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European Network  
for Academic  
Integrity



# Support for victims of academic misconduct: an interactive portal and support network

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European Network for Academic Integrity & Centre for Research  
Ethics & Bioethics, Uppsala University (Sweden)

Academic Integrity Webinar

9th December 2022

# Agenda for today

- ✓ Introduction
- ✓ Do victims of academic misconduct feel supported?
- ✓ The Victim Support Portal - an interactive portal and supporting network
- ✓ Supporting Victims – Lessons learned from the Portal
- ✓ Questions & Answers
- ✓ Future of the Erasmus+ FAITH Project and the Victim Support Portal

# Who am I?

- ✓ PhD in Physical Geography (University of Hull, UK);
- ✓ Junior Researcher at the H2020 INTEGRITY project (<https://h2020integrity.eu/>);
- ✓ ENAI Executive Director, Senior Researcher & Project Manager;
- ✓ Coordinator of the Victim Support Portal & Victim Support WG (<https://academicintegrity.eu/victims/>).

# The Good and the Bad!



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Academic/Research Integrity

Honesty  
Respect  
Accountability  
Ethical values  
Fairness  
Trust  
...


Plagiarism  
Data Manipulation  
Contract Cheating  
Abuse  
GGG Authorship  
Dishonesty/Fraud  
...

Academic/Research Misconduct


# The Good and the Bad!




2% of researchers admitted having manipulated data and 34% admitted other questionable practices (Fanelli, 2009)...



...About the behavior of colleagues, admission rates were 14.12% for falsification, and up to 72% for other QRPs (Fanelli, 2009).



>4% researchers admitted having engaged in data manipulation.  
>50% admitted having done at least one QRP (Gopalakrishna et al. 2022)



2022 Nature Postgraduate survey results: High stress levels, poor work–life balance and struggles with anxiety or depression

# The Good and the Bad!

**Do you feel that you have experienced bullying during your graduate degree?**



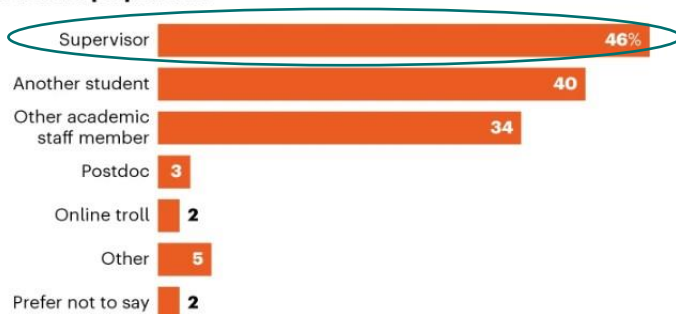
**Do you feel able to speak out about your experiences of bullying without personal repercussions?\***



**Do you feel that you have experienced discrimination or harassment during your graduate degree?**



**Who was the perpetrator?†**



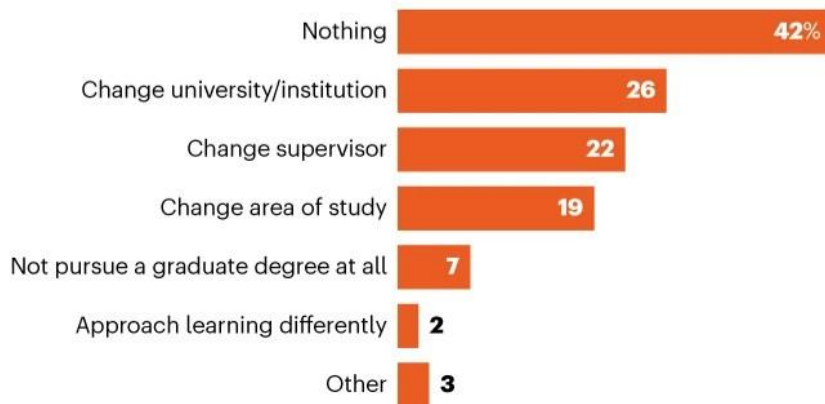
2022 Nature Postgraduate (PhD & MsC) survey results

3,253 respondents

35% Europe; 28% North America; 24% Asia; 13% split ~equally between South America, Africa and Australasia

# The Good and the Bad!

**What would you do differently right now if you were starting your graduate degree?**



- ✓ What actions are needed to improve the experience of postgraduate students?
- ✓ What is the supervisor's role?
- ✓ How often students and supervisors report unethical actions without the fear of repercussions?

