

CODE OF ETHICS AND CONDUCT

OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

FOUNDATION FOR RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY - HELLAS

2018

CONTENTS

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF SCIENTIFIC INTEGRITY AND ETHICS OF RESEARCH

ARTICLE 1: Scope

ARTICLE 2: Research value, independence and responsibility of researchers

ARTICLE 3: Principles of scientific integrity

ARTICLE 4: Principles of Research Ethics/Bioethics

ARTICLE 5: Respecting safety rules

ARTICLE 6: Relations between researchers

ARTICLE 7: Respect of third-party rights

ARTICLE 8: Intellectual property respect

ARTICLE 9: Written statement

ARTICLE 10: Use of FORTH facilities

ARTICLE 11: Research promotion

ARTICLE 12: Employment of faculty members in a research project outside FORTH

ARTICLE 13: Research Ethics and Conduct Committee

RESEARCH PARTNERS AND OTHER STAFF

Article 14: Partner obligations

Article 15: Scientific Supervisor obligations

SPECIAL RULES ON THE RESEARCH

Article 16: Research in humans

Article 17: Research in animals

Article 18: Research in natural, residential and cultural environment

Article 19: Obligations of the Research Organisation - FORTH

KEY PRINCIPLES

ARTICLE 1

Scope

This Code applies to all research activities, as well as the activities of providing specialised services, training programs or other research and scientific activities, applications, carried out inside or outside the premises of FORTH under the responsibility of its scientific staff, with or without funding.

ARTICLE 2

Research value, independence and responsibility of researchers

1. The research conducted at the Foundation for Research and Technology (FORTH) aims to promote fundamental and applied research, and scientific knowledge which, through its use, contributes to the well-being of society as a whole. To FORTH, scientific research is both a social good and a fundamental right of the researcher. As a social good, it promotes human knowledge and innovation and thus contributes to improving the quality of life for people and society as a whole. This dimension of research is inextricably linked to the freedom of researchers, without which research may not be conducted. Research activity is an integral element of the researcher's freedom, and is institutionalised as a personal right (Greek Constitution, UNESCO Declarations). These two dimensions of research value are inextricably and naturally linked.
2. In the field of research, there is an institutional principle corresponding to the one of academic freedom governing higher education. Researchers and scientists enjoy the constitutionally guaranteed freedom of operation within FORTH. Freedom of research and science is ensured as the Foundation is free from any political and economic dependencies.
3. The following guarantee research independence: on the one hand, the control of ethics by the research community itself, in the context of self-regulatory processes as they arise within the relevant scientific field, as researchers are mainly interested in ensuring the integrity and reliability of their activities; and on the other hand, the responsibility of the Greek state to ensure a framework for the unhindered development of research initiatives, which guarantees the independence of research from occasional constraints, including independence from coinciding economic priorities,

which may be to the detriment and not to the benefit of fundamental research and scientific innovation.

4. Researchers should disclose the sources of funding for their research work. When concluding a financing agreement, they must review and reject any terms that jeopardise their freedom in designing, conducting or publishing their research.

ARTICLE 3

Basic principles of integrity in research activity

- 1.** Research, either fundamental or applied, individual or collective, promotes scientific knowledge, supports the research and educational process and is associated with the utilisation of research and scientific findings for the benefit of society as a whole.
- 2.** Research must be conducted with a focus on scientific truth, respect for human dignity, personal autonomy, the biological and intellectual integrity of persons, moral, intellectual property and personal data, as well as care for life, nature and the environment.
- 3.** Good research practices are based on fundamental principles of research integrity, including the following:

3.1 Reliability

All scientific research must be conducted in a way that guarantees its reliability, which is reflected in the design, methodology, analysis and use of resources and the publication of its results, thus ensuring its quality.

3.2. Impartiality / Integrity

All members of FORTH's research and scientific community are committed to the principle of fair treatment of all persons with whom they cooperate, as well as to the observance of the principles of justice, meritocracy and impartiality. They must refrain from any activities or actions that might constitute, or suggest, favouritism or prejudice or a negative predisposition towards associates.

The development, conduct, control, reporting and provision of information with regard to research must be promoted in a transparent, fair, complete and non-discriminatory manner.

