



**21st Meeting of the
Committee on Freedom and Responsibility in the conduct of Science CFRS**

ICSU Secretariat
6-7 October 2016
Paris

Meeting Report

Present	Leiv K. Sydnes (chair), Ranjini Bandyopadhyay, David Black (<i>ex officio</i>), Richard Bourgeois-Doyle, Merry Bullock, Guéladio Cissé, Hasan Dweik, Kumie Inose, Gaven Martin, Alberto J. Núñez Sellés, Lucilla Spini (<i>ex officio</i>), Mark Thorley
Absent	Roberta D’Alessandro, Eric Odata, Silke Schicktanz, Valérie Schini-Kerth
ICSU Secretariat	Heide Hackmann (Executive Director), Roger Ridley (CFRS Executive Secretary), Rohini Rao (Administrative Officer), Johannes Mengel (Communications Officer), Charles Ebikeme (Science Officer)

1 Welcoming remarks and introduction

The chair welcomed the committee members and invited them to introduce themselves to the new Executive Secretary, Roger Ridley. The chair thanked the ICSU Secretariat for its assistance in facilitating the meeting.

The chair reminded committee members that travel arrangements should be made as early as possible and through the ICSU Secretariat, for reasons of cost effectiveness and to facilitate the obtaining of visas, if necessary. ICSU would reimburse expenses for economy air travel and accommodation for the duration of CFRS meetings.

The chair also reminded committee members about the confidential nature of the meeting documents and ICSU’s policy for conflict of interest. No conflicts of interest were reported.

2 Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes, but item 9.1 was moved to before 8.4. The chair noted one item for inclusion in Item 15: Any other business

Decision

To adopt the agenda

3 The new CFRS secretariat and the new Executive Secretary

The chair noted that the secretariat support for the committee was in transition. The chair welcomed the new Executive Secretary, Roger Ridley, and expressed appreciation for the New Zealand government’s support to enable the Royal Society of New Zealand to support the role for the next five years.

Lucilla Spini clarified the boundaries between her role as an *ex-officio* CFRS committee member providing a conduit between CFRS and the ICSU Executive Board and wider ICSU business, and the Executive Secretary’s role in directly supporting CFRS.

Roger Ridley described his background to the committee, noting his previous career as a scientist, his subsequent

career within government policy and science investment, and his current role in the Royal Society of New Zealand working with science experts and panels to provide advice and guidance to governments, the public and the research community.

4 20th CFRS meeting: report and implementation

The committee noted that the report of the previous meeting had been approved electronically and posted on the web on 13 June 2016. Decisions yet to be implemented were considered under the appropriate agenda items at the meeting.

The chair suggested that future meeting reports should identify follow-up actions and who is responsible for them, in the form of a table at the end of the report.

The committee sought clarification of the state of play on the advisory note from the workshop in Mexico City, given the transition in the Secretariat. It was agreed to cover this elsewhere in the agenda.

Decision

To accept the report of the 20th CFRS meeting

To note the follow-up actions by the Secretariat

To agree to prepare a separate table of actions and responsibilities to complement future meeting reports

5 ICSU Strategic Plan (2018-2023)

Heide Hackmann outlined the state of play on the strategic plan initiated by the ICSU Executive Board and Committee on Scientific Planning and Review (CSPR) in 2015. In view of the pending discussions regarding a proposed merger of ICSU and the International Social Sciences Council (ISSC) into a new organisation, the Executive Board has put further strategy development on hold until decisions are made on the merger and consequent process agreed. However, the committee was encouraged to provide further input on topics for subsequent use, recognising there would be a reduced timeframe for strategy development once the merger decision and process are clarified. The committee noted it had previously highlighted six important strategic topics: Research Integrity, Assessment, Open Access and Data, Education, Gender, and Mobility and Internationalisation.

Heide Hackmann noted that the intention is that the new strategy will be high level and flexible, will clearly articulate a vision and mission for the organisation and its committees, and will reflect the core values of a new organisation and how we live those values. This will be distilled down to annual achievements with consideration of expected impact. The objective is to have a draft strategy by January 2017.

The committee sought clarification of how the new organisation's visibility and profile would be communicated and agreed to cover this elsewhere in the agenda.

