and Funding Organisations.

> The system is composed of an **ETHNA RRI Office(r)** and three Guidance Tools:
>
> - The **Code of Ethics and Good Practices**
>
> - The **Ethics Committee**
>
> - The **Ethics Line**
>
> Plus, **indicators for monitoring** the progress of the ETHNA System (achievement of RRI)

Governance models and initiatives for responsible research

Models	Paradigmatic governance mechanisims
Self-regulation (permission and prohibitions articulated in society's norms and laws regulating scientific activity)	Research integrity committees, and ethics committees and state agencies, such as national research councils
Risk governance (handling and mitigating unacceptable or harmful risk to society or the environment by technology development)	External review involving technical expertise, ethics review involving stakeholders, and self governance mechanisms.
Anticipatory R&I (Anticipating potential negative social, environmental, and economic consequences of new technology)	Collectively agreed codes of conduct, guidelines, agreed sets of indicators, and deliberative assessment processes and ethics review.
Representative co-construction of science (Democratising research and innovation – stakeholders involvement)	Citizen juries, advisory committees, consensus conferences, focus groups, and surveys
Needs alignment (Aligning science with the needs and expectations of society at large)	Network interaction, mixing self-regulatory modes of governance, captured by the concepts of co-regulation, co-creation and co-production.
Trust in science (Re-establishing public trust through democratizing risk assessment and risk management)	Co-regulation and public deliberation seeking to improve involvement, collaboration and communication.
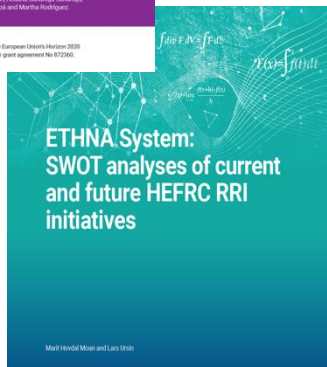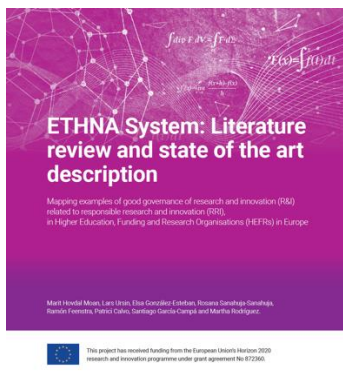
The concept of responsable research and innovation requires ethical governance systems that go beyond bureaucracy and technocracy

Dynamic style and in relation to the actors and multiple ecosystems of science.

Based on "applied ethics" governance → deliberative and open to the participation and involvement of those affected by research and innovation.

Public participation → in design, development, implementation and evaluation.

It does not have fixed answers but procedures for finding out the best answers at given moments. It requires reflexivity.

Multidisciplinary cooperation is essential.

ETHNA System: Literature review and state of the art description

Mapping examples of good governance of research and innovation (R&I) related to responsible research and innovation (RRI), in Higher Education, Funding and Research Organisations (HEFRs) in Europe

Marit Hovdal Moan, Lars Ursin, Elsa González-Esteban, Rosana Sanahuja-Sanahuja, Ramón Feenstra, Patrici Calvo, Santiago García-Campá and Martha Rodríguez.

Compass criteria

Ethical Criteria → informed by Habermas' theory of communicative action.

Effective Criteria → informed by governance theory on public innovation.

