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AMSTERDAM INSTITUTE FOR  
SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH

# AISSR Integrity Protocol

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## Contents

Introduction.....	2
1. Scientific fraud.....	4
2. Plagiarism.....	5
3. Self-citation standards .....	6
4. Ownership of intellectual property rights.....	8
5. Authorship .....	10
6. Conflicts of interest.....	12
7. Research Data Management (RDM).....	13
8. AISSR Integrity Procedures and Integrity Committee .....	18
Appendix A: Research Data Management Protocol.....	21
Appendix B: Research Data Management Plan Format .....	23
Appendix C: Data declaration form .....	24



## Introduction

This AISSR Integrity Protocol articulates AISSR-wide standards on scholarly integrity and data management in the AISSR research community, and an organization for facilitating discussion and protection of such standards. Its purpose is to promote and guard academic integrity for the AISSR, but also to facilitate advances in the quality of our research enterprise in terms of scholarly and societal impact. Good research practices improve the trustworthiness, accountability, credibility and transparency of our work and findings, and improve our understanding of the myriad problems and solutions in the world that our research investigates. Of course, researchers working in different traditions and methods can disagree about how to define and promote what good research practices are, but discussion and development of standards guidelines, sensitive to particular approaches, is possible and worthwhile. It improves not only the professional role of academics in academia, but also in society as a whole. The protocol we lay out here, tries to do so with respect to standards and guidelines that are sensitive to and honour the diversity of research orientations, methods and data of the broad AISSR community.

The protocol is the work of the AISSR Integrity-protocol committee, composed of representatives of all four social-science Departments within which the thirteen AISSR research programme groups are embedded: Anthropology; Geography, Planning and International Development (GPIO); Political Science; and Sociology. The Protocol reflects discussions within the committee and with members of the respective Departments. Its guidelines and procedures set out here shall be discussed and approved by the full AISSR Programme Council, including research directors and representatives of all thirteen AISSR Programme groups.

The Protocol builds on fundamental principles and responsibilities that have become the basis of international consensus: honesty, accountability, professional courtesy and fairness and good stewardship.<sup>1</sup> The standards with respect to all of these themes apply to all researchers: regardless of discipline or research group; regardless of one's views on how theoretical argument relates to the

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<sup>1</sup> See: Singapore Statement on Research Integrity, <http://www.singaporestatement.org/statement.html> (8 April 2016). Compare with: ALL European Academies (2017), "The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity. Revised Edition", URL: <http://www.allea.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/ALLEA-European-Code-of-Conduct-for-Research-Integrity-2017.pdf>  
VSNU (2004, herziening 2014), "De Nederlandse Gedragscode Wetenschapsbeoefening. Principes van Goed Wetenschappelijk Onderwijs en Onderzoek", URL: [http://www.vsnul.nl/files/documenten/Domeinen/Onderzoek/Code\\_wetenschapsbeoefening\\_2004\\_\(2014\).pdf](http://www.vsnul.nl/files/documenten/Domeinen/Onderzoek/Code_wetenschapsbeoefening_2004_(2014).pdf)



empirical world (diverse positions on epistemology and on the value of causal and descriptive inference); and regardless of one's methodology (e.g. particular qualitative or quantitative methods). Given that social scientists are public intellectuals, the standards apply to researchers when working and performing in their professional capacities (in printed publications, but also online-, video- or audio-broadcasting).

In practical terms, our Protocol draws on available resources and guidelines on such issues, but focuses on, and delineates standards with respect to five different aspects of (non-)integrity that deserve further elaboration: (1) Scientific fraud; (2) Plagiarism; (3) Self-citation; (4) Ownership and intellectual property rights; (5) Authorship; (6) Conflicts of interest; and (7) Research data management (RDM). These issues of integrity overlap with issues of ethics in research, since some kinds of undesirable behavior, like inflicting harm on persons or groups who are the subject of scientific research, constitute breaches of integrity and ethics of research. There can also be tensions between research integrity and ethics, especially when it comes to data access. Our focus, here, is on the integrity issues as such, though taking ethics issues into account. The integrity issues on which we focus also relate to standards of collegiality and responsibility, for instance to helping (and not undermining) our students and colleagues. However, our focus here is on issues and misconduct with respect to actual research integrity, where misconduct is understood as 'scientific dishonesty and infringement of scientific integrity'.<sup>2</sup>

Our Protocol calls for the AISSR research community to be aware of, and vigilant in avoiding, all violations of integrity. But it also calls for recognizing and taking action proportional to the egregiousness of violations. Some violations are blatant and clearly damaging in their implications for scientific inquiry and reputations; others are less nefarious, more modest 'forgivable sins' or 'grey areas' of obfuscation. All the perceived violations deserve transparent review without exaggeration or witch-hunts, but also without cover-ups or censor. Standards of integrity and good research practices should be encouraged, and violations and bad practices discouraged, while all aspects of integrity should be talked-about in the AISSR community. Through the discussion and facilitation of integrity, researchers should carry out due diligence in helping one another avoid even minor integrity infringements. Hence, the AISSR and each Programme Group should maintain an open research environment where all forms

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<sup>2</sup> Heilbron, Johan, (2005), "Scientific Research: Dilemmas and Temptations", KNAW.



of scientific best and worst practices, including misconduct, can be aired, discussed, and monitored. How to do so with continued promotion of diversely important and urgent research and without proliferation of rules and control mechanisms remains a challenge. We see the present protocol as a framework for ongoing discussion and implementation of good research practices for the AISSR and all constituent research groups.

