Rules for Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice

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1.0	Final Version	01.01.2018	Initial draft of guideline
2.0	Revision of Version 1.0	05.12.2022	Complete revision and update of the guideline

Content

Preamble

Scientific integrity and probity constitute the foundations of trustworthy scientific practice and therefore the fundamental principles of good, internationally competitive scientific work. This also includes commitment to respectful interaction with other members of the scientific community and with all living beings as well as cultural assets and the environment. All researchers and research institutions commit themselves to upholding and applying the principles of good scientific practice. Only then can the public's trust in science and the researchers' trust in each other be reinforced.

In order to ensure excellent research and good scientific practice, CISPA - Helmholtz Centre for Information Security gGmbH (hereinafter: CISPA) has established the following rules to ensure good scientific practice in line with the new Code of the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) [1]which was published in August 2019, in accordance with the resolutions of the DFG General Assembly of 3 July 2019, and in fulfilment of the currently valid framework of the Helmholtz Association. They are binding for all persons involved in CISPA's research activities. The German version of the DFG's guideline, Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice, can be consulted as a reference if necessary.

By setting up these rules and incorporating them into the daily work of its researchers, CISPA is fulfilling its responsibility as a research institution to provide a framework for adherence to and promotion of good scientific practice. Furthermore, CISPA fosters scientific integrity and probity and helps to prevent scientific misconduct.

1. Rules for Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice

1.1. General principles and professional ethics

Apart from compliance with legal regulations at national, European and international level, at CISPA the following rules must be observed in particular as core principles of scientific work:

a) maintenance of scientific probity, conscientiousness and research *de lege artis*,

b) promotion of an open discourse in the scientific community,

c) strict honesty regarding one's own contributions and those of others (such as colleagues, cooperation partners, doctoral students, etc.),

d) openness to doubts, both in terms of one's own results and of those of one's own group,

e) priority given to originality and quality as performance and evaluation criteria for recruitment and promotion over quantity,

f) professionalism and fairness in collaborating with others,

g) strict compliance with disciplinary rules for the collection, selection and processing of data; in particular, compliance with the GDPR for personal data,

[1] https://www.dfg.de/download/pdf/foerderung/rechtliche_rahmenbedingungen/gute_wissenschaftliche_praxis/kodex_gwp.pdf

All persons involved in CISPA research activities are responsible for observing the principles of good scientific practice in their work. Junior researchers and senior researchers support each other in their advancement and regularly update their knowledge of the standards of good scientific practice. Particularly those research staff who supervise young scientists raise their co-workers' awareness of the importance of good scientific practice from the very beginning.

1.2. Responsibility of CISPA's heads of science and leaders of work units

The management of CISPA creates the framework conditions for scientific work and research, including suitable infrastructures such as access to literature databases. In close cooperation with the leaders of research groups, the heads of CISPA's science develop an organisational structure which ensures that the tasks of leadership, supervision and monitoring, quality assurance and conflict management are clearly assigned, based on the size of the individual scientific work units, and can thus be carried out effectively. The organisational structures are arranged in such a way as to hinder abuse of power and exploitation of dependencies at all levels.

CISPA's heads of science make sure that the principles of good scientific practice are well known at the Center and are followed by everyone involved in research activities. All the researchers with management tasks at the Center have a role model function and therefore assume a particular responsibility for compliance with and communication of the basic rules of good scientific practice. Furthermore, the management of CISPA supports its researchers in complying with ethical and legal standards.

Apart from an appropriate organisational structure which ensures adequate mentoring and support for junior researchers, the heads of science at CISPA also establish other structures and concepts. These include counselling services for career development.

The leader of the work unit is responsible for the entire unit. They coordinate the tasks and teamwork in such a way that the group is able to fulfil its tasks. Each member of the work unit is familiar with their role, tasks and duties. Should this no longer be sufficiently possible due to the size of the group or for other reasons, the head of science at CISPA will support the leader of the work unit in delegating the tasks appropriately. The responsibility of the leader of the work unit also includes appropriate mentoring of the junior researchers in the group in line with the mentoring concept applicable throughout the Center.

In the context of personnel selection and development, CISPA promotes gender equality and diversity as well as training concepts for junior scientists. The processes of personnel selection and development are designed in such a way that they are transparent, are documented in writing and, as far as possible, avoid any unconscious bias.