Core Implementation Principles

Flexibility

Adaptability
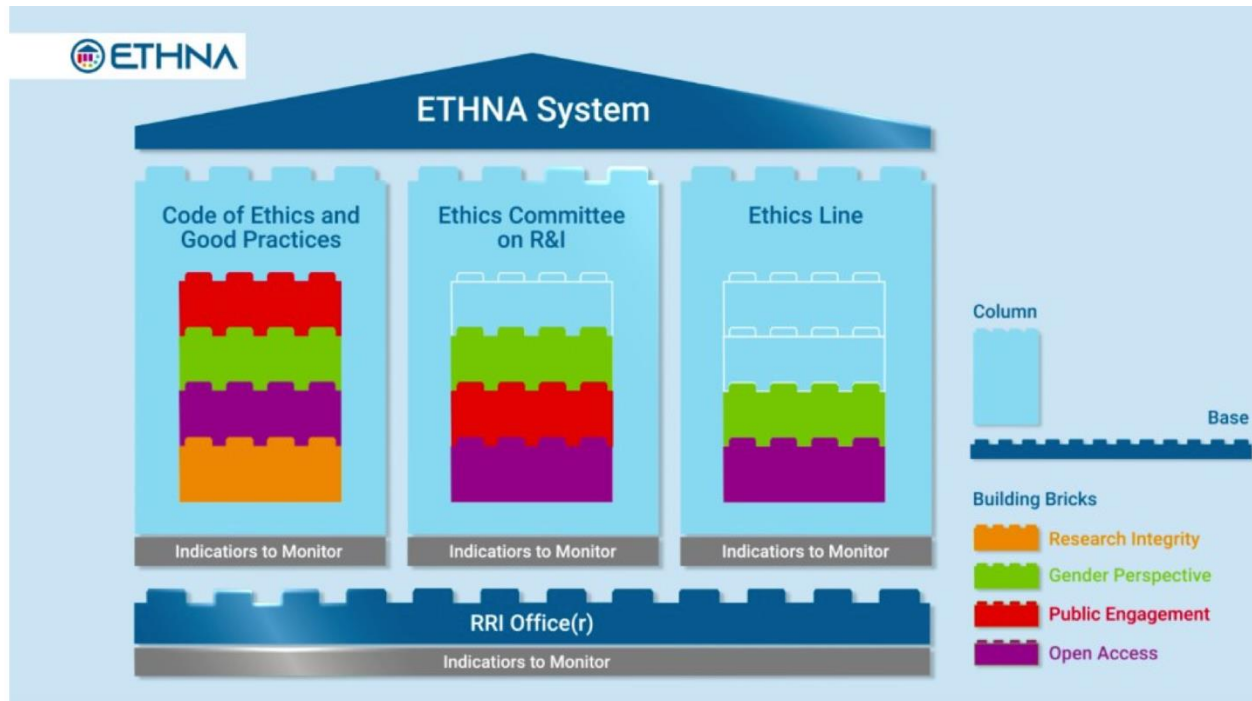
Integrative

Responsiveness and proactiveness

Networking

Directness

A flexible ethical governance system

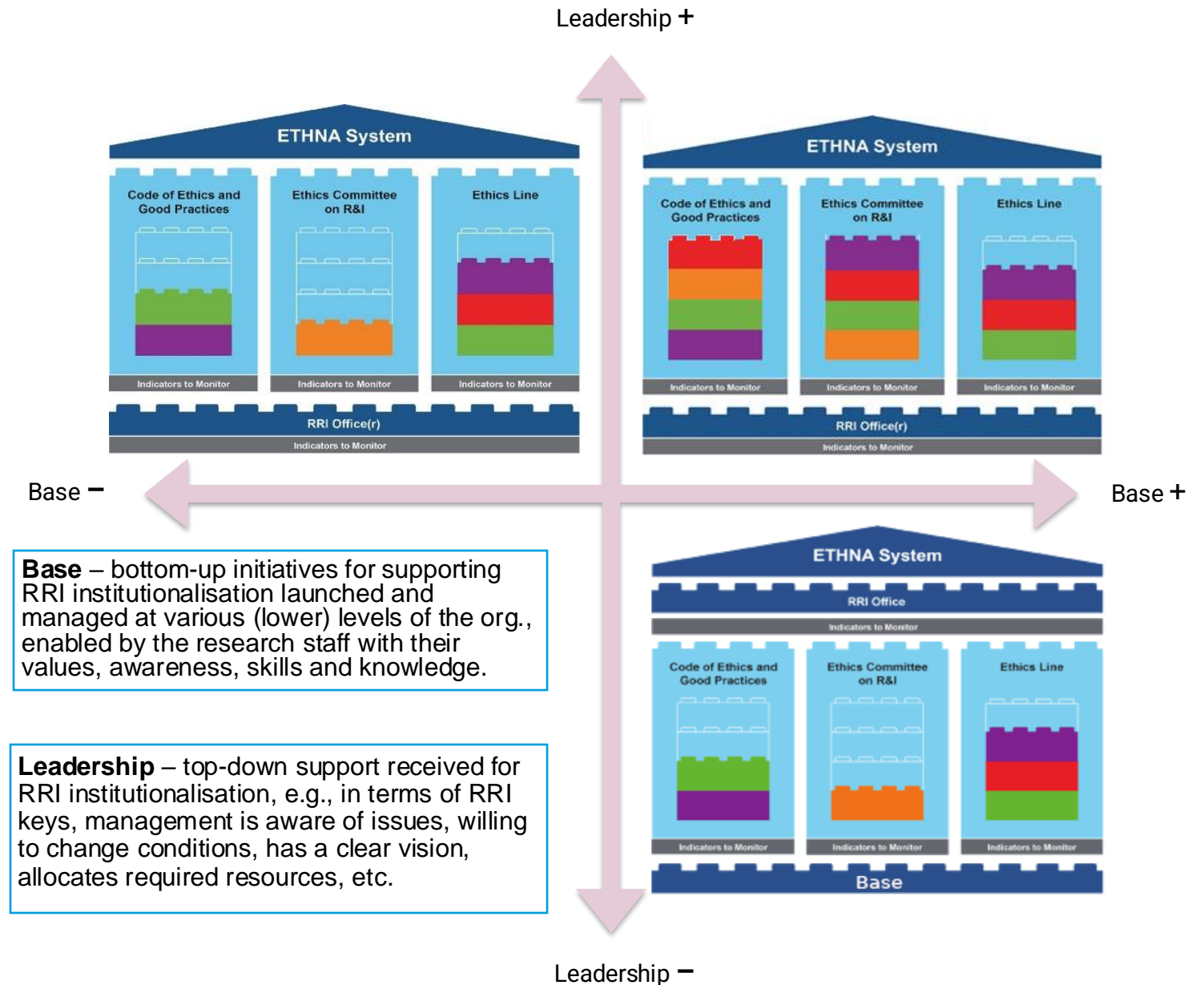20.03.2025

Tailor our own house

- To adapt to diverse scenarios, the ETHNA System has developed **3 different model houses** based on the dimensions of leadership and base support of RRI in the organisation.

- Implementers can choose which model best suits their own circumstances.

Leadership **+**

Base **−**
Base **+**

Base – bottom-up initiatives for supporting RRI institutionalisation launched and managed at various (lower) levels of the org., enabled by the research staff with their values, awareness, skills and knowledge.

Leadership – top-down support received for RRI institutionalisation, e.g., in terms of RRI keys, management is aware of issues, willing to change conditions, has a clear vision, allocates required resources, etc.

Leadership **−**

ETHNA

4 dimensions
(PROCEDURAL)

1. Anticipation
2. Inclusion (deliberative and engaging)
3. Reflexivity
4. Responsiveness

5 keys to start
(Open Agenda of Topics)

1. Integrity
2. Gender perspective
3. Public engagement
4. Open Access
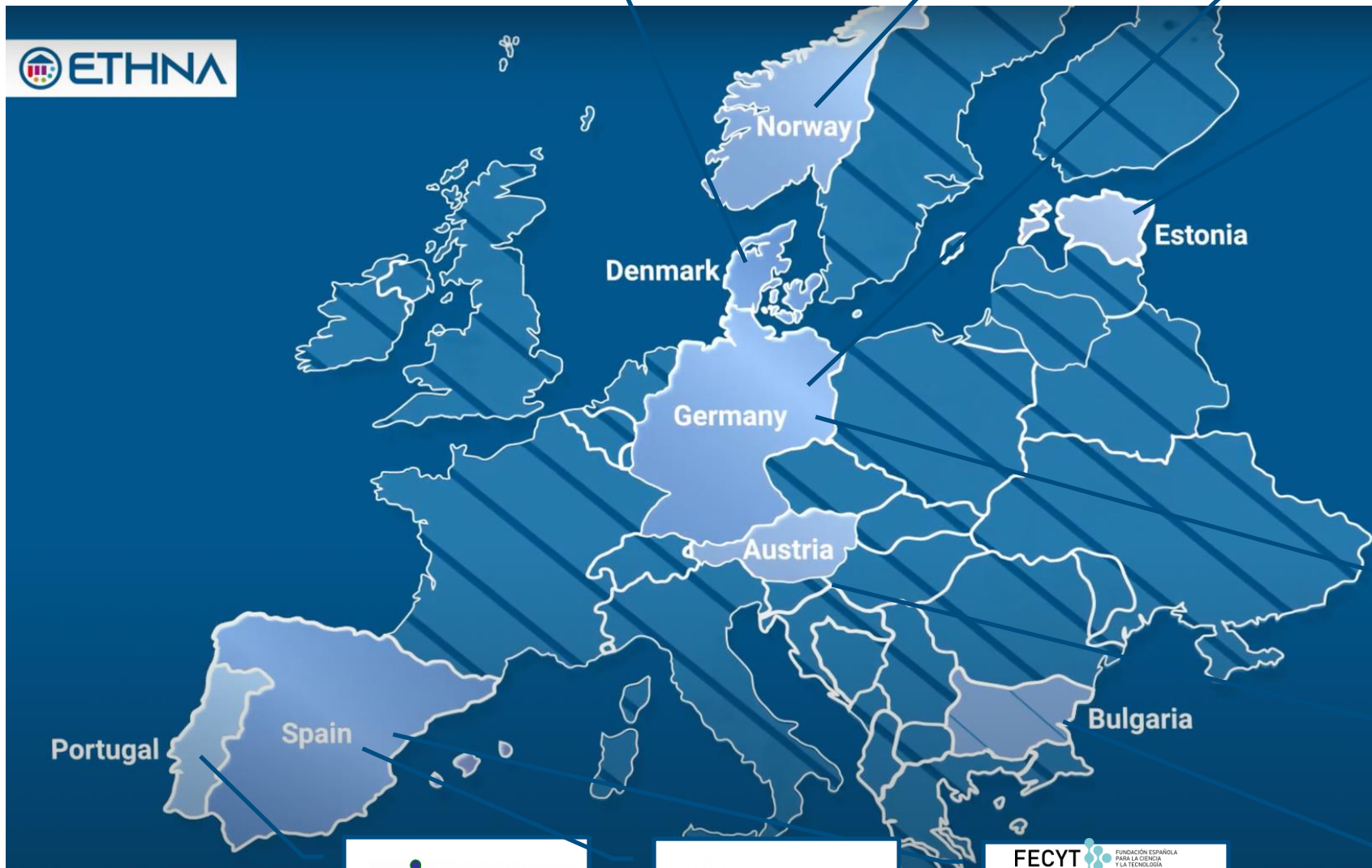
Start date: 01.01.2020

End date: 30.06.2023

Funding: H2020-EU.5.f.
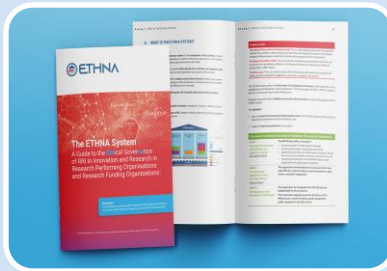
Consortium: 10 partners from 8 countries

Resources

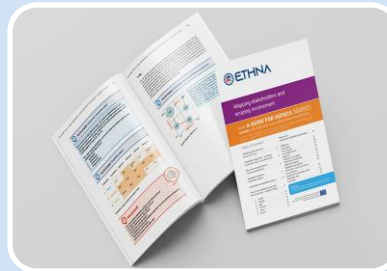You can find additional help online, including, among others