3.3. Fair Treatment

All members of FORTH research and scientific community enjoy the right to equal treatment, but must also respect the respective rights of other researchers and their colleagues, without any form of direct or indirect discrimination, based on racial, ethnic and cultural characteristics, language, gender and sexual orientation, religious, political and philosophical beliefs, privacy, health and physical fitness, and the economic and / or social status of individuals.

3.4. Respect

During any scientific activity, all members involved behave with due respect for the rights and freedoms of the persons with whom they cooperate, rejecting any form of deception, coercion or harassment. The behaviour of researchers is governed by respect for human biological and spiritual integrity, and concern for nature and the environment.

In addition, all THE research activities are governed by due respect for the intellectual property rights of the applicable law, the Foundation's Rules of Procedure, the contracts of FORTH and its collaborating bodies at international and national level.

3.6. Accountability & Transparency

Every researcher, or group of researchers must allow access to the complete results obtained from a specific research project. The research methodology must be or become apparent. The research protocols, in the cognitive areas where they exist, must be observed in any appropriate and provable manner so that the research results are verifiable.

Commitments to accountability and transparency in research concern the conception of the idea to the publication, management, organisation, training, supervision and guidance, as well as its wider implications.

4. Plagiarism, misappropriation of foreign achievements as well as falsification of results are inadmissible and are subject to sanctions under the regulatory law that governs FORTH.

ARTICLE 4

Principles of Research Ethics/Bioethics

1. Those who conduct research in humans should be aware of the ethical principles and specific rules of ethics that govern their subject matter. In particular, every research project involving people must be conducted based on the fundamental bioethical principles:

- of personal autonomy
- of utility
- of non-damage
- of justice

Respect for human dignity and the associated principle of primacy ("intrinsic value") of human beings form the core of the principles of bioethics, which are reflected in guidelines, international conventions and declarations (such as the UNESCO declaration on bioethics and human rights, the Oviedo Convention, UNESCO Declaration on the Human Genome) as well as national legislative texts including the Greek Constitution.

FORTH researchers and staff in general are committed to the universally recognised principles of respect for the fundamental freedoms and rights of the individual, equality, the protection of public health, the protection of the child and vulnerable groups.

The interests and well-being of those involved in research always take precedence over the interests of science and society alone. In the event of a conflict, priority must always be given to the individual.

2. Research in laboratory animals should only be carried out if there is no alternative method of research, on the absolutely necessary number of animals and with the special care of the researchers to avoid unnecessary suffering and pain. The treatment of animals is subject to the rules of good research practice and the provisions of current legislation.

3. No research project shall lead to a violation of the natural environment in breach of the ethical rules and laws applicable to its protection, as well as to waste management. All research must be conducted on the basis of the environmental responsibility principle and enhance the development of environmentally friendly biotechnologies.

4. No research project shall lead to a violation of the natural environment in breach of the moral rules for its protection and the applicable legislation.

5. *Protection of privacy and personal data*

a. FORTH hosts many kinds of information, including personal data and private information. FORTH researchers, scientific and research communities are committed to protecting the privacy of those involved in research, as well as to protecting them in the processing of their personal data. Researchers must process personal data exclusively

for the purposes of the processing and with the processing means set out by the Controller (FORTH). Any other data processing for other purposes, even similar ones, is prohibited. FORTH, as the data controller, and researchers as data processors are bound to apply the necessary technical and organisational measures to comply with the data minimisation principle, to ensure an appropriate level of protection and security during their processing, to protect data from destruction, loss, alteration, unauthorised access, disclosure or transmission in any way. Appropriate measures may include the use of pseudonyms, codes or other methods that completely exclude the identification of participating subjects, to the extent that identification is not necessary for the purposes of the particular treatment.

b. Researchers must, throughout the processing, comply with the requirements of the legal framework for personal data, in particular the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and the relevant legislation of both Greece and the European Union, as well as to the decisions and instructions of the Personal Data Protection Authority (PDPA).

c. In the event that in the context of an investigation carried out at FORTH there is a request from the Scientific Officer for the transmission of data to a country outside the European Union, this request must be accompanied by the corresponding documentation, i.e. by an official certificate, stating a) its number contract with the recipient of the data in the third country; and b) that the contract provides for the observance of the personal data protection guarantees set out in the EU Regulation. In the absence of such a contract, the Scientific Officer must state the reason, and provide special consent of the subjects participating in the research for the transmission of their data, provided that the consent form will explicitly state that in the third country (which should be named) EU protection guarantees do not apply.

