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Real life example: **Collaborate or else! An Institutionalised Integrity issue** (the story)

*See the attached PowerPoint presentation to see the complete example.*

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# Real life example: **Collaborate or else! *An Institutionalised Integrity issue***

# Basic information

* **Target audience:** Post-graduates, Researchers and academics
* **Summary:** This workshop highlights common integrity issues amongst the research community.
* **Objective:** To highlight the issues of research integrity to new academics
* **Length:** One hour workshop session

# Learning outcome/Message of the story

# This may not be an isolated case. In fact, this type of malpractice is widespread in academia. This workshop aims to highlight these “institutionalised malpractices” and offer help to PhD students, researchers and newly appointed lecturers.

# Material

* The attached presentation to be projected to the audience
* Last page of this document – the text of the story, as handouts for the audience

# Teaching methods

* Discussion over the presented case study.

# Didactic/teachers notes

# The story actually highlights practices common in many universities.

# Please highlight the importance of confronting the baseless decisions internally as well as externally.

# External organisations such as United Kingdom Research and Innovation (www.ukri.org) and German Research Ombudsman (www.enrio.eu) can help in cases such as this.

# We (ENAI - www.academicintegrity.eu), European Network of Research Integrity (www.enrio.eu) or International Centre for Academic Integrity (https://academicintegrity.org) can also advise on similar issues.

# Also these practices should be widely publicised involving media.

# Most importantly, the participants should be reassured that these are unacceptable practices and the more they are publicised, the better the chances of curtailing these issues.

# Real life example: Collaborate or else! *An Institutionalised Integrity issue*

# Ethan, an enthusiastic young academic

Ethan, an enthusiastic young researcher with several years of post-doctoral experience has been appointed as a lecturer in a respectable university. During his induction week, he was introduced to the research coordinator Prof. Gillett.

**Prof. Gillett** was really friendly and she told Ethan about internal research funding for new academics.
**Ethan** was really excited and asked for more details.
**Prof. Gillett** told him to lodge a research proposal ASAP!

When **Ethan** was about to leave, **Prof. Gillett** asked: “*so who is going to be your internal collaborator*?”

**Ethan**: “*well I have several years of research experience; also I already have a world renowned external collaborator lined up for this study, so I can manage without a collaborator.*”

**Prof. Gillett:** *“Well, it is up to you young man! But the offer is open.”*

Puzzled by **Prof. Gillett’s** last comment, **Ethan** asked around about the procedures of internal funding application. It was then **Mario**, his office mate said: “*that women is evil. She has her own selection committee; unless you include one of them as collaborators, your application will not be successful at all.*”

But **Ethan** was confident about the novelty of his project proposal and said “*I trust my research idea.*” for which **Mario** said “*good luck! but don’t say I haven’t warned you.*”

# Result of the project application

In contrary to **Ethan’s** expectations, his research funding applications was rejected.

The reasons given:

* Entirely new project
* Lack of (**Ethan’s**) experience
* No internal “mentors”

Yet, Ethan was asked to “consult” the research coordinator (**Prof. Gillett**) to improve the application and resubmit.

**Ethan** appealed against the rejection with additional information. He also submitted evidences against **Prof. Gillett** for research misconduct. To his surprise the internal panel that handled his appeal was comprised of professors who are all internal collaborators of **Prof. Gillett.**

His appeal was rejected on the basis of lack of proper evidence.

# The aftermath

Subsequent applications from Ethan were all rejected. Although he was successful in obtaining an external funding, the university failed to support this, and therefore the funding was withdrawn by the external body.

**Ethan** is now applying other universities, for which no one is willing to write a reference for him.