The management of CISPA promotes a comprehensive personnel development concept which ensures access to training opportunities and career counselling for all CISPA employees. Leaders ensure that members of their work unit can develop their potential, encourage them to work independently and give them the necessary support and participation rights to do so. In this way, CISPA employees are helped to actively shape their tasks and careers.

1.3. Performance and assessment criteria, and reviewer activities

With regard to the assessment of scientific performance, CISPA endorses a responsible use of metrics and quantitative data which can only be included in the overall assessment subject to reflection. Qualitative criteria and originality, which constitute key elements of excellent research, take precedence over quantity. Furthermore, activities such as involvement in teaching, academic self-administration, public relations, knowledge and technology transfer or contributions in the interest of society as a whole are taken into account, as are the researchers' attitudes in terms of openness to new insights and risks. Apart from criteria which relate directly to (scientific) performance, personal, family or health-related absences or an alternative career path are also taken into account as appropriate. Where voluntarily stated, individual circumstances in CVs are also included in the assessment, in addition to the categories of the German General Act on Equal Treatment.

Scientific integrity and objectivity are the basis for an honest assessment of manuscripts, funding applications, persons, etc. Researchers who conduct (peer) reviews or are members of scientific advisory boards or decision-making bodies are always bound to confidentiality. This includes not passing on the (peer-)reviewed material to third parties or using it for one's own benefit. Any aspects which could give rise to a conflict of interest or bias are disclosed.

1.4. Ombudsperson

CISPA's heads of science appoint two independent, appropriately qualified persons with high personal integrity from the scientific personnel of CISPA as ombudsperson and deputy respectively for questions on good scientific practice (see 2.). The names of the ombudsperson and their deputy are adequately communicated and published on CISPA's website. The ombudsperson and their deputy receive the support they need to carry out their tasks as appropriate. This includes measures to relieve their work burdens in other places.

In particular, it is the task of the ombudspersons to be available as confidential counsellors to all persons concerned if a breach of the standards of good scientific practice is suspected. As a matter of principle, the ombudsperson must treat all information about possible misconduct brought to their attention in a neutral, fair and strictly confidential manner.

The ombudsperson is the first person to contact if there is any suspicion of scientific misconduct and if there are any questions in the context of good scientific practice. CISPA employees may also turn to the national body of the DFG, *Ombudsman für die Wissenschaft*, which is a body that operates independently of the DFG and in particular DFG headquarters, although it is funded by the DFG.

1.5. Comprehensive quality assurance

Researchers uphold quality assurance for each step of the research process, especially when new methods are developed. This includes, apart from documentation in line with subject standards, compliance with discipline-specific standards and methods, and the application of established processes for the selection and use of research data and software and for software development and programming. The quality assurance mechanisms used are explained in accordance with the applicable

professional standards whenever the research results are published. Should researchers become aware of discrepancies or errors following a publication, these are corrected, e.g. by the publication of errata, or retracted if necessary. This also applies if they are made aware of such discrepancies or errors by a third party.

Quality assurance at CISPA also includes clearly indicating the origin of the data, hardware and software used, the correct citation of original sources and a coherent description of the data obtained during the research process. The data is processed according to the professional standards and, depending on the field, replication of the results is ensured. When software source codes are published, researchers make sure that they are persistent, citable and documented to the greatest extent possible.

1.6. Regulations for the research process

From the very beginning of a research project, all those involved are constantly aware of their roles, responsibilities and tasks, which should be adjusted if necessary, e.g. in the event of a change in the main focus of their work. The project members regularly exchange information and ideas. When a research project is planned, the researchers carry out thorough literature research in order to take account of the current status of research, to make it known and to identify relevant research questions. When the research results are interpreted, methods to avoid (unconscious) bias are applied and the specific framework conditions of the project are taken into account as far as possible. Researchers also consider how gender and diversity may be of significance to the research project.

Ethical and legal regulations must always be observed; this also applies to obligations arising from contracts with third parties. Where necessary, the researchers consult ethics committees and data protection officers and obtain the necessary approvals. Researchers are continuously aware of the risk of misuse of research results, and evaluate research projects in terms of possible research consequences and ethical considerations. In particular, they evaluate the risks associated with security-critical research wherever this is required by law.