6. While conducting research, researchers must be informed and adhere to the basic principles of research ethics and the specific rules of scientific and professional ethics in their field.

ARTICLE 5

Respecting safety rules

1. FORTH researchers must apply all safety rules recognised in the relevant scientific field, as well as those specifically defined in the following provisions (rules for the protection of humans, animals, natural environment, in particular for the protection

from radioactive or other hazardous substances, etc.). In case the observance of safety regulations depends on infrastructure / equipment issues, they inform the competent authorities, so that the necessary measures are taken immediately.

2. FORTH researchers conducting research projects / works must inform the participants involved, in a complete and honest manner, and take all the necessary and imposed scientific measures to protect the health of the participants and employees from accidents or side-effects, which may arise from the particular conditions of the research.

3. System security The basic principles that all security systems must incorporate are confidentiality, integrity and availability:

Confidentiality: The data must remain confidential and not be disclosed. Access to data must be controlled, so that it is done only by authorised persons, and there should be mechanisms in place controlling the creation of copies, as well as recording access to data.

Integrity: The system must guarantee data integrity, i.e. it should be ensured that the data have not been altered by unauthorised intervention. If a change has been made, it should be detectable (e.g. by creating logs, which record all access to the data, through encryption, which can guarantee their privacy and integrity, etc.).

Availability: The system shall be available to the users when they need it. If a system ceases to be available (e.g. due to a fault or malicious action), it should be able to return to normal operation within a reasonable time, or even be replaced as needed (e.g. through an alternative system available to operate, at the beginning of the availability recovery).

ARTICLE 6

Relations between the researchers

1. Mutual respect and equal treatment are among the obligations of researchers. Younger researchers must enjoy respect to their personality and fair evaluation of their abilities. They themselves have, respectively, an obligation to respect and recognise the experience of their senior colleagues.

2. The individual contribution of each researcher to collective research efforts must be recognised. It is the researcher's right to accurately capture this contribution, whether in scientific publications or in any public presentation of the research project. All members of the scientific team are responsible for this, and in particular the program leaders.

ARTICLE 7

Respect of third-party rights

1. When conducting their research, FORTH researchers must show due respect for the dignity, personal autonomy and individual rights of third parties involved in the research activity. They must pay respect to their private and family life and to the beliefs and values they hold. They are required to avoid any discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, race,

national origin, language, sex, religion, privacy, physical ability, socioeconomic status, or any other factor unrelated to scientific ability and integrity.

2. FORTH researchers must inform the people who are going to take part in their research, about the goals of the latter, in a concise but comprehensible and as complete manner as possible, with honesty and adequacy. The information is provided in a transparent, understandable and easily accessible form, in a way that can be understood by the participants in the research. The information shall be provided in writing or by other means, including, where appropriate, electronically.

The information must also be provided to persons that may not participate in the research project but are directly affected thereby. The consent of the persons to be involved in the research project must be given primarily in writing. If a written consent cannot be granted for any reason, or if the provision of such consent is not appropriate due to the nature of the research project or particular cultural and other characteristics of the individuals or groups taking part in the research project, consent may be reasonably provided with any clear positive action that constitutes a free, specific, explicit and fully aware indication of the subject's agreement to the processing of the data concerning them, for example by a written statement *inter alia* by electronic means or by recording.

In order to strengthen the right to be forgotten in the online environment, as well as the right to delete personal data, should there be a relevant request from a person participating in the research, the Processor must inform the Controller so that any links or copies or any reproduction of such personal data are deleted.

3. FORTH researchers accept that scientific responsibility and social responsibility towards fellow human beings are inextricably linked.

