

*Tuesday late afternoon session Track A, Tuesday, Sep 23 2025, 16:00-17:45*

*Location: Main Hall*

Session: **Training and Education**

Chair: Aleš Novak

OR-21

**Can E-learning formats provide effective research integrity training for doctoral researchers at large institutions?**

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The continuously rising attention on research integrity leads to a rising demand for training offers. The need for more integrity training, in the German academic context, especially in doctoral education, is evident.[1] In recent years, HEIs are reacting to this situation, as well as to new funding requirements for more engagement in research integrity structures. Comprehensive integrity training of doctoral students, however, is also an infrastructural challenge, especially at large HEIs or alliances. Within the Berlin University Alliance, for example, roughly 3,000 people start their doctorate each year. Offering sustainable live trainings for cohorts of this size is a challenge, especially in the context of funding cuts and structural overwork in academia.

At first glance, E-learning might formats seem like a viable solution to this challenge. Yet in the context of research integrity training, these formats have been criticized, given the highly discipline specific nature of research practices and the sensibility of the topic, both requiring reflective live exchange.[2;3;4] So, (how) can E-learning formats address these criticisms?

The presentation will share the experiences of the E-learning course “Good Research Practice for Doctoral Students” that has been developed at the Berlin University Alliance, launching in April 2025. The 10h introductory course is directed to researchers of all disciplines and addresses the relevant institutional, national and European guidelines with a focus on research data, plagiarism, authorship, publication, and conflict management. It was designed to motivate participants to reflect their own practices as much as possible, both in terms of contents, which put a strong focus on questionable research practices and dilemmas rather than binary solutions, and in terms of didactic design, with professionally-produced video talks by different experts and an attractive course environment. At the hand of initial course evaluations, these experiences might help to initiate a broader discussion about the necessary design efforts to be put in effective, activating, and sustainable research integrity E-learning formats.

Acknowledgements:

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References:

- [1] Gommel, Verse, Nolte, et al., *Bioethica Forum* 14, 1 (2021)
- [2] Shephard, Trotman, Furnari, et al. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management* 37,6 (2015)
- [3] Abdi, Pizzolato, Nemery, et al. *Science and Engineering Ethics* 27, 1 (2021)
- [4] Labib, Evans, Roje, et al. *Science and Public Policy* 49,2 (2022)