

# RESEARCH FAIRNESS INITIATIVE

## RFI : works for all science collaboration

We started the RFI to improve health research collaborations between high and low income institutions and countries. Soon we realised that almost all of it is directly applicable to any science and to any type of research collaborations – without or with only minor changes.

The RFI and RFI System are managed by COHRED, an international non-profit and non-governmental organisation based in Geneva, Switzerland. Since 1993, we support national capacity for research and innovation in low and middle income countries to improve health, equity and development.

“The RFI Report is the ‘Creating Shared Value’ Report of all key stakeholders in research and science”

## RFI : Who should be Using the RFI?

### Any institution that is a partner in science: Funders of research

- Academic and Research Institutions
- Government Departments with main responsibilities for research, research policy, research funding
- National Research Agencies
- Business engaged in applied and basic research
- Non-profits for whom research is a key pillar to achieve their mission
- International Organisations promoting research
- and others

“For most impact: you should produce you own RFI Report – and ask your partners or grantees to do so as well”



COUNCIL ON HEALTH RESEARCH FOR DEVELOPMENT

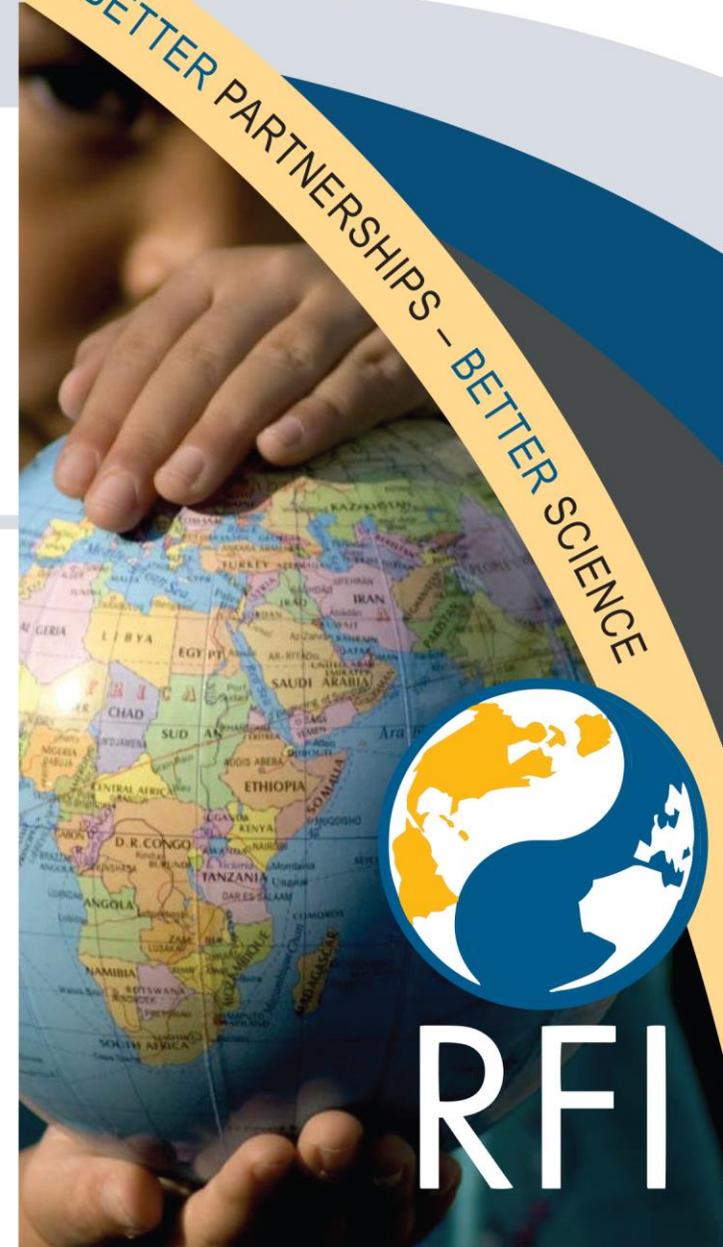
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BETTER PARTNERSHIPS – BETTER SCIENCE



# RFI

## What is the RFI?

Currently there is no systematic and accepted framework to measure the quality and impact of the partnerships aimed at producing excellent and relevant science. The Research Fairness Initiative (RFI) has been designed to optimize the ability of all stakeholders to contribute to solving complex local and global challenges through research and innovation.

