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In Quest of Conceptual Clarity: ENRIO Recommendations for Acceptable Practices for Authorship

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Authorship in collaborative and international research underscores the importance of acknowledging contributions equitably, promoting transparency, responsibility and accountability across research partnerships. Collaborative and international research introduces challenges in determining authorship, as diverse contributions and cultural norms can complicate appropriate acknowledgment of each contribution [1] [2] [3] [4]. To reach an agreement on the norms of acceptable practices for authorship, it is paramount to foster responsible collaboration.

ENRIO recognises the significance of clearly defining key terms related to research integrity. This clarity helps in fostering responsible research practices, handling of allegations of research malpractice and enhancing research integrity. To support ENRIO members and advance research integrity in Europe, ENRIO conducted the survey about key research integrity concepts in 2023–2024.

The findings of the ENRIO survey show that ENRIO members (n=18) define the term of authorship in a structured way; however, the attributes inherent to the definitions of authorship differ [5]. The attributes can be evaluated from six perspectives: agency (the entities to which acceptable practices for authorship apply), scope (the outlets to which these practices are relevant), form (the representations relevant to these practices), contribution (the type of contributions recognised within authorship practices), will (the acceptance of authorship), and values (the principles underpinning acceptable practices for authorship). Here, the triangle of perspectives—agency, will, and contribution—is critical for understanding acceptable practices for authorship. In the light of normative analysis, these perspectives are supported by a set of principles such as responsibility, accountability, respect, and honesty, which form the bedrock of acceptable practices for authorship that every author must embrace.

In this context, ENRIO has drawn recommendations for the definition of acceptable practices for authorship as a necessary precondition for adherence to common standards across disciplines, institutions, and countries.

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- [2] Bülow, W., and Helgesson, G. *Research Ethics* 14(1), 1–9 (2018)
- [3] Khalifa, A. A. *Ethics, Medicine and Public Health* 20, 100735 (2022)
- [4] Koljatic, M. *Research Ethics* 17(2), 127–134 (2020)
- [5] ENRIO's Key Research Integrity Concepts: Interpretations and Recommendations (forthcoming in 2026)