Decision

To note the oral report

To note that any further input from CFRS on topics needed to be with the Executive Board by 23 October

6 Freedom and responsibility in science: generic issues (updates and new ones)

6.1 Boycott calls against the Israeli science community

The committee noted that the chair had previously written to the American Anthropological Association (AAA) on behalf of the committee on two occasions encouraging them to reconsider a proposed boycott of Israel, on the basis that such a boycott would be inconsistent with ICSU's Principle of the Universality of Science.

The chair advised the committee that AAA had subsequently voted no to the boycott resolution in a close vote.

The committee noted that AAA is a member of ICSU and therefore obliged to adhere to the Principle of the Universality of Science. This case provided a useful reference example of the importance of ICSU members building this principle into their procedures.

Decision

To note the outcome of the AAA vote

To write to the American Anthropological Association expressing satisfaction with the outcome and their adherence to the Principle of the Universality of Science

6.2 CFRS Advisory note on “Science communication”

The Committee expressed its appreciation for the work of the task group of committee members in preparing the Advisory note on science communications.

The committee provided editorial comments on the introductory paragraph of the updated note and considered the appropriate process for publication.

Decision

To recommend adoption by the Executive Board following final editing by the ICSU secretariat

To send the advisory note, once adopted, to International Network of Government Science Advisers and World Science Forum

6.3 Ban on teaching political science at Uzbek higher education institutions

The committee noted that no response has yet been received from the Uzbekistan Academy of Sciences (UAS), requesting their assessment of the government’s ban on teaching of political science at the country’s universities, and also that no alternative channel of communication has been identified.

Decision

To resend the original letter to UAS

To contact the president of one of the universities to ascertain the latest situation, noting this initiative to UAS

6.4 Joint action with the InterAcademy Partnership to protect scientists’ human rights

The committee noted there had been no further progress on joint action with the InterAcademy Partnership. However, there was some progress with Science International.

Decision

To await a response from the InterAcademy Partnership

6.5 Vetting of scientific publications in Russia

At the previous meeting it was decided to continue to follow the consequences of a requirement, introduced by the Russian authorities, for scientists at universities and other research institutions to get approval before disseminating the results of scientific research. Since the previous meeting no developments have been observed and no action has been taken.

Decision

To continue to follow the case and act as appropriate in future

6.6 The situation in Turkey

The committee noted that ICSU had been following developments in Turkey over the years and its concern over the implications of recent developments following the failed coup d’état on 15 July 2016. The committee noted the reported removal of academics’ and researchers’ freedoms as expressed in the Principle of Universality of Science in the aftermath of the coup, for example the forced resignations of university deans and the mass firing of university teachers.

ICSU and CFRS were contacted by organizations and individuals shortly after the attempted coup, requesting that ICSU publish a statement about the situation and developments in Turkey. A statement was composed through a process coordinated by the secretariat, and posted on the ICSU homepage on 28 July 2016.

The committee noted that the situation in Turkey remains volatile. Further efforts would be needed to restore respect for the Principle of Universality of Science, although the means to do this are unclear.

Decision

To note publication of the statement on the ICSU website and that this had been picked up by others

To follow the situation in Turkey and continue investigating possible actions

To discuss the situation with the Executive Board

6.7 Defence Trade Controls in Act 2012 (DTCA), Australia

The committee received an update on the potential impact of Defence Trade Controls Act (DTCA) on the freedom of Australian scientists in carrying out their work, and noted the correspondence with the new Chief Scientist of Australia, Dr Alan Finkel, and the Australian Academy of Science. The President of the Academy has confirmed that there has been regular communication with the Chief Scientist and the Department of Defence over these matters.

The committee came to the view that the Australian science community appears to be comfortable with the legislation and nothing more needs to be done at this stage.

Decision

To note the usefulness of the correspondence with the local academy and the recognition of ICSU's role

To write and thank the President of the Australian Academy of Sciences for their assistance and request that they let us know if any new concerns arise

6.8 Israeli occupation of Al Quds University campus

The committee reviewed the case of Israeli forces' previous unscheduled visits and harassment of students on the Al Quds University campus. A letter had been sent to the Israeli Academy of Sciences but no reply received. The committee noted that there did not appear to have been any further recent incidences.

