



DFG

# Revision of the DFG`s White Paper “Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice”

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# What is the DFG?

Germany's largest research funding organisation

- ▶ over **32,500 projects** funded with **€3.2 billion** in 2017
- ▶ **association under private law** with 96 members
- ▶ serves **all branches of science and the humanities** by funding research **projects** and facilitating (international) **cooperation** among researchers
- ▶ supports the **advancement of early career researchers**
- ▶ promotes **gender equality and diversity** in the German research system
- ▶ **fulfils integrative functions**
  - advises parliaments and public authorities on scientific and academic matters
  - fosters relations between academic research and the private sector and between researchers and the public
  - establishes **standards of good scientific practice** – as **research integrity** is the **basis for trustworthy research**



# The DFG´s Code of Conduct “Guidelines for Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice”

## Background

- ▶ In 1998 the DFG published the **White Paper on “Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice”**.
  - first systematic approach to the topic
  - 17 recommendations
  - system of self-monitoring was initiated at universities and non-university research institutions – covering prevention, ombudspersons, investigation committees of inquiry on allegations of research misconduct
  - researchers submitting proposals to the DFG must undertake to comply with the standards of good research practice
- ▶ **revision due to changes in the way research is conducted** – e.g. digital turn, developments in publishing
- ▶ strategic decision of the DFG´s Executive Board in 2017
- ▶ establishment of a ten-member **expert committee** in summer 2018 – three subcommittees
- ▶ **new Draft Code of Conduct “Guidelines for Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice”**
- ▶ in line with the principle of **academic voluntary commitment** – adoption by the general assembly required

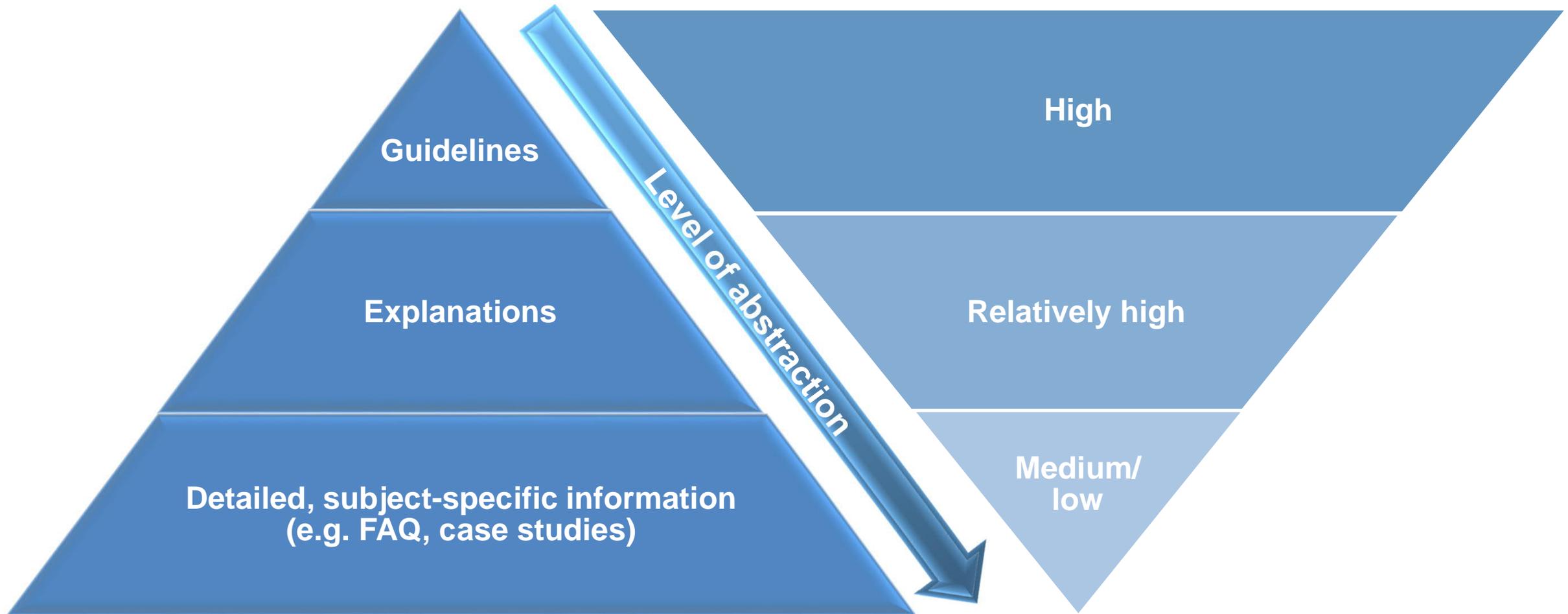
# The DFG's Code of Conduct "Guidelines for Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice"