ARTICLE 8

Intellectual property respect

- 1.** When conducting research, researchers must take into account third party intellectual property rights and must not infringe them in any way.
- 2.** Anyone who receives, formally or informally, knowledge of the progress or product of the research before the completion and publication of their results, must maintain complete confidentiality and refrain from any use of the knowledge or product of the research for their own benefit.
- 3.** FORTH researchers and scientists obtain the right to protect their personal connection (moral right) with the new original, intellectual work they produce, with the object of research they conduct depending on their degree of contribution thereto, and any other rights, claims, powers, to the degree and the extent provided for in the respective legal framework and contractual protection framework relating to the subject matter, work and research.

ARTICLE 9

Written statement

When submitting proposals or applications or contracts for research, researchers state in writing to the competent body, the FORTH Board of Directors, that they are aware of this Code, and undertake the obligation to respect and comply with the terms and conditions provided herein, and to be immediately notified of any changes or modifications to the research protocol during the research.

ARTICLE 10

Use of FORTH facilities

For the conduct of the externally funded research (may) be used the facilities and equipment of FORTH under the conditions provided in the applicable regulatory operating law of FORTH, the Internal Regulations and the relevant contracts concluded with FORTH. In such a case, the other activities, functions and research procedures of FORTH should not be hindered and the permission of the relevant body is required. FORTH's facilities and research infrastructure may be used only for purposes related to the establishment and operation of FORTH, for the purposes of Article 1.

ARTICLE 11

Research promotion

- 1.** Signs, announcements and general program promotion means are designed and used in a way that serves the information of the scientific community or the general public, and not the professional promotion in the research in an unfair way. The reference of any sponsors in activities or publications of the research groups should be done carefully, so as not to create confusion about the research body, nor create the impression of advertising a specific product or establishing a permanent connection of the sponsor with FORTH.
- 2.** Signs and general project leaflets must mention all scientists involved in the research.
- 3.** The invocation of the title of a (scientific, research, administrative) position held by a staff member of FORTH in a collective body, for the pursuit of external funding, which concerns the FORTH research laboratory unit, requires the consent of the FORTH Board.

ARTICLE 12

Employment of faculty members in a research project outside FORTH

Staff members, including faculty members, must notify to the competent body, FORTH Board of Directors, their proposals for lawful participation in research projects, which are carried out in other Institutions or Research Centers, companies, consortia, other legal entities, which do not belong to FORTH.

ARTICLE 13

Research Ethics and Conduct Committee

- 1.** The mandate of the Research Ethics and Conduct Committee is to guarantee the credibility of the research projects carried out at FORTH at an ethical and moral level. The Committee checks whether a research project is conducted with respect for the value of human beings and the autonomy of the persons involved, their privacy and personal data, and the natural and cultural environment. It also monitors compliance with generally accepted principles of research integrity and the criteria of good scientific practice.
- 2.** The RECC consists of seven (7) regular members and their

respective alternates. Members must be scientists, specialising in research, ethics /bioethics and research ethics. There must be at least one member specialising in ethics/bioethics. There must be at least two (2) members not forming part of FORTH. The specialisations of the members should ensure, as far as possible, the representation of the specialisations of the Foundation.

3. RECC members are selected as provided by law and the relevant BoD decisions on this issue. In the context of L. 4521/2018, as applicable, the following is provided for:

a. The Board of Directors of FORTH prepares and publishes on the website of FORTH a call for expressions of interest for filling the positions no later than three (3) months before the end of the term of each member. The invitation specifies the exact number of RECC members and the qualifications that the members must have, depending on the scientific fields of FORTH. Applications and the necessary documents are submitted by the interested parties electronically.

b. The Board of Directors of FORTH evaluates the applications and decides on the composition of RECC.

c. RECC is established upon decision of the Chairman of the FORTH BoD. In the decision for the establishment of RECC, the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman of the Committee are also appointed.

3. The committee members have a three-year tenure, which can be renewed once more.

4. If a RECC member resigns, is absent or in any other way terminates his term of office, he/she is replaced for the rest of his/her term by his/her alternate member.