# Who is a victim?

*"My PhD advisor stole my research data!"*

*"One of my co-authors manipulated data and now I'm being accused!"*

*"My teaching materials are being used elsewhere without my consent!"*



*"I'm not a co-author of a paper I did most of the work!"*

*"I've reported a bad action and now I'm being persecuted!"*

*"My supervisor threatened me, if I ever report that he harassed me!"*

*"My paper was plagiarised!"*



# Who is a victim?



Check the ENAI Glossary for the definitions:

<https://www.academicintegrity.eu/wp/glossary/>

# Do victims of academic misconduct feel supported?



- ✓ Few research on reporting academic/research misconduct and the impacts on both the victims and the respondents;
- ✓ Filing charges of scientific misconduct can be a risky and dangerous endeavour – whistleblowers often pay a high price!
- ✓ Reporting suspected academic/research misconduct is a shared and serious responsibility of all scientific community!
- ✓ The two sides of the coin: misconduct or misunderstanding?

# How to blow the whistle and still have a career afterwards (Gunsalus, 1998)

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## The Rules for Responsible Whistleblowing (Gunsalus, 1998)

Rule 1 – Consider Alternative explanations  
(consider that you may be wrong!)

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Rule 2 – Ask Questions, do not make charges

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Rule 3 – What documentation supports your  
concerns? Do you have access to it?

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# How to blow the whistle and still have a career afterwards (Gunsalus, 1998)

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## The Rules for Responsible Whistleblowing (Gunsalus, 1998)

Rule 4 – Separate your personal and professional concerns

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Rule 5 – Assess your goals: what are you seeking from this situation?

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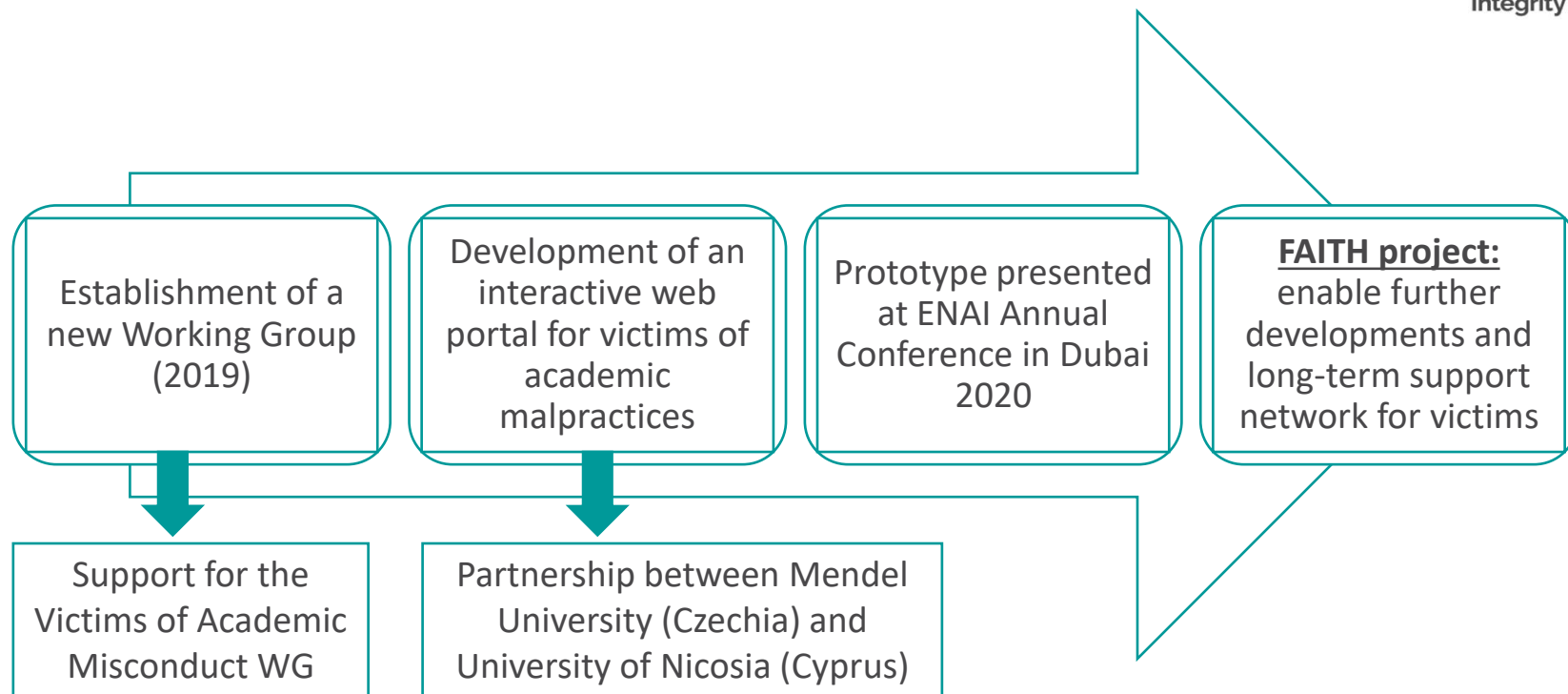
Rule 6 – Seek advice and listen to it

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# Do victims of academic misconduct feel supported?



