



Council of Canadian Academies
Conseil des académies canadiennes

News Release

Expert Panel Says Canada's System for Research Integrity Should be Strengthened

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Ottawa (October 21st, 2010) *How do we ensure the integrity of Canada's research system?* This was the topic of considerable discussion for a group of 14 eminent experts brought together by the Council of Canadian Academies. Today the Council released the Expert Panel's report, *Honesty, Accountability and Trust: Fostering Research Integrity in Canada*. The report is an evidence-based and independent assessment of research integrity in Canada.

The Panel, chaired by Dr. Paul Davenport, former President of the University of Western Ontario, found that those involved in the research domain (individual researchers, funders, and institutions) must jointly take action to strengthen research integrity practices. Competition for funding, complex multidisciplinary research partnerships, combined with a greater number of researchers who procure funds from both public and private sources, make it more difficult to impose a universal set of research integrity practices.

"Canada is best able to strengthen its system of research integrity by using a positive approach that focuses on promotion and prevention," said Dr. Davenport. "However, a positive environment must also be balanced by the ability to sanction and address intermittent cases of misconduct."

Key to creating a positive environment for research integrity is a common definition for research integrity, along with values and principles that can be widely adopted. The Panel's report therefore sought to provide a definition for research integrity, five core values, and 11 fundamental principles that are applicable to all members of the research community.

The Panel also proposed the creation of a new entity, the Canadian Council for Research Integrity (CCRI). This proposed body would facilitate research integrity practices and support all those involved in the research community. Notably, the CCRI would be independent from government, serve to offer confidential advice on research integrity, collect and disseminate information on research integrity, and promote best practices and standards. The CCRI would not assume responsibility for policing of research misconduct. Issues of sanctioning would continue to rest with Canada's major federal public research funders, otherwise known as the Tri-Council.

"Research plays a key role in shaping our future and the daily lives of Canadians, as such, ensuring the integrity of our research system are vital," said Elizabeth Dowdeswell, President of the Council of Canadian Academies. "The Council was pleased to undertake this assessment at the request of the federal Minister of Industry and we believe the Panel's report will spark an important national discussion and action on research integrity."

For more information, or to download a free copy of the report in English or French please visit www.scienceadvice.ca.

About the Council of Canadian Academies

The Council of Canadian Academies is an independent, not-for-profit corporation that began operation in 2005. The Council supports evidence-based, expert assessments (studies) to inform public policy development in Canada. Assessments are conducted by independent, multidisciplinary panels of experts from across Canada and abroad. The Council's blue-ribbon panels serve free of charge and many are Fellows of the Council's Member Academies: the RSC: The Academies of Arts, Humanities and Sciences of Canada; the Canadian Academy of Engineering; and the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences. The Council's reports are published and made available to the public free of charge in English and French. For information please visit the Council's website at www.scienceadvice.ca.

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