## General Principles

- ▶ appropriate standards for research work in **19 concrete guidelines**
- ▶ researchers, (senior) administrators of universities/non-university research institutions can **align their actions, internal structures and processes** to the guidelines
- ▶ **diversity of various disciplines** is taken into account – guidelines permit a certain degree of flexibility
- ▶ guidelines contain **criteria that provide orientation for compliance** with good scientific practice **and avoid the use of definitions** to the greatest extent possible (e.g. of data)
- ▶ researchers should **make their decision-making processes as transparent as possible** to third parties
- ▶ **conceptual core** of the Code and **paradigm shift** compared to the White Paper – the embedding of a **culture of research integrity** through a more markedly positive approach to the topic
- ▶ Rather than concentrating on breaches of good scientific practice, the Code focusses on the **professional ethics of researchers.**

# The DFG's Code of Conduct "Guidelines for Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice"

## Elements of a Guideline



# The DFG's Code of Conduct "Guidelines for Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice"

## Structure

### I. Foreword

### II. Preamble

### III. Standards of good scientific practice

#### 1. Applicability

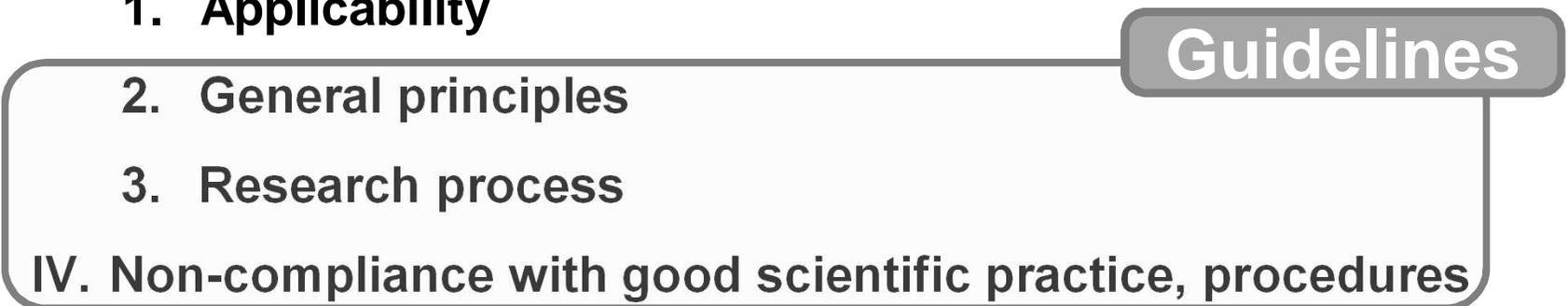
#### 2. General principles

#### 3. Research process

### IV. Non-compliance with good scientific practice, procedures

### V. Implementation of the guidelines

**Guidelines**



# The DFG´s Code of Conduct “Guidelines for Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice”

## III. Standards of good scientific practice – General principles

### - **Guideline 1: Commitment to the principles**

*Universities and non-university research institutions define (...) the rules of good scientific practice, make their members and employees aware of them, and require their members and employees (...) to comply with them. Individual researchers are responsible for ensuring that their own behaviour complies with the standards of good scientific practice. (...)*

### - **Guideline 2: Professional ethics**

*Researchers are responsible for putting the fundamental values and norms of research work into practice and advocating for them. Education in the principles of good research begins at the earliest possible stage in academic teaching and research training. (...)*

### - **Guideline 3: Organisational responsibility of heads of research institutions**

*The heads of universities and non-university research institutions create the basic framework for research work. They are responsible for ensuring adherence to and the promotion of good scientific practice and adequate career support for all researchers. (...)*

# The DFG´s Code of Conduct “Guidelines for Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice”

## III. Standards of good scientific practice – General principles

### - **Guideline 4: Responsibility of the heads of working units**

*The head of a research working unit has responsibility for the whole unit. (...) The leadership role includes ensuring the adequate individual (...) supervision of early career researchers and career development for research and auxiliary staff. Suitable measures must be put in place (...) to prevent abuses of power and exploitation of relationships of dependence. (...)*