# Request for support made to ENAI



# Erasmus+ FAITH project



- ✓ FAITH – Facing Academic Integrity Threats
- ✓ Cooperation partnerships in higher education (2021-1-TR01-KA220-HED-000027559)
- ✓ Timeline: 28th Feb 2022 – 27th Feb 2025 (36 months)
- ✓ Budget: 274,709.00 EUR



# Erasmus+ FAITH project



## PR1 – Policy for good practice

- Establish a benchmark for minimum standards for Academic Integrity policies in Europe and beyond based on good practice internationally

## PR2 - Proactive approach to deter academic misconduct

- Design evidence-based guidance and training materials on how to prevent, detect and deter academic misconduct

## PR3 – Support for victims of academic misconduct

- Establish an interactive portal and support network for victims of academic misconduct



# Erasmus+ FAITH project PR3

## PR3A

Understanding  
different needs of  
potential victims

## PR3B

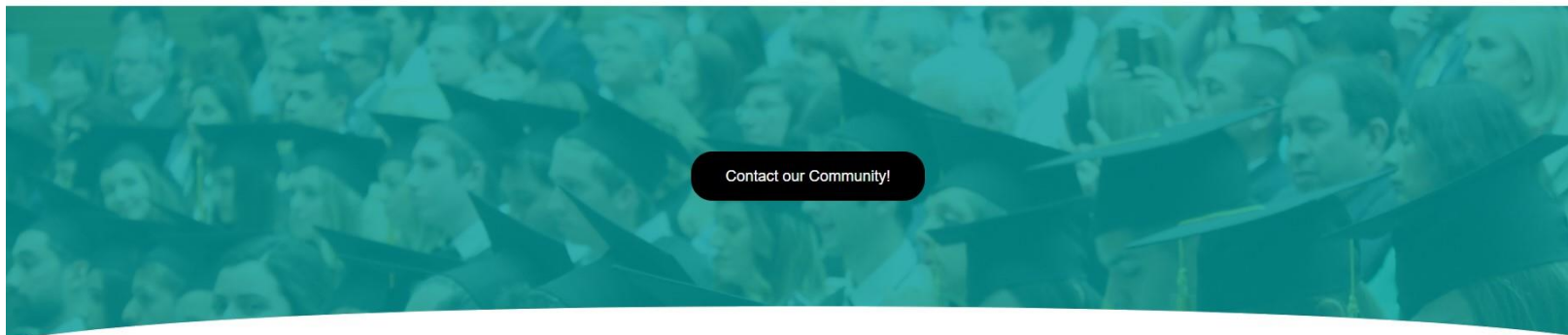
Victim Support  
Network

## PR3C

Educational and  
Mentoring  
Support



# The Victim Support Portal



## THE COMMON TYPES OF ACADEMIC & RESEARCH MALPRACTICE

- Authorship Abuse
- Contract Cheating
- Fabrication
- Falsification
- Exploitative Relationship
- Plagiarism



<https://academicintegrity.eu/victims/>

# The Victim Support Portal

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## Aims

To establish a confidential **support network** for victims of academic and research malpractice

