



The Cape Town statement on fostering research integrity through fairness and equity

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Conflicts of interest

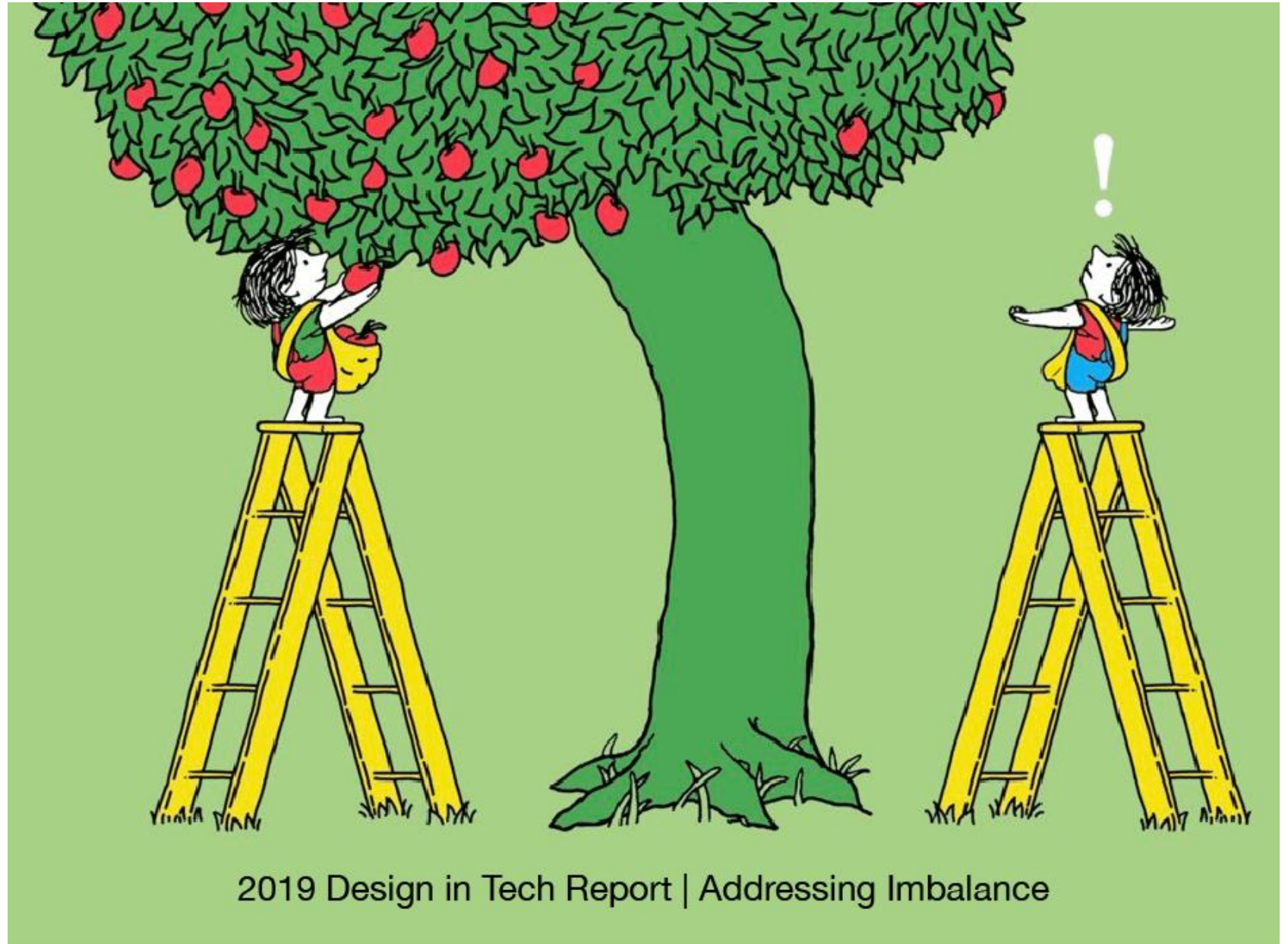
- Co-author on the Cape Town Statement
- Views today are personal as a woman of color and scholar in STEM research