Decision

To write to the Israeli Defence Ministry if any further incidents arise that warrant it

To re-send an email previously sent to the Israeli Academy of Sciences requesting their view on the situation and offering a briefing by the committee chair

6.9 The Heinz Richter case

The committee was pleased to observe that charges against Professor Heinz Richter, University of Mannheim, Germany for racism that were discussed at the previous meeting of the committee, have been dropped. This may have been assisted by ICSU's prompt action in getting information onto the web about the case.

Decision

To note that the charges have been dropped and that no further action is required

6.10 Killing of Giulio Regeni, an Italian PhD student in Egypt

The committee received an update on the case of Giulio Regeni, an Italian student pursuing a PhD at University of Cambridge, UK, who died in tragic circumstances when he was doing fieldwork in Egypt in January 2016. His case was discussed at the previous meeting. The committee noted that a letter sent to the Vice Chancellor at the university did not elicit any specific information related to the case as it was still under investigation by public

authorities both in Egypt and Italy. It remains unclear what guidance exists for researchers working in high risk areas foreign to them.

Decision

To note the guidelines being drafted by the committee on the subject of researchers working in high risk areas
To follow the case

6.11 Guidelines for scholars doing research in unstable regions

Inspired by the recent Regeni and Kokabee cases, the committee received a progress report from the subgroup (Bullock, Cissé, D’Alessandro, Inose, Martin, Schick Tanz and Schini-Kerth) tasked with drafting guidelines for students and scholars doing research in countries and regions where the Principle of Universality of Science might be breached, and where research and researchers could be at risk. The committee had a wide ranging discussion on the scope and language of the proposed guidelines note.

The committee noted the need for individuals to know what they have to do when risks materialise and that the guidance available from, for example, UN security guidelines, travel advisories and the like is insufficient. There always needs to be an appropriate risk assessment including, but not limited to, normal institutional and government policies on travel. The committee noted that this topic should be of interest to the International Social Sciences Council given the political and sociological aspects of the risks involved.

Decision

To thank the subgroup for its work to date and invite it to further develop the guidelines for the next meeting
To limit the scope to students and researchers travelling to other countries where there is a need to educate them about the socio/political risks that they may face
To use the recent Regeni case to check whether the guidelines would have made a difference

7 Freedom of Science: Individual cases (updates and new ones)

7.1 Omid Kokabee, Iran

The committee noted its satisfaction that Omid Kokabee has been released from prison in Iran. The chair had previously contacted Iranian representatives at the mission in Oslo, Norway with a view to obtaining Omid Kokabee’s release.

The Kokabee case, combined with increasing activity to launch research cooperation with Iran, contributed to the appointment of a team with the task to draft guidelines for scholars intending to work in Iran and other countries with a record of breaching the Principle of Universality of Science (item 6.11).

Decision

To note the release of Omid Kokabee
To write to the Iranian representatives acknowledging the positive outcome

7.2 Busra Ersanli, Turkey

The chair updated the committee noting that the case has been going through the courts for over four years with the last court appearance on 17 May 2016, the final outcome of which is not clear yet.

Decision

To continue following the case

7.3 Bahá’í academic leaders, Iran

The chair reported that there have been no new developments since the last meeting

Decision

To continue monitoring progress

To write to the relevant minister: either Minister of Research Science and technology or Council of Higher Education, rather than higher government officials (Merry to provide address)

To copy the letter to the Bahá'í international community to sit alongside other responses on the website

7.4 Hooma Hoodfar, Canada/Iran

The committee noted this case which was originally brought to the attention of the committee through an article in the New York Times (<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/10/world/middleeast/arrest-of-homa-hoodfar-in-iran-shines-light-on-dangers-for-dual-citizens.html>). The committee noted that Hooma Hoodfar has now been released and is recovering, and that it was the profile of the case in Canada that helped force the issue to resolution.

Decision

To take no further action

7.5 Additional item – identifying new cases

The committee discussed the formal basis for bringing issues violating the Principle of Universality of Science to the table.

Decision

To seek information from committee members when a potential issue comes to the committee's attention and, if agreed by members, have the chair write to the appropriate organisation and request information to assess:

- The opportunity for ICSU to have influence in resolving the issue
- Whether the issue is materially one of science

7.6 Additional item – possible future agenda item

The committee noted a potential case of an Israeli professor now back in jail as a possible agenda item for the next meeting.