To avoid conflicts with internal or external partners in research projects, wherever it is necessary and possible the partners involved conclude documented agreements at the earliest possible stage regarding rights of use and access to the data used or developed as part of the project and rights to the research results. Those researchers in particular who compile the data are entitled to use it. During an ongoing research project, the authorised users also decide (in particular in accordance with data protection regulations) whether third parties should have access to the data.

In order to ensure the comparability and transferability of research results and to answer research questions, researchers follow sound scientific methods or establish standards for new methods, with special attention to quality assurance. This applies equally to the use of software, the collection of research data and the description of research results.

Scientific studies, experiments and numerical calculations can only be reproduced if all the relevant steps can be verified. For this reason, the researchers draw up complete and adequate reports in accordance with the existing professional guidelines. These reports also make it possible for the research results to be evaluated and reviewed. The reports contain information on the research data, methods, evaluation

and analysis steps, and, in the case of research software developed, the source code as well as the origin of the hypothesis, if applicable. As far as possible, third parties are given access to this information. In the interest of a positive error culture, individual results which do not support the hypothesis are also documented. If the documentation deviates from the professional standards, the reasons are explained. Research results and documentation may not be manipulated, but must be protected as closely as possible.

1.7. Scientific publications

Publications, ranging from conference papers to articles in a scientific journal, are the most important medium for disseminating research results to the scientific community and to society. The researchers generally introduce all results into the scientific discourse, but avoid inappropriately small-scale publications. In individual cases, reasons may exist not to publish, especially in the context of patents and collaborations, but such a decision must not be allowed to depend on third parties. It is the responsibility of every researcher to decide whether, where and how to make results publicly available.

If they decide to publish, researchers select the publication medium, whether new or established, with a view to its quality, visibility and respectability. In particular, the evaluation should also take into account whether the medium has established rules of good scientific practice. If it has the function of publisher, the organ of publication must also be examined from these points of view. Apart from publications in books and journals, consideration should also be given to academic repositories, data and software repositories, and blogs. The publication medium chosen for publishing does not determine the scientific quality of a contribution.

The research results are described in full and comprehensibly. Preliminary work, both one's own and that of others, must be fully and correctly acknowledged and cited; previously published results should only be repeated to the extent deemed necessary to understand the context. In the spirit of Open Science, the research data, materials, information, methods and software used to produce the results should, as far as possible, be made available on repositories and in archives in accordance with FAIR principles. Again, restrictions may arise in the context of patents and research collaborations. Whenever co-workers develop their own software, the source code should be indicated and the software should be provided with an appropriate licence.

An author of a research project or of a resulting publication is someone who has verifiably made a substantial and genuine contribution to the scientific content. This includes, in particular, scientific collaboration on the development and conception of the project, or the development, collection, procurement or provision of data, software or sources, or the analysis and evaluation or interpretation of the data or sources or the conclusions drawn from them, as well as the manuscript. Other support may be appropriately recognised in footnotes, in the foreword or as part of an acknowledgement. An honorary authorship where no such contribution has been made is not permissible. Having a managerial or supervisory position does not in itself constitute co-authorship.

The contributors to the publication approve the final version of the publication and agree among themselves who will be named as the authors of the results. Approval

of publication may only be refused with sufficient reason and the criticism or reasons given must be ascertainable. The order of contributors is determined in good time, at the latest when the manuscript is formulated, and takes the conventions in the field into account. The contributors bear joint responsibility for the publication, unless explicitly stated otherwise. They exert influence upon the publication media to ensure that their research contributions are correctly identified so as to make correct citation possible.

1.8. Archiving

Primary data serving as the basis for publications must, as far as possible and in keeping with the standards in the field, be secured and stored in an accessible and traceable manner on durable media in the research institution or repositories for ten years from the date of publication. This also includes research software. The Management of CISPA provides appropriate infrastructure for securing and storing the data. If there are reasons not to store certain data or to store it for a shorter period of time, then these are documented.

1.9. Protection of the complainant and of the person affected by the allegations

CISPA's heads of science, the ombudspersons and the investigation committee for cases of scientific misconduct are committed to protecting complainants and the person affected by the allegations. Allegations of scientific misconduct are expressly investigated with due regard for confidentiality and the fundamental principle of the presumption of innocence at every stage of the proceedings. The person affected by the allegations should not suffer any disadvantage before scientific misconduct has been formally established.