The Protocol is organized as follows. It discusses standards towards, and procedures for dealing with, our seven issues or categories of integrity, taking issue in turn – where each of the seven issues requires some delineation and discussion. These standards should be taken as *binding guidelines* for the entire AISSR research community, and can be the basis of scholarly review of individual members and programme groups in that community. Most importantly, the standards ought to be the subject of discussion and debate to clarify, carry-out and update these standards to the end of improving our scientific quality. The eight sub-sections below should facilitate such discussion and debate. The Protocol's final section sets out procedures to monitor and develop integrity issues, including the creation of an AISSR Integrity Committee responsible for deliberating these and potentially additional integrity standards and to handle cases where such standards have been violated. Such a Committee shall have an ambit and authority consistent with those of other AISSR bodies, including Programme Groups and the Ethics Committee, but also including the formal, University-level Integrity procedure<sup>3</sup>.

## 1. Scientific fraud

Scientific fraud is the most encompassing and among the most serious parts of integrity-related misconduct. Fraud involves, most obviously, the familiar forms of deception – fabrication, falsification, obfuscation, and plagiarism, also widely known as FFP. Our Protocol treats plagiarism as a separate realm of misconduct (see below). For our purposes, hence, we take fraud to mean any cheating and misrepresentation of research procedures or results of research, or any cheating and misrepresentation of one's own scholarly accomplishments. Note that 'cheating and misrepresentation' imply conscious deception or skewed, 'untrue' presentation of findings, research procedures or accomplishments that involve demonstrable intention, knowledge or recklessness on the part of the researcher.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.uva.nl/onderzoek/onderzoek-aan-de-uva/wetenschappelijke-integriteit/wetenschappelijke-integriteit-uva.html>

For the AISSR Protocol, we also seek to guard against not only familiar and egregious kinds of malicious misrepresentation – such as manipulated data or results – but also subtler, less egregious forms of such misrepresentation. We seek, for instance, to discourage research practices where one might engage in empirical short cuts that yield misrepresentation of results. For instance, reporting empirical results consistent with one’s findings and arguments, while being aware of but not reporting or mentioning less favorable results (including sensitivity tests or robustness tests), also represents a kind of misconduct. And to take another example, reporting publications or awards or accomplishments in terms that stretch the truth – such as calling an article ‘under review’ when it is no more than a paper draft – are also violations of standards related to fraud. Finally, there are more ‘forgivable sins’, ambiguous situations where conventional academic standards have yet to be set. For instance, (English-language) third-party editing of a draft of scholarship can substantially alter content without attribution, or citation practice for slides in teaching presentations, or questions raised by PhD Commission members that might be leaked to candidates prior to the actual PhD defense. With respect to these and many other grey areas, the AISSR community should identify and discuss the various manifestations of scientific dishonesty or fraud are, what each group thinks are more or less common, more or less important for a particular research discipline, substantive area or empirical method.

## 2. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is one of the most obvious forms of scientific misconduct. Its definition is not particularly controversial, and we follow the definition set out in “Social Sciences Thesis Plagiarism Check Procedure”<sup>4</sup>: *‘Plagiarism is the practice of completely or partially copying someone else’s ideas without attributing them to their rightful owner (without complete and correct acknowledgement of sources) and passing them off as one’s own’*. There are, however, various dimensions and gradations of plagiarism, and some of these yield ambiguity and justify some discussion here. We follow the UvA’s own “Regulations Governing Fraud and Plagiarism for UvA Students”<sup>5</sup> in distinguishing different kinds of plagiarism:

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<sup>4</sup> See: <http://aissr.uva.nl/phd-programme/doctorate-regulations-and-plagiarism-check/thesis-plagiarism-check.html> (15 April 2016)

<sup>5</sup> a to e copied from the Regulations Governing Fraud and Plagiarism for UvA Students, which can be found on the following website: <http://www.uva.nl/over-de-uva/organisatie/juridische-zaken/reglementen/reglementen.html> (choose Fraude- en Plagiaatregeling 2010 (Engelstalig) on the website)



- a. making use of or, as the case may be, reproducing another person's texts, data or ideas without complete and correct acknowledgement of sources;
- b. presenting the structure or, as the case may be, the central body of ideas taken from third party sources as one's own work or ideas, even if a reference to other authors is included;
- c. failing to clearly indicate in the text, for instance by means of quotation marks or the use of a particular layout, that literal or near-literal quotations have been included in the work, even if a correct reference to sources has been included;
- d. paraphrasing the contents of another person's texts without sufficient reference to sources;
- e. reproducing another person's audio, visual, or text materials, software and programme codes without reference to sources and in doing so passing these off as one's own work;
- f. submitting papers obtained from a commercial agency or written (whether or not for payment) by another person.

Plagiarism can take place in 'proposing, performing, or reviewing research, or in reporting research results'.<sup>6</sup> As copyright applies to all types of publications, correct use of references and citations should apply to both academic and non-academic work to avoid any doubts about the origin of the content. Building knowledge using (shared) knowledge presents 'the obligation to recognize and respect other people's intellectual property'.<sup>7</sup> This Protocol does not call for adherence to any one particular citation standard, as we recognize that this varies across publications, journals, discipline and research community encompassed by the AISSR.

### 3. Self-citation standards

Since plagiarism is understood as the inappropriate use of *someone else's* work, i.e. theft, we reject the often-used term 'self-plagiarism'.<sup>8</sup> The Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) rather calls it 'text recycling'.<sup>9</sup> This Protocol shall use the term 'self-citation' as a generic phrase that can be more or less

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<sup>6</sup> European Science Foundation and ALL European Academies (2011), *The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity*, p. 11.

<sup>7</sup> Heilbron, Johan, (2005), "Trust, deception, and self-deception", in: *Scientific Research: Dilemmas and Temptations*, KNAW.

