

## Research on Research Institute (RoRI) launches to enable more strategic, open, diverse, and inclusive research

London, UK - 30 September 2019

Today, we're proud to announce the launch of the Research on Research Institute (RoRI) – an international consortium of research funders, academic institutions, and technologists working to champion the latest approaches to research on research.

Co-founded by the Wellcome Trust, the universities of Sheffield and Leiden, and Digital Science, the RoRI consortium will undertake transformative and translational research on research (also known as meta-research, science of science or meta-science). By analysing research systems and experimenting with decision and evaluation data, tools and frameworks, we aim to advance more strategic, open, diverse and inclusive research.

In support of its overall vision for transformative and translational research on research, RoRI has five objectives:

- To support, expand and build capacity for interdisciplinary, mixed-methods research on research (RoR) in the UK and internationally;
- To connect academic capabilities to the data and analytical resources of Wellcome, Digital Science and RoRI's wider consortium of strategic partners;
- To co-design, experiment and apply new tools, indicators, funding modes, prioritisation and evaluation frameworks;
- To critically evaluate RoR methods and support engagement with data and evidence about research systems by decision makers and society;
- To create an independent space for learning, networking and collaboration between researchers, policymakers, funders & technologists.

RoRI will be based for an initial two-year incubation phase at Wellcome's offices in London. To date, **eleven strategic partners** have expressed their interest in becoming part of the RoRI consortium, including private foundations, academic research institutions, and public funding agencies from **eight countries** – Austria, Canada, Denmark, Germany, India, Netherlands, Switzerland, and the USA – and one pan-African partner, the African Academy of Sciences.

Together, the consortium will codesign projects and share data to inform comparative analysis of research systems and cultures, and develop, test and apply novel approaches to decision-making, prioritisation, allocation and evaluation.

RoRI's activities will include partnership projects, a rolling programme of research seminars and webinars, as well as regular reports, working papers and think-pieces. All of its research methodologies and findings will be made openly available. Within RoRI, funders and academic research institutions will also be able to access and use a secure data platform, hosted and managed by Wellcome as a neutral convenor and broker. This will provide a trusted space, where funders and academic research institutions can securely share data, policies and practices for primary research and experimentation.

**The following have expressed their interest in becoming part of the RoRI consortium:** African Academy of Sciences; Austrian Science Fund; a consortium of Canadian funders including British Columbia's Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research and Canadian Institutes of Health Research; Dutch Research Council (NWO); Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI); Novo Nordisk Foundation; Albert P. Sloan Foundation; Swiss National Science Foundation; Wellcome Trust/DBT India Alliance; and Volkswagen Foundation. Over the coming months, RoRI hopes to expand the consortium to include additional funders, publishers, and learned and professional societies as partners.

**Chonnetia Jones**, Co-Chair of RoRI and Director of Insight and Analysis at Wellcome, said: "Wellcome wants to distribute its funding in the most efficient, fair, effective, and beneficial ways possible to achieve our mission of improving health for everyone. To that end, Wellcome has joined the universities of Sheffield and Leiden, and Digital Science, to launch a Research on Research Institute (RoRI), an international consortium of funders, policymakers, academics and technologists working in collaboration to advance Research on Research. We wish to encourage research that helps us to better understand our own funding practices and policies - and those of other funders - and how they can be improved to enable research and innovation."

**James Wilsdon**, Director of RoRI and Digital Science Professor of Research Policy at the University of Sheffield said: "Worldwide, interest is intensifying in how research is funded, practised and evaluated, and in how research systems can be made more efficient, open, inclusive and impactful. Research on research isn't new - there is a wealth of excellent work to build on - but it can be poorly joined-up and applied in policies and practices. Working with our consortium of partners, who together invest several billion pounds a year in research, RoRI has a unique opportunity to co-design new methods, and experiment with creative approaches to decision making, prioritisation and evaluation."

**Daniel Hook**, Co-Chair of RoRI and CEO of Digital Science said: "Digital Science is committed to empowering all those involved in research with the right tools - either to improve their research or to improve the ecosystem that supports research. RoRI is a unique 'experiment' that brings together perspectives from all stakeholders in research to understand how research on research can be translated to improve all aspects of global research capabilities. It is a pleasure to participate in such an exciting initiative."