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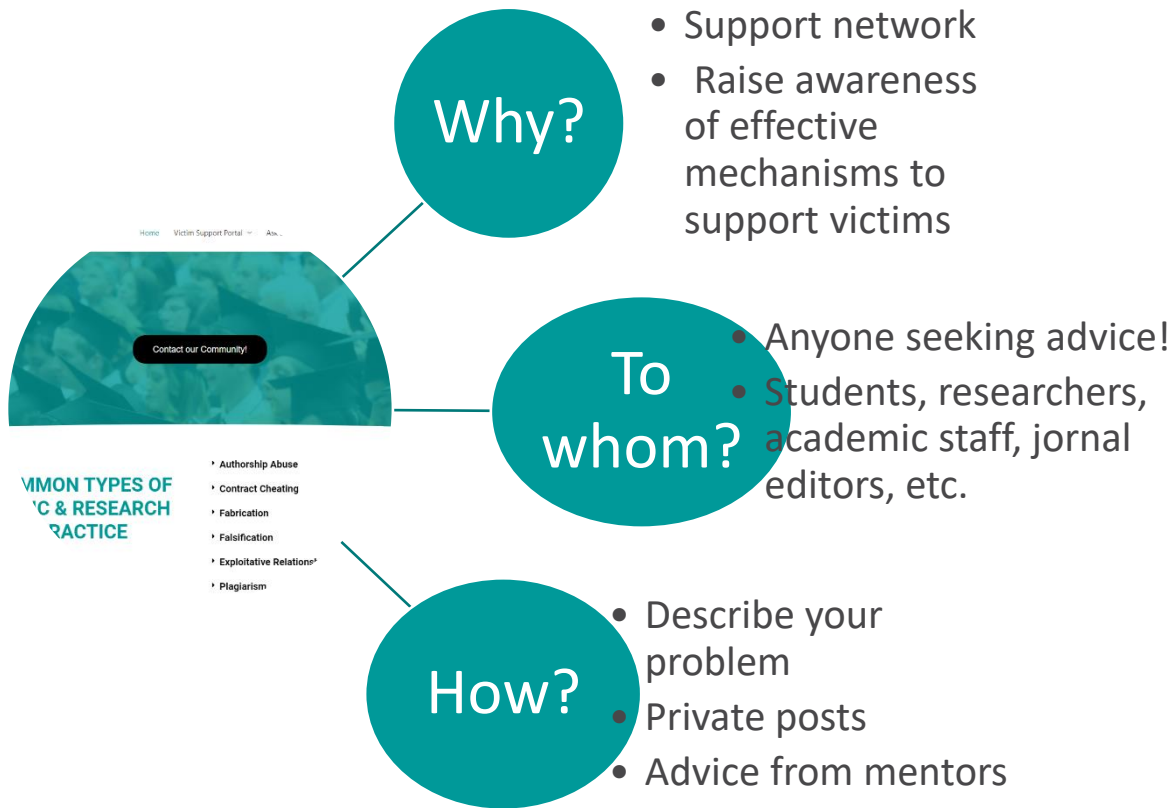
To provide an **advisory service** for people affected by unethical academic conduct

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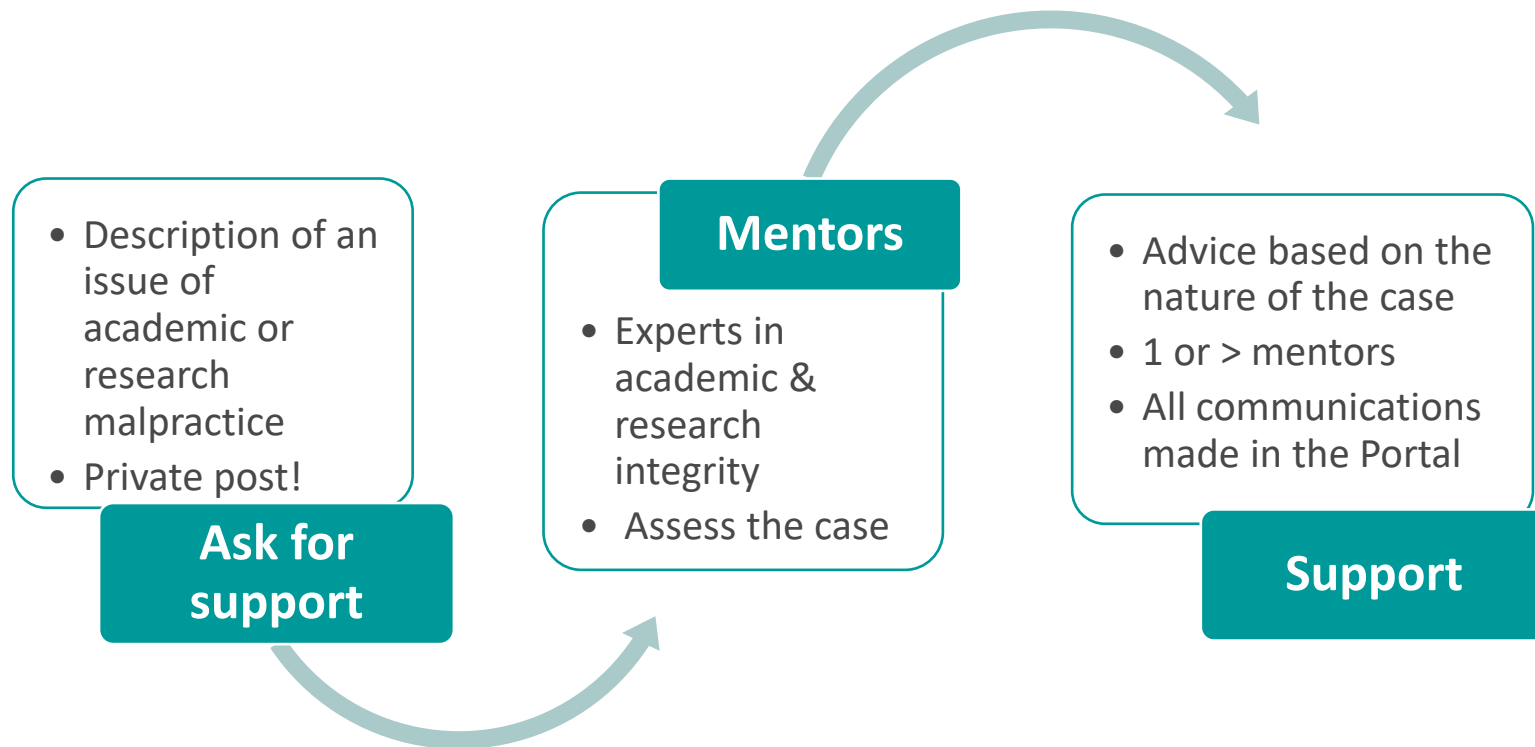
To **raise awareness** of the need to implement effective supporting mechanisms for victims of academic and research malpractice