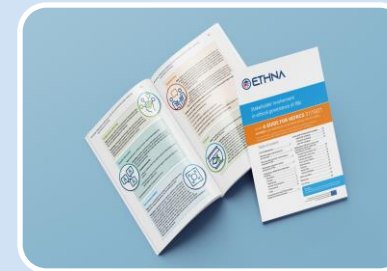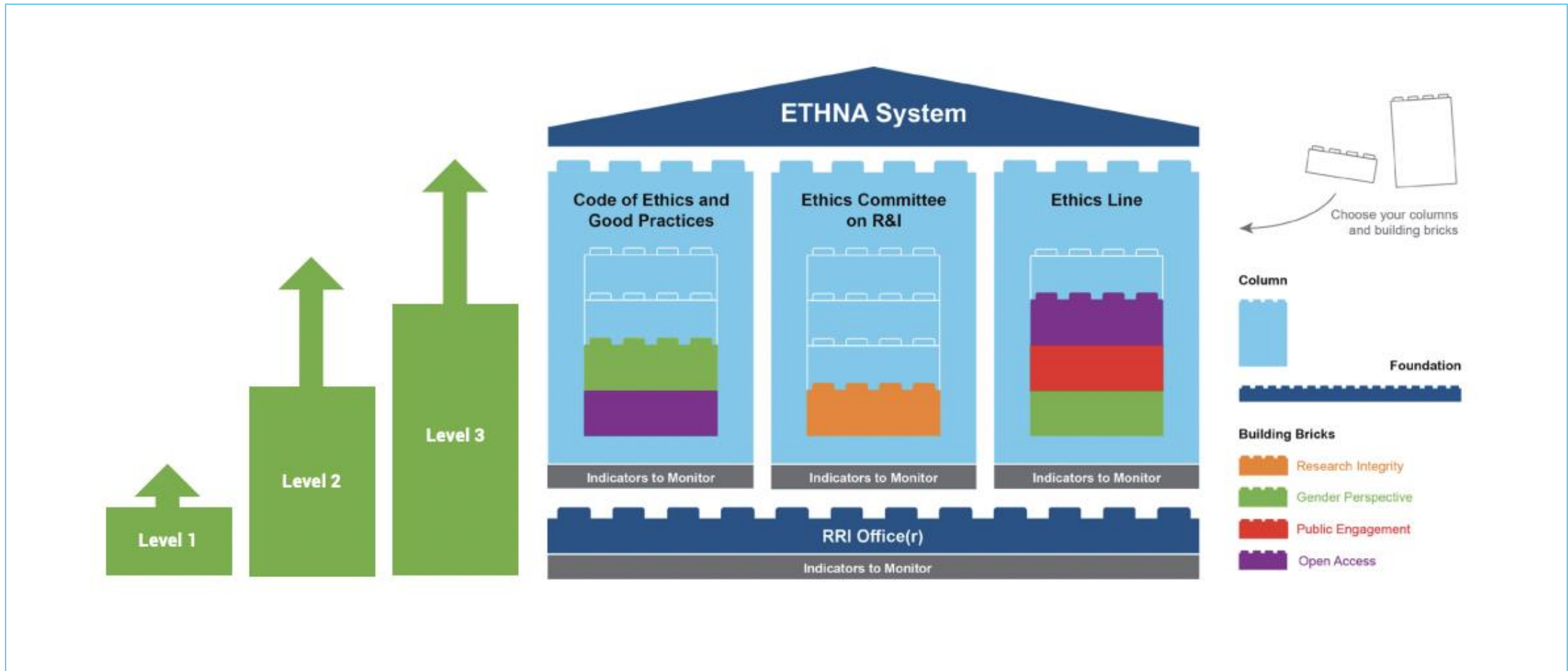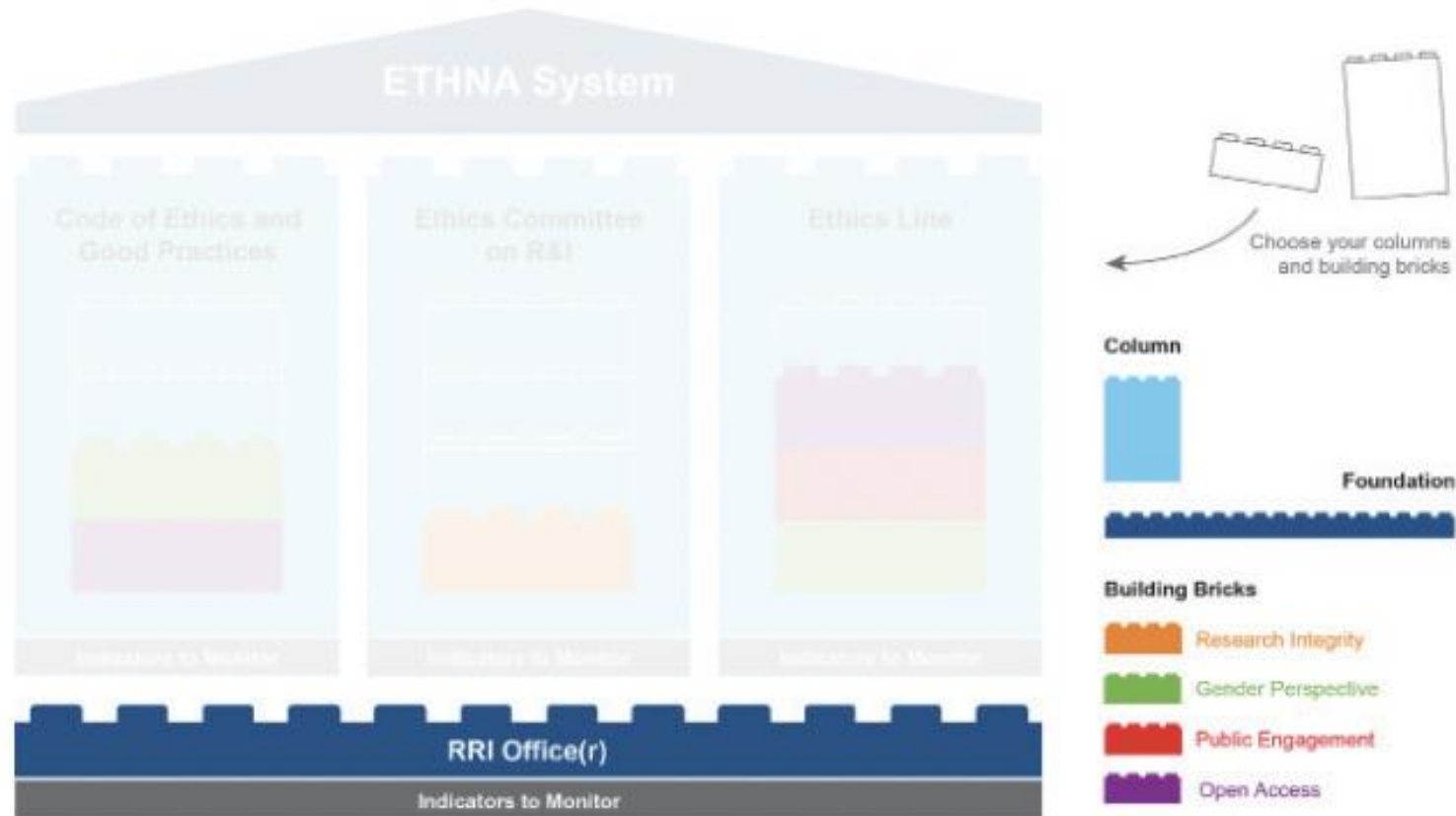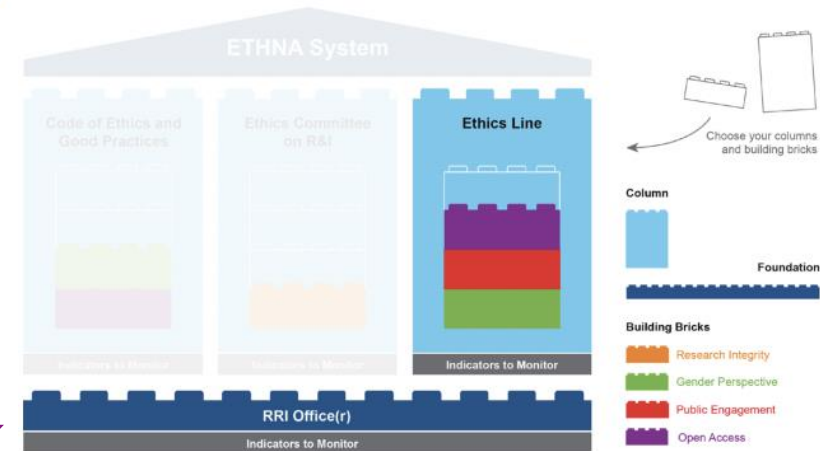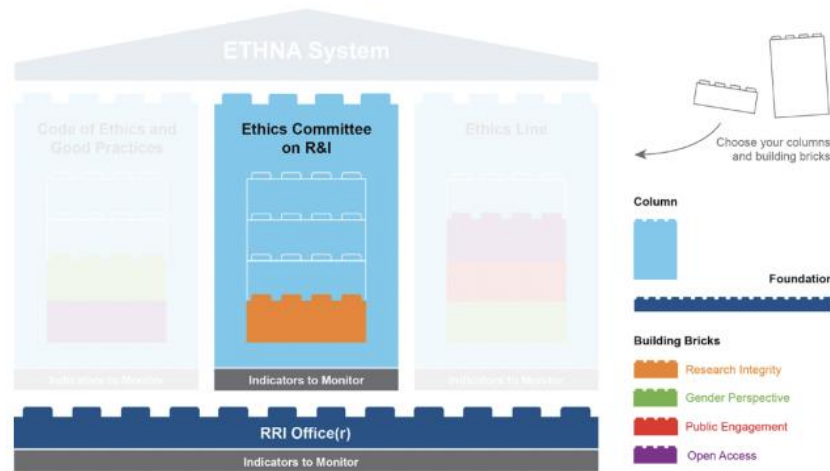| ETHNA SYSTEM CONCEPT – to be piloted in 6 organisations | TOOLBOX – to implement the ETHNA SYSTEM | GUIDE – to map stakeholders and scope involvement | GUIDE – to gauge societal contributions of R&I | GUIDE – to involve stakeholders in ethical governance of R&I |