<sup>8</sup> See: <http://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2014/04/02/wetenschappers-willen-af-van-term-zelfplagiat> and <http://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2014/04/02/wetenschappers-willen-af-van-term-zelfplagiat> (15 April 2016)

<sup>9</sup> <http://publicationethics.org/text-recycling-guidelines> (8 April 2016)



legitimate, but in extremis can constitute an important integrity violation – albeit one that is, in its implications for trust in scientific inquiry, a much less serious violation than plagiarism.

Our conception and guidelines with respect to ‘self-citation’ follows insights from recent watch-dog publications. First, we recognize the VSNU Code of Conduct was revised in 2014 especially on the principle ‘honesty and scrupulousness’ with the following (quite permissive) rule:

*“Academic practitioners do not republish their own previously published work or parts thereof as though it constituted a new contribution to the academic literature. When republishing previously published findings, they indicate this with a correct reference to the source or by another means accepted within the discipline. In many disciplines it is permissible and even customary to reprint short texts from works published with or without coauthors without a source reference when it concerns brief passages of introductory, theoretical or methodological explanation.”<sup>10</sup>*

However, our Protocol does not mandate a more stringent standard, such as that set out by ESF and ALLEA in their European code of conduct: *“Publication of the same (or substantial parts of the same) work in different journals is acceptable only with the consent of the editors of the journals and where proper reference is made to the first publication. In the author’s CV such related articles must be mentioned as one item.”<sup>11</sup>* This standard, for instance, is likely too stringent in that there might be good reasons to reproduce chunks of one’s own previously-published claims, so long as these are properly referenced; asking journal permission is likely unnecessary or inappropriate in most circumstances. What we do mandate in this Protocol is honesty and scrupulousness in correctly using citations and references when building upon one’s own earlier work – just as one would do when citing the work of another scholar. Such referencing can vary in formality and specificity. Minimally and most broadly, when using substantial parts of the same publication, one could make clear in a footnote stating “the following [paragraph; section; chapter] heavily draws upon...” As with the other features of integrity, the Protocol presumes that further discussion and delineation of worst and best practices in ‘self-citation’ will help sharpen our standards on how to build-upon but not misuse one’s earlier contributions.

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<sup>10</sup> VSNU (2004, revision 2014), “The Netherlands Code of Conduct for Academic Practice 2004”, p. 5. URL: [http://www.vsnul.nl/files/documenten/Domeinen/Onderzoek/The\\_Netherlands\\_Code%20of\\_Conduct\\_for\\_Academic\\_Practice\\_2004\\_\(version2014\).pdf](http://www.vsnul.nl/files/documenten/Domeinen/Onderzoek/The_Netherlands_Code%20of_Conduct_for_Academic_Practice_2004_(version2014).pdf)

<sup>11</sup> European Science Foundation and ALL European Academies (2011), The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, p. 14.

#### 4. Ownership of intellectual property rights

An important integrity issue concerns ownership rights with respect to academic output. As a standard, our Protocol recommends that ownership of all outputs – datasets, texts, video material, etc. – should be discussed and agreed-upon between researchers and, where applicable, between researchers and subjects. These can be informal judgments. But it may be worthwhile formalizing such agreements, such as through memoranda of understanding – particularly if the researchers anticipate disagreement, discord, due for instance to anticipation of changes in where and with whom one might work and want to use material, and/or significant economic implications of using the material.

As for guidelines as to what ownership ought to mean, this Protocol relies on some basic insights in intellectual-property law and conventions. Academic output can be protected by (an) intellectual property right(-s), e.g. by a copyright and/or a database right. Copyright is applicable to unique types of work that show creativity and originality, not necessarily in print, but also in spoken word (e.g. lectures, speeches etc.). When research data consists of bare facts, these facts are not subjected to copyright, but free to use for anybody, since facts cannot be owned by anyone. However, when ‘facts’ are collected, compiled, archived and/or processed in an original and creative way, copyright can be applicable. In that sense, a database can also be protected by copyright. The rightful claimant alone can decide on disclosure and duplication of the work.<sup>12</sup>

Database rights are applicable when the database fits the following definition: "[the database is] a collection of independent works, data or other materials arranged in a systematic or methodical way and individually accessible by electronic or other means,"<sup>13</sup> and for this purpose one (in our case the researcher) made a ‘qualitatively and/or quantitatively [a] substantial investment in either the obtaining, verification or presentation of the contents (...)’.<sup>14</sup> Where copyright seeks to protect one’s creativity,

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<sup>12</sup> Zie: Kuil, A. van der (ed) (2009), De juridische status van ruwe data; een wegwijzer voor de onderzoekspraktijk, pp. 15 – 20.

[https://www.surf.nl/binaries/content/assets/surf/nl/kennisbank/2009/SURFdirect\\_De+juridische+status+van+ruwe+data\\_wegwijzer.pdf](https://www.surf.nl/binaries/content/assets/surf/nl/kennisbank/2009/SURFdirect_De+juridische+status+van+ruwe+data_wegwijzer.pdf) (12 april 2016)

<sup>13</sup> Article 1 (2) of the Directive 96/9/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 1996 on the legal protection of databases, see <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31996L0009:EN:HTML> (11 april 2016)

<sup>14</sup> Article 7 (1) of the Directive 96/9/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 1996 on the legal protection of databases, see <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31996L0009:EN:HTML> (11 april 2016)

database rights seek to protect the substantial investments that were made to establish a database. Protecting one's efforts takes place in two types of situations: when one makes a request for a substantial part of the database or when one makes repeated requests for non-substantial parts of the database.<sup>15</sup>

What are the guidelines, then, as to who is the rightful proprietor? The rightful proprietor in the case of copyright belongs to the (legal) person or persons responsible for the originality and creativity of the work. Often this is the author, or in case of research data, the project leader. However, it could also be decided that the research team as a whole bears responsibility for the uniqueness of the work. However, there are also situations where copyright doesn't befall the actual maker of the work, but is owned by the employer. In the case of database rights, the law recognizes the one making the substantial investment as the rightful owner. This may also be the employer of the person(s) who actually composed the database.