NB

Use DEI as one entity and refer to it as a means to achieve research fairness

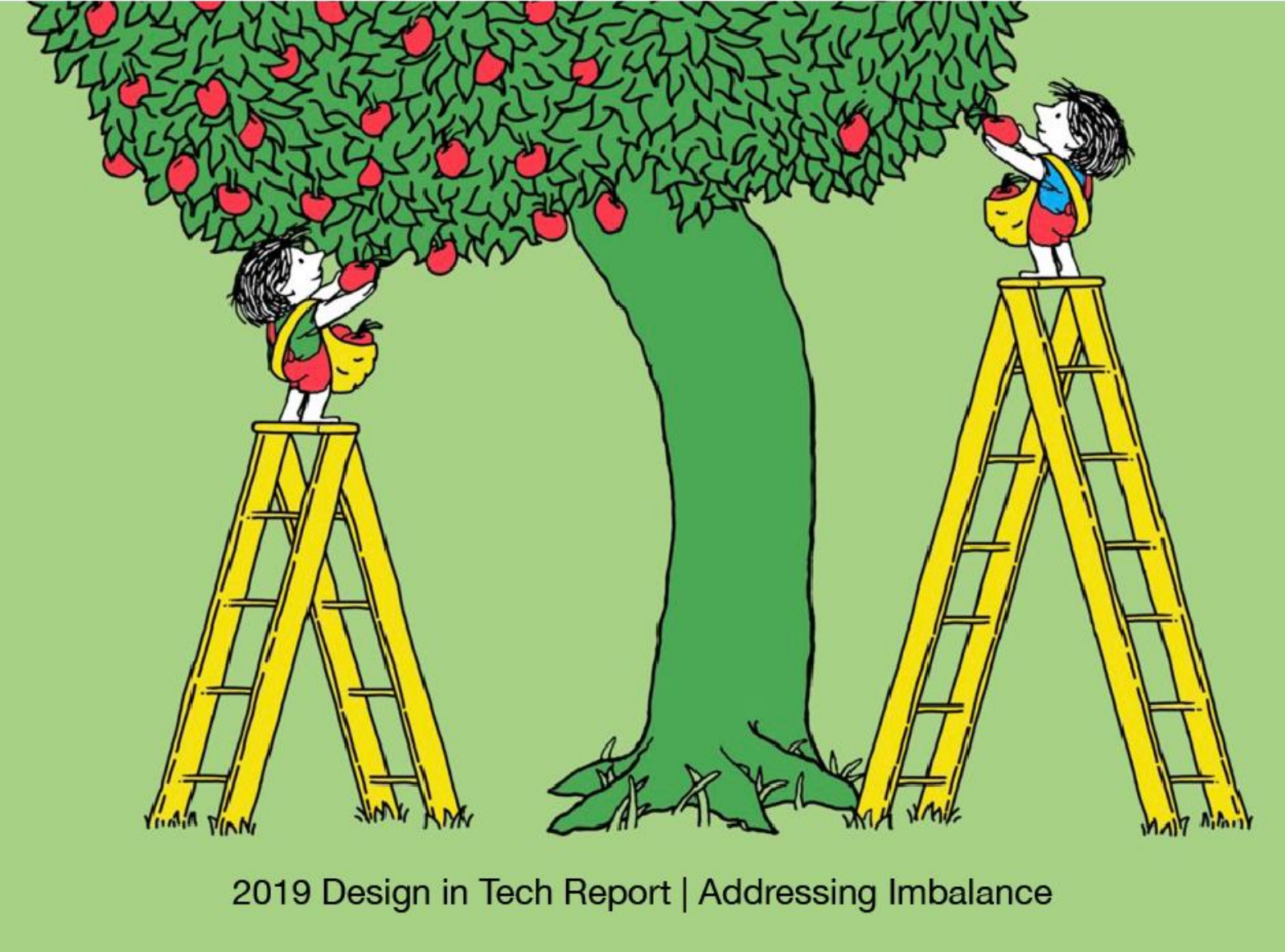
- Concepts and Definitions
- Making the case for Why DEI is important
- How can we realise DEI at each stage of the research lifecycle
- Concluding remarks

