

Merit Review *Summary of Discussions*

Livingstone,
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The Task at Hand



To update the current GRC principles, but retain their essential nature

Why

- Global STI landscape in transition coupled with widespread technological disruption: presents new challenges and new opportunities
- Increased awareness of the role of S&T in development – SGCs are being called upon to be agents and facilitators of change
- Increasingly resource constrained contexts, demand that public investment in research demonstrates impact

Agreements

- There is no distinction between peer and merit review
 - Focus should be on strengthening essential elements of review in funding research
- Merit review should include multifaceted considerations, in which scientific excellence is the baseline, but augmented by additional impact criteria for allocating funding
 - Especially in the context of SDGs and the increasing importance of partnerships in research and innovation
 - The weighting/ definitions/ boundaries of impact will vary by context

The current principles

- Expert Assessment
- Transparency
- Impartiality
- Appropriateness
- Confidentiality
- Integrity and Ethical Considerations

The Gaps/ Challenges

- Inter-, trans- and multi-disciplinary research aspects
- Perceptions of current expert reviews as conservative, biases in forms of knowledge and knowing
- Review within fields with small numbers of experts
- Review in context of novel and frontier knowledge explorations
- Availability and capacities of experts at the nexus of disciplines and geographical locations is uneven

Suggested Recommendations

1. Endorse a comprehensive definition of what constitutes merit taking into consideration:
 - Expectations of the principal i.e. public investor
 - Context/ type(s) of societal impact

Definition can consider:

- Contribution to sustainable development goals – people, planet, peace and prosperity
- Human and institutional capacity development imperatives of SGCs

Suggested Recommendations

2. Operationalise and systematise the understanding of merit review in the entire research system, not just within the SGC context
3. Strengthen and deepen the capacities and competencies of expert reviewers to appreciate merit review in a comprehensive manner
 - Including harnessing partnerships to share reviewer databases and expertise
4. Consider new approaches to merit review that that are inclusive of facets such as: *gender, diversity and inclusivity; and inter-, trans- and multi-disciplinarity*

The image features a white background with several light blue curved lines that sweep across the frame. In the upper right corner, the text "GLOBAL RESEARCH COUNCIL" is displayed in a blue, sans-serif font. To the right of the text is a blue curved line that forms a partial circle. In the center of the image, three thick, curved lines intersect: one is red, one is orange, and one is yellow. The red line curves from the upper left towards the lower right. The orange line curves from the upper right towards the lower left. The yellow line is positioned horizontally, crossing the other two.

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