This brings us to the *de facto* property rights accorded to the University of Amsterdam with respect to research outputs gleaned from the facilities and contractual personnel investments of the University. As with most universities, in the Netherlands and elsewhere, the University of Amsterdam claims ownership of all knowledge and intellectual property rights that are the result of education and research performed by its employees.<sup>16</sup> The "Regeling Valorisatie 2014" offers a policy on how to address exploitation of knowledge and intellectual property rights. The standing practice regarding copyright is that the UvA allows the author of the work to exercise the copyright, for instance by allowing researchers to negotiate with publishers themselves about their publications.<sup>17</sup> This Protocol strongly recommends that the University of Amsterdam exercise its formal copyright prudently and with restraint. Researchers invest substantial scholarly resources, and may worry that the University might claim or misuse its property rights. One important concern is that the authors retain access to key research materials that they deem to be important for the protection of their sources and to both research ethics and integrity. Another concern involves the sharing of property rights in large projects

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<sup>15</sup> Kuil, A. van der (ed)(2009), *De juridische status van ruwe data; een wegwijzer voor de onderzoekspraktijk*, p. 30. [https://www.surf.nl/binaries/content/assets/surf/nl/kennisbank/2009/SURFdirect\\_De+juridische+status+van+ruwe+data\\_wegwijzer.pdf](https://www.surf.nl/binaries/content/assets/surf/nl/kennisbank/2009/SURFdirect_De+juridische+status+van+ruwe+data_wegwijzer.pdf) (12 april 2016)

<sup>16</sup> Article 3, Regeling Valorisatie 2014, Universiteit van Amsterdam, p. 6.

<sup>17</sup> See: <http://uba.uva.nl/diensten/citeren-en-publiceren/auteursrecht/onderzoekers.html#anker-bij-wie-berust-het-auteursrecht-op-publicaties-van-een-uva-onderzoeker->

involving many researchers with difficult-to-define borders of contributions, and with researchers that come and go in a globalized academic marketplace. This protocol calls for discussion of such issues from the outset of research projects, and mandates the AISSR Integrity Committee to further refine property rights standards to be discussed and approved by the AISSR community.

### 5. Authorship

A crucial and distinct integrity issue involves who and how one reports authorship of scholarly output. Sharing your knowledge with the academic community and other stakeholders usually involves publishing research results in journals, books, reports or other media. The sections above on ‘plagiarism’, ‘self-citation standards’ and ‘ownership of intellectual property rights’ already discussed elements of good publication practices. In addition to these, the issue of who, in what order, and how authorship is communicated of scholarly output is also a matter of good publication practices. Authorship posits the credit and recognition to the contributions that have been made and the obligation to take responsibility (and accept accountability) for the work.<sup>18</sup>

The AISSR Integrity Protocol follows the basic standards for authorship as set out by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE), which explicitly and clearly explicates standards and practices discussed in many other disciplines and scholarly traditions. By these standards, authorship should be ascribed to any and all researchers to whom all of the following four criteria apply:

1. Substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work; or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work; AND
2. Drafting the work or revising it critically for important intellectual content; AND
3. Final approval of the version to be published; AND
4. Agreement to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.<sup>19</sup>

ICMJE stresses, and this protocol strongly affirms, that these four criteria should be used as a means to give credit to the ones who deserve it, not to disqualify colleagues by denying them to meet all criteria.

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<sup>18</sup> See Heilbron, Johan, (2005), “Publishing, authorship, and secrecy”, in: *Scientific Research: Dilemmas and Temptations*, KNAW.

<sup>19</sup> See: <http://www.icmje.org/recommendations/browse/roles-and-responsibilities/defining-the-role-of-authors-and-contributors.html> (15 April 2016)

If contributors meet only some of the criteria clearly, a group of researchers involved in a project may decide to accord authorship to a contributor. But in such situations it is likely preferable that such contributors be acknowledged in ways other than full co-authorship. One can add names of collaborators, in a separate section. Some collaboration is better communicated by the conjunction ‘with’ or ‘with the assistance of’, as in: ‘Author 1 with the assistance of Author 2’. So-called guest authorship (i.e. listing authors who do not qualify) or ghost authorship (i.e. disregarding authors who did qualify) are not acceptable.<sup>20</sup>

A related issue involves the name-order and way of communicating (joint) authorship. There are many traditions for dealing with hierarchy, and a lot of variegation in the level and kind of contributions. As a general matter, first authorship connotes the greatest responsibility and credit for a contribution, though alphabetical order can water-down the connotation of first-authorship. Some disciplines also have standards about second or last authorship – for instance where the last author is often the head of a research unit or lab. In our AISSR social sciences, alphabetical order remains the default order in which authors are reported, though some researchers have sought to move away from such default in order to more transparently and honestly communicate the order and character of contributions. The AISSR Protocol leaves author order and form of authorship-attribution to the researchers. But the Protocol does recommend that scholars use first-authorship to connote greater credit and responsibility with respect to the above four criteria (particularly the first two), and/or report in a footnote the character and level of responsibility among the authors (e.g. identify who gathered the data, who wrote the first draft, etc.). The Protocol recognizes, of course, that it may be, in many instances, impossible to understand exactly the depth and value-added of a particular person’s contribution to a project or paper. But even here the criteria should be an important basis or guideline for defending any given authorship decision.