EQUALITY



2019 Design in Tech Report | Addressing Imbalance

EQUITY



2019 Design in Tech Report | Addressing Imbalance

EQUITY

World Health Organization: **absence of avoidable or remediable differences among groups of people,** whether those groups are defined socially, economically, demographically or geographically.”

Race Matters Institute: The route to achieving **equity** will not be accomplished through treating everyone equally. It will be achieved by **treating everyone equitably, or justly according to their circumstances.**

- **Diversity** : **DIVERSE REPRESENTATION**
(demographics, perspectives, methods, ideas)

- **Inclusion**: engaged, heard, respected = **BELONGING**. Without inclusion, diversity is tokenism

Diversity is Recruitment; Inclusion is Retention;

- **Equity** underpins D & I to ensure **fairness & justice** by correcting for systemic disparities

DIVERSITY

**WHY DO WE LIKE IT
IN OUR
SUPERMARKETS**

**BUT NOT IN THE
STREETS**

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Loesje

WHY

We live in a world where **research mainly benefits a subset of our society**, while other segments are left vulnerable.

Reality today

- Underrepresentation of **women** and **ethnic minorities** in health research
- Genetic epidemiology primarily focused on **European descendants**
- Covid 19

nature

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NEWS & VIEWS FORUM | 19 October 2022

Skin colour affects the accuracy of medical oxygen sensors

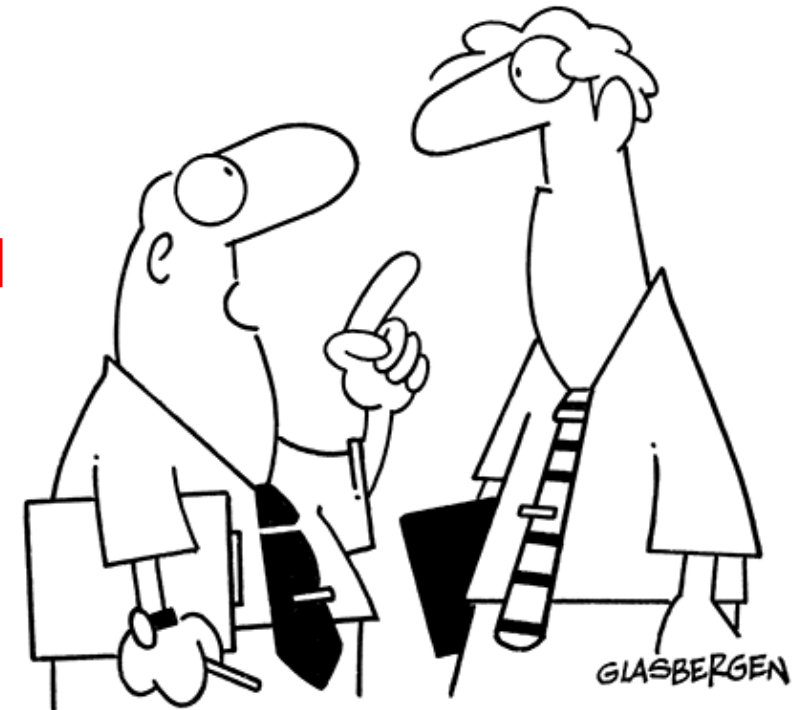
COVID-19 broadened the use of pulse oximeters for rapid blood-oxygen readings, but it also highlighted the fact that skin pigmentation alters measurements. Two groups of researchers analyse this issue, and its effects on people with dark skin.