5. The RECC must ascertain whether a specific research project to be carried out at FORTH does not contravene the legislation and is in accordance with generally accepted rules of research ethics, as to the content and manner of its conduct. RECC evaluates the research proposal and:

a. it approves it; or

b. makes recommendations and suggests its revision, if moral and ethical obstacles arise. Recommendations and proposals must be specifically reasoned.

6. a. Funded research projects which, according to the scientific director, involve research in humans, on human-derived material, such as genetic material, cells, tissues and personal data, on animals or on the natural and cultural environment, must be submitted for approval to the RECC., while the project cannot start to be implemented at FORTH unless it does not receive the relevant approval in advance.

b. Apart from the research projects of 6a above, the RECC may consider, following the request of an interested party or a complaint, other research work, and give an opinion on ethical and

moral issues related to work to be published in a scientific journal or a thesis dissertation under preparation.

7. The RECC decisions are binding for FORTH.

8. The Commission may invite the responsible researchers to submit any document it deems necessary, or to request their presence in person for clarifications. When there is a relevant issue, the RECC may request specialised experts to provide their opinion on the subject matter concerned.

9. The Committee holds regular monthly meetings and extraordinary meetings when requested by its Chairperson or the Chair of the Research Committee. RECC meetings may take place remotely by electronic means.

10. The Committee decides by absolute majority of the attending members, after all possible effort has been made to achieve unanimity.

RESEARCH PARTNERS AND OTHER STAFF

Article 14

Partner obligations

- 1.** Research partners must:
 - a.** carry out their research activity with the main purpose of promoting scientific knowledge and the benefit of society as a whole.
 - b.** comply with the provisions of the legislation relating to research subjects, the principles of ethics, the rules of good practice in research, and the rules of ethics of their profession and of this Code.
- 2.** In conducting research, partners enjoy freedom of expression and opinion. At the same time, they must respect the directions required for the organisation and guidance of the research activity by the person in charge of the research.
- 3.** Violation of the provisions hereof by research partners, or failure to comply with the instructions of the responsible persons regarding the violation of the principles of ethics and rules of ethics, may lead to their replacement.

Article 15

The Scientific Supervisor obligations

- 1.** Those in charge of the research must:
 - a.** comply with the provisions of the current legislation, the fundamental ethical principles, the rules of professional ethics, as well as this Code, and
 - b.** to monitor the observance of the above rules by their partners during the conduct of the research, as defined in the previous article.
- 2.** Those in charge of a collective research project must not appropriate research findings for their own individual promotion, or present the research findings as their individual work.
- 3.** In collective research projects, the team leader must ensure that all team members adhere to the basic principles of ethics and conduct. Respect for and recognition of the individual contribution of each researcher and adherence to the principle of transparency and mutual information are the responsibility of all participants in the research. Honesty in publishing and reporting scientific findings, integrity in keeping promises and commitments, confidentiality in data disclosed during private meetings, or during

the consideration of proposals for funding or works for publication, social responsibility, protection of volunteers and respect for their personalities, especially when it comes to vulnerable groups, are key principles of good research practice and should be followed by all researchers.

4. The assignment to third parties of part of the research or research support works falls under the responsibility and supervision of the person in charge of the research project. In case that there are more than one people in charge, they are all equally responsible for meeting the responsibilities herein.

5. Violation of the provisions of this Article by those in charge of research may be a reason for the termination of this research project. The termination is decided by the Board of Directors of FORTH, following a proposal of the Research Ethics and Conduct Committee, which is issued following a relevant written and signed complaint. Prior to any RECC proposal, both the complainant and the person in charge of the research are called before it, in order to express their views orally or in writing regarding the complaint.

SPECIAL RULES ON THE RESEARCH

Article 16

Research in humans

1. The main goal of research in humans is to prevent, diagnose, and treat diseases, to preserve and promote health and to improve the life of the person and of society in general. The specificity and importance of research in humans require the development of certain specific regulatory guidelines.

2. No biological, medical, psychological, social or pedagogical research in a person can be carried out without prior thorough information and consent of the participating person for the purpose, extent and possible risks, in accordance with Article 4 of this Code. "Informed Consent" Form Templates appropriate to each case of research are set out in *Annex II*.