The report must be made in good faith and treated confidentially by the complainant. There must be objective evidence that standards of good scientific practice may have been breached. Deliberately false or wilful accusations can themselves constitute scientific misconduct. The complainant must not suffer any disadvantage as a result of the report. Special care should be given to the protection of junior scientists. Experience shows that students and doctoral candidates in particular can be hindered in their advancement if they hint at a case of scientific misconduct or are themselves falsely suspected of misconduct.

CISPA employees are informed about the function of the ombudsperson as an independent contact person for cases where scientific misconduct is suspected or where there is uncertainty regarding good scientific practice. Reports can be made anonymously, but must contain robust and concrete evidence for the case to be checked. If the name of the complainant is known, it is treated confidentially and not passed on to third parties without consent. The only exemption to this rule is made if there is a legal obligation to do so or if the person affected by the allegations is otherwise unable to defend themself adequately, as this requires knowing the identity of the complainant(s) by way of exception. Before the name of the complainant is disclosed, they are promptly notified; the complainant can decide whether to withdraw the complaint if the name is likely to be disclosed. Even in the case of unproven misconduct, the complainant must be protected if they demonstrably made the report because they knew no better.

The confidentiality of the procedure is restricted if the complainant goes public. In

this case, the investigating body decides how to deal with the breach of confidentiality. CISPA's heads of science and the ombudspersons make it clear to employees that justified whistleblowing does not constitute denunciation or any conduct which is detrimental to their group; rather, it is a necessary step given a suspected breach of scientific ethics. It is not a complainant expressing a reasonable suspicion that harms colleagues or the institute concerned, but rather a researcher committing misconduct.

CISPA's heads of science support the ombudspersons in their work with the clear stance that scientific misconduct is not tolerated.

2. Guidelines for appointing ombudspersons at CISPA

Any person who is confronted with special circumstances which breach the rules of good scientific practice or suggest scientific misconduct should be given an effective opportunity to voice their concerns without fear of adverse personal consequences. For such cases, an ombudsperson and a deputy are appointed at CISPA, whom CISPA employees can approach in confidence. CISPA personnel can also approach the national body "Ombudsman für die Wissenschaft" of the DFG.

2.1. Tasks and position of the ombudsperson and their deputy

As a person of trust, the ombudsperson is directly available for advice on all questions of good scientific practice and in cases of suspected scientific misconduct. As far as possible, the ombudsperson also contributes to a solution-oriented mediation of conflicts. In particular, the ombudsperson provides support in potential conflict situations in which junior researchers may find themselves as a result of the dilemma between loyalty to their supervisors or team and their commitment to good scientific practice.

In the event of suspicion, the ombudsperson proceeds according to the guidelines for suspected scientific misconduct (see 3.) and conducts the preliminary enquiry. If necessary, they initiate a formal investigation.

The function of the ombudsperson is to provide a point of contact and advice which is independent of the heads of science for those who wish to make a report or supply information. The ombudsperson is bound to confidentiality. In the performance of their duties, they are independent of superiors, colleagues and CISPA's heads of science. The ombudsperson may turn to the heads of science but is not obliged to pass received information on to them.

The ombudsperson is the first person to contact if there is any suspicion of scientific misconduct and if there are any questions in the context of good scientific practice. If the ombudsperson is unavailable or biased, the deputy is informed. If the ombudsperson is unavailable, the deputy informs them upon their return and hands over the case to them. The ombudsperson and their deputy may consult each other if necessary.

2.2. Appointment of the ombudsperson and their deputy

Upon recommendation of the tenured faculty of CISPA, the heads of science of CISPA appoint two experienced researchers from the scientific personnel as ombudsperson and their deputy for a term of two years. A further term is possible. In order to avoid conflicts of interest and because the ombudspersons are to be a body independent of the heads of science of CISPA, they are not allowed to be members of a

central managing body. Simultaneous membership of the works council should also be ruled out in order to prevent conflicts of interest between these two roles. The ombudsperson and their deputy are announced in an appropriate manner.