Decision

To investigate what information is available and assess whether it warrants discussion at the next meeting

8 Conferences and workshops**8.1 Workshop "Gender issues in field research" (Mexico, April 2016)**

The committee noted that a workshop entitled "Gender issues in field research: mobility and internationalization of science" took place on 27 April 2016 at the Mexican Academy of Sciences. The event was organized by CFRS, the Mexican Academy of Sciences (MAS) and the ICSU Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (ROLAC). A report about the workshop, prepared under the lead of AJ Núñez Sellés, was published on the CFRS section of the ICSU website on 11 May 2016.

During the workshop an Advisory Note on the conference topic was drafted, and in a subsequent circular process a draft version of "Mobility and Field Research in the Sciences: Gender Equality and Prevention of Harassment", was produced. The committee discussed the draft and made final editing changes before agreeing it could go to the ICSU Executive Board for approval.

Decision

To thank those that contributed to the successful workshop

To send the advisory note to the Executive Board and recommend it for publication

8.2 5th World Conference on Research Integrity (Amsterdam May 2017) and Science International

The committee noted that at the previous meeting the committee decided to withdraw any official involvement from the 5th WCRI and that this had been communicated to the conference chair.

The committee discussed what topics could be usefully pursued through its involvement in Science International and noted that it previously identified two subjects to which the committee could contribute:

- Integrity in the use of metrics for assessment, evaluation and construction of excellence; and
- Reproducibility and the responsible use of data.

The committee noted that there could be beneficial flow-on from the first Science International topic on big data, and that CFRS and CODATA could link and provide members for a working group. The committee also discussed an alternative scenario to provide input within the context of major world science events such as the World Science Forum (see item 12), however this was seen as likely to be less effective.

The committee noted that topics for Science International should be ones that reach across domains e.g. open data and that created an opportunity to talk with a global voice, and that there was huge international interest from research communities in these issues. Capacity building and entrepreneurship in African and Middle Eastern countries are also big opportunities for Science International.

The committee noted that metrics is an issue where it could come up with tangible advice, whereas reproducibility of science is an area where there is more limited opportunity to drive change beyond just describing the issue.

Decision

To note the topics suggested for Science International
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8.3 Workshop on “Shaping the future of researchers in developing countries”

The committee noted that it agreed at its previous meeting that “Shaping the future of researchers in developing countries; enabling environment and resources, halting brain drain and enhancing the value of basic research” was an interesting topic for a future workshop. The committee also noted that the focus could be on Africa and in that context, possibly be linked through the Regional Office for Africa with the African capacity-building program, which is now funded by the Swedish International Development Agency. A group (G Cissé, R D’Alessandro, K Inose, V Schini-Kerth) was established to develop the program further, and D Black was tasked to pass these suggestions on to H Hackmann for consideration in upcoming discussions.

The committee received an update on the workshop proposal, confirmed the relevance of the topic, and provided comments and suggestions in further developing the proposal. A summary of comments will be distributed to committee members.

Decision

To note the update from the subgroup and thank them for their work to date
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To invite the subgroup to prepare a concrete proposal and agenda, considering the comments of the committee

8.4 Ideas for new future CFRS workshops

The committee first sought clarification of what had previously been discussed at the Mexico meeting and in previous CFRS discussions, and that Metrics and Research Integrity is done – the previous workshop started it and others are taking it forward. Science International has proposed a workshop that CFRS could contribute to.

Committee members were divided into groups to discuss proposals and were asked to consider ideas for topics. A summary of ideas will be distributed to committee members.

Decision

To note the possible topics

9 ICSU and ISSC

9.1 Possible merger of ICSU and ISSC

Heide Hackmann briefed the committee on progress with discussions re possible merger. The committee noted that the process of consideration to merge ICSU and ISSC is moving forward following the roadmap developed through constructive discussions between the two councils. The process will culminate in a joint meeting of ICSU and ISSC in Oslo on October 24th 2016. All ICSU members will be invited to the meeting, which therefore constitutes an Extraordinary General Assembly of ICSU. CFRS will be affected if the outcome of the meeting is to approve the merger.