Ideally authorship should be decided before the project or the writing-up of the article/monograph starts. At this point, decisions regarding the criteria for the sequence of authors should also be made and agreed upon explicitly. Co-authors can of course also agree to revisit and revise what is decided at a later stage of research preparation and submission – as the hierarchy of contributions can shift and in unforeseeable ways. In addition, any possible conflicts of interest should be declared as well. In collaborations involving PhDs, formality and explicit agreement is particularly important – so as to

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<sup>20</sup> See: European Science Foundation and ALL European Academies (2011), *The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity*, pp. 7, 12-14.



safeguard what are clearly unequal relationships, with impact for careers that are greater for the PhDs than for the more senior scholar. The AISSR has separate guidelines for authorship of component chapters of PhD dissertations, particularly article-based dissertations. Such standards should be considered and discussed in making decisions about PhD authorship. More generally, PhDs should record authorship in their PhD Trajectory Plan, at the start of the PhD trajectory. This is confirmed again before writing the article and when the article is finished. Changes regarding authorship can be made yearly when revising the PhD Trajectory Plan. Any concerns, doubts or questions in this regard can always be discussed with the relevant Programme group director, PhD ombudsperson and/or the AISSR Integrity Committee.

## 6. Conflicts of interest

Conflicts of interest are distinctly important to consider as a major integrity issue. This is particularly important given the increasing importance of contract research and applied research measures to guarantee the autonomy of research. Sponsoring and other links between universities and private companies have become common practice. But issues of conflicts-of-interest can arise anytime a given research or parts of a research team have relationships and allegiances external to a given project or team – which is to say, almost always.

Conflicts of interest occur whenever (co-) financiers of research have a vested interest in the results of the research, and are problematic to the extent that the financiers or collaborators have a vested interest in a particular *outcome* of that research. This influence from financiers can take various forms and although maybe not exerted explicitly, researchers can feel the pressure of steering the research in a certain direction. Additionally, having economic interests in the collaboration poses a clear conflict of interest too. It is not uncommon for academics - as experts in their field of research - to take up management or advisory positions in related organizations. However the slightest appearance of a conflict of interest should be avoided for the sake of trust in science. Another example of a conflict of interest is when one participates in a review committee and needs to review direct colleagues, family, friends or co-authors. For that purpose the NWO, for example, introduced a code of conduct regarding

this theme requiring all members of review committees to sign a declaration that declares their direct links to the applications under review.<sup>21</sup>

To address the many aspects of conflicts of interest, this Protocol recommends, where possible, openness and transparency, and in any event taking steps to address, any possible conflict in the writing and refereeing of a given research project. This calls for care in announcing or making explicit any participation in an organization or professional capacity that might bias one's research. How detailed and extensive one does so, however, is a matter of professional judgment for researchers. Similarly, in yearly and updated statements of one's professional activity, all researchers should be transparent about their ancillary activities and participating in positions where there might be conflicts of interest. Again, however, there are many circumstances where researchers try to produce unbiased and reliable research in topics where they have some related, professional stake – for instance, hypothetically, a researcher publishing about migration as an AISSR-scholar while also being an advocate in some other political capacity for more stringent migration. How to navigate such instances in ways that preserve scholarly integrity is a matter of individual scholarly judgment. In such instances, in the relevant research and statement of ancillary activity scholars might well be advised to be as transparent as possible, in the direction of full disclosure. But one should not assume that all affiliations and normative priors need to be made explicit or 'confessed'. Quite the contrary. The most important is to recognize that such affiliations and normative priors might affect one's results, making it particularly important to take steps to ensure that empirical work can yield findings beyond or against such priors. Hence, one should be as clear and transparent as possible about the methods underlying and about the uncertainty surrounding claims made in the relevant research. If there is any doubt regarding issues of (possible) conflicts of interest, please seek the advice of the AISSR Integrity Committee.

## 7. Research Data Management (RDM)

A number of the integrity issues already identified above relate to, and require, integrity in research data management. For instance, practices to prevent and identify fraud in empirical research require information about and, where possible, access to data and replicability of analysis used in such research.

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<sup>21</sup> You can find the code through this link: [NWO Code of Conduct on Conflicts of Interest](#)  
Also see the following KNAW document: "Wetenschap op bestelling. Over de omgang tussen wetenschappelijke onderzoekers en hun opdrachtgevers." <https://www.knaw.nl/nl/actueel/publicaties/wetenschap-op-bestelling>

More generally, building scientific knowledge, making socially and scientifically meaningful contributions in research, requires validity and reliability of empirical claims – even if standards and understanding of such issues of trustworthiness and credibility of claims vary substantially across approaches to social science. And to gauge such qualities of validity, reliability, credibility, etc., we usually need some transparency and access to empirical information, or data, or at least responsibility-taking and explanation for the limitation on such access. For all these reasons, a structured and transparent *research data management (RDM)* system for reporting, depositing and accessing research data contributes to research integrity as a whole – even before and separate from gauging the integrity of actual outputs of research. To be sure, research data management has other purposes, for instance facilitating research collaboration and the quality and cumulation of insight in empirical research. For the purposes of this Protocol, however, our focus is on guidelines with respect to RDM that promote integrity through responsibility-taking, transparency and, where relevant and possible, replicability.

To do so, AISSR Protocol's RDM standards follow guidelines set out by the University of Amsterdam in 2014 in the memo 'Beleid voor Research Data Management aan de Universiteit van Amsterdam en Hogeschool van Amsterdam'. Following such guidelines, the AISSR Protocol defines 'data' broadly following a common definition used in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD):

*[...] factual records (numerical scores, textual records, images and sounds) used as primary sources for scientific research, and that are commonly accepted in the scientific community as necessary to validate research findings. A research data set constitutes a systematic, partial representation of the subject being investigated".<sup>22</sup>*

The RDM guidelines call for adequate management of such data in all phases of the research, but the focus is particularly on any and all data and research materials relevant to any given publication or publicly-available report. However, the AISSR Integrity Protocol recommends responsibility-taking, transparency and access at all phases to the extent possible.