2.3. Commitment to confidentiality

The ombudsperson and their deputy must treat all the information they receive in the context of scientific misconduct as confidential. In particular, the identity of the complainant should be protected throughout the entire procedure (see 1.9.). The ombudsperson and their deputy are not obliged to pass on such information to CISPA's heads of science. This only happens if scientific misconduct was proven during the preliminary enquiry or the conflict could not be resolved and, after the preliminary enquiry, scientific misconduct is highly probable. In such a case, the ombudsperson writes a report. If a formal investigation is initiated, CISPA's heads of science are informed and the ombudsperson, together with the heads of science, appoints an enquiry committee to formally investigate the allegations.

2.4. Duty to report

The ombudspersons write an anonymised report on their work once a year for the Management of CISPA and the CISPA Faculty.

3. Procedural guidelines for cases of suspected scientific misconduct

In cases of suspected scientific misconduct, the procedure always follows the principles of fair and trustworthy proceedings. In particular, the principle of the presumption of innocence must be observed. The person affected by the allegations as well as the complainant is given the opportunity to comment at every stage of the procedure.

3.1. Preliminary enquiry

1) In the event of justified suspicion of scientific misconduct, as defined in Annex 1, the ombudsperson must be informed in writing or verbally. If the information is verbally imparted to the ombudsperson, they shall document it in writing. Both internal and external persons may submit information if the suspicion of scientific misconduct concerns a person involved in CISPA's research activities.
2) The ombudsperson appropriately documents the nature of the suspicion, the evidence, the name of the complainant (if known) and the name of the person affected. Information can also be given anonymously, but concrete evidence must be supplied. If the ombudsperson is not available, the deputy serves as a contact person and informs the ombudsperson upon their return. The ombudsperson then takes over the proceedings. If the ombudsperson is biased, the deputy must be informed. The deputy conducts the preliminary enquiry accordingly.
3) If the ombudsperson is of the opinion, based on the information available, that there is significant evidence of scientific misconduct, they must immediately notify the person affected by the evidence about the incriminating facts and proof. The accused person is given a maximum period of two weeks to make a written statement. Without the complainant's consent, their name is not disclosed to the person affected at this stage.
4) After receipt of the statement or expiry of the deadline, the ombudsperson decides without delay whether further measures are necessary to clarify the matter, and if so, which. If needed, the ombudsperson can call in internal and external experts for advice. The information must be submitted to them in an anonymised form. The assessors are bound to confidentiality.
5) When the further investigations have been completed or if no further measures were necessary, the ombudsperson decides without delay whether the preliminary enquiry can be closed or a formal investigation must be opened.
    a. The preliminary enquiry must be closed if there is no reasonable suspicion of scientific misconduct. No report need be drawn up.
    b. The proceedings may be discontinued on the grounds of insignificance in the case of minor scientific misconduct and a substantial contribution to its clarification on the part of the person affected. If the person affected proposes a measure as specified in Annex 2 or has already taken steps to correct the consequences, this is counted as a contribution to clarification. CISPA's heads of science must agree to the discontinuation of the proceedings within two weeks. Such consent is assumed to have been given if the heads of science have not objected to the planned termination within two weeks.

c. If the preliminary enquiry uncovers proof of misconduct, the ombudsperson promptly submits a report to CISPA's heads of science together with a written recommendation of the sanctions or consequences they deem necessary (Annex 2), and closes the preliminary enquiry.

d. The decision on discontinuation and the reasons are first communicated to the complainant. If they do not agree with the discontinuation of the preliminary enquiry, they have a right of remonstration vis-à-vis the ombudsperson within two weeks. The remonstration can only be based on new facts, subsequent to which the ombudsperson reviews the decision.

e. The person concerned must be notified of the final decision resulting from the preliminary enquiry.

f. Where the preliminary enquiry confirmed reasonable suspicion in the matter but did not also prove misconduct, the ombudsperson opens a formal investigation without delay. CISPA's heads of science must be informed. The person concerned must be notified of the final decision resulting from the preliminary enquiry. The complainant must also be informed of this decision and be made aware of the confidentiality of this decision.

