Towards fair research collaborations

Paulo Ferrinho, Isabel Craveiro, António Carvalho, Maria do Rosário Oliveira Martins, Henrique Silveira and Zulmira Hartz

INSTITUTO DE HIGIENE E
MEDICINA TROPICAL
UNIVERSIDADE NOVA DE LISBOA

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Research partnerships (RP)

Involve

building relationships,

mutual cooperation

sharing tasks

In order to:

enhance research capacity

attain common goals

produce and share innovative knowledge

develop new lines of research supported by new synergies *(Craveiro et al, 2017, Farnman et al, 2015)*.

Therefore, the way partnerships are built & sustained should be a common concern of
FUNDERS & RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS

Not surprisingly, over the past twenty years,

development of guidelines,

good standards of practice,

ethical regulations and

recommendations on transboundary research partnerships *(ESSENCE, 2014; KFPE, 2014; CCGHR, 2016)*.

But no systematic framework to evaluate RP in practice

COHRED's **RFI**

- **evidence based tool** that operationalizes **good practice standards** related to three main dimensions of partnerships

    - fairness of opportunity,

    - fair process and

    - fair sharing of benefits, costs and outcomes *(COHRED, 2017; Ijsselmuiden and Klipp, 2017; Carvalho et al 2017; Carvalho, Nunes and Hartz, 2017; Craveiro and Hartz, 2017)*

- requires adhering institutions to develop a strategy to "improve" their behavior in RP – RFI Logo granted for a period of 2 years – institutional change must take place

- IHMT-NOVA was first **partner of COHRED´s RFI.**
    - among Portuguese language Institutions
    - among Europen Academic Institution

RP at NOVA-IHMT

- NOVA-IHMT
  - key institution in Portugal and in the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries in terms of health for development, health systems strengthening, infectious tropical diseases, global health, education & training
  - strongly engaged in RP between Latin America, Europe and Africa since its foundation in 1902

  - Undergoing process of revision of management and laboratory processes
    - **COHRED´s RFI provided** tool to go beyond mere good intentions or discussions,
      - reviewing our partnership processes and systematizing our ongoing efforts to establish fair partnerships with our collaborating institutions – **INTERN**AL positioning.
      - structuring with our partners the dialogue about what our partnerships should look like – **EXTERNAL** positioning.

Internal RFI advocacy

- RFI **report** and **accreditation** →

IHMT NOVA is a Research Fairness Initiative-reporting organization → Action agenda

- **GHTM´s Research line** →

Fair Research Partnerships

- **Research projects** and initiatives focused on capacity building, knowledge translation and public engagement with science.

- University Development and Innovation – Africa (UDI-A) - mobility and empowerment of African academics, the establishment of North/South research partnerships and the strengthening of African institutions.
- *WIDENING-TWINNING project* in partnerships with COHRED and SDU - develop the field of 'fair RP' and foster the implementation of standards and good practices related to the RFI.

- **5th National Congress on Tropical Medicine**

5º CONGRESSO NACIONAL DE MEDICINA TROPICAL

POLÍTICAS E SERVIÇOS DE SAÚDE

10 A 12 ABRIL 2019
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External RFI advocacy/implementation will build on:

- **Members from partner institutions from the Global South belonging to IHMT's** Administration Board, Advisory Council & Scientific Advisory Board

- **Institutional partnerships with Universities in Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Mozambique and East Timor**
  - NOVA-IHMT incorporates academic staff from those Universities as Invited Professors
  - NOVA-IHMT staff
    - serving as Invited Professors at those Universities,
    - participating in Scientific Councils and
    - delocalizing training programs from Portugal to Angola, Brazil and Cape Verde.

- Membership of several networks, namely
  - within the CPLP (Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries)
  - within the European Union , such as TropEd
  - globally, such as IANPHI and CUGH

External RFI advocacy

- A dedicated special issue of IHMT's scientific journal – **Anais do Instituto de Higiene e Medicina Tropical**

- **Editorial in the BMJ Global Health** (Portuguese version available, shared with HIFA – Health information for all)

- CPLP's Ministers of Health **Declaration to adopt the RFI** as part of the collaborative strategies of CPLP (October 2017 in Brasilia).

- **RIDES** (CPLP research networks) (April 2018)

- IHMT's Newsletter (monthly)

- **Editorial** - Cooperation, research and health equity
- **Guest Editorial** – Beyond Good Intentions – The Research Fairness Initiative
- **6 Original Articles**
- **2 Research Notes**

- Dear Dr. Carvalho,

Thank you for submitting your interesting manuscript to BMJ Global Health, which I am pleased to tell you has been accepted for publication ... **Given its importance**, I have decided to publish your manuscript as an editorial...

Yours sincerely

Dr. Seye Abimbola

Editor in Chief, BMJ Global Health

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Ethical and Moral Impact

- Good practice standards (as structured by RFI) are a certain subset of ethical obligations

- Help to mobilize ethical capital as part of an organisations' brand management strategies

- Hence, RFI guides institutions towards ethical actions that reconfigure member's perceptions of their moral obligations

- It does so by changing morally relevant facts and circumstances, e.g.
  - changing people's expectations regarding opportunity, process and sharing of benefits,
  - providing new options.

Concluding remarks

- We are still in the early days of the RFI but we need to assess its real impact on partnerships – how does it benefit LMICs?

- Development of a metric/protocol/indicators to "evaluate" the RFI

- It fostered an institution-wide discussion at the IHMT/NOVA with practical implications (implementation of new research management processes)

- Need for reflection on the adequate business model

- IHMT/NOVA and CPLP spearheading the incorporation of the COHRED's RFI as a model to support the transition towards fair partnerships, aligned with the SDG17

- Need recognition and support from funders and research institutions

SDG 17 **- strengthening "the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development".**