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# The Victim Support Portal



# The Victim Support Portal



# How can I ask for support?

✓ Ask a Question section

✓ Private posts (only visible to our mentors)

✓ Select the category

✓ Select the mentor (optional)







**Title**

Question title

**Description**

NOTE: Your request and all communications will remain private and only be visible to our mentors. A mentor will contact you shortly after you have submitted your request. Where appropriate, certain requests, together with the advice provided by mentors, may be made publicly available on the Portal, but only after all personal details have been removed. This information will serve to help other people in similar situations. Approved consent is required from the person who posted the request before any anonymised case details are made publicly available on the Portal.

**Insert image**

**B I U ABC**      

**Category**

Please select the category that best describes your situation. You may select multiple categories.

- ☐ Authorship
- ☐ Citation
- ☐ Conflicts/Dispute (personal/work)
- ☐ Contract cheating
- ☐ Data collection, analysis and reporting
- ☐ Plagiarism
- ☐ Publication/Peer Review
- ☐ Research collaboration
- ☐ Unfair allegations of unethical conduct
- ☐ Supervision
- ☐ Whistleblower protection
- ☐ Other

**Mentor**

Please select the mentor you wish to support you on your situation (optional). You may select more than one mentor. You may find information about the mentors [here](#). The selected mentor(s) will read

# How can I ask for support?

- ✓ Choose your username (no need of real name!)
- ✓ Your email will only be used to send you automatic notification when a mentor provides you with advice
- ✓ Submit your question – only visible to the administrators & mentors of the Portal

## Mentor

Please select the mentor you wish to support you on your situation (optional). You may select more than one mentor. You may find information about the mentors [here](#). The selected mentor(s) will read your situation and contact you shortly through the Portal.

- ☐ I don't have a mentor preference
- ☐ Dita Henek Diabolová
- ☐ Ece Zehir Topkaya
- ☐ Irene Glendinning
- ☐ Jūliūš Kravjar
- ☐ Laura Ribeiro
- ☐ Milan Ojsteršek
- ☐ Özgür Çelik
- ☐ Rita Santos
- ☐ Salim Razi
- ☐ Shiva Sivasubramaniam
- ☐ Sonja Bjelobaba
- ☐ Tomáš Foltýnek
- ☐ Zeenath Reza Khan

## Your Username

## Your Email

An account for you will be created and a confirmation link will be sent to you with the password.

# Meet our mentors!



- ✓ Academics and researchers from the FAITH project and ENAI;
- ✓ Experts in academic and research integrity issues (e.g. plagiarism, authorship, publication ethics; AI policies; etc.)
- ✓ Mentors will be assigned to a case, based on the expertise of the mentor and nature of the case;
- ✓ Victims may choose the mentor (optional).



# Meet our mentors!

Click on individual mentors to learn more about their expertise!



Facebook



Twitter

[https://academicintegrity.eu/victims/  
list-of-mentors/](https://academicintegrity.eu/victims/list-of-mentors/)

## List of Mentors



Rita Santos  
ENH (Czechia)



Salim Razi  
Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University  
(Turkey)



Ece Zehir Topkaya  
Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University  
(Turkey)



Dita Henek Diabolová  
ENH (Czechia)



Shiva  
Sivasubramaniam  
University of Derby (UK)



Tomáš Foitýnek  
Masaryk University (Czechia)



Irene Glendinning  
Coventry University (UK)



Jülius Kravjar  
ENH (Czechia)



Sonja BjeLOBaba  
Uppsala University (Sweden)



Milan Ojsteršek  
University of Maribor (Slovenia)



Özgür Çelik  
Balikesir University (Turkey)



Zeenath Reza Khan  
University of Wollongong (Dubai)



Laura Ribeiro  
University of Porto (Portugal)



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# Victim Support Portal



✓ Cases made public after receiving informed consent from the victim

✓ Raise awareness and support people facing similar problems

✓ Interact with others!



