The VIRT2UE project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research programme under grant agreement N 787580.
VIRT²UE

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Funded by the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research programme.
Coming up

1. What is VIRT²UE?
2. Description of the VIRT²UE programme
3. Roll-out across Europe
4. First evaluations
What is VIRT\textsuperscript{2}UE?
The VIRT$^2$UE training – fostering reflection

Trainers are taught:

- how to foster reflection on the virtues needed to make a good researcher
- how to promote understanding of the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity

The train-the-trainer program has an aspirational approach, and focuses on what it means to be a good and virtuous researcher. The core of the training is to promote reflection on personal attitudes and behaviours.
Theoretical background

A virtue ethics approach – trainees are taught to understand the importance of virtues and how to develop them in practice.

Learning by doing – trainees experience the programme as a participant, then practice the role of trainer and reflect on the skills needed to use the materials in teaching.

Learner centred teaching – trainees select which materials and exercises to use based on the needs and backgrounds of their students.
Why a virtue ethics approach?
A virtue ethics approach

• Virtue ethics is appropriate for **professional ethics** because it relates virtuous behaviour to good professional functioning.

• Focusing on compliance but neglecting researchers’ moral and value development fails to equip researchers for the **complexities and dilemmas of real-life research**.

• Virtue ethics training develops researchers’ moral sensitivity, and **provides them with tools** to reflect on the principles and virtues of a ‘good’ researcher.
3

Description of the VIRT²UE programme

Program and structure

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Blended learning

Tool box for trainers

Online eLearning modules and (offline) participatory exercises targeting different learning goals:

✓ Adaptable to context
✓ Easy to use and train
✓ Modular

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Training schedule

1. Online modules
2. First participatory sessions
3. Practice
4. Final participatory session
5. Train others

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1. Online modules + preparatory work

**Online modules**

- 12 eLearning modules
- Individual learning and reflection
- Introduction to main concepts and principles
- Introduction to The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity
- Interactive

**Preparation**

- Theme pages
- Instructions and videos

All available on [www.embassy.science](http://www.embassy.science)

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Introduction to Research Integrity

What is Research Integrity?

Three levels of Research Integrity

Scope of Research Integrity

Research Integrity in your context
Virtue Ethics under current research conditions

Performative Culture in Research

Cognitive Dissonance & Moral Distress

Why we justify unethical behaviour

To make a virtue of necessity

Virtue Ethics under current research conditions
2. First participatory sessions

Five participatory exercises - to encourage group reflection on practice

1. Debate and Dialogue
2. The Modified Rotterdam Dilemma Game
3. Self-Declaration Approach
4. The Middle Position
5. Virtues and Norms

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Debate and Dialogue

Aim and relevance to the programme

Aim

To identify the features of debate and dialogue

Relevance

• Sets the tone for the other exercises

• Important for group learning processes

• Important for moral reasoning and ethics education

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The Modified Rotterdam Dilemma Game
Aim and relevance to the programme

Aim
To reflect on alternative courses of action and identify the principles and practice at stake

Relevance
• To create a space to talk about research integrity issues without having to talk about personal cases
• Ice breaker

The Self-Declaration Approach

Aim and relevance to the programme

Aim

To understand the multidimensional nature of goodness and to reflect on understandings of ‘goodness’ in research.

Relevance

• Virtuous behaviour linked to ‘good’ professional functioning

• Sensitizes participants about what it means to do ‘good’ research and to be a ‘good’ researcher

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The Middle Position

Aim and relevance to the programme

**Aim**

To foster sensitivity for scientific virtues and acknowledge the ambiguity of virtues for guiding action

**Relevance**

- To foster reflection on acting on virtues in specific situations
- To understand the practical meaning of abstract virtues
- To reflect on moral ambiguities and grey areas

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Virtues and Norms
Aim and relevance to the programme

Aim

To identify virtues that would guide actions in real research integrity dilemmas and to describe the course of action that would follow.

Relevance

• To facilitate reflection on personal cases
• To learn through dialogue by sharing personal perspectives

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3. Practice

- Experience the exercises (try out with colleagues or students)
- Reflect on own teaching practice and knowledge (self-reflection forms)
- Reflect on the experience with the exercises (both process and content)
4. Final participatory session

- Reflection on the experience with the exercises
- Feedback and more support on exercises
- Deepening reflection on theoretical issues (answering questions)
5. Train others

- Each trainer (ideally) trains 10 researchers in their own country
- Use The Embassy of Good Science to interact with the community of trainers
- Contribute to the materials on the basis of own training context
- Certificate from the consortium
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Roll-out across Europe
Become a certified trainer on research integrity and ethics

your email address

Over 300 participants...

...in 30 countries

...participated in the VIRT^2UE Train the Trainer program
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First evaluations
Questionnaire

Online modules

- So far $n = 93$

What grade between 0-10 would you give the online courses based on a general impression? 0 (very bad) to 10 (excellent)

Participatory exercises

- So far $n = 40$

What grade between 0-10 would you give the training based on a general impression. 0 (very bad) to 10 (excellent)
What are the main take home messages you acquired from the online courses?

“So far the 'morality' aspect of research integrity was very fuzzy for me. Now I have a more structured view of what that actually means. That is helpful for analyzing one's own decisions and feelings in certain situations.

Unethical behaviors in science are not inevitably part of the system and can be reversed/combated.”
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Questions?
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