# Rules for Securing Good Scientific Practice (Ethics Code)

Leibniz Institute for Financial Research SAFE
Sustainable Architecture for Finance in Europe

## 1. Introduction

On the basis of the Guidelines for Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice of the German Research Foundation (DFG) and the Guidelines for Good Scientific Practice of the Leibniz Association, approved by the General Assembly of the Leibniz Association on 28 November 2019, the Leibniz Institute for Financial Market Research SAFE (hereinafter referred to as "SAFE" or "the Institute") has adopted a set of rules to safeguard good scientific practice which is binding for all scientific staff. It formulates the rules of good scientific practice and defines scientific misconduct. In addition, it describes the role and tasks of the SAFE ombudspersons and the central ombudspersons of the Leibniz Association and lays down the procedure for dealing with allegations of scientific misconduct.

The primary concern of this set of rules is to raise awareness of the basic rules of scientific practice, to keep them alive and to communicate them to all researchers as a natural condition for scientific work. The rules and regulations are also intended to make it clear that SAFE cannot accept scientific misconduct because it undermines the public's trust in science and destroys the trust of scientists in each other.

This set of rules was adopted by the Board of Trustees of the Leibniz Institute SAFE on 14 January 2020 and is binding for all scientific staff of the Institute.

## 2. Rules of good scientific practice

2.1 Good scientific practice is

- Working lege artis in accordance with current professional and discipline-specific standards,
- fully documenting all steps and results of an experiment or study and securely storing protocols and research data. Test protocols should record the test objective, the test conditions, the test execution and the test result in a comprehensible manner and in a form that cannot be changed afterwards,
- critically and consistently verifying the validity and reproducibility of all results of experiments and other research designs,
- Honesty in the distinguishing of the contributions of all contributors and in the disclosure of third-party funding sources,
- respecting the intellectual authorship of others in all publications and duly identifying all citations and endorsements,
- the assumption of responsibility by the authors of scientific publications for the content and presentation of the results and their discussion as a whole, as well as the explicit identification and justification of cases in which responsibility extends to only part of the publication,
- the appropriate support of researchers during their in qualification phases, including an adequate transfer of competencies, continuous individual support as well as an appropriate and comprehensible academic performance evaluation of the qualification work,
- the responsible cooperation and performance of scientific management tasks in the institution as a whole and in its respective working units, including the assurance of transparent forms of organization, a sufficiently clear division of responsibilities and tasks and the consistent avoidance of the abuse of power and the exploitation of relationships of dependency,
- the primacy of originality and quality of scientific performance as evaluation criteria for promotions, recruitment, appointments and fund allocations.

2.2 Scientific publications should describe scientific results and the way they are produced in a complete and comprehensible manner. Results published earlier can only be part of later publications if they are indispensable for understanding the context of the publication and if reference is made to their first publication.

2.3 Only those who have made a significant contribution to the conception of the studies or experiments, to the preparation, analysis or interpretation of the data and to the formulation of the manuscript itself and who have agreed to the publication, i.e. who are responsible for it, may act as authors of an original scientific publication.

2.4 Research data must be kept complete and accessible for at least ten years, if possible in central, public repositories, such as the SAFE Financial Data Repository (FiF). Information on work processes as well as on applied materials, methods and software must be made accessible as far as possible and reasonable.

2.5 Ethical standards and legal norms must be observed in the collection of personal data and in dealing with examined persons, whether in surveys, experiments or observations. In particular, the personal rights and autonomy of persons involved in investigations must be respected. As a rule, permission to participate must be obtained and documented in advance. Persons who are included in studies as observers or respondents or in other ways, for example in connection with the evaluation of personal documents, must not be exposed to disadvantages or dangers through the research. The persons concerned must be informed about all risks that exceed the level of what is usual in everyday life. In general, an acceptable ratio of risks to the probable return must be maintained. The right to anonymity of the persons investigated must be guaranteed. Confidential information obtained from persons under investigation must be treated accordingly and protected by careful precautions. Data protection regulations must be observed.

## 3. Scientific misconduct

3.1 Scientific misconduct includes misrepresentation in a scientific context by, in particular:

- the invention of data,
- the falsification of data (for example, by selecting desired results or rejecting undesired results or evaluation procedures without disclosing this, or by manipulating a presentation or illustration)
- incorrect information in publication lists or in a grant application (including incorrect information on the publication medium and on publications in print),
- Multiple publication of data or texts without appropriate disclosure.

3.2 Scientific misconduct includes the violation of intellectual property rights, in particular:

- relating to a legally protected work created by others, or to essential scientific knowledge, hypotheses, teachings or research approaches originating from others
  - the unauthorized adoption or other use of passages without adequate proof of authorship (plagiarism),
  - the exploitation of research approaches and ideas without consent, in particular as a reviewer,
  - the presumption or unfounded assumption of scientific authorship or co-authorship as well as the refusal of such,
  - the falsification of the content or
  - the unauthorized publication and unauthorized sharing to third parties as long as the work, knowledge, hypothesis, teaching or research approach has not yet been legally made public;
- Claiming authorship or co-authorship from another person without their consent.

3.3 Scientific misconduct includes unfair obstruction of the research activities of others, including damaging, destroying or manipulating experimental set-ups, equipment, documents, hardware, software or other items needed by others to conduct an experiment.

3.4 The removal of research data if this violates legal provisions or recognized principles of scientific work, as well as the unlawful failure to remove (in particular personal) data, is considered scientific misconduct.