How is the ETHNA System implemented?

Level 1. Foundation Block
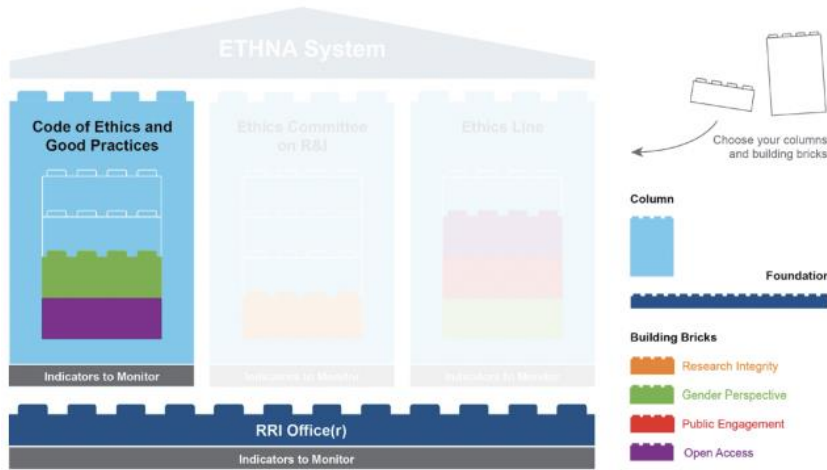
Level 2. Column Block
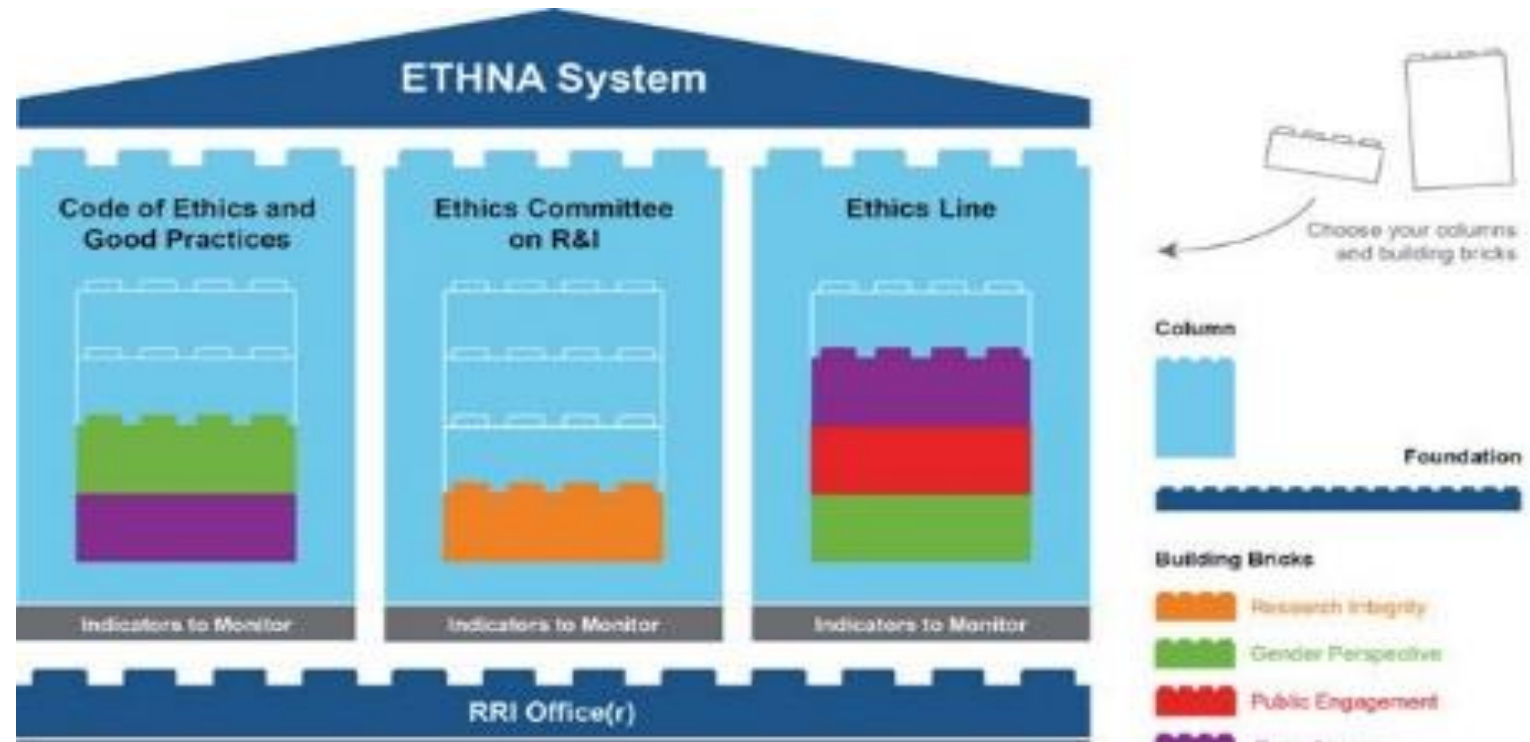
Level 3. Full Commitment

Tailor our own house

- To adapt to diverse scenarios, the ETHNA System has developed **3 different model houses** based on the dimensions of leadership and base support of RRI in the organisation.

