# Consolidating European ethics assessment for research and innovation: the SATORI project

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# The SATORI project

- A response to the call for Mutual Learning and Mobilisation Action Plans (MMLAPs) on Societal Challenges
- Part of the Science in Society work programme
- Stakeholders <u>Acting Together on the ethical</u> impact assessment of <u>Research and</u> <u>Innovation</u>



# Aims of SATORI

- Development of an ethical assessment framework for scientific research and related innovation activities
- Active involvement of all of the main actors involved in the design and application of ethics, principles and laws in research and innovation
- Aim to contribute to better, more inclusive practices of governance for the European system of research & innovation

SATORI



# **Rationale for SATORI**

- Lack of uniformity of ethics assessment frameworks
  - Variety of ethical theories & methodologies, different ethical approaches, different national/regional focus
- Dissimilar legislation and practices
- Implications of globalisation for "ethics dumping"
  Exporting "less ethical" research practices outside the EU
- Evolution of technologies and societal concerns

# Required elements in the framework

The framework should encompass all scientific disciplines



# **Mutual learning**

 Mutual learning between different fields, ethics assessors & approaches in different European countries



## **Dialogue & participation**

#### The societal challenge of ethics assessment





# Uniformity and diversity

#### Finding a balance



 Variety in ethics assessors, nations and regions, regulatory, social and institutional settings

# Participation of stakeholders

- Results should be useful to a wide variety of ethics assessors
  - Research ethics committees (IRBs)
  - National ethics committees
  - Funding agencies
  - Science academies
  - Research institutions
  - Industry
  - Civil society actors



#### Scope and terminology: research

"Research" here refers to scientific research using scientific methods



#### Scope and terminology: innovation

- Innovation: the development of new products, processes and services
  - Technological innovation
  - Social innovation





# **Objects of assessment**

- 1) Research and innovation **plans and agendas**
- 2) Research and innovation practices
- 3) Research and innovation systems and infrastructures
- 4) **Products** of research and innovation
- 5) **Impacts** of research and innovation

## Steps in the assessment

• Ethics assessment may involve three steps:

- 1) Identification of ethical aspects of R&I
- 2) Evaluation of ethical aspects of R&I
- 3) Recommendations based on identification and/or evaluation of ethical aspects



#### Building the ethics assessment framework: existing & novel approaches

- Research ethics
  - Major focus on practice-internal issues
- SATORI will also have a major focus on practice-external issues
  - Ethical impact assessmentAnticipatory issues

#### Ethical impact assessment

- A process for identifying, examining and assessing the ethical issues arising from the development of a project, technology, service, policy or other initiative and, in consultation with stakeholders, for taking remedial actions as necessary in order to avoid or minimise the negative impacts.
- An early warning system, a way to detect ethical problems, build safeguards before, not after, heavy investment – fix ethical issues now, not later
- Avoids costly or embarrassing mistakes
- Enhances informed decision-making
- A way to gain the public's trust and confidence

# Anticipatory ethics

- Anticipatory (technology) ethics is an approach for broad ethical assessments of emerging technologies.
- It combines futures studies (including technology assessment and forecasting) with ethical assessment.
- It identifies and studies ethical issues at three levels: the technology level (fundamental techniques and processes), the artifact level (actual and future products) and the application level (actual and future uses by different users in different contexts)

## Structure of SATORI



# The challenge of diversity

- Precedents exist...
  - Ethics review for EU research funding, European Group on Ethics in Science and New Technologies
  - Also at the global level: 2005 Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights

## Towards a framework

- Focus on values?
  - European constitution
  - Linking and prioritising values?
- Practices and protocols?
  - Approaches, expertise, cost – effectiveness



- Institutional structures?
  - How to strengthen European policy and institutions for ethics assessment?

#### Thank you!



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