

ARMS 2024 CONFERENCE ABSTRACT

Theme: More than our rank – innovate the future of global rankings

Title: Integrity in Research Authorship Attribution – guidelines, nuances and new approaches

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Abstract:

Despite the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research providing binding principles for ensuring research integrity, authorship attribution integrity remains an area where there are some significant inconsistencies across research domains. This paper gives the results of a selective literature review from the Australian and European Universities and funding institutions on what is considered responsible conduct for authorship attribution. In all instances, the prime qualification for authorship is *significant* contribution to the project. The threshold of what constitutes a significant contribution is where there is some room for interpretation. It is already acknowledged in the Research Integrity space that there are a range of ways specific research cultures attribute authorship and that remains a challenge for institutions to address. What has been discovered from this project, is that promotion processes and funding decisions based on quantitative assessment of research contribution provide perverse incentives to manipulate authorship attribution. Therefore, contributions to research outputs are not always captured accurately and the decisions based on such outputs could be considered unsound as a result. Given the recognition in the Australian Universities Accord that research integrity is vital to maintain and improve credibility in expertise, it will be proposed that the time is right for Australian universities and funding bodies to think creatively on what the future of research contribution evaluation could look like.