### - **Guideline 5: Dimensions of performance and assessment criteria**

*(...) Other aspects may be taken into consideration in addition to scientific achievements. Performance is assessed primarily on the basis of qualitative measures, while quantitative indicators may be incorporated into the overall assessment with appropriate differentiation and reflection. (...)*

### - **Guideline 6: Ombudspersons**

*Universities and non-university research institutions appoint at least one independent ombudsperson to whom their members and employees can turn on questions relating to good scientific practice and in cases of suspected scientific misconduct. (...)*

# The DFG´s Code of Conduct “Guidelines for Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice”

## III. Standards of good scientific practice – Research process

- **Guideline 7: Cross-phase quality assurance**

*Researchers apply quality assurance measures at each step of the research process. When research findings are made publicly available (...), the quality assurance mechanisms used are always explained. (...)*

- **Guideline 8: Stakeholders, responsibilities and roles**

*The roles and responsibilities of the researchers and of the auxiliary staff participating in a research project must be clear at each stage of a research project. (...)*

- **Guideline 9: Research design**

*Researchers take into account and acknowledge the current state of research when planning a project. (...)*

- **Guideline 10: Legal and ethical frameworks, usage rights**

*(...) They take into account rights and obligations, particularly those arising from legal requirements and contracts with third parties (...).*

# The DFG´s Code of Conduct “Guidelines for Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice”

## III. Standards of good scientific practice – Research process

- **Guideline 11: Methods and standards**

*To answer research questions, researchers use academically/scientifically sound and appropriate methods. (...)*

- **Guideline 12: Documentation**

*Researchers document all information relevant to the production of a research result as clearly as is required by and is appropriate for the relevant research area to allow the result to be reviewed and assessed. As a basic principle, they also document individual results that do not support the research hypothesis. (...)*

- **Guideline 13: Providing public access to research results**

*(...) If it has been decided to make results publicly available, researchers describe them clearly and in full. Where possible and reasonable, this includes making the research data, materials and information on which the results are based, as well as the methods and software used, available and fully explaining the work processes. (...)*

# The DFG´s Code of Conduct “Guidelines for Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice”

## III. Standards of good scientific practice – Research process

- **Guideline 14: Authorship**

*An author is an individual who has made an identifiable, genuine contribution to the content of a scientific/an academic text, to a data or software publication. (...)*

- **Guideline 15: Place of publication**

*Authors select the publication medium carefully, with due regard for its visibility in the relevant field of discourse. The scientific/academic quality of a contribution does not depend on the medium in which it is made publicly available. (...)*

- **Guideline 16: Confidentiality and neutrality of review processes and discussions**

*Fair behaviour is the basis for the legitimacy of any judgement-forming process. (...)*

- **Guideline 17: Archiving**

*Researchers back up research data and results made publicly available as well as the central materials on which they are based and any research software used, by adequate means according to the standards of the relevant field, and retain them for an appropriate period of time. (...)*

# The DFG´s Code of Conduct “Guidelines for Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice”

## IV. Non-compliance with good scientific practice and V. Implementation of the guidelines

### IV. Non-compliance with good scientific practice/procedures

#### - **Guideline 18: Whistleblowers and individuals affected by allegations**

*The responsible bodies or offices at universities and non-university research institutions (...) examining a suspected instance of scientific misconduct act appropriately to protect the person(s) affected by the allegations and the person(s) making them. The investigation (...) must maintain confidentiality and adhere to the basic principle of presumed innocence. (...)*

#### - **Guideline 19: Procedures in cases of suspected scientific misconduct**

*Universities and non-university research institutions establish procedures to deal with allegations of scientific misconduct. (...)*

### V. Implementation of the guidelines

- Prerequisite for awarding of funds: legally binding implementation of guidelines 1 – 19 (levels 1 – 2)



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### For more information

- ▶ on the DFG: [www.dfg.de/en](http://www.dfg.de/en)
- ▶ on **Research Integrity**: [www.dfg.de/en/research\\_funding/principles\\_dfg\\_funding/good\\_scientific\\_practice/index.html](http://www.dfg.de/en/research_funding/principles_dfg_funding/good_scientific_practice/index.html)
- ▶ on DFG-funded projects: [gepris.dfg.de/en](http://gepris.dfg.de/en)
- ▶ on over 23,000 German research institutes: [www.gerit.org/en](http://www.gerit.org/en)