

Procedures for the management of research misconduct cases



PROCEDURES FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF RESEARCH MISCONDUCT CASES

- Report to Chief Scientific Officer (Tigem Scientific Office director) of a likely research misconduct case

1. Preliminary evaluation

- The Chief Scientific Officer, supported by members of the Faculty, draft a preliminary evaluation consisting of:
 - Evaluation of the attendability of the information received
 - Evaluation of the competence of Tigem/Fondazione Telethon (FT) in the management of the procedure
- The Chief Scientific Officer contacts the Research integrity committee (RIC) composed of:
 - Tigem Scientific Director
 - FT HR Director
 - FT Head of Research

With the aim to:

- Communicate to the personnel involved that a misconduct report has been filed.
 - Make a preliminary evaluation of the impact of critical issues and possible follow up actions,
 - Collect more information/declarations
 - Define which are the units/institutions involved
- RIC contact:
 - The misconduct case reporter
 - Personnel involved, subject of the misconduct report: researcher(s) and the PI
 - Other involved parties, i.e. collaborators, funding bodies (if necessary)
- to:
- **Inform about the management of the procedure** (show the next step, the possible scenarios and the possible results of the investigation);
 - **Collect more information and declarations**
- RIC decides whether to take temporary measures on personnel involved until the conclusion of the investigation (e.g. temporary funding suspension, researcher tutoring or other, taking into account all the law and collective agreement provisions)
 - If this is the case, the Researcher and the PI of the laboratory are formally notified of the decision
 - The RIC, based on the information collected, decide if the case can be dismissed or if it is the case to proceed with a deep evaluation of the case

2. Deep evaluation

I. **Case opening**

within 10 days from the report

- The RIC constitute the Evaluation Committee, composed as follows:
 - FT Medical-Scientific Committee Director
 - 2 expert researchers in the field of international relevance, part of the FT Medical-Scientific Committee (if available), or Independent
 - TIGEM Scientific Director
 - FT Head of Research
 - TIGEM Chief Scientific Officer
- The evaluation is performed by the Evaluation Committee

II. **Investigation and evaluation**

within 5 days from the case opening

- The Evaluation Committee autonomously proceeds with its ascertainment activity following (not necessarily all) these steps:
 - Contact the researcher(s) involved in the case and the PI(s) responsible of the projects to notify them about the procedure and eventually request more information
 - Collection of sufficient details to clarify the case, by interviewing other people directly involved in the case
 - Drafting an evaluation report, with eventual requests for clarification and/or additional experiments and sharing with the involved researcher(s) and, for reference, to FT R&D Director and Tigem Scientific Director.
 - Reception of the new requested elements (e.g. experiments and explanations)
 - Evaluation of the received elements
 - Writing up of the final report

III. **Conclusion**

Within 10 working days from the final report

- Tigem/FT take note of the conclusions reported in the final report written by the Evaluation Committee and supervise the implementation of the indications therein expressed i.e. in the case of a scientific publication, eventual amendment or article retraction.
- Tigem/FT proceeds with eventual disciplinary measures if necessary (always according to law and collective agreement provisions such as: suspension of a research project, formal appeal, intensive supervision, dismissal)
- Closing/Archiving of the internal procedure.
- The RIC decide if/how to communicate the case resolution to the Funding Agencies and to the Scientific Journals involved.
- In case of serious scientific fraud that may be configured as a crime, FT is obliged to lodge a formal denunciation to the competing authority.