Report on Global Research Council 2024 Asia Pacific Regional Meeting

Beijing, China

October 29-November 1, 2024

Co-Hosts:
National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC)
National Science Foundation of Sri Lanka (NSF Sri Lanka)

Report on GRC 2024 Asia Pacific Regional Meeting

Summary

The Global Research Council (GRC) is a virtual organization dedicated to promoting the sharing of data and best practices for high-quality collaboration among funding agencies worldwide. The GRC 2024 Asia Pacific Regional Meeting was co-hosted by the National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC) and the National Science Foundation, Sri Lanka (NSF Sri Lanka) from October 29th to November 1st, 2024.

The meeting aimed to provide a platform for GRC participants from the Asia Pacific region to discuss key topics and contribute insights in preparation for the 13th Annual GRC Meeting in 2025. The 2025 meeting will be hosted by the Research, Development, and Innovation Authority (RDIA) in partnership with Saudi Arabia's King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology (KACST) and Türkiye's Scientific and Technological Research Council (TÜBITAK).

The meeting brought together over 40 representatives onsite and around 10 representatives online from research funding agencies across 14 countries, including Australia, China, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Mongolia, New Zealand, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, the United Kingdom, and Vietnam.

The event commenced with welcome remarks from Lan Yujie, Vice President of NSFC, and Sepalika Sudasinghe, Director General of NSF Sri Lanka. This was followed by an introduction to the GRC delivered by Michael Bright, Acting Secretariat of the GRC, introduction to the Background Paper outlining the annual meeting themes and updates of working groups. During the meeting, participants shared their comments and practices during the panel discussions and moderated discussions.

This report highlights the key outcomes of the following topics discussed during the meeting:

1. Research Management in the Era of AI
2. Working Together in Co-Creation to Address Global Challenges
3. Gender and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)
4. Responsible Research Assessment
5. Multilateral Engagement

Please refer to the Annex for further information on the programme of the event.

Contents

1. Research Management in the Era of AI

1.1 Background Introduction

The Background paper was introduced by Maha Almozaini, General Manager of the Grants Planning and Design, Research Development and Innovation Authority (RDIA), Saudi Arabia. The introduction highlighted the importance and of integrating AI tools into the framework of research management, emphasizing AI's potential to enhance research management through its application in proposal screening, data analysis, resource allocation, and impact assessment. It also addressed the risks related to privacy, reliability, and sensitivity in AI-Driven Proposal Reviews.

Two initiatives were proposed to deploy AI implementation in funding management:

1. Establishing a Funding Management AI Working Group dedicated to
   (1) Proposing global guidelines for the use of AI in Research, Development, and Innovation;
   (2) Creating a platform for multiple agencies to share best practices;
   (3) Defining mechanisms to monitor and address any biases.
   (4) Handling issues related to compliance and ethical considerations.

2. Developing Cross-Agency Standardized Trials or Deploy AI across Funding Management Processes by implementing standardized trials or integrating AI at various stages of funding management to enhance efficiency and consistency.

1.2 Keynote Speech

A keynote speech titled "*Navigating Complexity: The Future of Research Management with AI*" was delivered by Xiong Hui, Vice president and Chair Professor, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology. The keynote introduced the Data Driven AI thinking and outlined 4 types intelligence: knowledgeable on one subject (domain expertise), knowledgeable across domains (cross-domain expertise), inference and prediction, and from zero to one (creating something entirely new). The speaker compared Traditional Research Management with Intelligent Research Management, highlighting the transformative potential of AI in this field (Figure 1).

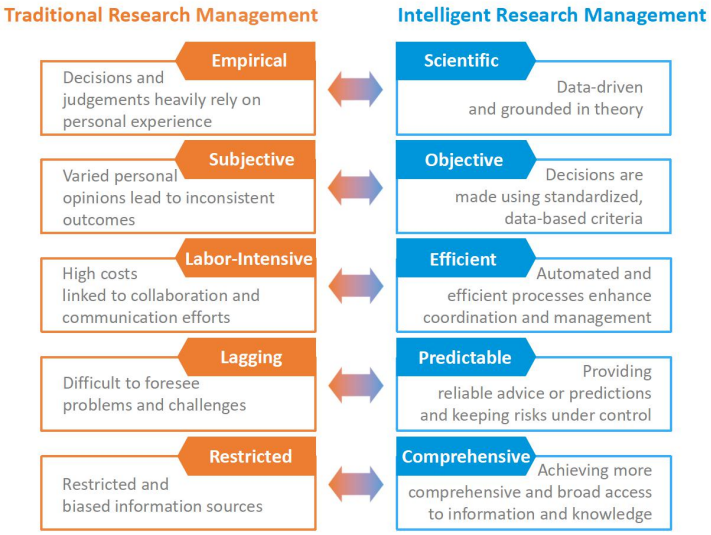

Figure 1 Traditional Research Management vs. Intelligent Research Management

According to the speaker, Intelligent Research Management focuses on 3 key areas: research topics, research scholars, and research projects.

(1) Research topics: In terms of research fields and specific topics, Intelligent Research Management can analyze Research Trends and Interdisciplinary Research fields, generating Research Guidelines.

(2) Research scholars: AI tools enable the profiling of researchers and institutions, facilitating the formation of collaborative research teams.