3. The consent of the persons participating in a research project is required, who must be fully informed about the methodology to be used, the purposes of the research and the possible risks, any burden or discomfort (see Article 1, par. 2 of this Code). Those who are not legally competent as well as minors are allowed to participate in a research project with the written consent of their legal representatives, based on the Oviedo Convention and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) regarding their opinion and the free withdrawal of consent at any time. The consent of the legal representatives of persons who are not capable of a legal act and of minors does not release the researcher from the obligation to obtain the consent of minors and persons who are not capable of a legal act. All persons involved in a research project have the right to be forgotten or have their data deleted.

4. Consent after informing the participants does not always guarantee, nor exclusively, the protection of the persons concerned. An important part of the responsibility for their protection lies with those responsible for the planning and conduct of the specific research or clinical study, especially when it comes to deciding in which areas and environments they will look for volunteers and conduct the research. In certain environments and situations, the prevailing conditions can objectively affect the will of the person and consequently restrict their freedom and self-determination, such as detention in penitentiaries, hospitalisation in psychiatric institutions or even in intensive care and emergency response

units, nursing homes or shelters for refugees and migrants, situations of domestic, social or political violence, emergencies due to natural or other disasters, etc. In these cases, researchers have increased responsibility and must justify that they ensure that research participants are not used as simple "means" of experimentation and research.

- 5.** The economic or other exploitation of the human body, from the organs to the genome of the cell, as well as any economic or other exploitation of the persons involved in it, by the researchers is prohibited during the research or under the pretext of research.
- 6.** The funding of the research by a pharmaceutical company, or a company producing or marketing mechanical or other equipment or products and applications, is allowed if there is a written acceptance from the company of the Code of Principles and Ethics that governs the research activity of FORTH
- 7.** It is not allowed to cause illness, pain or physical and mental discomfort or to prolong or aggravate an existing illness, pain or physical and mental discomfort, for research purposes.
- 8.** Researchers must adhere strictly before, during and after the research to the principles of protection and integrity of the personal data collected and processed, as well as to the applicable legislation for their protection. The respective research is carried out in accordance with the principles and rules of the GDPR and the Greek legislation.
- 9.** Laboratories that carry out research on microorganisms - including genetically modified - that can cause any infection, allergy or toxicity, or that can reproduce or carry genetic material, must comply with the law. Based on their risk, microorganisms are classified into 4 groups and research on them is carried out in specially designed laboratories.
- 10.** The RECC evaluates research proposals which, according to the scientific director, include studies or tests in humans (L. 4521/2018, Article 23, par.^{2a}), without replacing the competent Scientific Council of the Hospital where the study is to be carried out. The RECC takes into account any previous documented evaluation of the latter for a specific clinical trial and checks whether the submitted proposal is covered by the authorisation of the Scientific Council.
- 11.** Research in human embryos is governed by legal rules. Excess human gametes, zygotes and fertilised eggs that have been allocated for this purpose are used for research, in accordance with Article 1459 of the Greek Civil Code. Research in this field

is carried out in order to expand the knowledge about human reproduction, to improve infertility diagnosis and treatment methods, as well as fertility control (contraception), to identify the causes of miscarriages and to develop ways to deal with them, to develop control and treatment techniques of genetic diseases and congenital anomalies, to study the biology of embryonic stem cells and their possible therapeutic uses. The research is carried out with the permission of the Ethics and Conduct Committee, written consent of the donors, previous corresponding research on animal models, unless this is not scientifically feasible, and permission of the National Authority IYA. Researchers are bound by the principles of consent upon informing the gamete donors, as well as of protection of collected and processed personal data.

12. In social research, including social research as part of a wider interdisciplinary research project, researchers must respect cultural and individual differences of roles and positions, including those due to age, gender, race, minority, ethnicity religion, sexual preferences, disability, language and socioeconomic status. They shall be sensitive to the actual or perceived hierarchies and inequalities of relationships between researchers and research participants, and ensure the necessary theoretical, methodological and research conditions to highlight the genuine discourse and perspective of research participants. They shall not exploit persons with whom they have a consulting or other similar relationship that objectively creates an inequality relationship (e.g. patients, clients, etc.) and avoid in any way causing harm or exposure to risk to the participants in the research. They create, maintain, distribute, store, maintain and have files and data related to their research, in accordance with the legislation and this Code of Ethics and Conduct of Research.