The central point of the AISSR RDM guidelines is that research data relevant to all published output should be transparently described and, to the extent feasible and appropriate, openly accessible. However, the AISSR recognizes that the extent to which and how access to data is arranged varies

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<sup>22</sup> Universiteit van Amsterdam (2014), "Beleid voor Research Data Management aan de Universiteit van Amsterdam en Hogeschool van Amsterdam", p. 3. Also, Appendix A gives more details on the University's broader Research Data Management Protocol.

substantially across disciplines and specific data and research methods. In particular, it varies in three ways. First, the AISSR research community harbors wide diversity in data and research modes where data is inherently difficult or very costly to deposit and make-available for replication, for instance data that is gleaned from ethnographic participant observation, even with the most detailed of research notation. As Csordas explained in the 1990s, ‘...whereas the experimental paradigm relies on systematic control of confounding variables, the ethnographic paradigm is grounded in systematic attention to context as a means of accounting for variation’ (p.397).<sup>23</sup> Second, the AISSR community also includes gathering and analysis of data and modes of research involving politically and socially sensitive areas where confidentiality and anonymity can be crucial and can stand in the way of data deposit and replication – sometimes precluding even standard attempts at anonymizing data. Third and finally, the AISSR community includes researchers who follow various modes for depositing and replicating data, with some scholars depositing data on protected internal servers, and make this accessible upon request; others do so on public depositories (e.g. DANS, Dataverse); and still others store their field notes in physical files and archival information physically.

As a result, the AISSR RDM carries through the credo ‘open when possible, closed when necessary’ that informs broader University of Amsterdam policy and protocol,<sup>24</sup> and does so by promoting and monitoring transparent reporting and maximum public access, coupled or balanced with maximum research ethics, for the data used in all published research outputs. But the AISSR RDM policy leaves space to the good judgment of staff members themselves on how to carry out the credo ‘open when possible, closed when necessary’. In practice, such an AISSR RDM policy translates into three RDM guidelines.

*7.1. Be open when possible, closed when necessary.* The first guideline is that AISSR researchers do indeed put into practice for all their published work the credo of ‘open when possible, closed when necessary’. Our expectation is that there are many situations, applying perhaps to the majority of research outputs, where the data cannot be made publicly available. For such situations, the researchers should be prepared to explain why this is important: maintenance of integrity in research (e.g. embargo periods with original data, or terms of purchased data) or, more likely, ethics in research

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<sup>23</sup> Csordas, T. J. (1992). Anthropology's Integrity as a Research Discipline. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*, 6(4), 394-400.

<sup>24</sup> Universiteit van Amsterdam (2014), “Beleid voor Research Data Management aan de Universiteit van Amsterdam en Hogeschool van Amsterdam”, p. 3. Also, Appendix A gives more details on the University’s broader Research Data Management Protocol.

(e.g. protect the safety or privacy of respondents as might be necessary in some projects). For the many situations where the data takes a form that prevents full accessibility – such as qualitative histories and ethnographic observations – scholars should be able to state how and why this is so, and to report what *is* available (e.g. digitized or archived field notes). For many situations, particularly with digitized and quantitative data, the data can be made available, either through public or security-protected data interfaces. Whatever the form and procedure for gaining access, researchers should explicitly state how data can be accessed.

With respect to this first guideline, the AISSR RDM Protocol leaves the decision of whether, how and where to make data available to the individual researcher. Whatever is done to meet this broad guideline, however, may also need to conform to particular standards of a given funder of a given research project, and should that be the case, researchers should follow their funders' format and standard. In any event, the AISSR will facilitate options for depository, including physical storage space for documentation and fieldnotes; some backup storage facilities on UvA-located servers (e.g. in the Methods Expertise Center); and a range of options for web-based storage that can accommodate both open as well as restricted and more secure access. For instance, for broadly open access, researchers can rely on the relatively cheap and accessible providers like DANS, iCloud, Amazon, Surfdrive, Hubic, or Dataverse. For more restricted and protected data, one can rely on the UvA-based RDM platform being developed with Figshare. On which specific interface or storage system an AISSR researcher relies is, again, left to the researcher to decide. These diverse options shall be compatible with and hopefully (partly) carried-out by the UvA's formal RDM platform (Figshare), which is still being developed alongside 'PURE', the new 'current research information system' for registering all publication and scholarly output (expected to be online in the Autumn of 2017). The AISSR shall in any event facilitate, advise and assist in a researcher's statement and storage plan for a given data project. And the AISSR Integrity and Ethics Committees, and the rest of the AISSR leadership, shall strive to protect individual researchers from external pressures that might arise against an AISSR researcher's motivated decision in the direction of more or less disclosure. For example, we as a community may in selected instances need to find ways to appropriately address/redress the lack of legal protections given to other professionals (e.g. journalists) hoping to protect anonymity of sources.

