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Regulations of the Commission on Research Integrity

of 12 July 2016

The National Research Council,

based on Article 9 letter d of the Organisational Regulations of the National Research Council

issues the following Regulations:

Article 1 Commission on Research Integrity and Plagiarism Control Group

¹ The Commission on Research Integrity and the Plagiarism Control Group at the SNSF deal with proceedings, checks and questions concerning scientific misconduct.

² The Commission for Research Integrity was appointed by the Research Council to conduct proceedings in cases of suspected scientific misconduct.

³ The Plagiarism Control Group of the Administrative Offices was appointed by the Executive Management specifically to check applications submitted to the SNSF for cases of plagiarism and coordinate any related questions. It is supervised and instructed by the member of the Executive Management who is responsible for research funding. Within the Commission (Articles 3 and 4), the members of the Plagiarism Control Group are not bound by instructions.

⁴ Both bodies advise the SNSF on research integrity issues as needed.

Article 2 Subject and scope of these Regulations

¹ The Commission on Research Integrity (hereinafter: the Commission) is responsible for research integrity issues, in particular the proceedings conducted in accordance with the Regulations on scientific misconduct of the SNSF¹.

² Its organisation and responsibilities are set out in these Regulations along with the provisions governing the Plagiarism Control Group of the SNSF.

Article 3 Commission on Research Integrity and Plagiarism Control Group, composition

¹ The Commission on Research Integrity is composed as follows:

- a. President;
- b. One delegate from each of the divisions and specialised committees of the Research Council,
- c. Members of the Plagiarism Control Group of the Administrative Offices.

¹ [Regulations on scientific misconduct](#) (Research Integrity Regulations, RI Regulations) of 12 July 2016.

² The Plagiarism Control Group of the Administrative Offices is composed of 8 employees of the Administrative Offices who represent the four divisions and three specialised committees as well as the Legal Department. If necessary, the Executive Management may delegate 2-4 further employees to join the Plagiarism Control Group. A permanent deputy to the member representing the Legal Department must be appointed.

Article 4 Commission on Research Integrity, composition when discussing cases

¹ The Commission meets and decides on cases of scientific misconduct in relation to grant applications or the use of SNSF grants in the following four-member constellation:

- a. President;
- b. Delegate of the respective division or specialised committee of the Research Council;
- c. One member of the Plagiarism Control Group of the Administrative Offices, generally the member representing the responsible division or the responsible specialised committee;
- d. The member of the Legal Department in the Plagiarism Control Group or their deputy.

² In the event of cases of misconduct that cannot be clearly allocated to an individual division or specialised committee, the Commission will consist of those members of the Plagiarism Control Group who are most familiar with the subject at hand or most closely linked to it in organisational terms.

³ If a delegate pursuant to paragraph 1 letter b is prevented from participating or recused, the president will appoint another delegate as a member for the relevant proceedings. If the president is prevented from taking part or recused, his/her place is taken by the vice president.

Article 5 Constitution of the Commission on Research Integrity

¹ The president of the Commission is elected by the Presiding Board of the Research Council at the recommendation of the Commission. The latter proposes candidates after taking account of their competencies and experience in the area of research integrity. The members of the Presiding Board of the Research Council may not be elected as president of the Commission.

² The divisions and specialised committees of the Research Council each delegate one member to join the Commission.

³ The members of the Commission elect a deputy to the president from among the delegates pursuant to Article 4 letter b.

⁴ In all other respects, the Commission organises itself.

Article 6 Constitution of the Plagiarism Control Group

¹ The Plagiarism Control Group is led by a member appointed by the Executive Management.

² The members are appointed by the presidents of the divisions.

³ In all other respects, the Plagiarism Control Group organises itself.

Article 7 Terms of office

¹ The term of office of the president of the Commission is 4 years. The president may be re-elected once for a maximum of 4 years.

² The term of office of the delegates corresponds to the term of office within the relevant division or specialised committee of the Research Council.

³ Members of the Plagiarism Control Group may be members of the Commission for a maximum of 4 years.

Article 8 Meetings of the Commission on Research Integrity

¹ The Commission meets as often as is necessary, but at least once a year.

² In its four-member constellation for the discussion of cases (Article 4), the Commission will hold meetings as required. It ensures that cases are dealt with rapidly and confidentially.

