



# RFI SUMMARY GUIDE

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## Summary Guide: Introduction

*The Research Fairness Initiative (RFI) is a COHRED service to improve the fairness, efficiency and impact of research collaborations globally. Given our origins in “research for health”, the RFI was created with the aim of improving global health, equity and development.*

However, with minor modifications, the RFI is also completely appropriate to be used in any other field of science collaboration. As we discovered, improving the fairness of research is also a strategic advantage in research organisations, institutions and businesses: greater fairness results in greater efficiency, longer-lasting partnerships, less conflict, improved uptake, reduced reputational risk and greater impact. The RFI is, therefore, of relevance to all key stakeholders in any research collaboration anywhere and of any duration – even though we started with the aim of increasing the research and innovation capacity of low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) in particular. The overall impact of the RFI should be more capable research and innovation systems in all countries of the world to deal with all the important local, regional and global health and development challenges – now and in the future. The RFI is in direct support of the Sustainable Development Goals – particularly SDG 17 on Partnership.

The RFI can be used by all organizations, institutions, businesses or government departments who engage as actors, sponsors, facilitators of research and research partnerships. In particular, the RFI has been designed for use by:

1. *Government departments with a major responsibility for supporting or undertaking research including but not limited to Ministries of Science and Technology, Health, Higher Education*
2. *National Research and innovation agencies*
3. *Academic and research institutions/organisations*
4. *Private sector / Industry research divisions and organisations*
5. *Research funders, sponsors, and philanthropies*
6. *Other key stakeholders – including but not limited to – large non-profits engaging in research, international organisations and multi-national bodies, development organisations promoting and using research and innovation, and others who associate themselves as concerned stakeholders*

### **Research Fairness Initiative (RFI)**

Get involved with the RFI, contribute to global research fairness, efficiency and impact for health, equity and development.

## RFI Documentation

### What you will need:

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RFI Summary Guide



RFI Reporting Guide



RFI Implementation Guide

Further documentation will be added over time. Please see the RFI website for latest updates. <http://rfi.cohred.org>

### Copyright and Fair Use

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*The current version of the RFI Summary Guide is ready for use. It is version 2, so we are convinced it can be improved. We are welcoming any comments for improvement. Please send your comments to [rfi@cohred.org](mailto:rfi@cohred.org) or upload them on the RFI website.*

## Introduction to the RFI Summary Guide

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The core of the Research Fairness Initiative (RFI) is an understanding of the characteristics and measures that organisations need to have to be or become better partners in collaborative research and innovation.

This Research Fairness Initiative (RFI) Summary Guide outlines the RFI domains, topics and indicators that are required to produce an organisational RFI Report. The RFI Summary Guide serves as an overview on areas of reporting for organisations to follow in order to become fairer partners in research and innovation. More details are provided in the RFI Reporting Guide.

One major objective of the RFI is to develop research and innovation system capacities in low- and middle- income country (LMIC) institutions through their research partnerships with high-income country (HIC) institutions. At the same time, the RFI is of relevance to increase efficiency and performance of any research collaboration and partnerships and this guide will be useful to all research stakeholders.

The RFI has been designed, firstly, as a reporting system that is used by all research stakeholders and can be validated by the RFI Secretariat, and, secondly, as a learning platform to increase understanding and sharing of innovations and best practices. High quality reporting is done by providing quantitative and qualitative information on each of the 45 indicators that jointly make up the RFI.

### **Comprehensive reporting on each indicator is done in three tranches:**

1. *Provide specific answers as required under each topic.*
2. *Provide supportive documentation to substantiate your answers in item.*
3. *Provide your short- and medium-term plans for further improvement of your organisation's actions related to this particular indicator/topic. It is the strategic part for your own organisation and for prospective partners – to see how future collaborations will be implemented.*

### **For Each Indicator**

- Report on each indicator according to specifications
- Provide supportive documentation
- Outline future actions to improve fairness and performance

### For Each Domain

- Supplement the information provided for each indicator with any other good partnership practices or actions used or promoted by your organisation

The Research Fairness Initiative (RFI) is a COHRED service to improve the fairness, efficiency and impact of research collaborations. Given our origins in „research for health“, the RFI was started with the aim of improving global health, equity and development. However, with minor modifications, the RFI is also completely appropriate to be used in any other field of science collaboration. As we discovered, improving the fairness of research is also a strategic advantage in research organisations, institutions and businesses: greater fairness results in greater efficiency, longer-lasting partnerships, less conflict, improved uptake and impact. The RFI is therefore of relevance to all key stakeholders in any research collaboration anywhere and of any duration - even though we started with the aim of increasing the research and innovation capacity of low and middle-income countries in particular. The RFI is in direct support of the Sustainable Development Goals - particularly SDG 17 on Partnerships.