3.4 The neglect of scientific leadership responsibility and the duty of supervision by the heads of working groups or institutes in a way conducive to violations of good scientific practice is scientific misconduct.

3.5 Co-authoring with the acceptance of participating in a publication that is subject to falsification is scientific misconduct.

3.6 Deliberately pretending to implement or use quality assurance measures and procedures (such as peer review) is scientific misconduct.

## 4. SAFE Ombudspersons

For the mediation or clarification of discrepancies, suspicious facts or disputes in connection with good scientific practice, the SAFE researchers elect two ombudspersons from their midst by a simple majority of the votes cast. All researchers and academics who carry out research tasks at SAFE against payment or within the framework of a cooperation agreement are entitled to propose and vote. The institute management ensures that a secret ballot is conducted properly and that the ombudspersons' work is sufficiently visible, independent and supported.

The ombudspersons should have the personal integrity and objective judgement necessary for the performance of their duties and may not be members of the executive bodies (Management Board and Scientific Board) of SAFE. They mutually represent each other. The term of office is three years. Re-election is possible.

The ombudspersons exercise their function on a voluntary basis, independent and free from instructions. In the performance of their role they are to be supported by all researchers involved in a procedure. They report annually in writing to the SAFE Board of Trustees.

An ombudsperson can be removed from their function by two-thirds of the votes of the researchers entitled to vote, if a permanently reliable fulfilment of tasks no longer appears possible or if confidence in the proper fulfilment of the tasks no longer exists. The ombudsperson concerned must be given the opportunity to be heard before such a decision is taken.

The SAFE ombudspersons advise the researchers and mediate in conflicts related to good scientific practice. They can make statements to the management of SAFE and contribute to the establishment of a culture of good scientific practice and scientific integrity at the Institute. They also examine allegations of scientific misconduct in a formal procedure. If, in the course of such an investigation procedure, it emerges that it is not possible to conclusively clarify the allegations within SAFE or that extraordinary circumstances prevent the procedure from being carried out, the ombudspersons submit the case to the central ombudspersons of the Leibniz Association. This does not affect the possibility of turning to the "Research Ombudsman" committee set up by the DFG.

## 5. Investigating allegations of scientific misconduct and proceeding with the investigation

The SAFE ombudspersons can and should be contacted by anyone who suspects or is suspected of scientific misconduct within the Institute.

If an allegation of scientific misconduct is brought to the ombudspersons, they will conduct a preliminary examination independently and immediately. In order to carry out this preliminary examination, they usually hear at least the accused and the informant in oral or written form. In order to clarify the facts of the case, they may question other persons and obtain expert opinions. The persons concerned are informed of the result of the preliminary examination by the ombudspersons. The result of the preliminary examination is also submitted to the Institute's Management Board.

In case of specific grounds for suspicion, the facts on which the suspicion is based must be investigated immediately. In any case, the allegations must be sufficiently substantiated so that a well-founded initial suspicion of misconduct can be derived from them. The investigations are carried out or initiated by the ombudspersons. The persons concerned are informed about the commencement of the investigations and about the course of the investigations. A conflict of interest of an investigating ombudsperson can be asserted both by him or her or by one of the persons concerned. If there is disagreement about the allegation of bias, the Chairman of the Research Advisory Council will decide.

The person affected by the suspicion of misconduct shall be given the opportunity to express his or her position, stating the incriminating facts and evidence, no later than one week after the suspicion has become known. The period to give the statement shall not exceed two weeks.

After receipt of the statement of the person concerned or after expiry of the deadline, the ombudspersons will make a decision within one week as to whether the previous findings invalidate or confirm the suspicion of misconduct. The internal investigation procedure of the ombudspersons is concluded with a written report of the ombudspersons to the Management Board and the Chairperson of the Research Advisory Council.

The Management Board deals with the report of the ombudspersons. If there is a substantiated suspicion, the Management Board, in consultation with the SAFE ombudspersons and the Chairman of the Research Advisory Council, decides on further investigations, the necessity of measures or the consultation of the central ombudspersons of the Leibniz Association. However, the procedure by the ombudspersons of SAFE always has priority.

The central ombudspersons deal with allegations if they are submitted by decentralized ombudspersons or if they are informed by persons concerned, third parties or even anonymously about a suspicion of scientific misconduct at a member institution of the Leibniz Association.

All investigations are carried out in strict compliance with the confidentiality and protection of all parties concerned. Personal information is anonymized as far as possible. As a rule, disclosure of the name of the informant to the accused person is only necessary if no other appropriate defense against the accusations is possible. The ombudspersons are obliged to prevent disadvantages for the scientific and professional advancement of the informant as far as possible and to protect the accused from unjustified accusations. This obligation also applies to any person and body that needs to consulted in further proceedings.

## 6. Closure of the procedure

In the event of scientific misconduct, the Management Board shall decide on the necessary measures. These may include:

- a written reprimand,
- a request to withdraw incriminating publications or - in less serious cases - to correct incorrect data by publishing an erratum,

- the use of actions with academic, disciplinary, work related consequences or civil or criminal sanctions.

The main grounds that led to the termination of the proceedings or to decisions on measures to be implemented must be communicated to the persons concerned, the informant and the Chairperson of the Research Advisory Council as well as the SAFE Board of Trustees.

The Management Board decides on the disclosure and publication of its decisions and the ombudspersons' reports on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the existence of a legitimate interest by third parties.

## 7. Entry into force

The "Rules for Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice" come into force with the Institute's internal announcement.