- Implementers can choose which model best suits their own circumstances.

Base – bottom-up initiatives for supporting RRI institutionalisation launched and managed at various (lower) levels of the org., enabled by the research staff with their values, awareness, skills and knowledge.

Leadership – top-down support received for RRI institutionalisation, e.g., in terms of RRI keys, management is aware of issues, willing to change conditions, has a clear vision, allocates required resources, etc.
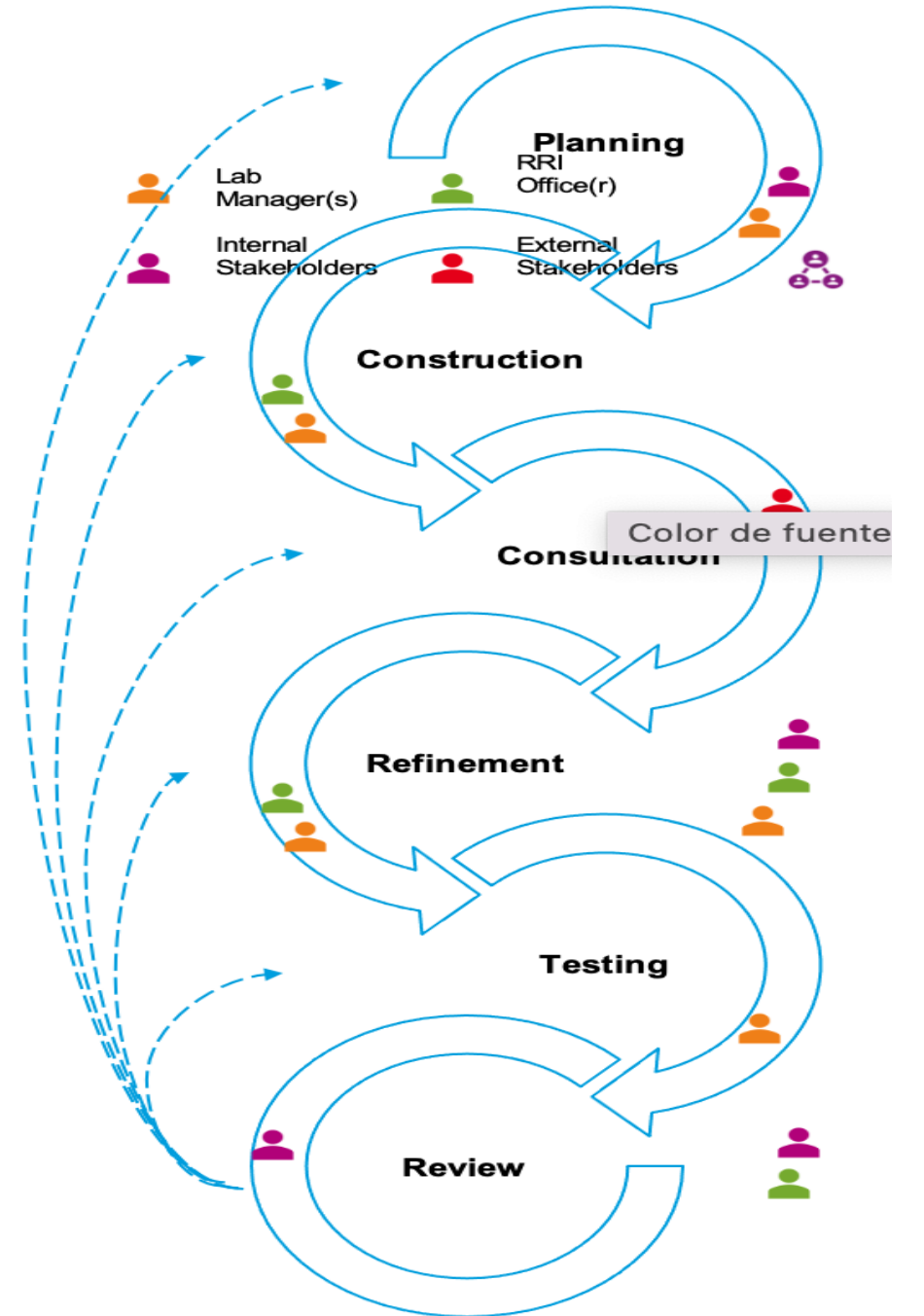
Lab magager's challenge is to convince, encourage and lead the team to success.

Introduce your team in the overview of the ETHNA System:

- What is the ETHNA System?

- How is the ETHNA System implementation …

[Guide - Part D and Part E]

19

Initial Assessment

Step 1. Mapping Priorities

- ✔ Resources mapping
- ✔ Capacity mapping
- ✔ Goal mapping
- ✔ Priority mapping

Step 2. Setting the level of commitment

- ✔ Define the level of commitment
- ✔ Establish your Action Plan

Publicly available in a devoted section of the institutional website
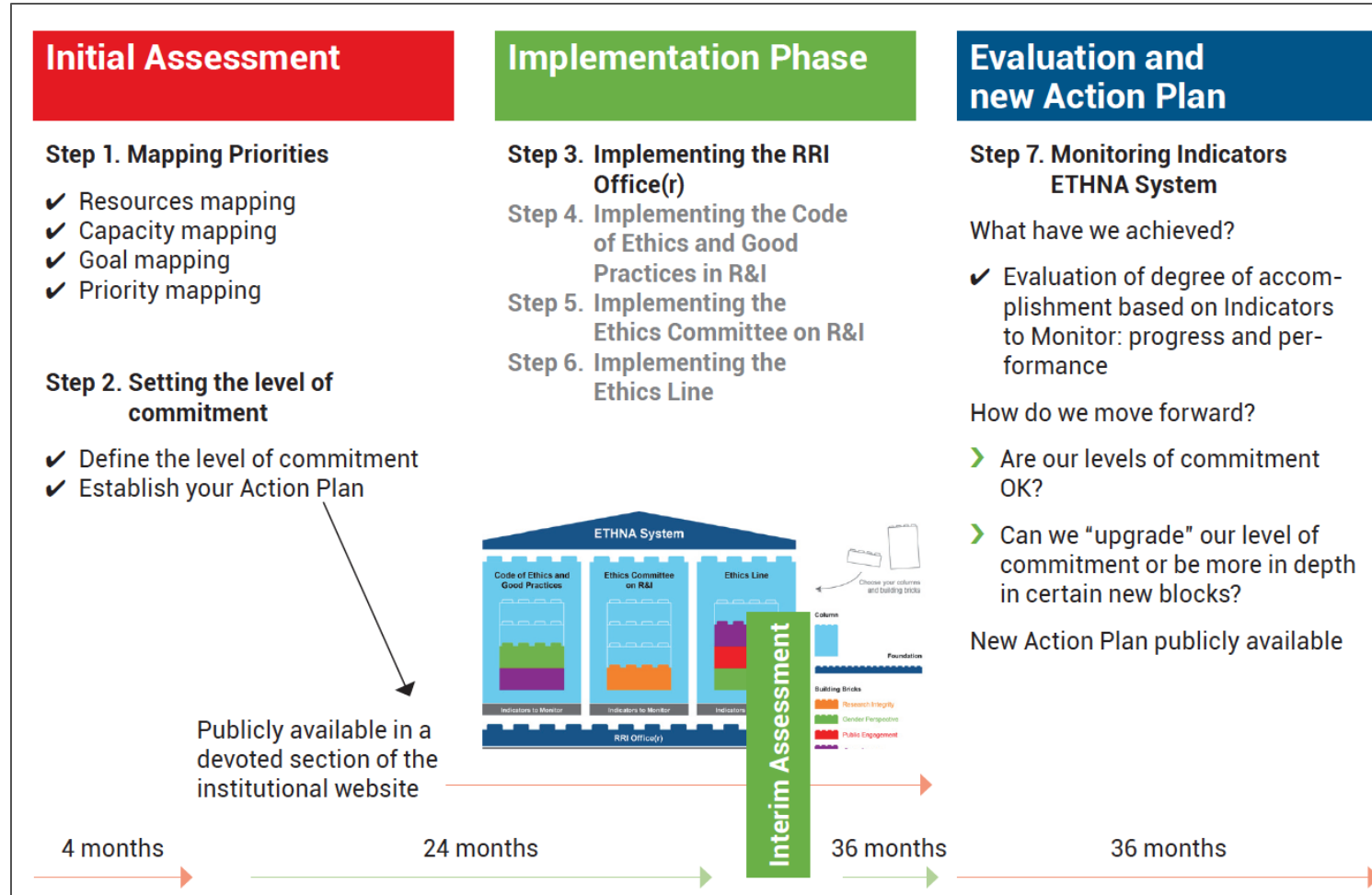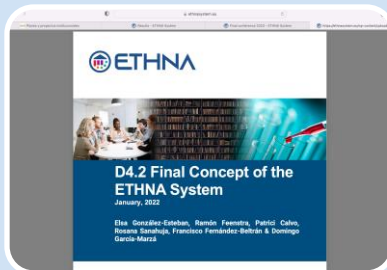
Implementation Phase