## RFI Guidelines: Domains, Topics and Indicators

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### DOMAIN 1: FAIRNESS OF OPPORTUNITY

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#### Topic 1. Relevance to communities - in which research is done

- Indicator 1.1.1. Research priorities in communities where research is being conducted
- Indicator 1.1.2. Actions if there are no research priorities
- Indicator 1.1.3. Justification to research low priority topics

#### Topic 2. Early engagement of all partners - in deciding about aims, methods, implementation

- Indicator 1.2.1. Relationship between the ,main/lead/sponsoring' and ,other' partners
- Indicator 1.2.2. SOPs for partner inclusion in study design
- Indicator 1.2.3. SOPs for supportive actions to partners

#### Topic 3. Making contributions of all partners explicit -Fair Research Contracting

- Indicator 1.3.1. Role clarification in research partnerships
- Indicator 1.3.2. SOPs for conflict resolution
- Indicator 1.3.3 Making potential impact explicit before starting research

#### Topic 4. Ensuring that matching and other co-financing mechanisms do not undermine opportunities for fair participation of all partners

- Indicator 1.4.1. Equal co-financing
- Indicator 1.4.2. Alternatives to equal co-financing
- Indicator 1.4.3. Research outside national priorities and co-financing

#### Topic 5. Recognition of unequal research management capacities between partners and providing for appropriate corrective measures

- Indicator 1.5.1. Research Management Capacity
- Indicator 1.5.2. Financial Management Capacity
- Indicator 1.5.3. Contracting and Contract Negotiation capacity



## **DOMAIN 2: FAIR PROCESS**

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### **Topic 6. Minimizing negative impact of research programmes on systems**

- Indicator 2.6.1. Assessing potential harm of research
- Indicator 2.6.2. Reducing negative impact of research
- Indicator 2.6.3. Compensation for unintended (negative) consequences of research

### **Topic 7. Fair local hiring, training and sourcing**

- Indicator 2.7.1. Local staffing
- Indicator 2.7.2. Local sourcing of consumables and services
- Indicator 2.7.3. Support for local capacity development

### **Topic 8. Respect for authority of local ethics review systems**

- Indicator 2.8.1. Research Ethics Approval
- Indicator 2.8.2. Supporting local Research Ethics Review capacity
- Indicator 2.8.3. Enabling access to global expertise

### **Topic 9. Data ownership, storage, access and use**

- Indicator 2.9.1. Data Ownership Agreements
- Indicator 2.9.2. Material Transfer Agreements
- Indicator 2.9.3. Rights of Use of Data for Publication

### **Topic 10. Encourage full cost recovery budgeting and compensation for all partners**

- Indicator 2.10.1. Full Cost Recovery Budgeting
- Indicator 2.10.2. Improving/Standardising Budgeting
- Indicator 2.10.3. External Financial Audit

## **DOMAIN 3: FAIR SHARING OF BENEFITS, COSTS AND OUTCOMES**

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### **Topic 11. Research system capacities**

- Indicator 3.11.1. Training
- Indicator 3.11.2. Research Management
- Indicator 3.11.3. Increase (Predictable) Funding

### **Topic 12. Intellectual property rights and technology transfer**

- Indicator 3.12.1. Technology Transfer
- Indicator 3.12.2. Sharing Intellectual Property Rights
- Indicator 3.12.3. Contracting Support for IPR

### **Topic 13. Innovation system capacities**

- Indicator 3.13.1. Localising innovation
- Indicator 3.13.2. Financing to link Research with Innovation
- Indicator 3.13.3. Support Innovation Culture

### **Topic 14. Due diligence**

- Indicator 3.14.1. Promoting participation of women in science and innovation
- Indicator 3.14.2. Reducing negative environmental impact
- Indicator 3.14.3. Achieving SDGs

### **Topic 15. Expectation of all partners to adhere to a best practice standard in research collaborations**

- Indicator 3.15.1. Partner Requirements for Fair Research Partnerships
- Indicator 3.15.2. Sponsor Requirements for Fair Research Partnerships
- Indicator 3.15.3. Fair Research Contracting

## Internally

- Promotes alignment with organisational values.
- Increases research („R&D“) efficiency.
- Improves quality, cost-effectiveness and impact of partnerships

## Externally

- Creates clarity and transparency for partners and stakeholders
- Creates fairness right from the start
- Attracts those you want to work with.
- Demonstrates responsible corporate/ organisational citizenship in R&D
- Highlights organisational innovation

## Globally

- Builds global evidence-base on research collaboration
- Encourages use and development of standards, benchmarks and best practices
- Contributes to the Global research capacity needed for health, equity and sustainable development



# RFI

## Contact

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For assistance on any other platforms, please use the details below to get in touch. Or contact us directly with the details on the cover page.

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|---------------------------------------|---|
| <b>RFI Web Portal</b>                 | <a href="http://rfi.cohred.org">http://rfi.cohred.org</a>   |
| <b>RFI Support</b>                    | <a href="http://rfi.cohred.org/get-help/">http://rfi.cohred.org/get-help/</a>                               |
| <b>RFI Resources</b>                  | <a href="http://rfi.cohred.org/rfi-evidence-base/">http://rfi.cohred.org/rfi-evidence-base/</a>             |
| <b>RFI Frequently Asked Questions</b> | <a href="http://rfi.cohred.org/FAQ">http://rfi.cohred.org/FAQ</a>   |
| <b>Email contact</b>                  | <a href="mailto:rfi@cohred.org">rfi@cohred.org</a>  |
| <b>RFI Validation Criteria</b>        | <a href="http://rfi.cohred.org/rfi-validation-criteria/">http://rfi.cohred.org/rfi-validation-criteria/</a> |

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