13. Research in sports should be guided by the Olympic ideals. The use of methods against the current regulations for the increase of athletic performance is prohibited.

14. For the carrying out research in Greek schools, an opinion of the Department of Research, Documentation and Educational Technology of the Pedagogical Institute is required.

15. Research on corpses is allowed only upon written consent by family members. In case of unclaimed corpses, research cannot begin until at least 10 days after the death.

16. In case of possible research in detainees, researchers must comply with the special provisions that apply to them (Penitentiary Code), while taking into account the requirements of the Code of Ethics of Criminology. Under no circumstances shall experiments be carried out in search of interrogation methods or other means which may endanger their physical and mental health, or reduce their moral character and offend their human nature.

17. Research in children, minors and other vulnerable groups must be specifically justified, and in case the results cannot be produced in any other way or with the participation of other groups. In these cases, special care is required by researchers to protect the rights of children, minors and vulnerable groups, when their participation in research projects is deemed necessary.

18. In particular, research projects involving children should be conducted in accordance with the guidelines that summarise the key points of the Code of Conduct in Research on Children issued by the Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD), <https://www.srcd.org/about-us/ethical-standards-research>). Among others:

a. Researchers cannot use any research process that may be harmful to the child either physically or psychologically. *No matter how young the children are, their rights take precedence over the rights of the researcher.*

b. Before the start of the research, researchers must obtain the consent of the participants after being informed. Children should be informed about all the characteristics of the research that could affect their willingness to participate, and they should have all their questions answered using terms that correspond to their level of understanding. Researchers should respect the children's freedom to choose whether or not to participate in the research, as well as to terminate their participation at any time. If participants are over 7 years old, they must voluntarily agree to take part in the research project. If they are under 18 years old, the consent of their parents or guardians must be obtained.

c. When it comes to infant research, researchers must give all necessary explanations to parents, and be particularly sensitive to infant discomfort indicators in order to obtain consent after informing parents.

d. In addition to their own opinion, the participation of children and minors in research requires the consent of the parents or guardians. The consent of the parents or guardians, or those acting in the parents' position (e.g. directors of institutions, etc.), after informing them, should preferably be obtained in writing or under conditions of Article 16d hereof.

e. Consent must also be ensured upon informing any person whose interaction with children is subject of the study (e.g. teachers).

f. The personal information provided by the participants during the research must remain confidential. The anonymity of the participants should be maintained and no information should be used for which no approval has been granted.

19. Researchers who process the personal data of research subjects, and are either not bound by legal secrecy or are not dependent on the FORTH, i.e. those who are not 'officials' or 'employees' of the FORTH, nor are associated therewith with regard to the conduct of the specific research by means of an employment or independent services provision relationship etc. conclude an additional Agreement with FORTH with the object and purpose of confidentiality, and conditions regarding the protection and the processing of personal data in accordance with the applicable law.

Article 17

Research in animals

1. Experiments performed in the context of animal research are divided into two broad categories: experiments that benefit humans, and those that benefit animals. The first category includes research that has as its main objectives the study, prevention and treatment of diseases, drug testing, the production of diagnostic products, the promotion of human health, the knowledge of mechanisms of operation of the human body (fundamental research), etc. The second category, includes experiments aimed at improving the lives of the animals themselves.

2. According to animal protection principles, research should be guided by the ethical treatment of animals, as well as the selection of the appropriate animal species for experimental purposes.

3. A necessary condition for the correct use of animals for experimental purposes is the knowledge of their morphological and physiological

features, as well as of their “zootechnical” requirements. Thus, housing, food and care must be commensurate with the needs and requirements of the animals.

4. The use of animals for experimental purposes is governed by the fundamental principle of "3 Rs" (Replacement, Reduction, Refinement). According to the principle of Replacement, research in animals is justified only when there are no other alternative methods, and no attempt should be made to replace animals with other lower organisms that have a less developed nervous system and experience less pain, such as plants, microorganisms and metazoans. When animals cannot be replaced, care should be taken to reduce their number (Reduction). The design of the experiment should be such as to give reliable results using the smallest possible number of animals. Refinement requires the minimisation of pain and suffering in animals.