Step 3. Implementing the RRI Office(r)
Step 4. Implementing the Code of Ethics and Good Practices in R&I
Step 5. Implementing the Ethics Committee on R&I
Step 6. Implementing the Ethics Line

ETHNA System

Code of Ethics and Good Practices | Ethics Committee on R&I | Ethics Line

Indicators to Monitor | Indicators to Monitor | Indicators

RRI Office(r)

Interim Assessment

Choose your columns and building bricks

Column

Foundation

Building Bricks
Research Integrity
Gender Perspective
Public Engagement

Evaluation and new Action Plan

Step 7. Monitoring Indicators ETHNA System

What have we achieved?

- ✔ Evaluation of degree of accomplishment based on Indicators to Monitor: progress and performance

How do we move forward?

- ❯ Are our levels of commitment OK?

- ❯ Can we "upgrade" our level of commitment or be more in depth in certain new blocks?

New Action Plan publicly available

4 months | 24 months | 36 months | 36 months

Implementation

Implementation Context	I. Higher Education context	II. Research Funding context	III. Innovation Ecosystems context	IV. Research Centre context
Organisations	UNIVERSITAT JAUME I (Spain, University) NTNU (Norway, University)	REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA EDUCATION AND YOUTH BOARD (Estonia, Higher Education Funding Agency)	UNINOVA (Portugal, Applied Research Institute) UNIVERSITAT JAUME I Fundació General · FUGEN / espaitec Parc Científic i Tecnològic (Spain, Technological Park)	ARCFUND (Bulgaria, Private Research Centre)

Lessons from our experience…

ETHNA SYSTEM CONCEPT
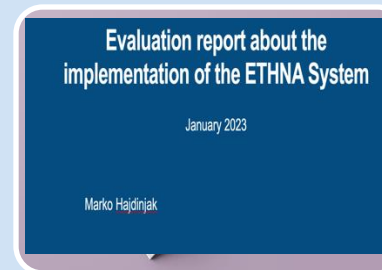– to be piloted in 6 organisations

ETHNA lab
– Guiding implementation. Co-design

DIFICULTIES FOUNDED
– in the implementation process

EVALUATION REPORT
– to help others in that journey

FINAL VERSION

MANUAL TRAINERS
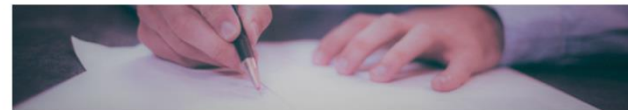
Research Ethics

Laura Bernal-Sanchez
RRI Officer at UJI

Code of Best Practices in Research and Doctoral Studies (CBPID)

Research Ethics Conferences

Ethical Assessment Report

Human Research | Animal Research | Ethical Aspects of European Projects

Experimentation and Animal Welfare

Examples of 3R | Renewal of training | Alternative methods | Veterinary research | Transparency

The office: ethics and integrity

Training and reference resources

Gender perspective | Animal experimentation| Biosafety (Some of the contents are only available in Spanish)

Research Ethics and Integrity Committee

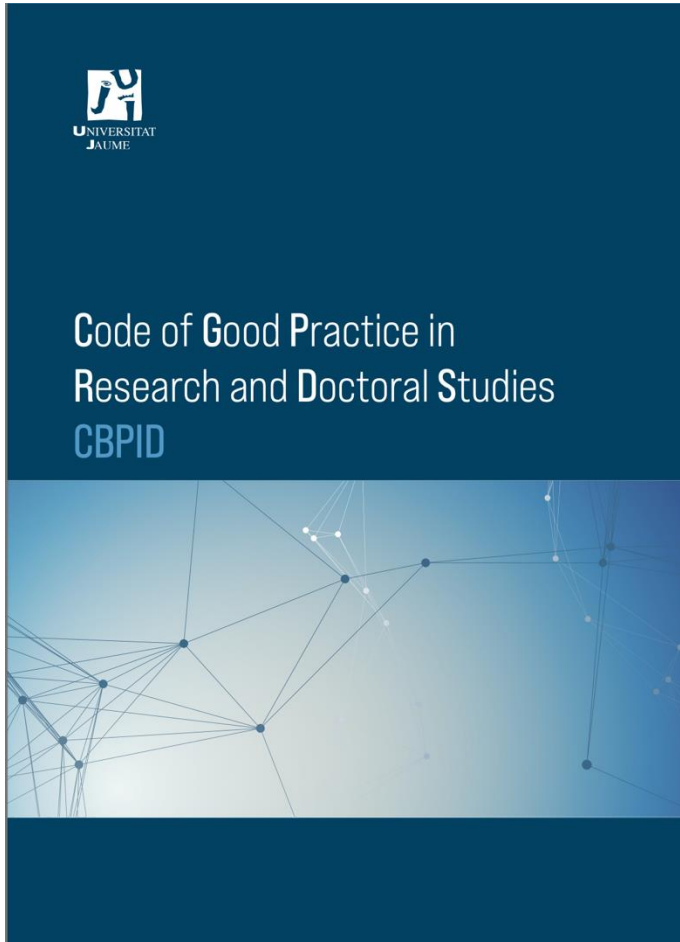Human Research Ethics Committee | Animal Experimentation Ethics Committee
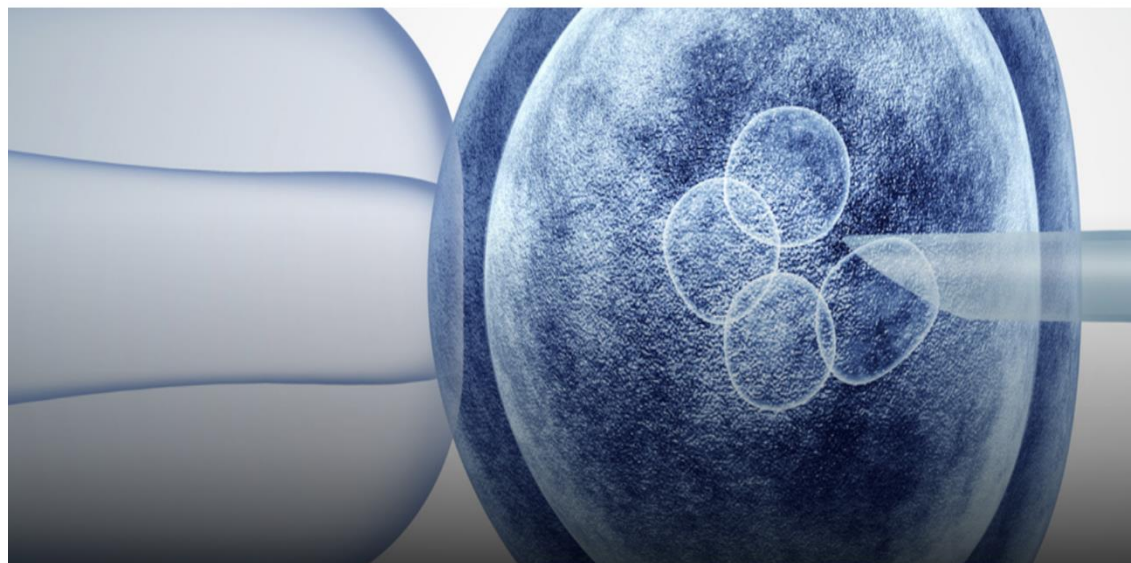
Ethical Advice and FAQs

Contact us | FAQS

Regulations

Human research | Animal research | Other regulations

ETHNA

Code of Good Practice in Research and Doctoral Studies
CBPID

1. Move from a deontological committee to a Research Ethics and Integrity Committee (CEI).

   A central body whose purpose is to promote ethical, high-quality, integral, responsible and accessible research.