³ Decisions of the Commission require a simple majority; in the event of a tie the president has a casting vote.

⁴ Decisions by circular letter are permissible if the matter is urgent and none of the members has asked for a verbal discussion.

Article 9 General tasks of the Commission on Research Integrity

In its constellation pursuant to Article 3, the Commission is tasked with the following:

- a. Discussing organisational and procedural matters as well as fundamental questions related to research integrity;
- b. Participating in the further development of the basic legal documents and standards for research integrity;
- c. Periodic reporting on the Commission's and the Plagiarism Control Group's activities to the Presiding Board of the Research Council.

Article 10 Tasks and competencies of the Commission on Research Integrity when studying cases (Article 4)

¹ The Commission in its composition pursuant to Article 4 examines cases of scientific misconduct in connection with applications for SNSF grants or the use of such grants. It is tasked with the following:

- a. Determining the factual basis of suspected cases of scientific misconduct;
- b. Investigating suspected cases and issuing binding judgements on whether scientific misconduct has occurred;
- c. Submitting a report to the Presiding Board of the Research Council if an instance of scientific misconduct is deemed to have occurred, together with a recommendation with regard to sanctions and communication of the decision to third parties;
- d. Discontinuing the proceedings if no scientific misconduct has occurred;
- e. Consulting with internal or external experts.

² The members of the Commission are fully independent in the execution of their tasks.

Article 11 Tasks and competencies of the president

¹ The tasks and competencies of the president are as follows:

- a. Deciding whether there are grounds for suspecting scientific misconduct and initiating an investigation;

- b. Deciding whether an investigation should be postponed until the results of the investigation conducted by the relevant institution are available;
- c. Deciding whether the SNSF should opt not to carry out its own proceedings despite grounds for suspicion if the research institution concerned is bringing or has brought proceedings against the suspected party.
- d. Deciding whether the Commission, when clarifying the facts, should opt not to conduct its own investigation and rely on the results of the investigation conducted by the institution concerned;
- e. Convening the Commission to discuss cases and chairing meetings;
- f. Supervising the investigation procedure and directing that hearings be held as needed;
- g. Representing the Commission within the SNSF, particularly before the Presiding Board of the Research Council;
- h. Representing the Commission externally by agreement with the president of the Research Council and the Executive Management;
- i. Conducting at least one meeting of the Commission (in its composition pursuant to Article 3) per year;
- j. Participating in the further development of the basic legal documents and standards for research integrity.

² For decisions pursuant to letters a-d, the president may, if necessary, consult with persons who would be members of the Commission in the event of an investigation (Article 4 paragraph 1 letters b-d).

Article 12 Tasks of the Plagiarism Control Group

¹ The main task of the Plagiarism Control Group is to regularly vet applications submitted to the SNSF for instances of plagiarism. The Plagiarism Control Group

- a. examines applications either at random or in response to information received from a third party;
- b. discusses and decides on trivial cases in accordance with paragraphs 2 and 3; and
- c. drafts or completes the standards and the procedures for detecting instances of plagiarism.

² Instances of plagiarism may be regarded as trivial if

- a. only a few citations are missing;
- b. only a small amount of text is uncited compared to the entire text; or
- c. the content of the uncited text is of a general nature or concerns the state of research.

³ Isolated and insignificant minor errors in the publication list can be regarded as trivial.

⁴ The Plagiarism Control Group is responsible for the cross-divisional coordination of plagiarism vetting, the uniform handling of plagiarism detection software and the development of standards and procedures relating to plagiarism.

⁵ The guidelines issued by the Executive Management apply with regard to any tasks and responsibilities of the Plagiarism Control Group that are not defined in these Regulations.

Article 13 Notification of the divisions and specialised committees

¹ The following persons are informed as soon as an investigation regarding scientific misconduct is initiated:

- a. the president of the respective division or specialised committee of the Research Council and
- b. the head of the division at the Administrative Offices.

² This information must be treated as confidential. It may be used for appropriate sensitisation and prevention measures in the domain of research integrity as long as full anonymity is guaranteed.

Article 14 Secretariat

The Commission on Research Integrity is supported by an administrative secretariat based at the Administrative Offices.

Article 15 Entry into force and replacement of existing regulations

¹ These Regulations enter into force on 1 September 2016.

² They replace the Organisational Regulations of the Commission on Research Integrity of 17 September 2013.