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It is never easy to develop definitions, especially when we are talking about something that is emerging and changing as we speak. This is the case for Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI), an emerging process within European Framework Programs whose definition is new and

evolving. However, we can certainly identify a number of key characteristics of RRI, which is an umbrella term including a wide variety of notions, coming from the academia and politics. All these notions have in common an essential tension towards the development of responsible practices in research and innovation.

Essentially, at the heart of the RRI concept, there is a shift in the idea of responsibility. More in detail, we shift from an individualist and consequentialist notion of responsibility to thinking in terms of collective and distributed responsibility. This means that the responsibility of the results of research and innovation are collectively shared among all the actors participating to the process of knowledge and innovation construction. Indeed, Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) aims to bring together researchers, citizens, policy makers, businesses and educators to cooperate during the entire research and innovation process in order to align the outcomes of research with the values and needs of society.

RRI is a crosscutting issue in the European Commission 'Horizon 2020' Framework Programme. Its ultimate ambition is to address the great challenges of our time (climate change, energy, health, etc.) and encourage smart, sustainable and inclusive growth in Europe. It is still an emerging concept and, in order to implement RRI, the concrete need for practical tools is undeniable. It is exactly there that our project steps in. Since its early beginning, the **RRI Tools project** [7] has gathered and developed online resources ? **the RRI Toolkit** ? allowing closer interactions of the actors of research and innovation systems. It also addresses topics such as open access, gender in science, ethics, science education, governance, public engagement. Last March 7<sup>th</sup>, the very first version of the the Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) Toolkit was launched. You can find it at [www.rrr-tools.eu](http://www.rrr-tools.eu) [7]. The toolkit has been designed to meet needs and views of all the possible stakeholders of the research

system, including researchers, policy-makers, business and industry, educators, and civil society organizations. It works for individuals but also for institutions.

Entering the toolkit you will find that as far as today it contains more than 350 resources. The latter are meant to help to design and bring projects to life, and to train on Responsible Research and Innovation. These resources include:

- inspiring practices;
- manuals, guidelines, how-tos, catalogues and online databases of resources;
- background documents including presentations, reports, cross-analysis and pan-European surveys;
- other European projects that developed RRI resources;
- a self-reflection tool to assess professional practices.

It is important to underline that the RRI Toolkit belongs to the RRI Community. In other words, it is a dynamic resource open to a growing European Community of Practice. This means that by joining the Community you will be able to participate in discussion fora and get support from other practitioners. In addition to this, anyone can contribute to the further developments of the toolkit by uploading tools and resources at [www.rri-tools.eu/registration](http://www.rri-tools.eu/registration) [8].

Valentina Amorese  
On behalf of RRI Project

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Action plan on **Science in Society** related issues in **Epidemics and Total pandemics**  
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