   Integrity, Gender Equality, public engagement and open access.

2. Define to specific committees:

   2.1. Human Research Ethics Committee (CEISH)

   2.2. Animal Experimentation Ethics Committee (CEEA)

3. Define and approve the regulations of this bodies.

ETHNA

UJI > Transparency

Ethics Helpline

02/06/2023 | SG   Compartir   f X in ⊙ ✉ 🖨

The Ethics Helpline is a confidential (not anonymous) channel for reporting of conduct occurring in the Universitat Jaume I that may be breaches of the Code of Ethics, of the Code of Good Practices in Research and Doctorate or of the principles or rules of ethics and good governance.

Any person can make complaints, beyond the members of the university community of University Jaume I.

The body responsible for receiving complaints is the Office of the General Secretary as secretary of the University Ethics and Social Responsibility Commission.

The complaint can be processed through the following channels:

a. By post:
   Universitat Jaume I
   Ethics Helpline
   Edifici de Rectorat
   Avinguda de Vicent Sos Baynat, s/n
   12071 – Castelló de la Plana Spain

b. By email: liniaetica@uji.es

c. Via the online form available at: http://www.liniaetica.uji.es

If you want to submit a complaint by email or by post, the following information must be provided:

UNIVERSITAT JAUME I   Ethics Helpline Form

Valencià | Espa

Ethics Helpline

The Ethics Helpline is a confidential (not anonymous) channel for reporting of conduct occurring in the Universitat Jaume I that may be breaches of the Code of Ethics, of the Code of Good Practices in Research and Doctorate or of the principles or rules of ethics and good governance.

Details of the complainant

Name and surname (*)	
DNI/NIF/Identification (*)	
Address (*)	
Telephone (*)	
E-mail address (*)	

Identification of the reported person (*)

Please provide as much data as possible to to allow identification (name, position, etc.).

Statement of the facts complained of (*)

The facts have to be described as concretely and in as much detail as possible and detailed as possible, and any available documentation available documentation or evidence to facilitate verification.

Documentation attached

GENDER MAINSTREAMING

Equality between women and men is a universal human right, constitutes a value of the European Union, is recognised as a fundamental right in the Spanish Constitution and forms part of the guiding principles and aims of the UJI. The European Charter for Research requires it of employers and funding bodies, the Law on Science recognises it for research staff and the 3rd UJI Plan for Equality[9] expressly promotes it in its research activity.

The Universitat Jaume I of Castelló as an institution:

1. Is firmly committed to becoming a national benchmark for the effective equality of women and men in research, innovation and the transfer of results.

2. Will promote efforts to ensure that the culture of effective equality of women and men inspires its internal organisation, is known by all its staff and is integrated in all its activities related to research, innovation and transfer of results.

3. Will increase the presence of women in leadership positions in its governing and research management bodies, in its departments, areas and research groups, as well as in obtaining patents, even by adopting positive actions.

4. Will strive to ensure that none of its areas of research are gender blind, even by introducing criteria in research funding that make this possible, acknowledging gender mainstreaming as a criterion for research excellence and implementing a research monitoring system based on gender indicators and statistics.

5. Will increase the presence of women in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) studies and fields of knowledge and the research vocations of women in them, which includes the creation of a mentoring programme and specific support for their research careers. At the same time, it will highlight the studies and areas of knowledge in which women are most present. It will also boost the presence of men in studies and fields of knowledge where they are under-represented (e.g. healthcare or teaching).

6. It will develop a zero tolerance policy towards sexual and gender-based harassment, as well as LGTBI-phobic harassment.

1. Teams with a gender balanced

2. Teams will take steps to ensure that one or more persons who are permanently attached to the research group fulfil two or more of the following four conditions:

   a) Are able to introduce the gender perspective in any of the group's research activities;

   b) coordinate regularly with the research groups with expertise in gender mainstreaming at UJI;

   c) get advice from research groups with expertise in gender mainstreaming from outside UJI

   d) apply the Gender in Research Checklist published by the EU Commissionj.

3. Before starting their projects, during their implementation and in the dissemination of results, researchers will be as- ked to what extent their research incorporates a gender perspective it to other personal or social variables, detecting stereotypes, using non-sexist language, reviewing feminist or gender-sensitive literature related to the object of research, etc.).

4.   Expert groups in gender mainstreaming will share good practices with other research groups.

5. Teams will bring awareness to the contribution of women in their areas of expertise, insofar as it contributes power- fully to the effective equality of women and men in research, innovation and transfer.

6. With the aim of making women's scientific production more visible, the full first name, not just the initial, of male and female authors will be indicated in the bibliography and, whenever posible.

7. They will study, where appropriate, sexual and gender diversity in order to provide more comprehensive research and to combat discrimination on these grounds.

UJI Commitment
ACCELERATE INSTITUCIONALIZATION with

Co-creation and validation of gender perspective indicators

1. There is a balanced gender presence in the research group(s) in which I participate.

2. The research I carry out includes a gender perspective in its design.

3. The research I conduct includes a gender perspective in its design.

4. The research I conduct includes a gender perspective in its development.

5. The research includes a gender perspective in the evaluation and assessment of the impact of the research.

6. The research incorporates gender intersectionality where appropriate.

7. Gender and sexual diversity are included in the research where relevant.

8. The research team coordinates with groups with expertise in gender perspectives in research if this expertise is not available within the team.

9. The research group shares good practice in gender mainstreaming with other research groups.

10. I am familiar with the Gender Checklist developed by the European Commission [if yes, I apply the Gender Checklist developed by the European Commission].

11. I use inclusive language when writing my articles.

12. I use full names of authors in the bibliography.

Thank you for your attention!

www.ethnasystem.eu

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Impact	
Institutional impact	Institutionalise the reflexivity on the processes of RRI in the RPO's and RFO's
Professional impact	Define a number of core ethical orientations and/or guiding principles that the RPO's and RfO's themselves could recognise, incorporate and promote, so that R&I actors can carry out their activity in line with the RRI. The promotion of RRI among the actors of R&I processes.
Social Impact	The kind of research and innovation that society will receive from the RPO's and RFO's that apply ETHNA System will raise the ethical standard of the science infraestructura across Europe.
Economic Impact	An excellent or ethical performance in the R&I activities and processes allow reducing internal and external coordination costs that shall have a financial impact in RPO's and RFO's

