



ROTHAMSTED
RESEARCH

Rothamsted Statement on Scientific Research Integrity 2024

Rothamsted Commitment to Scientific Research Integrity

Rothamsted Research's mission is to undertake cutting-edge agricultural science and innovation, in collaboration with others, to generate discoveries and knowledge with wide impact and outreach. We are a global leader in cutting-edge agricultural science, and we collaborate with multiple partners both nationally and internationally. As an Institute with [national capability](#), Rothamsted Research is committed to upholding the highest standards of Research Integrity and Research Ethics. Rothamsted Research is proud to follow the principles outlined in the [Concordat](#) to Support Research Integrity in all Research conducted under the auspices of Rothamsted Research. All RRes Researchers adhere to the following principles:

- **Honesty** - Results, findings and claims are accurate, can be justified, and acknowledge the contribution of others. Researchers should not engage in or conceal Misconduct. Researchers should be honest whether in relation to their own actions, or those of others, and in all aspects of conducting Research beginning with the application for Research funding and running right through to the publication and dissemination of results. Research projects should report appropriate Research design, methodology and framework.
- **Rigour** - Research should be conducted with the utmost rigour in line with prevailing disciplinary norms and standards, current best practice and using appropriate methods; in adhering to an agreed protocol where appropriate; in drawing interpretations and conclusions from the Research; and in communicating the results. Researchers should ensure that data and results are precise, valid, reproducible, and authentic when drawing conclusions and when reporting results. They should communicate clearly the methods used to collect, analyse, and disseminate data. This involves being able to demonstrate fully documented protocols with precise details, original data sets, versions of software used, and documenting consistency of multiple outcomes. Data must be collected in accordance with ethical principles, and analysed and disseminated appropriately, including negative data, to ensure that findings are robust, and defensible.
- **Integrity** - Researchers have autonomy in their academic choices. RRes requires that Researchers accept responsibility for the decisions made and take responsibility for acting in accordance with the principles of Research Integrity and Research Ethics. If their Research project has a major change of direction the Researchers should inform the sponsor or any other relevant body.
- **Transparency, and Open Communication** - in declaring potential competing interests; in the reporting of Research data collection methods; in the analysis and interpretation of data; in making Research findings widely available, which includes publishing or otherwise sharing negative or null results to recognise their value as part of the Research process; and in presenting the work to other Researchers and to the public.
- **Safety, care, and respect** -. ensuring the dignity, rights, and wellbeing of all (Researchers and Participants) is observed during Research is paramount, and subject to assessment and control. Also ensuring appropriate steps are taken to minimise any risks to health and safety of those conducting or participating in research. Researchers treat each other and their Research with utmost care and respect and recognise others' contributions. RRes has safeguarding procedures to protect the welfare of children under the age of 18 and Vulnerable Participants. Within Research projects this may include staff, students, and collaborators, as well as anyone directly affected by our Research or activities while on site, whilst working virtually, or undertaking fieldwork in the UK or internationally. Safeguarding in international Research is defined as: "preventing and addressing any sexual exploitation, abuse, or harassment of

Research participants, communities and research staff, plus any broader forms of violence, exploitation and abuse such as bullying, psychological abuse and physical violence” (UKCDR 2020) and will be applied to all Research projects. Confidentiality of Human Participants and their data is maintained during the Research. Informed Consent must be provided by Human Participants before Research begins. Should a need arise for participants to become known to one another or, their data shared, revised Informed Consent must be obtained in advance. All data should be handled in accordance with laws governing personal data and personal data sharing applicable to the [country in which the data will be processed](#) e.g., UK and EU GDPR regulations. Further information can be found here: [A guide to international transfers | ICO](#).

- **Accountability** - Researchers are accountable to RRes both in and through their Research and act accordingly, ensuring compliance with agreements, terms and conditions relating to the Research project, and following any requirement or guidance from any professional body in their field of research if regulated. Researchers must be aware of expectations of the Research Integrity & Research Ethics Policy, the [Concordat](#), Funder policies and guidelines on expected governance and good Research conduct, and frameworks when accepting Research funding. Funders increasingly require Researchers to consider principles of Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) which are related to, but distinct from Research Integrity as defined in the RI & RE Policy. Further information can be found here: [Framework for responsible research and innovation – UKRI](#)

We inspire all Research staff working under the auspices of Rothamsted Research to reflect upon the broader implications of their work and to actively address the practical, ethical, and intellectual challenges inherent in the pursuit of high-quality Research. This is achieved by providing a robust framework for good Research practice and its governance as set out in our Research Integrity and Research Ethics Policy available to view on this website. Rothamsted Research provides training, coaching, and mentorship associated with Research Integrity and scientific Research Ethics for all Researchers.

Research Integrity and Research Ethics Governance at Rothamsted

Rothamsted Research operates a Research Integrity Committee (RIC), currently chaired by Professor Frederica Theodoulou, and Research Ethics Committee (REC), currently chaired by Dr Edward Joy. These committees include Rothamsted staff with significant experience in Research Integrity, Research Ethics, and research data management along with representatives from Rothamsted’s Company Secretariat, Human Resources and Research Farm teams.

RIC reports to Rothamsted’s Chief Executive Officer who in turn reports to the Rothamsted Board of Directors.

Responsibilities of the RIC:

- Enable development of and compliance with Rothamsted Research’s Research Integrity and Research Ethics Policy and associated processes available to view on this website.
- Provide a Code of Practice for Researchers and ensure Research Integrity and Research Ethics are represented in all associated policies and processes.
- Enable provision of training, support, and guidance for the institute and for Researchers.
- Provide strategic direction in relation to ethical matters.
- Act as the point of contact for collaborative working with other Institutes in relation to allegations of misconduct or on national matters related to Research Integrity and or Research Ethics.
- Facilitate investigations into alleged misconduct supporting both complainant and respondent throughout the process.
- Compile an annual statement and periodic reporting for Rothamsted Research’s internal use and for publication on Rothamsted Research’s website.

Responsibilities of the REC:

- Review and assess Research proposals with ethical elements.
- Provide guidance and support to Researchers about the ethical content and considerations in their Research designs.

- Identify emerging themes and escalate to RIC (or other relevant body).
- Provision of associated processes.
- Coordination and provision of training in the REC processes.
- Continuous development of processes as legislation or requirements change.

Points of Contact

For information related to Scientific Research Integrity or Research Ethics related to Research conducted by Rothamsted Research contact:

- Professor Frederica Theodoulou – Chair of Rothamsted Research Integrity and Research Ethics Governance Committee RIC@rothamsted.ac.uk

To raise any concerns related to Research Integrity or Research Ethics in relation to Rothamsted Research scientific Research, contact in confidence:

- Dr. Damon Lowes - Rothamsted's Research Integrity Nominated Officer (RINO) RIC@rothamsted.ac.uk
- Dr. Edward Joy - Rothamsted's Research Ethics Nominated Officer (RENO) ethics@rothamsted.ac.uk