

Published in [EuroScientist](#) via [SciencePOD](#)



Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) is too often no more than a cryptic acronym to many in European research circles. It is at times not quite clear how to implement it. Now, thanks to the results of the RRI Tools project, a catalogue of practical RRI solutions is about to be launched this week. Don't hold back and feel free to explore all the available options.

Launch of the RRI Toolkit

RRI Toolkit



library



projects



inspiring practices



tools

Hands-on Responsible Research and Innovation

So what on Earth is Responsible Research and Innovation, or RRI? And more important, how are we expected to implement it in our work and lives? Despite the growing interest and political momentum of the concept of RRI, which is described as a cross-cutting issue in the Horizon 2020 framework programme, these questions are often heard among most actors in European research and innovation circles, who don't know how to implement it. This realisation stems from the [27 consultation workshops](#) conducted as part of the EU-funded RRI Tools project during the autumn of 2014.

For RRI to become a game changer in the scientific and technological arena, guidance on how to put it in practice is required. This is precisely the mandate of the [RRI Tools project](#): to develop a Toolkit

that helps all those involved in research and innovation to familiarise themselves with RRI and make it a reality.

Challenges to RRI implementation

This is easier said than done. When crafting the first version of the Toolkit we have found three main challenges.

First, a wealth of resources tackling diverse aspects of RRI is actually already available. These include expert literature, training materials, tools for practical implementation and self-assessment, and examples of good practice. The Toolkit gathers all these useful resources in a single place and provides easy access to them.

Second, RRI is a multifaceted concept covering a variety of topics, processes and outcomes. The challenge for the Toolkit is therefore to offer a digestible but holistic view of what RRI entails, connecting all the separate pieces.

Third, RRI involves diverse actors who have various levels of expertise. The RRI Toolkit has to address them all, but paying special attention to those more in need of guidance: newcomers to the concept.

From newbie to RRI-savvy

With these challenges in mind, the RRI Toolkit first offers a crash course on RRI. It offers five dedicated landing pages outlining the benefits, needs, and obstacles for [researchers](#), [innovators](#), [policy makers](#), [civil society](#) and the [education community](#).

In addition, the Toolkit features concrete examples explaining how to address common challenges. These include how to incorporate RRI at universities, how to support RRI in institutions and implement its principles at national level, how to embed the RRI principles in research proposals and business plans or how to co-create participatory research.

The Toolkit also caters to many people who are already familiar with the normative aspects of RRI. The portal offers specific pages dealing with the [six policy agendas](#) defined within RRI by the European Commission. They are split to include ethics, gender equality, governance, open access, public engagement, and science education. Through these thematic pages, users have access to relevant information and resources to implement each normative aspect, explaining how best to integrate them within any given research project.

Finally, we have also provided a third approach for those who do not need further guidance on RRI. They can avail of a powerful search engine with specific filters to find the precise resources they need.

Reflection and collaboration

This description of the Toolkit may give the impression that RRI is a collection of resources and guidelines on how to use them. However, RRI is primarily about reflecting, sharing, creating, and

learning in a collaborative group. This is why the Toolkit includes a self-reflection tool: to assist users in thinking about their own application of RRI.

In parallel, the RRI Toolkit incorporates a number of functionalities to foster multi-actor collaboration through a [Community of Practice](#), where registered users can find potential partners to co-create new projects, post interesting events in the [RRI calendar](#), upload their own resources, share their favourite ones, and comment on any contents through a [forum](#).

To complete this Toolkit, the project is setting up a training program with a complete package of materials and more than 40 workshops during 2016, aimed at research and innovation stakeholders to help spread the word on RRI all across Europe.

You are only just [one click away](#) from being part of this great RRI community. Feel free to join!

[Daniel García](#)

Daniel is a member of the RRI Tools Coordination Team, based at La Caixa Foundation, Barcelona, Spain.