ETHNA

ETHNA SYSTEM FINAL CONFERENCE

Ethics and Responsible Research and Innovation in Practice

General information   Registration   Programme   Location   Media Kit
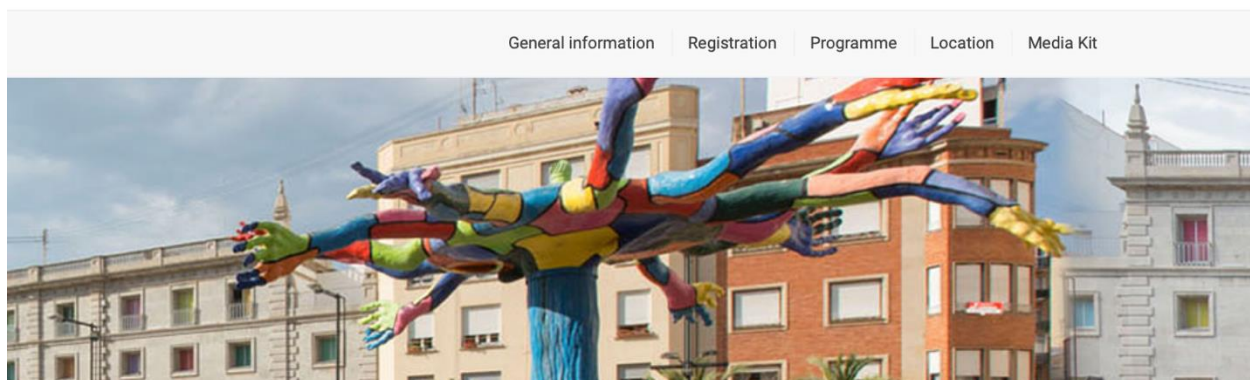
General Information
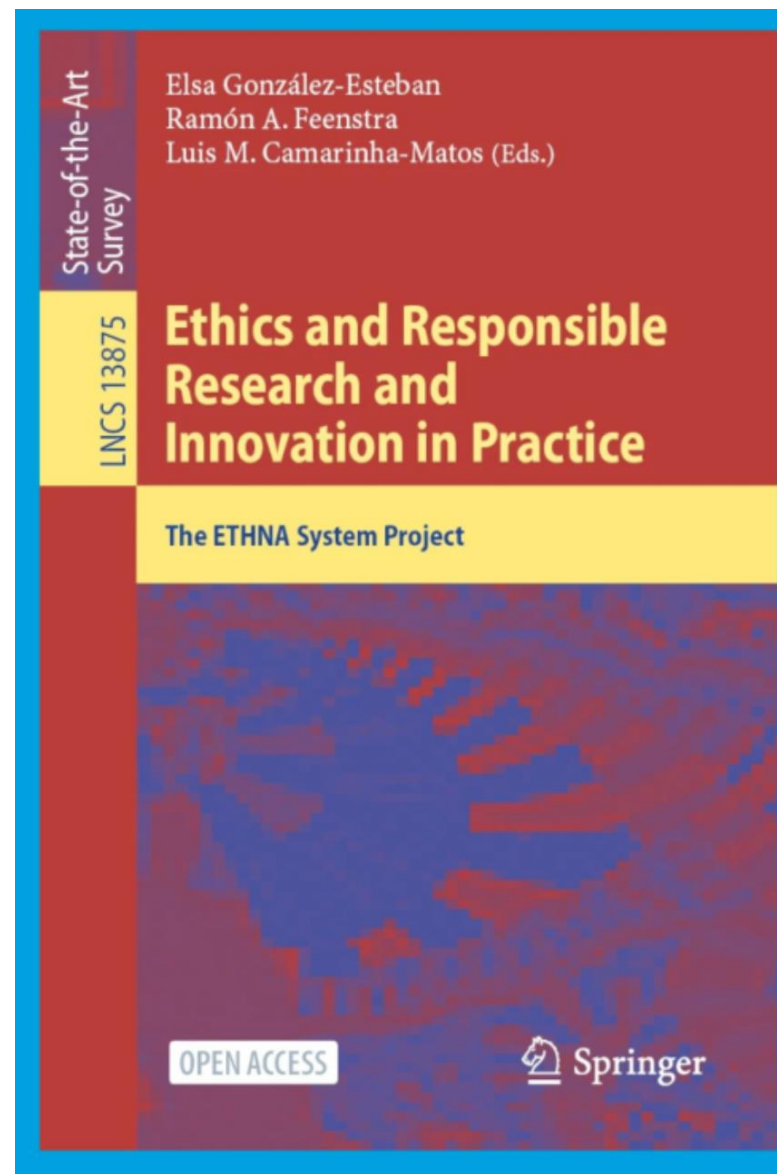
WHEN?
15th and 16th June 2023

WHERE?
Menador Cultural Space
4, Plaça de l'Hort dels Corders

Castelló de la Plana, Spain

View on Google Maps

Live stream available

The ETHNA System Project is working on the Final Conference during which we will be presenting the results of the Research and Innovation Governance Ethical System we have designed and implemented all along the last three years and a half. During the conference we will also debate about the future challenges in order to advance in the consolidation of a Responsible and Open Science. Sister projects, experts and entities interested in grounding ethical governance for the use of responsible research and innovation (RRI) in Higher Education, Research Funding, Innovation Ecosystems and Research Centres, will be all welcome.

State-of-the-Art Survey

LNCS 13875

Elsa González-Esteban
Ramón A. Feenstra
Luis M. Camarinha-Matos (Eds.)

Ethics and Responsible Research and Innovation in Practice

The ETHNA System Project

OPEN ACCESS

Springer

Any prior to advice?

Different organisations, RPOs and RFOs, have previously used this guide. Their experience provides us with useful advice that it is worth knowing about before starting the process:

› To undertake a deep analysis on your own resources and internal structures (material and human) before deciding the level and type of implementation.

› To involve the organisation's leadership in the process. A strong commitment about the adoption of the ethic management tools is very much needed.

› To set up a work team with a clear Lab Manager that actively leads the implementation process. The team can be relatively small, but it needs to be committed, proactive and able to adapt the ETHNA System tools to the needs of the organisation.

› To internally identify if someone is willing to take up the responsibility to plan, execute and monitor the process when you have limited financial and other resources to support a permanent position such as the RRI Officer.

› To create knowledge and awareness among researchers and innovators on the parts of the ETHNA System that have been decided to be implemented and the RRI. The specific benefits of their implementations for Research and innovation linked activities should be highlighted.

› To obtain the involvement and approval of the smallest units within the organisation structure prior to starting implementing the system within the organisation.

› To identify external incentives, such as international awards, EU funding requirements (e.g. in case of a Gender Equality Plan), or participation in projects that may work as a starting mechanism. It is necessary to be aware that they alone cannot guarantee the sustainability of the proposed [3] institutional changes.

› To modify, if it is a small part of the organisation, the use of the methodology of the Living Lab for the ETHNA System Guide to be used/applied. In that case, it is better to use participative methods but without iterations.

› To start the process without aiming at adopting all instruments. If the ETHNA System can work as a tool for reflection that helps the organisation to articulate their most urgent ethical priorities, this is an excellent result in itself.

ETHNA

Why is an ethical governance system like ETHNA System so important in the era of publish or perish?

The ETHNA System will help organisations to achieve strong impacts such as:

1. **Generate credibility and reliability (trustworthiness)** in the activity and the achieved results by the organisation in R&I.

2. **Align the policies and strategies of the organisation with European guidelines** and thus increase the possibilities for cooperation and funding.

3. **Facilitate stable relationships with stakeholders** by including them in participatory spaces so their legitimate interests are considered and, as a result, the quality of results improved.

4. **Promote a culture that fosters cohesion and a common decision-making position**, as well as a healthy working environment that inspires confidence.

5. Encourage a **proactive position towards the current challenges of R&I**: integrity, gender perspective, public engagement, and open access.

6. Involve stakeholders to increase economic profitability with the rational and sustainable use of scarce resources.

7. **Reduce internal and external coordination costs** deriving from possible conflicts and misconducts that have an economic and reputational impact.

8. Position the organisation in terms of RRI by **building trust and a reputation for excellence in R&I**.

9. Build the character of the organisation by promoting or complying with various existing political and legal frameworks.

10. **Promote a close relationship with the community and its needs by responding to the expectations of society** (e.g., sustainability, social justice, gender perspective, and integrity research, etc.).

Thank you for your attention!

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