Responsible-Industry

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1st PROJECT PERIODIC REPORT

Publishable Summary

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Publishable Summary

Modern societies increasingly rely on research and innovation (R&I) to address the most pressing world-wide problems such as demographic change, security, environmental or social sustainability. Current European policy specifically underlines the importance of R&I in addressing these so called “grand challenges” and, more generally, to tackle them promoting a responsible approach to R&I. A key question in this context is how research and innovation can be governed to tackle grand challenges in a responsible manner.

The Responsible-Industry project uses the working definition of responsible research and innovation (RRI) as a higher level responsibility or meta-responsibility that aims to shape, maintain, develop, coordinate and align existing and novel research and innovation-related processes, actors and responsibilities with a view to ensuring desirable and acceptable research outcomes. This definition is consistent with established views that RRI should incorporate social concerns and democratic accountability into research and innovation. It aims to ensure mutual responsiveness of stakeholders and establish principles of anticipatory governance of research and innovation.

![Figure 1: Concept of RRI](image)

The RRI discourse is still at an early stage. The European Commission nevertheless relies heavily on RRI to ensure that its considerable investment in research and technology development (over €70 billion for Horizon 2020) will be ethically and socially acceptable and desirable. It has therefore defined RRI as a cross-cutting activity that should inform and guide all research in Europe and beyond.

The Responsible-Industry project is premised on the recognition that industry would benefit from RRI. Incorporating RRI into research and development processes will contribute to a better understanding of customer needs and thus promote customer satisfaction. RRI will play a key role in risk management and lead to reputational gains. Companies that take their corporate social responsibility serious will find that RRI is one way of putting this aspiration into practice. Engaging early with RRI will allow industry to anticipate future regulations and develop ways of proactively dealing with these. What is stopping industry across Europe from benefitting from RRI is the lack of tools and best practice examples specifically aimed at industry. At present each industry is on its own in engaging with the concept of RRI, understanding it and incorporating it in its working. The lack of visibility and standardisation of RRI in industry can lead to the lack of a coordinated approach and therefore to a lack of support for industry and other actors. An important step in overcoming these problems is to develop specific examples of RRI in industry.

The main aim of Responsible Industry is thus to collect, analyse, develop and pilot a set of industry-tailored RRI tools in the specific application example of ICT for Health, Demographic Change and Wellbeing.
Work Performed and Main Results

The Responsible-Industry project commenced in February 2014. During the first six months of the project were spent setting up project structure and work processes and starting the initial steps.

The first major engagement activity of the project will be the Delphi Study. Most of the content-related work of the project so far has led up to this Delphi Study. This included the literature-based work to arrive at an agreed interpretation of RRI that the consortium will work with and that will be used to identify relevant topics and questions to explore during the Delphi. The consortium started an initial round of 10 expert interviews the analysis of which also informs the Delphi. On this basis the first draft of the initial questionnaire for the Delphi Study was developed.

The call for the bottom-up case studies was successfully launched. 12 applications were received and evaluated leading to the selection of 5 relevant cases to be funded.

The consortium started discussion and preparation for the later stages of work, including the creation of the international stakeholder groups, definition of the case study protocol.

In addition to this substantive work, the consortium finalised processes and procedures to ensure smooth collaboration. These activities included the creation of a shared work platform (based on Google tools), project management structures and documents such as templates, the development of a communication and dissemination strategy, risk and quality management plans and the stakeholder mapping and dialogue strategy. The project website was successfully set up.

With the initial substantive results and agreed procedure in place, the project is well placed to tackle the next steps, starting with the Delphi Study in September 2014.

Expected Final Results and Potential Impacts

The Responsible-Industry project will design an Exemplar Implementation Plan of RRI in Industry to demonstrate how industry can work productively together with societal actors and integrate principles and methodologies of Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) into research and innovation processes. To achieve maximum impact where it is most needed, the implementation plan will focus on the grand challenge of health, demographic change and wellbeing. More specifically the project will focus on the role that research and innovation in ICT can play in addressing this challenge.

Responsible-Industry will guide interactive discussions between leading industry partners, established RRI experts, policy advisors and civil society organisations to drive the research and innovation process with the principles of RRI in mind. In doing so, Responsible-Industry will achieve the following objectives:

- Synthesis of current discourses on RRI in the industrial context, based on an extensive literature review, 30 in-depth interviews with industry thought leaders, 5 bottom-up case studies and 2 Horizon Scanning reports.

- Investigation, through practical cases and in depth dialogue with stakeholders (industry, CSOs, policy makers and emerging global stakeholders), of processes, challenges and
opportunities leading to responsible innovation along specific value chains of products and applications.

- International Delphi Study of RRI in industry involving 130-150 stakeholders and an international Multi-Stakeholder workshop.

- Development of a detailed implementation plan to be tested in at least 4 pilot projects.

- Reflection on the viability of the implementation plan, supported by least 15 industry-driven focus groups.

- Development of models of RRI in industry as a basis of specific recommendations to be disseminated to the various stakeholders through an Exemplar Implementation Plan of RRI in Industry.

Overall these activities will lead to a shared view of the nature of RRI in industry and a set of concrete tools and good practice examples that will ensure that RRI becomes relevant to industry-based research and innovation activities.

For more information visit www.responsible-industry.eu.