6) The final report on the results of the preliminary enquiry to be drawn up by the ombudsperson in cases 5) b., c. and f. must include the nature of the allegation, the proof and the results of the individual steps of the preliminary enquiry as well as the main reasons for the discontinuation of the preliminary enquiry. If the name of the complainant is known, it is treated confidentially and not disclosed to third parties without corresponding consent. The only exemption to this rule is made if there is a legal obligation to do so or if the person affected by the allegations is otherwise unable to defend themself adequately, as this requires knowing the identity of the complainant(s) by way of exception. Before the name of the complainant is disclosed, the complainant is promptly informed of this. It is then up to them to decide whether to withdraw the report in the event of a probable disclosure of their name. The ombudsperson's final report is sent to the person affected by the allegations, the Management of CISPA, the head of the Legal and Licensing Unit, the departmental head of the person affected, the head of HR and, upon request, the complainant. If the heads of science are affected, the General Management takes over the role accordingly.

7) Pending proof of scientific misconduct, information about those involved in the proceedings and the findings so far must be treated confidentially.

8) CISPA's heads of science ensure that the proceedings are carried out in a timely manner, initiates all necessary steps and, where appropriate, informs the relevant departments and the works council, so that deadlines under labour law or appointments can be adhered to while the proceedings are taking place.

9) Any person involved in the proceedings may be rejected on the grounds of misgivings or bias if there is a reason to suspect bias. If the ombudsperson is biased, the deputy is entrusted with the case. If the deputy is also deemed to be biased, the proceedings can be submitted to the DFG's national body "Ombudsmann für die Wissenschaft" ("Ombudsman for Science"). The person in question, the person whose rights have been violated and the ombudsperson are entitled to submit proposals at any time during the proceedings.

3.2. Formal investigation

1) Responsibility and composition of the investigation committee

   An investigation committee is responsible for the formal investigation. It consists of the chairperson and a deputy, three conciliation advisors, the head of the Human Resources Department and the head of the Legal and Licensing Unit. The chairperson and the deputy, neither of whom should belong to CISPA, are appointed by the ombudsperson entrusted with the preliminary enquiry together with the heads of science on a case-by-case basis; reappointment is possible. The other members are appointed for the proceedings in question by the heads of science in consultation with the chairperson. If the heads of science are affected, the General Management takes over the role accordingly.

   The members of the investigation committee must not hold any other functions that could possibly lead to a conflict of interest, such as membership of the works council or of the Management, and must not be superiors or co-workers of the person concerned.

   In individual cases, the investigation committee may call in experts from the relevant scientific field and persons who are familiar with such cases to be advisors not entitled to vote. The information must be passed on anonymously and treated confidentially.

   Any bias petition against a member of the investigation committee must be addressed to the committee itself, which will decide thereon in the absence of the person accused of being biased. If bias is ascertained, such person is excluded from the committee for that investigation. If the chairperson is concerned, the deputy takes over the chair. If an advisor is concerned, the chairperson appoints another suitable person.

2) Procedure

   a. The investigation committee receives the report from the ombudsperson. It deliberates in non-public oral proceedings and considers whether scientific misconduct has occurred by freely evaluating the evidence. The committee is authorised to take all the necessary steps to clarify the matter at hand, e.g. to request all the necessary information and explanations. In doing so, it takes appropriate action to protect both the complainant and the person concerned and expressly acts with due regard for confidentiality and the fundamental principle of the presumption of innocence. The person concerned must be heard orally if they so wish; they may be assisted by a person of their confidence. Other persons who are heard may also make use of this assistance.

   b. It may become necessary to disclose the name of a complainant if the person concerned cannot otherwise defend themselves properly, especially as the credibility of the complainant is of great import for the determination of misconduct.

   c. If the majority of the investigation committee considers misconduct to be sufficiently proven, it presents the result of its investigation to the heads of science for a decision, together with a proposal for the further procedure. If not, proceedings are discontinued.

d. The main reasons leading to discontinuation of the proceedings or to presentation of the result to the heads of science must be communicated in writing to the person affected at once and also to the complainant if they so wish.

e. CISPA's heads of science decide about the next steps to be taken. They write a report on the reasons for the decisions. This is forwarded to the person affected by the allegations, their departmental head, the head of the Legal and Licensing Unit and the ombudsperson who carried out the preliminary enquiry. Upon request, the complainant also receives the report.

f. If proceedings are discontinued due to a lack of evidence during the investigation or because the allegations were resolved, the person affected may request the publication of the results on a public notice board or on the intranet two weeks after receiving the final decision.

g. There is no internal appeal procedure against this decision.