Home Victim Support Portal Ask a Question Discussion Forum Stories Blog Resources FAQs Login Registration

## Welcome to the Discussion Forum

Share your situation to get feedback and advice from people who might have experienced similar issues or are knowledgeable in the field. Help us build a community of support for the victims of misconduct and questionable practices in research and education! Share your voice! You are not alone!

**Note:** The cases presented here are based on real events shared by people who have been unfairly disadvantaged by misconduct and questionable practices in research and education. All personal details have been anonymized. Approved consent was received from the subject of this case for it to be published here.

Comments made about the following cases will only be made public after they have been assessed and approved by our team of mentors.

Search questions...		Search	Ask question
Order By: Active Category X Clear Filter			
	<b>My thesis has been plagiarized several times. What can I do?</b> 478 views Rita Santos Changed status to publish 5. 9. 2022	1 votes	2 ans
	<b>Plagiarized Medium article</b> 382 views Tomás Fatjmes Answered question 23. 4. 2020	0 votes	1 ans

# The Victim Support Portal

- ✓ Learn about the aims and guidelines;

## About the FAITH project



The FAITH (Facing Academic Integrity Threats) project is an Erasmus+ project under the Cooperation partnerships in higher education (Project Number 2021-1-TR01-KA220-HED-000027559). The project started on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022 and will end on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2025 (36 months).

- ✓ Information about the Erasmus+ FAITH project

## Project partners:



- ✓ Information about ENAI

# Victim Support Portal

## Stories



- ☐ Real cases of academic and research misconduct
- ☐ Open discussions

## Blog



- ☐ Personal reflections from mentors & other researchers on academic & research malpractice
- ☐ Open discussions

## Resources



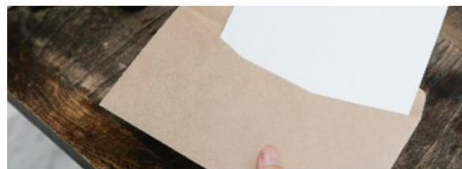
- ☐ Relevant bibliography
- ☐ Guideline documents
- ☐ Webinar & other educational materials

**You are welcome to contribute with stories, blog posts and resources!**

# Victim Support Portal

- Plagiarism
- Data manipulation
- Authorship issues
- Contract cheating
- Bullying
- ...

## Stories



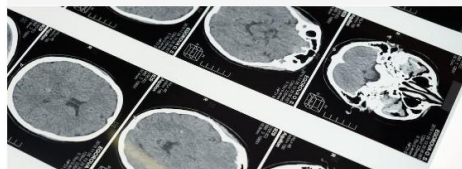
### Fired postdoc faked recommendation letters from supervisor

Following the filing of a complaint and affidavit in July 2022, Georgios Laliotis, a postdoctoral researcher from Ohio State University (OSU), was found guilty of creating and sending fake recommendation letters, supposed to be from his supervisor, Dr Philip Tschlis. It all started when Laliotis' contract at OSU was terminated ...



### Plagiarism: the two sides of the coin

"The narrative around plagiarism is often extremely simplified: There is a plagiarist and there is a victim. It's a simple and compelling narrative. There is a bad person that has stolen or lifted from a good person by using their work without the decency of at least giving them proper ...



"You can't cheat to cure a disease" (by: Matthew Schrag)



You cannot hide from misconduct, not even underwater!

Feel free to leave  
your comments!

# Victim Support Portal

## Blog

In our blog you will find personal reflections and experiences from our mentors and extended network on issues related to academic and research malpractice, and the importance of fostering academic integrity and responsible conduct in research.



### My pathway to Research Integrity and prevention of Scientific Misconduct

To this day I vividly remember my fascinating but very complicated work related to my PhD thesis. My research...

[Read More](#)

Agnieszka Raubo (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poland)

18. 11. 2022



### The good old days? What has my career taught me about respect in the workplace

Everyone within an academic community deserves to be treated with respect and dignity by other members of that community....

[Read More](#)

Irene Glendinning (Coventry University, UK)

7. 9. 2022

New blog texts will be posted every 2 months!

Feel free to leave your comments!

You are welcome to contribute with your personal experiences/reflections!