**Sarah de Rijcke**, Co-Chair of RoRI, Professor in Science and Evaluation Studies and Director of the Centre for Science and Technology Studies (CWTS) at Leiden University said: "Science and innovation systems are changing rapidly to meet global challenges. These changes often go together with heated debates about the value and reliability of science and scholarship. At CWTS, we are thrilled to bring to RoRI our decades' worth of experience in analysing the research system and its connections to technology, innovation, and society. RoRI combines know-how and innovation capacity at an unprecedented scale. This creates new and exciting opportunities for research on research, and for fostering a more open, collaborative, and impactful scientific enterprise."

**Today RoRI is also pleased to announce the publication of its first of what will become a regular series of working papers:**

- *The 21st Century PhD: Why we need better methods of tracking doctoral access, experiences and outcomes* by Sally Hancock and Paul Wakeling
- *AI-Assisted Peer Review: opportunities, biases and uncertainties* by Alessandro Checco, Lorenzo Bracciale, Pierpaolo Loreti and Giuseppe Bianchi

Also, we are today launching a **RoRI research funding landscape tool**, which has been developed by Ludo Waltman and colleagues at CWTS-Leiden, together with a report that discusses how the tool can be used to support priority setting.

Working papers and further information about RoRI are available at <http://researchonresearch.org/>

The funding landscape tool is available here:

<https://www.cwts.nl/rori/fundinglandscape/?map=global> (all sciences)

<https://www.cwts.nl/rori/fundinglandscape/?map=biomed> (only biomedical and health sciences)

## **Notes for editors:**

### **About RoRI**

RoRI is an international consortium of research funders, academic institutions and technologists working to champion transformative & translational research on research. By analysing research systems and experimenting with new tools, indicators and evaluation frameworks, we aim to advance more strategic, open, diverse and inclusive research. Visit our website <http://researchonresearch.org/> and follow [@RoRIInstitute](https://twitter.com/RoRIInstitute) on Twitter.

### **About The Wellcome Trust**

Wellcome is a politically and financially independent foundation. We support researchers, we take on big health challenges, we campaign for better science, and we help everyone get involved with science and health research.

### **About Digital Science**

Digital Science is a technology company working to make research more efficient. We invest in, nurture and support innovative businesses and technologies that make all parts of the research process more open and effective. Our portfolio includes admired brands including Altmetric, Anywhere Access, Dimensions, Figshare, ReadCube, Symplectic, IFI Claims, GRID, Overleaf, CC Technology, Writefull, Gigantum and Ripeta. We believe that together, we can help researchers make a difference. Visit [www.digital-science.com](http://www.digital-science.com) and follow [@digitalsci](https://twitter.com/digitalsci) on Twitter.

### **About The University of Sheffield**

With almost 29,000 of the brightest students from over 140 countries, learning alongside over 1,200 of the best academics from across the globe, the University of Sheffield is one of the world's leading universities. A member of the UK's prestigious Russell Group of leading research-led institutions, Sheffield offers world-class teaching and research excellence across a wide range of disciplines. Unified by the power of discovery and understanding, staff and students at the university are committed to finding new ways to transform the world we live in. Sheffield is the only university to feature in The Sunday Times 100 Best Not-For-

Profit Organisations to Work For 2018 and for the last eight years has been ranked in the top five UK universities for Student Satisfaction by Times Higher Education. Sheffield has six Nobel Prize winners among former staff and students and its alumni go on to hold positions of great responsibility and influence all over the world, making significant contributions in their chosen fields. Global research partners and clients include Boeing, Rolls-Royce, Unilever, AstraZeneca, Glaxo SmithKline, Siemens and Airbus, as well as many UK and overseas government agencies and charitable foundations.

### **About CWTS, Leiden University**

CWTS is an institute that studies scientific research and its connections to technology, innovation, and society. As a leading research, consulting, and training centre, CWTS is dedicated to increasing our understanding of scientific quality, societal impact, and other related concepts. Its research, scientometric tools, and evaluation expertise provide a solid basis for supporting research assessment and strategic decision making and for developing science policy.