4. Entry into force and language

1) The guideline enters into force on 01.06.2023. The guideline is to be reviewed every five years. At the same time, the guideline of 01.01.2018 shall cease to apply.

2) This guideline is drawn up in German and English. In the event of any discrepancies between the German and the English version, the German version shall prevail.

Saarbrücken, 31.05.2023

Prof. Dr. Dr. h. c. Michael Backes
Gründungsdirektor und Vorsitzender der Geschäftsführung

Dr. Kevin Streit
Administrativer Geschäftsführer

Annex 1: Catalogue of conduct to be regarded as scientific misconduct

If, in a context involving science, false statements are made deliberately or through gross negligence, or if the intellectual property of others is infringed or their research activities are impaired in any way, this constitutes scientific misconduct.

In particular, the following is deemed to be misconduct:

1) inventing data and/or research results;
2) falsifying data, e.g.
    a. by selecting and rejecting results obtained, without revealing this,
    b. by manipulating a diagram or illustration;
3) false information in a letter of application, an application for funding or within the scope of the reporting obligation (including false information about the publication organ and about publications in print);
4) with regard to a copyrighted work created by another person or important scientific insights, hypotheses, doctrines or research concepts originating from another person,
    a. unauthorised exploitation under pretension of authorship (plagiarism),
    b. exploitation of research concepts and ideas, especially as an expert (theft of ideas),
    c. pretension or unfounded assumption of scientific authorship or co-authorship,
    d. falsification of the content or
    e. unauthorised publication and unauthorised disclosure to third parties as long as the data, work, insight, hypothesis, doctrine or research concept has not yet been published;
5) claiming (co-)authorship with another person without that person's consent;
6) sabotage of research activities (including damaging, destroying or tampering with test assemblies, equipment, records, hardware, software, chemicals or other items required by others for research purposes),
7) the falsification or unauthorised elimination of research data or research documentation.

Joint responsibility can result from, i. a.:

7.1) participation in the misconduct of others;
7.2) joint knowledge of falsification by others;
7.3) co-authorship of publications containing falsifications;
7.4) neglect of the duty of supervision.

Ultimately, the circumstances of each individual case are decisive.

Annex 2: Catalogue of sanctions and consequences of scientific misconduct

The following catalogue is exhaustive and includes all possible sanctions or consequences of scientific misconduct. As every case is likely to be different and the severity of the scientific misconduct ascertained also plays a role, one or more specific sanctions or consequences may arise, depending on the individual case. The Management, in particular its Human Resources Department and the Legal and Licensing Unit, are available to answer any queries.

1) Consequences under civil law

   1.1) Consequences under labour law (e.g. warning, dismissal, termination of contract)

   1.2) Other consequences under civil law (e.g. issuing a ban on entering the premises, claims for damages, surrender claims, claims for removal and injunctive relief)

2) Academic consequences

Academic consequences in the form of the withdrawal of academic degrees cannot be taken by CISPA itself, but only by the bodies that awarded these degrees, usually the universities. These must be informed of serious scientific misconduct if it took place in connection with obtaining an academic qualification. The same applies to the withdrawal of an authorisation to teach.

3) Consequences under criminal law

Consequences under criminal law always come into consideration if there is a suspicion that scientific misconduct simultaneously constitutes an offence under the German Criminal Code (StGB) or other criminal or administrative norms. Any involvement of investigating authorities must always be coordinated with the Management of CISPA.

4) Revocation of scientific publications / information to the public / press

Scientific publications which contain errors due to scientific misconduct must be withdrawn if they are still unpublished, and corrected if they have been published (revocation); cooperation partners must be informed in a suitable manner where necessary. In principle, the persons who authored the publication and any publishers involved are obliged to do so; if they fail to take action, CISPA initiates the appropriate measures in its power.

In cases of serious scientific misconduct, CISPA informs other research institutions or scientific organisations concerned. In justified cases, it may also be appropriate to inform professional organisations.

CISPA may be obliged to inform third parties who have a justified interest in the decision and the public in order to protect third parties, to maintain confidence in scientific probity, to restore its scientific reputation, to prevent consequential damage and in the event that there is a particular public interest.