Building Research Equity for Women and Underrepresented Groups. Washington (DC): National Academies Press (US); 2022 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK584396/>

WHY

- Homogenous research teams overlook critical variables, introduce **bias in research design and processes and produce findings that serve some and not others**
- DEI in research supports **innovation, validity, and increases relevance and impact** of our policies and interventions to all segments of society

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“We need to focus on diversity. I want you to hire more people who look different, but think just like me.”

What's it got to do with Research Integrity?



HOW

Critically question and where possible
toppling power imbalances

Decolonizing research agenda, methods, findings, dissemination practices



**Research
priority/agenda
setting**

Funding

- supports LMICs directly
- prioritizes capacity building & mentorship
- Mandatory DEI initiatives

e.g. requiring local community input pre & post study;

diverse representative teams having a seat at the table

Define the research questions

- A **dominant perspective unduly influencing questions, methodologies and analysis**, e.g.

lack of nested social science studies that may help answer important local research questions e.g involving health-related behaviours

- Include **variables** important for subgroup analyses
- **Power imbalances** where investigators pursuing goals that frequently overlook the **needs of local people/communities**.

**Develop funding
proposal**

Get funding

**Establish the research
team**

- Co-creation of **Indigenous-led knowledge**;
- Collaborations that are a means to an end (access to sites and participants) can lead to **unequal involvement & acknowledgement** of team
- Late involvement resulting in **poor allocation of budget** and the need for 'short cuts' that can influence data validity (e.g. field workers on short term contracts)
- Address **barriers to open science** (OA) & open data sharing infrastructure

**Collect, analyse, store,
share, data**

- Lack of diversity in research teams can lead to **bias in interpretation of data** esp when race/ gender/ culture/ ethnicity involved
- **Early sharing of data** can force under-resourced collaborators to share data before they can interrogate the data (that they have usually been instrumental in collecting)

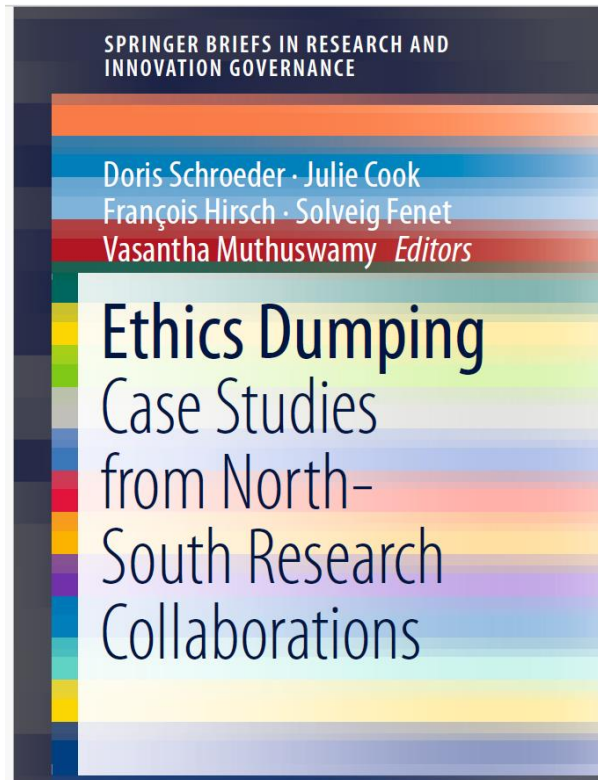
**Collect, analyse, store,
share, data**

- Funder requirements or lead PI requirements resulting in **data hosted in the global north that local collaborators can't easily access**
- **Secondary analyses** done by those removed from the context/environment/ community where the data was collected may **produce biased analyses or interpreted incorrectly**

Engage with diverse stakeholders and local communities

- Research translation **ends at publication;**
- Involve stakeholders to translate findings to **local context that respects and works with indigenous practices**
- **Ensure benefit sharing**

Example: US-Ugandan transgenic banana study, funded by Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation



Publication, Dissemination, Policy

- **Perpetuation of helicopter research:** authors write about issues and communities that they are not directly involved with
 - >> *One in five African COVID-19 papers had no African authors, and 66.1% of authors on African papers were not from Africa (Naidoo AV et al 2020)*
- **Inadequate credit** in authorship; relegated role of data collectors
 - >> *Covid 19 papers with African authorship, 59% of first authors and 81% of last authors not from Africa. Only 14% had both an African first and last author (Naidoo AV et al 2020)*
- Inadequate translation into **policy or innovation relevant to local context** (academic careers are mostly built on publications)

Cape Town Statement on fostering Research Integrity through Fairness and Equity

Goals for Research Integrity

Research should deliver accurate, replicable, and unbiased results reported responsibly, with the appropriate acknowledgement of all stakeholders. To be valuable, trustworthy, and usable in local settings the research should be translatable into locally relevant and locally owned and accessible interventions or policies, where applicable. Research integrity educational programmes and other related initiatives should support researchers to reflect these goals in the planning, conduct, and dissemination of their research.

Concluding remarks

This is not the first set of principles or similar, focusing on research fairness and equity particularly in collaborations, and these documents have informed our discussions. They include the Swiss KPFE (The Commission for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries) [2], the Global Code of Conduct for Research in Resource-Poor Settings [3] and the BRIDGE Guidelines which also linked research fairness to research integrity in the context of epidemiological research [4]. Furthermore, we would also like to acknowledge that while this statement can encourage stakeholders to act, a tool already exists, namely the Research Fairness Initiative (RFI) [5], that can assist both RPIs and funders with evaluating their current practices. After completion of this evaluation the tool assists stakeholders to identify implementation steps that can lead to improvement of fair and equitable research and innovation partnerships and practices. The RFI was discussed in some detail in the 7th WCRI pre-conference paper and informed discussions at the 7th WCRI [6]. The Cape Town Statement specifically links the issue of research fairness and equity with research integrity broadly. We hope that by doing so this statement will strengthen the call to recognise fairness and equity as an essential component of research.

Preamble

The 7th World Conference on Research Integrity (7th WCRI) was held in Cape Town in May 2022 with the conference theme "Fostering Research Integrity in an unequal world". Participants at this conference recognised that unfair and inequitable research practices remain prevalent at all stages of research from proposal development to funding application, data collection, analysis, sharing and access, reporting and translation. These practices can impact the integrity of research in many ways, including skewing research priorities and agendas with research questions that are irrelevant for local needs, power imbalances that undermine fair recognition of knowledge contributions within collaborations, including unfair acknowledgement of contributions to published work, lack of diversity and inclusivity in collaborations, and unfair data management practices that disadvantage researchers in low resource environments. Furthermore, a drive towards open science as a pillar of research integrity fails to recognise the financial burden placed on under-resourced researchers and institutions, and the reality that highly trained and well-resourced researchers in HIC may disproportionately benefit from re-analysing openly shared data by LMIC researchers. In response to these challenges the following statement of goals, values and recommendations aims to contribute to the growing global recognition that fairness and equity are essential requirements of integrity in all research contexts.

This statement advocates for fair practice from conception to implementation of research and provides 20 recommendations aimed at all involved stakeholders. These recommendations are grouped under values that were identified as important underpinning considerations in discussion groups at the 7th WCRI. These values include diversity, inclusivity, mutual respect, shared accountability, indigenous knowledge recognition and epistemic justice [1] (ensuring that the value of knowledge is not based on biases related to gender, race, ethnicity, culture, socio-economic status et cetera).

Recommendations to uphold values and achieve research integrity goals

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVITY AS A PATHWAY TO FAIR PRACTICE AND ATTRIBUTION

- Researchers should recognise the value of collaborating with colleagues from different disciplinary, geographical, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds and strive to achieve this diversity, especially when doing research in contexts and environments that are different from their own.
- Research Performing Institutions (RPIs) should develop and implement policies, structures and processes that support and promote diversity and inclusivity in their research.
- Funders from high-income countries (HICs) should aim to avoid so-called 'helicopter research' by including diversity stipulations in funding calls and funding local researchers directly.
- Journals and publishers should question the practice of excluding local researchers from low-income and middle-income countries (LMICs) from authorship when data are from LMICs and have a low threshold for rejecting such papers.