5. Animal research is governed by the rules described in P.D. 56 / 30-04-2013 (see *Annex*) - which adapts Greek legislation to Directive 2010/63/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 September 2010 (L 276/33 / 20.10.2010) "On the protection of animals used for scientific purposes" - as well as the provisions of L. 4521/2018, Article 23 para.2a see *Annex*).

For research projects involving experiments using animal models and requiring approval by the Experimental Protocol Evaluation Committee (EAP), established under current legislation and involving specialised scientists to judge ethics and moral issues, the RECC will accept the informed recommendation of the specialised Committee and will consider only issues not covered by the special Committee.

The RECC evaluates research proposals which, according to the scientific director, include research in humans (L. 4521/2018, Article 23, par.2 “), without substituting the competent EAP of FORTH. It must take into account the previous documented evaluation of the latter for a specific research proposal, and check whether the submitted research proposal is covered by the approval of the competent EAP.

The decision of RECC does not replace authorisation provided by the P.D. 56/2013.

Article 18

Research in natural, residential and cultural environment

- 1.** Research with regards to the environment must be carried out

with utmost care to its protection, and in accordance with the good practices of biological resource management following the principle of sustainability.

- 2.** Access to biological resources should be based on national law and international treaties and on obtaining any required permits from the competent authorities.
- 3.** Research that may affect biodiversity must be carried out in accordance with the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (Rio de Janeiro Convention) and the Cartagena Accompanying Protocol on Biosafety, as incorporated into Greek law with L. 2204/1994.
- 4.** Research in genetically modified organisms and micro-organisms must be carried out in accordance with the provisions of Community Directive 2001/18, as incorporated into Greek law by the M.D. 38639/2017 and those of the Community Directive 1998/81 on the contained use of genetically modified micro-organisms, as incorporated in the Greek legislation with M.D. ΗΠ/11648/1943/2002.
- 5.** For the use, distribution and collection, and movement of radioactive substances, a special permit of EEAE is required, in accordance with the applicable provisions (L. 1733/1987, 2480/1997, L.D. 854/1971, P.D. 22/1997).
- 6.** In the case of the use of ionising or non-ionising radiation, special protection measures must be taken for both the researchers and the general population, in accordance with the law.
- 7.** No research project shall lead to a violation of the natural environment in breach of the laws established for its protection, as well as for waste management.
- 8.** No research shall justify the violation of cultural heritage in breach of the law (L. 3028/2002).
- 9.** During the execution of technical works in the context of research, the rules of ethics of the Professional Code of Greek Engineers, issued on the basis of Articles 24 and 26 of 27-11 / 14- 12-1926 P.D. "On the codification of the provisions on the establishment of a Technical Chamber of Greece".

Article 19

Obligations of the Research Organisation - FORTH

By means of its competent bodies, FORTH guarantees the independence of its researchers, as laid down in Article 2 hereof. It is responsible for the transparency of its financial resources, in particular the conditions for accepting private funding.

- 2.** In the context of the researcher independence and integrity

guarantees, FORTH must protect the working rights of researchers. It also ensures the observance of safety rules, both for the protection of the researchers themselves and for the protection of public health and the environment, in relation to research carried out at its facilities.

3. FORTH should provide support for the ongoing training of its researchers, including their training in the principles of research ethics and conduct, and those of scientific integrity, as well as facilitate by all appropriate means their information on international scientific developments.

4. FORTH ensures the dissemination of the knowledge produced, in the context of its research activities, to the international scientific community. It also ensures, in collaboration with its researchers, the transmission of the produced knowledge to the general public, by any appropriate means and in a responsible way, thus contributing to the social utilisation of science and, therefore, to social progress and improvement of the quality of human life.

ANNEX I : Application form - questionnaire template for granting RECC approval: see RECC official website where each valid form was posted.

ANNEX II: Additional Agreement on the terms for personal data processing: see official website of the Data Protection Officer, where the applicable Personal Data Protection Policy is posted.