### The RFI is:

- **An institutional reporting system** – providing for a regular and systematic assessment of its research partnerships – this should be a core activity for any research organisation.
- **Improvement focused** - the RFI focuses on continuing improvement, not on 'rating' and 'ranking'
- **A due diligence tool for research collaboration** – the first practical way for funders, research organisations, business and others to exercise due diligence in establishing and maintaining science collaborations
- **A Global Learning Platform** – The RFI is NOT a guideline itself – the RFI is a reporting framework encouraging RFI Reporting Organisations to take note of and use existing codes, rules, regulations, recommendations, and expectations through the RFI Global Evidence Base.



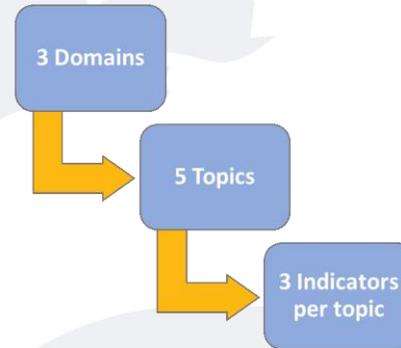
While there are numerous criteria to judge the quality of the science resulting from research collaborations, there is no practical and widely accepted standard to measure the quality and impact of the partnership component. The RFI asks institutions to document their current policies and practices and their intentions to improve their research partnerships in the short term – based on criteria established through wide global consultation.

## How does it work?

The RFI provides a pragmatic view of what 'fairness' means in research collaborations:

Research partnerships have three distinct phases or 'domains' -

- Fairness of Opportunity – 'before research starts'
- Fair Process – 'during implementation of research'
- Fair Sharing of Benefits, Costs and Outcomes – 'after research is completed'



In each phase or 'domain' there are 5 key aspects that define high quality partnerships

And each of these aspects are assessed by 3 indicators – using mostly already available data

- The RFI Report consists of the responses to these indicators – focusing on where your institution intends to improve over the next 2 years – a decision YOU take
- Deciding to become an RFI Reporting Organisation is a strategic decision

Reporting  
Format for RFI  
Indicators

1. Describe CURRENT POLICY or PRACTICE.
2. Share DOCUMENTS, SUCCESSES, etc.
3. Outline IMPROVEMENTS for the next 2 years.

RFI Validation is done by the RFI Team – based on explicit and transparent criteria that focus on process rather than content of the report, and are available from the RFI Web.

## How can the RFI help change the world?

- Partnerships are key to developing sustainable research and innovation capacity – everywhere – especially in low income countries.
- Capacity building is essential for dealing with major global and local development challenges, stimulating economic growth, generating resilience, and promoting equity.
- Fairness in research collaborations is at the heart of achieving this.

## WHO BENEFITS?

### 1. Your Organisation

- Systematically analyse and improve key aspects of research partnerships

*“The RFI provides a framework that allows an organization to take a step back and challenge itself to think about how its processes and approaches affect its partners. We found the process of completing the RFI rewarding and are ready to share our experiences with others.” - Dr John Reeder, Director of the Tropical Disease Research programme of the World Health Organization WHO/TDR*

### 2. Your Partners

- Create Transparency and Trust – Communicate Your Commitment to Fairness – Exercise Due Diligence

### Domains of Fairness

#### 1. Fairness of Opportunity

#### 2. Fair Process

#### 3. Fair Sharing of Benefits, Costs and Outcomes

### 3. All Research Collaborations – anywhere

- Share Experience and Practices – Build Standards and Benchmarks