FAIR PRACTICE FROM CONCEPTION TO IMPLEMENTATION

- All research stakeholders should be aware of potential power imbalances in their research collaborations and ensure their actions do not exacerbate them, but rather contribute to redressing imbalances.
- Funders should specifically identify and adopt practices that support fairness and equity in research collaborations and avoid practices that undermine fairness such as unfair indirect cost allocations to LMICs.
- Barriers to 'open science' participation by researchers working in low-resource settings need to be identified and addressed by publishers, and other appropriate national and global stakeholders, such as science councils, funders, and similar institutions. Journals and publishers should adjust page costs for authors from low-resourced environments.

MUTUAL RESPECT AS A PATHWAY TO TRUST

- Research priority and agenda setting should include all research partners; HIC research agendas should not be imposed on LMIC collaborators.

- Research teams should identify mechanisms to enable planning and budgeting that minimise power and opportunity imbalances in teams and make roles explicit early.
- Full cost transparent budgeting is an essential mechanism to enable fair practice and ensure equitable resource allocation.
- Data access, use, sharing and openness requirements should not unfairly disadvantage LMIC collaborators.

SHARED ACCOUNTABILITY

- Research fairness requires a commitment from all stakeholders to address deficiencies in research capacity and systems in LMIC contexts.
- LMIC governments need to recognise the value of funding research to support locally relevant research priorities and be accountable for reducing reliance on HIC funders.
- RPIs should prioritise the development of adequate research support systems to support researchers, including support for research management capacity development and open access page costs where possible.
- HIC funders should incorporate some funding for local capacity development, mentorship, and research support systems.
- Funders should take steps to minimise the negative impact of currency fluctuations on LMIC collaborators when they agree to fund research that involves HIC and LMIC collaborators.
- RPIs from HICs collaborating with researchers from low-resource settings should ensure their researchers engage in fair practice and where possible and appropriate, contribute to local capacity development and strengthening of research management systems and processes.

INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE RECOGNITION AND EPISTEMIC JUSTICE

- The unique value of indigenous knowledge must be recognised. Researchers and community researchers from indigenous communities are often best placed to articulate and translate this value into beneficial outcomes that can have impact.
- All stakeholders must ensure adequate recognition and respect of indigenous knowledge; avoidance of exploitation and stigmatisation of such knowledge by external researchers is essential.
- Researchers involved in co-creation of indigenous-led knowledge must ensure collaborations are grounded on mutual trust and respect and result in appropriate benefit-sharing and recognition.

Authors	Van Pelt [1], Smit [2], [3], [4], [5], [6], [7], [8], [9], [10], [11], [12], [13], [14], [15], [16], [17], [18], [19], [20], [21], [22], [23], [24], [25], [26], [27], [28], [29], [30], [31], [32], [33], [34], [35], [36], [37], [38], [39], [40], [41], [42], [43], [44], [45], [46], [47], [48], [49], [50], [51], [52], [53], [54], [55], [56], [57], [58], [59], [60], [61], [62], [63], [64], [65], [66], [67], [68], [69], [70], [71], [72], [73], [74], [75], [76], [77], [78], [79], [80], [81], [82], [83], [84], [85], [86], [87], [88], [89], [90], [91], [92], [93], [94], [95], [96], [97], [98], [99], [100]
Affiliations	[1] University of Cape Town, South Africa; [2] [3] [4] [5] [6] [7] [8] [9] [10] [11] [12] [13] [14] [15] [16] [17] [18] [19] [20] [21] [22] [23] [24] [25] [26] [27] [28] [29] [30] [31] [32] [33] [34] [35] [36] [37] [38] [39] [40] [41] [42] [43] [44] [45] [46] [47] [48] [49] [50] [51] [52] [53] [54] [55] [56] [57] [58] [59] [60] [61] [62] [63] [64] [65] [66] [67] [68] [69] [70] [71] [72] [73] [74] [75] [76] [77] [78] [79] [80] [81] [82] [83] [84] [85] [86] [87] [88] [89] [90] [91] [92] [93] [94] [95] [96] [97] [98] [99] [100]
References	[1] [2] [3] [4] [5] [6] [7] [8] [9] [10] [11] [12] [13] [14] [15] [16] [17] [18] [19] [20] [21] [22] [23] [24] [25] [26] [27] [28] [29] [30] [31] [32] [33] [34] [35] [36] [37] [38] [39] [40] [41] [42] [43] [44] [45] [46] [47] [48] [49] [50] [51] [52] [53] [54] [55] [56] [57] [58] [59] [60] [61] [62] [63] [64] [65] [66] [67] [68] [69] [70] [71] [72] [73] [74] [75] [76] [77] [78] [79] [80] [81] [82] [83] [84] [85] [86] [87] [88] [89] [90] [91] [92] [93] [94] [95] [96] [97] [98] [99] [100]