*7.2. Declare data (un-)availability with each publication.* The second guideline is that all AISSR researchers ought to submit a brief but explicit declaration documenting information and justification about data access for a given output, no later than the publication date of a given research output. This

declaration may well simply repeat, substantively, what already appears in the text of the publication. However, the Protocol envisions a separate in the form of a short (digitized) document or email that can be shared with the AISSR publication-administration system. The AISSR is arranging to make it VERY EASY to include that (short) declaration/description in the same system where scientific output is registered (PURE, the replacement for METIS). This can be combined in the University's Research Data Management Plan format (see Appendix B). A Research Data Management Plan is ideally thought out before the start of a research project and reviewed whenever necessary. A complete RDM plan can make it easier to declare the (un)availability of data with each publication. This declaration should include the following information: a) details about the publication: title, author(s), date of acceptance / publication, reference, b) the name of the person responsible for storing the data and / or files, c) the location of the data or research material, d) clarification of authorship attribution, who did the data analysis?, e) date / period of data gathering and the names of the persons who carried out the data gathering, f) if applicable, locations of the fieldwork and possible contact persons, g) is the data openly accessible and if not, please clarify, h) was there an ethical review done, and if yes, what were the recommendations? (see Appendix C)

It could be that funding agencies behind a particular research project have their own format of a *data management plan* that needs to be filled-out at the start of a project. Such a plan describes what happens with the research data in all phases of the research and should be adjusted whenever necessary during the course of the project. Our second guideline concerns a more limited document, however, clarifying the availability of data relevant to any specific and published output. We should repeat that this need not be an onerous requirement, and does NOT presume that all research entails the setting-up of some replication materials. After all, we practice 'open when possible, closed when necessary'. To facilitate the following of the second guideline, the AISSR will assist in making the declaration as easy as possible and suited to various research results and methods, and the AISSR and data steward shall offer examples of 'best practices' of declarations.

*7.3. Monitor and encourage data availability.* The third and final major guideline of this AISSR RDM Protocol involves concrete steps to encourage implementation and conformity with the above two substantive guidelines for RDM. First, conformity with the guidelines should be reviewed and discussed at some point in the annual discussion of a researcher's work, perhaps but not necessarily mainly or only in the formal Annual Reviews ('jaargesprekken') for all AISSR researchers. The AISSR data steward will register and help keep track of data depositing and can provide additional input for these meetings.

Where problems are identified in these reviews, Programme Group (PG) leaders should advise on how to better comply with the RDM Protocol. And repeated failure to comply, and against the advice of PG leaders, can justify reprimand and sanction proportional to the violation of integrity that noncompliance entails. Second, the AISSR will also conduct an annual review of the degree of implementation and honoring of the RDM guidelines, and experiences surrounding RDM. This will take place on the basis of a sample of AISSR research outputs that adequately represent the work of the various AISSR Programme Groups, research methods and data orientations. Together, these two extra steps can affirm good standing practices and inform adjustments to RDM policy, hopefully minimizing the setting-up of new rules or procedures.

#### **8. AISSR Integrity Procedures and Integrity Committee**

The above guidelines require careful and explicit discussion and review by all members of the AISSR community. The Protocol itself, or any changes to it, is only binding with the approval of the AISSR Academic Director and the AISSR Programme Council, comprising leaders of all thirteen AISSR Programme Groups in all four disciplinary Departments. But the currently-approved protocol at any given moment is a living document where its elements of guidelines and certainly its implementation get worked-out in and between the various programme groups. We know, for instance, that at the moment of its approval, most scholars and certainly most research groups have not, and cannot be expected to, already have implemented or adhered to the Protocol's guidelines. That is a matter of continued work. Hence, implementation, monitoring, and further development of the AISSR Integrity Protocol and integrity issues generally shall be the basis of ongoing deliberation. This discussion should include new avenues of deliberation about integrity issues, for example using established and new channels of collegial, small-group and one-on-one discussion, or 'intervisie', on experience with and challenges surrounding integrity and good practice.

The implementation and development of the Integrity Protocol does also involve some formal organization and procedures as well at the level of the AISSR Programme Groups and at the level of the AISSR Bureau. At the level of the Programme Groups, the PG Leaders have a key role to play in disseminating and discussing integrity issues among their Group's membership. This ought to include leadership in convening actual dedicated meetings or discussions among the full membership or



individuals in the group. As with RDM standards, for instance, the HRM annual reviews should monitor and discuss data-related integrity issues, in ways and at a level of detail that an individual Programme group leader to decide. But some attention should be given to this issue. For instance, with respect to a single example of a colleague's research output a Programme leader can ask, 'how have you identified the availability of the data for this piece?' We recommend that discussion in annual reviews extend also to other issues of the Integrity Protocol, though again in line with the judgment of the Programme leader conducting such reviews. This is but an example. Most important to emphasize is that Programme Group Leaders have discretion to devise what they see as appropriate to their Programme Group's discussion and deliberation over integrity issues.

At the level of the AISSR, the implementation of this AISSR Integrity Protocol will involve in the Autumn of 2017 the convening of an Integrity Committee, to handle questions and issues of integrity, and deliberate on how to deal with violations of any aspect of the Protocol that come to the Committee's attention by a given AISSR Researcher. This Committee will meet no less than once per semester, and will include the following members: the AISSR Academic Director, the AISSR Data Steward, and representatives of each of the Departments that the AISSR comprises, a member of the AISSR Ethics Committee, and one of the AISSR Ombudsmen and Ombudswomen (*'vertrouwenspersoon'*). Serious violations of the Protocol can be discussed and deliberated-upon in confidentiality, but if the Committee or involved researchers at any time wish to dispute the deliberations or recommendations of the Committee, issues or cases can be brought before the formal University-level Integrity Commission.

