

POIESIS Newsletter III



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TRUST IN SCIENCE



**How Integrity and Open
Science affect Public
Trust in Science**

The 3rd POIESIS General Assembly in Portugal



The POIESIS 3rd General Assembly was successfully held on February 22nd and 23rd in CIES-Iscte, Lisbon. There were plenty interesting topics to discuss, such as the implementation and summaries for each partner's Focus Groups, the preparation for the 112 interviews on researchers and science communicators and a very interesting overview on the outcomes of the project's 2nd Expert Workshop.

The impact of the POIESIS research activities and its eventual recommendations were also at the centre of attention, while the Assembly opened with a presentation of the early findings of [a highly interesting study](#) the CIES - Iscte team had conducted, about Research Integrity among Portuguese Researchers.

All 7 partners of the POIESIS Consortium left the Assembly very ambitious about the implementation of all the remaining POIESIS engagement activities and outcomes and their impact on fostering Trust In Science!

2nd Expert Workshop on Dynamics of Recovering Trust and Reputation after a Crisis

On the eve of the last General Assembly in Lisbon, on the 21st and 22nd February 2024, the LSE and WiD POIESIS consortium members organised the 2nd POIESIS expert workshop, this time with a focus on dynamics of recovering public trust and reputation after a crisis in different contexts.

To discuss why public trust is important in real-life scenarios and how to rebuild it after a scandal or another kind of internal crisis, the workshop brought together six international experts with academic and corporate backgrounds and POIESIS consortium members. For two half days, they discussed national and international case studies each of the experts presented. The case studies ranged from crises in private companies to public universities and inspired interesting comparisons of different dynamics and mechanisms of crisis management and communication.



Discussions were lively and fruitful and will not only inspire further reflections for the work of POIESIS but also lead to a joint publication led by the POIESIS team. Learn more about the POIESIS indicators of Trust In Science in Europe by downloading the D1.3 Deliverable [here](#).

The POIESIS Focus Groups



The POIESIS Focus Groups, a major survey that took place in the 7 Consortium countries (Denmark, UK, France, Germany, Portugal, Spain and Greece) with the participation of dozens of researchers and science communication experts has been completed. The discussions were extremely interesting in each of the 21 Focus Groups held, with the influence of the wider social context of each country evident in most of them and led to some very interesting findings:

- Most of the participants suggested that there is **no general crisis in trust in science**; however, increasing and complex challenges, related to trust between science and society, were identified. Questionable or detrimental research practices, irresponsible science communication, “disruptors”, and the influence of private and political interests are some of the main factors contributing to these challenges.



- Additionally, while participants were relatively divided on the effects of public engagement in science, they agreed that **fostering a culture of participation** requires a mobilisation of all actors in the ‘chain of mediation’: non-institutional actors in science communication are already involved, but other actors, especially institutional ones, should play a more active role in supporting the development of participatory projects by the scientific community.

Finally, regarding the role of **Institutions** in promoting social integrity and social integration, the idea that each scientific organization should be able to systematically identify the conflicting moral imperatives to which it subjects its staff seems to be an essential task. But it is important to stress that these institutional actions will remain ineffective if they are not coordinated at both national and European levels.



You can read more about our Focus Groups by reading the *Focus Group Findings: Exploring Institutional Roles in Fostering Public Trust in Science* (D3.2) document [here](#).

POIESIS at the 12th SciComPT Congress



CSIC-Iscte team attended the [12th Congress of SciComPT](#), which took place at University of Minho, in Braga, May 8-10.

The team contributed with two oral presentations. In the "*The role of scientific institutions in public involvement in science: voices from institutional stakeholders*" the team presented the main findings of the Focus Groups with Institutional Stakeholders, which took place in Lisbon in February 2024. This talk discussed the need to reinforce the capacity of science communication offices with resources to establish long-term relationships between scientific institutions and society.

In the "*Science communication by scientists in Portugal*", the team discussed perceptions of researchers working in Portuguese research institutions and universities about their role in science communication and how this may affect public's opinion and trust in science.

SciComPt is the Portuguese Science and Technology Communication Network, aiming to promote science communication in all its aspects, to promote exchange between Science Communication professionals as well as the informed participation of citizens in all issues involving Science and Technology.

POIESIS took part in the OPERAS Trust On Event

How can we enhance trust and build best practices to safeguard the quality and integrity of online content, which is paramount in the age of AI-driven disinformation?

Under the auspices of the Belgian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, this question was discussed at the OPERAS organized event "Trust On 2024. Tackling Disinformation" (for more information, please visit <https://operas-eu.org/news-and-events/calendar-2/truston-2024/>) that took place on June 26 -27 at the Royal Library of Belgium (KBR) in Brussels.

The aim of the workshop was to develop actionable strategies and practical recommendations for the UN Summit of the Future in September 2024. The workshop was organized in three parallel tracks, 'Infrastructure Trust', 'Mediation Trust' and 'Science Trust' to discuss and assess 'various trust dimensions of the Internet, encompassing infrastructure, governance & regulation, mediation and science, through partnerships with civil society, academia, the tech community, youth, policymakers, among others'.



POIESIS, together with partner projects **VERITY**, **IANUS**, and **COALESCE**, chaired the Science track, which was led by **Tine Ravn**, **Agata Gurzawska**, and **Charlotte Bruns**. Based on numerous expert presentations and through a co-creation and dialogue-based format, we discussed the following questions:

- How to engage with different audiences about science and technology in times of crisis?
- How can co-creation and participatory initiatives be designed and implemented to empower citizens and mediating actors navigate online (mis)information?
- How can Stewards of Trust collaborate to enhance engagement against (digital) dis- and misinformation in the context of science?

The discussions resulted in a first set of key themes and overall recommendations.

POIESIS at the 8th WCRI (Athens, 2-5 June 2024)

POIESIS participated at a section dedicated to trust in science in the context of the 8th World Conference of Research Integrity.



Dr. **Tine Ravn** presented POIESIS early findings along with our sister projects IANUS (Dr. **Hub Zwart**) and VERITY (Dr. **Agata Gurzawska**) in the "Implications of research integrity for public trust in academic research" session that was fully devoted to those three projects' research outputs.

The session was chaired by POIESIS former member of the coordinating team Dr. **Serge Horbach**. The presentations steered much interest and thorough discussion and questions from the audience that could go on for much longer than the total of 90 minutes of the session!



The project's poster presentation, which included POIESIS main objectives, findings from our Public Workshops and Focus Groups, and the planned engagement events, attracted interest and Dr. Tine Ravn was ever-present talking to many Conference attendees about POIESIS efforts to tackle societal mistrust in Science.