# Victim Support Portal

## Guidelines

## Bibliography

Title	Author(s)	Year	Abstract	Link
Both whistleblowers and the scientists they accuse are vulnerable and deserve protection	Lex M. Bouter; Sven Hendrix	2017	Whistleblowers play an important role diagnosing research misconduct, but often experience severe negative consequences. That is also true for incorrectly accused scientists. Both categories are vulnerable and deserve protection. Whistleblowers must proceed carefully and cautiously. Anonymous whistleblowing should be discouraged but cannot be ignored when the allegations are specific, serious, and plausible. When accused of a breach of research integrity it is important to be as transparent as possible. Sometimes accusations are false in the sense that the accuser knows or should know that the allegations are untrue. A mala fide whistleblower typically does not act carefully and we postulate a typology that may help in detecting them. Striking the right balance between whistleblower protection and timely unmasking false and identifying incorrect accusations is a tough dilemma leaders of research institutions have to face.	<a href="#">link</a>
Defining and handling research misconduct: a comparison between Chinese and European Institutional Policies	Dan Li; Gustaaf Cornelis	2020	Research institutions are responsible for promoting research integrity and handling allegations of research misconduct. Due to various cultural and social contexts, institutional policies from different cultural backgrounds exhibit many differences, such as their primary concern and mechanisms for dealing with allegations of research misconduct. This comparative study analyses research misconduct policies from 21 Chinese and 22 European universities. The results show that definitions of research misconduct from all retrieved policies go beyond fabrication, falsification, and plagiarism but include different types of questionable research practices. Their procedures for handling research misconduct differ in, for example, confidentiality and disclosure of conflict of interest. Differences can also be found in their governance approaches ("bottom-up" versus "top-down").	<a href="#">link</a>
How many scientists fabricate and falsify research? A systematic review	Daniele Fanelli	2009	The frequency with which scientists fabricate and falsify data, or commit other forms of scientific misconduct is a matter of controversy. Many surveys have asked scientists directly whether they have committed or know of a colleague who committed research misconduct, but their results appeared difficult to compare and synthesize. This is the first meta-analysis of these surveys. To standardize outcomes, the number of respondents who recalled at least one incident of misconduct was calculated	

Feel free to contribute!

# Victim Support Portal



[Home](#) [Victim Support Portal](#) [Ask a Question](#) [Discussion Forum](#) [Stories](#) [Blog](#) [Resources](#) [FAQs](#) [Login](#) [Registration](#)

## Frequently Asked Questions

Here you may find useful information about the Victim Support Portal and the answers to your questions. If you don't find an answer to your question, please email us at: [victims@academicintegrity.eu](mailto:victims@academicintegrity.eu). We hope that you will find useful tips and information here.

### About the Portal

- + Why was the Victim Support Portal created?
- + Can I disseminate the Victim Support Portal to my Institutional and personal contacts and social media?
- + Can I use the documents and other resources available in the Portal?

### Asking a question or sharing a situation

- + How can I ask a question or share a problem of misconduct or questionable practice in research or education that I am currently experiencing?
- + Can I ask a question or share an example of misconduct or questionable practice in research or education that I have experienced in the past?
- + Can I ask for support on behalf of someone else?
- + Do you promise to solve my problem if I ask for support?
- + Do I need to be registered in the Portal to post a request?
- + If I wish to withdraw my request, how long will it take to process it?



# Victim Support Portal

## Privacy and Confidentiality

- + When submitting a request, will the information be public or private?
- + What personal information will be displayed when I submit my request?
- Why do I need to introduce my email when I submit a request? (only for non-registered users)

If you have not registered in the Portal, you will be asked to introduce your email when you submit your request. Your email will only be used to send an automatic registration link to the Portal. We ask you to register in our Portal to see the reply from our mentors and for all communications between you and them.

## Supporting Network

- + Can I reply/comment on someone's else case?

## Who do we support?

- + Who can obtain support?
- + I'm not sure if I'm a victim of misconduct or questionable practices in research or education. Can I still ask for support?
- + What should I do if I happen to be a victim of a case of misconduct or questionable practice in research or education?

- Will you contact the abuser/institution on my behalf and report him/her?

No. Our mentors will only be able to support and advise you on the actions you should take, according to the nature of your situation. Our mentors will not provide legal advice, nor do they have the power to contact or influence the abusers, institutions or other stakeholders related to your issue.

# Victim Support Portal - Impact

## Conference presentations

- 2 Oral communications – ECAIP 22 & QQI 10th Anniversary Conference
- 1 Leaflet - WCRI

## Local disseminations

- ENAI PhD Summer School
- Presentations made by project partners
- [Interview](#) – Universitas.cz (ENG & CZ)