20 recommendations, involving around 300 people from about 50 countries, including 16 African nations and 5 South American ones.

Discussions over **18 months** — arising from the **Cape Town conference in 2022** — on ‘**fostering research integrity in an unequal world**’.

<https://www.wcrif.org/guidance/cape-town-statement>



When there is a will there is always a way

- CTS is not only about HIC and LIC
- It's **applicable to all research teams/ RPO/ RFO**
- Swiss KPFE (The Commission for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries), the Global Code of Conduct for Research in Resource-Poor Settings, the BRIDGE Guidelines & the Research Fairness Initiative (RFI) all initiatives that already exist

The challenges are real

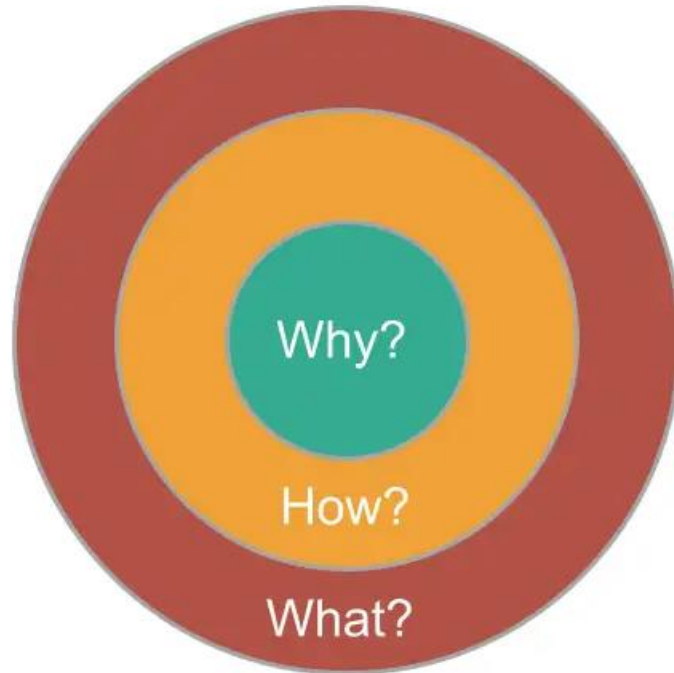
- **How does one measure the impact of a statement such as the CTS?**
- **Current geopolitical climate not supportive of science and academia**
- >> **Woke labeling of issues like EDI/fairness/special interests**
- >> **Reduced funding**
- >> **Technology and biases that maybe propagated because our knowledgebase is skewed**



Thanks to Lyn Horn from University of Cape Town
and fellow co-authors of the Cape Town
Statement

Simon Sinek's Golden Circle

The Golden Circle Model



Why? = The purpose (The core question)

What is your cause? What is your motivation and believe?



How? = The process

How do you do it?



What? = The result

What do you do? The What-Ring represents the products or services a company sells