The committee discussed the merger and raised many ideas for the secretariat to consider. A summary of these ideas will be distributed to committee members.

Decision

To note the presentation

To invite the ICSU secretariat to consider the feedback and comments from the committee

9.2 World Social Science Report 2016

The ISSC Executive Director Mathieu Denis presented a summary of the ISSC report World Social Science Report 2016: Challenging Inequalities – Pathways to a Just World, that was published on 22 September 2016. The report highlights the latest social science knowledge on the state of inequalities today and examines the effects of inequalities across multiple dimensions including gender and access to knowledge.

Decision

To thank Mathieu Denis for the valuable presentation
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10 Presentation of the IBC report on Big Data and Health

Professor Johannes van Delden, chair of UNESCO's International Bioethics Committee (IBC), presented a summary of a preliminary draft report prepared by IBC on Big Data and Health. Professor Van Delden noted that the IBC's role is to draw attention to issues and opportunities. However, countries will need to fund specific initiatives.

Big data is driving rapid change in personalised medicine and data, and a computer may now be better than an oncologist in diagnosis through its ability to process big data.

The committee noted the usefulness of the report in summarising and articulating the issues and opportunities around Big Data for the health sector and its applicability in other areas. The committee noted that capturing cultural diversity and dealing with false data were generic issues for big data.

Following on from the earlier ISSC presentation on inequality, the committee noted that Big Data may exacerbate inequalities e.g. through the existence of the "digital divide" resulting in differential access to data.

Decision

To thank Professor van Delden for the valuable presentation and encourage finalisation of the report
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11 9th Extraordinary Session of COMEST

The chair briefed the committee about the proceedings of the UNESCO World Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology (COMEST) meeting in Paris 12-16 September 2016.

Decision

To note the proceedings

12 Possible CFRS role in World Science Forum

The committee noted that the World Science Forum (WSF) is held every two years with the next one to be held in Jordan in November 2017 with the theme “Science for Peace”. The committee noted that ICSU is a founding member of WSF and is represented on the steering committees for the forum, and therefore has a long term commitment to contributing to WSF. IAP and ISSC have also joined the steering committee. Attendees typically include scientists, previous committee members and Regional Offices.

The CFRS committee discussed the opportunities of the upcoming WSF, noting that WSF’s focus on science provides an appropriate place to socialise and promote the Principle of Universality of Science, complementing the World Conferences on Research Integrity (WCRI).

The committee considered the proposed high level agenda and noted its contributions should be part of one or more of the plenary sessions. The committee identified two plenary sessions where it could contribute:

Plenary III. Science Education, Outreach and Engagement

This would be an ideal place to socialise and highlight the Principle of Universality of Science.

Plenary VIII. Reconstruction and Recovery

This could include developing science infrastructure.

The committee encouraged collaboration with ISSC in any or all of these contributions reflecting the proposed merger, and also noted the opportunity to leverage Sir Peter Gluckman’s work and profile.

The CFRS committee noted that its initial view on contributions to WSF is required by the Executive Board by 28th October and final input by June 2017.

Decision

To note the opportunities for participation in WSF in Jordan 7-11 November 2017

To invite the ICSU Secretariat to consider its views in preparing advice for the Executive Board

13 The ICSU homepage

J Mengel provided an update on the redevelopment of the ICSU website and noted the project is behind schedule and that a further report will be provided at the next meeting.

The committee then discussed ways to showcase CFRS’ work as part of a wider ICSU communications and digital strategy, in a world where use of social media including Twitter for news and communication predominates. A summary of the committee’s suggestions will be distributed to committee members.

Decision

To note the update

To invite the ICSU Secretariat to consider the committee’s suggestions

14 Upcoming CFRS meetings

The committee considered its future meetings and noted the potential impact of a merger with the International Social Sciences Council on meeting requirements and schedule.

Decision

To meet next in Paris on the 20th and 21st of April, 2017

To expect to meet in Jordan in November 2017 in conjunction with the World Science Forum, subject to confirmation at the next meeting in Paris

15 Any other business

A university professor had approached the chair about an employment dispute and potential dismissal. The committee discussed the case and determined that it could not usefully contribute to resolving the issue.

Decision

To take no further action