Finally, at the level of the AISSR Bureau, dedicated tasks and time will be devoted to facilitate discussion and implementation of integrity standards as overseen by the Programme Group leaders, Programme Council and Integrity Committee. This includes the AISSR Academic Director as a participant and contact person for any integrity issues for any given Programme Group or the broader AISSR. That Director is also responsible for and represents the AISSR in Faculty-level and University-level discussions. AISSR Bureau contributions also include the dedicated AISSR Data Steward (who at the time of this writing is Yomi van der Veen), who is involved in development and implementation of RDM contributions, and is more generally available to answer any questions about RDM and integrity, and can participate in any integrity discussions, not least as member of the Integrity Committee. Finally, the development and implementation of integrity standards shall be assisted also by the AISSR Bureau's



Programme Managers and other assistants, for instance with respect to helping keep track of integrity and RDM issues arising in programme-Group level annual reviews.

## Appendix A: Research Data Management Protocol

### 1. Roles and responsibilities

- a) AISSR academic director  
Ultimately responsible for (providing an adequate infrastructure to be able to carry out) good research practices at the AISSR.
- b) Principal Investigator  
Responsible for drawing up a Research Data Management Plan and for conducting the research in conformity with the Research Data Management Plan.
- c) Staff member  
Responsible for carrying out research in conformity with the Research Data Management Plan.
- d) PhD candidate  
Responsible for carrying out research in conformity with the Research Data Management Plan.
- e) Data steward  
The AISSR data steward is responsible for monitoring the research data practices at the AISSR. The data steward informs the academic director and is part of the AISSR integrity committee. He/she is the first contact person for AISSR members in case of research data management questions.
- f) AISSR Ethical review committee  
The AISSR Ethics Advisory Board advises and gives guidance in addressing ethical issues specific to research in the domain of social sciences. This board supports the ethical reflection on new research projects and, if needed, grants permission to conduct them.
- g) AISSR Integrity committee

### 2. Storage: rules and facilities

- a) *All research data* should be stored securely, completely, recognizable and traceable, in all phases of your research. The AISSR leaves it to the good judgment of the researcher *where* the data is stored. This can be in a cloud, on an external hard drive, the UvA servers (H and Q drive), or in case of non-digital data in a cabinet in your office. The UvA will soon offer a facility that is supposed to function as short term storage (for during research) as well as long term storage of data (i.e. repository).
- b) *All staff members*, including PhD candidates and postdocs, are responsible for correct data storage.

- c) *All (raw) data* should be stored at least 10 years after the publication date. Preferably data is stored infinitely, unless there are pressing reasons not to do so. Responsibility for destroying data after 10 years (if applicable) lies with the researcher him/herself.
- d) *Anonymity* should be ensured in case of personal details or other sensitive data. This kind of sensitive data requires encrypted storage and sometimes extra protected storage.
- e) *Transparency* about data collection /data creation and data storage should be ensured by documenting any relevant information about this. An additional document could for instance clarify possible restrictions on specific data or report about the reasons for missing data.
- f) *Folder structure* could look like this: Main folder [ Research Data] and subfolders: [Ethics], [Methods], [Data collection/creation], [Data analysis], [Papers/reports].

### 3. Access

During a research project research data is available to the researcher and his/her team. The principal investigator him/herself decides in which way access to the data is arranged and who is allowed to have access to the data. The AISSR data steward should always be allowed to have access to the research data to be able to carry out yearly random sample checks.

Long term storage of research data after your project is completed is best achieved through storage in an online repository. Nationally, DANS is a good option, but any other repository that fits the specific field of study is fine as well. Important at this stage is to give your data an Personal Object Identifier (POI, unique code of reference) and to decide whether or not your data is open accessible or not. In case of the latter many repositories give the possibility to give a data description in which a sentence can be included like: “for more information about this data contact...”.



**Appendix B: Research Data Management Plan Format**

The Research Data Management Plan is filled out at the start of each research project. This is the responsibility of the principal investigator. The document should be shared with the AISSR data steward for information and advice. A copy of the document should always be kept by the principal investigator him/herself. During the project the Data Management Plan can be reviewed and adjusted whenever needed. Updated Data Management Plans should again be forwarded to the data steward. The data steward archives the Data Management Plans in a folder on the Q drive.

**Data Management Plan**

Version [number] (date)

<b>Researcher</b>	
<b>Researcher ID</b>	<i>e.g. Digital Author Identifier (DAI), ORCID</i>
<b>Project title</b>	
<b>Project description</b>	
<b>Project duration</b>	<i>start date – end date</i>
<b>Funder(s)</b>	
<b>Related documents</b>	<i>e.g. project proposal</i>

1. Will data be collected or generated that are suitable for reuse?

Yes Please answer questions 2 to 4

No Please explain below why the research will not result in reusable data or in data that cannot be stored or data that for other reasons are not relevant for reuse.

2. Where will the data be stored during the research?

3. After the project has been completed, how will the data be stored for the long-term and made available for the use by third parties? To whom will the data be accessible?

4. Which facilities (ICT, (secure) archive, refrigerators or legal expertise) do you expect will be needed for the storage of data during the research and after the research? Are these available?

**Appendix C: Data declaration form**

The data declaration form is required with each publication. We are working towards the possibility of uploading the form in PURE with the registration of your publication.

<b>Researcher</b>	
<b>Researcher ID</b>	<i>e.g. Digital Author Identifier (DAI), ORCID</i>
<b>Publication title</b>	
<b>Authors</b>	
<b>Date of acceptance</b>	<i>start date – end date</i>
<b>Date of publication</b>	
<b>Funders</b>	
<b>Related documents</b>	<i>e.g. project proposal</i>

1. Long term storage of the research material: Could all the research material be stored? If not, please clarify why not. Who was responsible for storing the research material? Where is it stored? And is the research material openly accessible? If not, or not to anyone, please clarify.

2. Data gathering and analysis: Please clarify the authorship attribution, who did the data analysis? What was the period of data gathering and who carried it out? If applicable, what were the locations of fieldwork and were there possible contact persons?

3. Ethical review: was there an ethical review done? What were the main recommendations?