# Victim Support Portal - Impact

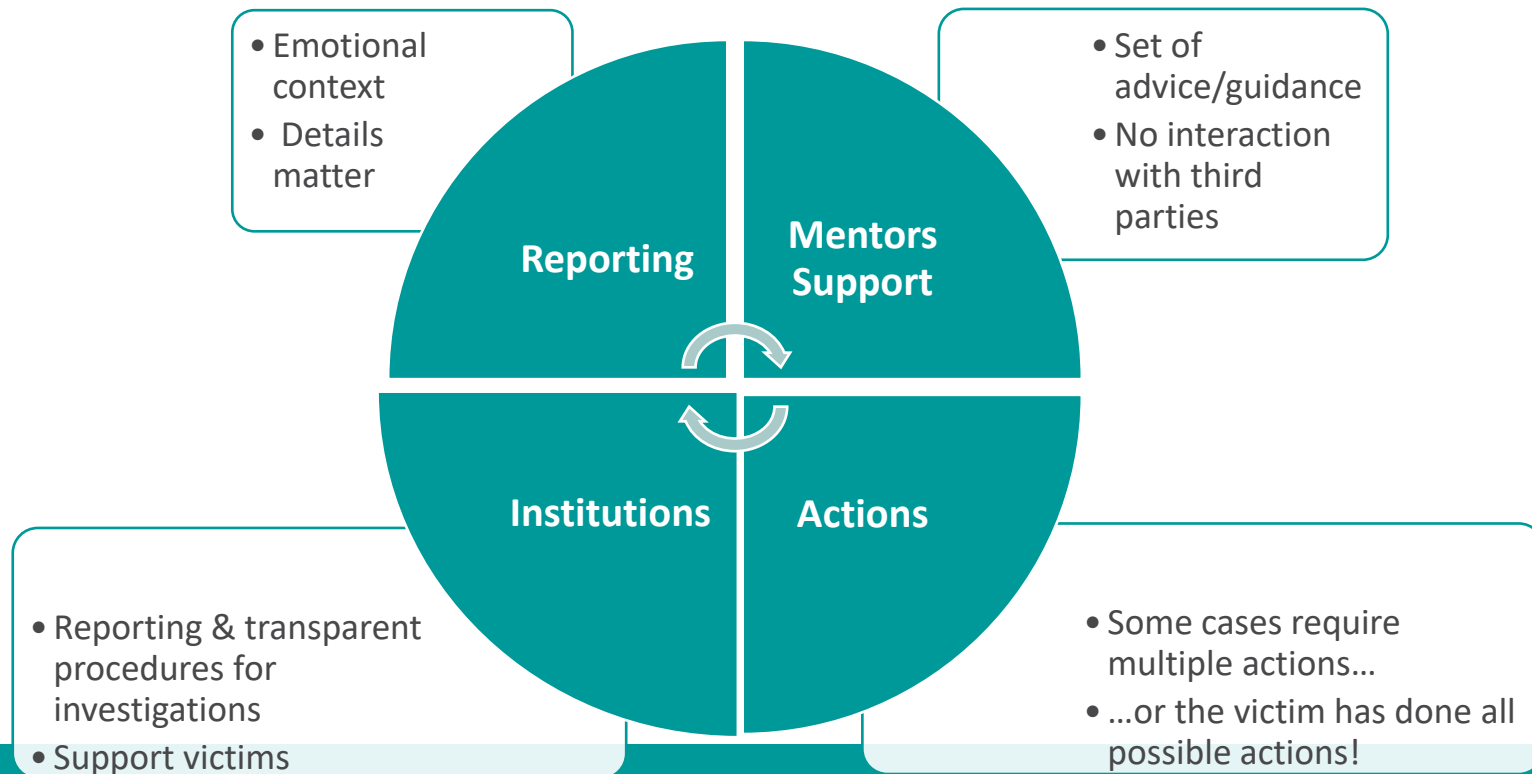
- ✓ Cases supported privately;
- ✓ 1 case made public (after anonymisation);
- ✓ Cases: Plagiarism; working dispute; peer-review process, research data issues
- ✓ > 5,700 page views (25.05 – 05.12.22)
- ✓ 510 users from 60 countries



COUNTRY	USERS
United Kingdom	90
Portugal	61
United States	60
Czechia	29
Turkey	28
Slovakia	25
Slovenia	24

Spread the word about the Portal! Help others get support!

# Supporting Victims – Lessons learned from the Portal



# Supporting Victims – Lessons learned from the Portal so far



Positivity/Learn  
from the process

Example from the Blog text  
(<https://academicintegrity.eu/victims/blog-2/>)



Negativity/revenge,  
resentment, etc.

# Thank you for your attention!

## Contact us anytime!

- European Network for Academic Integrity – [info@academicintegrity.eu](mailto:info@academicintegrity.eu)
- Rita Santos – Executive Director, Senior Researcher & Project Manager – [rita.santos@academicintegrity.eu](mailto:rita.santos@academicintegrity.eu)  
[victims@academicintegrity.eu](mailto:victims@academicintegrity.eu)



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