(3) Research projects: Regarding project management, Intelligent Research Management offers tools to automate peer review, evaluate grant proposals, and provide supervision and progress tracking for ongoing projects.

In terms of Risks and Challenges, Fairness, Transparency, Security issues such as data privacy and protection, ethical concerns, system security and the Reliability of Data, Model, System and Process should be addressed.

1.3 Panel Discussion

The panel discussion was chaired by Mohammed Alshareef, General Manager of the National RDI Observatory, Research Development and Innovation authority (RDIA), Saudi Arabia. After setting the stage for the transformative role of AI in research management and funding, he highlighted the double-edged nature of AI, emphasizing its potential to enhance objectivity and efficiency in research funding management while also raising concerns about data privacy, potential biases, and ethical issues.

Participants shared their opinions, practices and experiences related to Research Management in the era of AI. The panelists of this session are listed as follows:

(1) Sunyoung Yoo, Senior Researcher, National Research Foundation of Korea (NRF)
(2) Ajeng Arum Sari, Director of Research and Innovation Funding, Indonesia National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN)
(3) Pongpan Kaewtatip, Vice President, Thailand Science Research and Innovation (TSRI)
(4) Nguyen Dinh Pham, Chief Executive Officer, National Foundation for Science and Technology Development (NFSTD), Vietnam

1.3.1 Main Discussion Points

The panel discussion highlighted AI's potential to enhance efficiency, objectivity, and innovation in global research management. While acknowledging its transformative benefits, participants emphasized concerns regarding data quality, governance, and ethical implications. Recurring themes included the need for robust ethical frameworks, human oversight, and international collaboration to mitigate risks and maximize AI's value in research funding and management.

Enhancing Efficiency in Funding Allocation

AI tools can streamline project management procedures and review processes by automating preliminary screenings, matching experts with proposals, and reducing administrative workloads. This optimization allows funders to reallocate resources toward strategic decision-making and critical evaluations, analyze historical funding data to identify successful research strategies and trends.

Promoting Objectivity and Reducing Bias

AI can conduct integrity checks and provide data-driven assessments to mitigate unconscious biases in peer and panel review, enhancing transparency and accountability. Additionally, AI-generated documentation of review processes strengthens institutional transparency, credibility and auditability.

Fostering Global Innovation and Collaboration

AI accelerates innovation by identifying gaps in literature and datasets, enabling

researchers to refine questions and explore emerging fields. It fosters collaboration by connecting researchers with complementary expertise or shared interests, promoting interdisciplinary projects. By automating repetitive tasks (e.g., data analysis, literature reviews), AI frees researchers to focus on creative endeavors like hypothesis generation and experimental design, accelerating scientific advancements.

AI Training and Capacity Building

The effective AI integration in research management requires targeted training for funding agency staff and researchers. Personnel responsible for designing and deploying AI tools must possess foundational AI literacy, necessitating capacity-building programs. Current AI systems excel at analyzing existing data but lack the capacity for original ideation; their value lies in augmenting human efforts by streamlining repetitive tasks. Therefore, human-centered strategies should be prioritized for the research management in the era of AI.

Ethical Considerations and Evolving Practices

Ethical guidelines must govern AI use to ensure responsible practices by researchers and reviewers. The continuous refinement of AI systems, coupled with human oversight, remains critical to maintaining fairness and fostering innovation in research ecosystems.

Key Takeaways and Recommendations

(1) Foster Global Partnerships and strengthen cooperation: Encourage funding agencies to share resources, best practices, and success stories to accelerate AI adoption. Utilize the GRC as a central hub to disseminate case studies and coordinate cross-border initiatives.
(2) Establish an AI Working Group: Form a dedicated group to guide AI policy, ensuring alignment with existing initiatives and avoiding duplication.
(3) Develop Clear Guidelines: Draft ethical and operational frameworks to standardize AI use in research management, focusing on fairness, transparency, and accountability.
(4) Balance AI Reliance with Human Oversight: Ensure AI supports rather than replaces human decision-making, maintaining critical oversight in all stages of research evaluation.
(5) Redefine Human Roles: Adapt roles to emphasize strategic thinking, ethical judgment, and complex decision-making, areas where AI has limitations.
(6) Promote Ethical AI Use and Accountability: Establish protocols to detect, report, and mitigate AI biases, with clear accountability mechanisms in place.
(7) Capacity Building and Training: Provide targeted AI literacy programs for researchers, evaluators, and funding agency staff to ensure effective and ethical tool usage. Integrate AI-related training into professional development to keep pace with evolving technologies.
(8) Adopt a Trial-Based Approach to AI Implementation: Test AI applications through pilot programs before wide-scale implementation to identify risks and refine strategies.

Use lessons from pilots to adjust guidelines, ensuring continuous improvement.

(9) Acknowledge Technical and Ethical Challenges: Remain vigilant about data privacy, security, model bias, and ethical dilemmas associated with AI-driven decisions. Develop contingency plans to address AI failures, ensuring systems remain adaptable in dynamic environments.

1.3.2 Practices and Experience Shared by Funding Agencies

Most funding agencies recognize the significant potential of AI in streamlining research funding management, though implementation remains largely in its early stages.

National Research Foundation of Korea (NRF)

The NRF is advancing AI integration through educational programs and practical applications. Initiatives include hosting AI tool competitions, embedding AI into internal research management workflows, and piloting Q&A chatbots for proposal evaluation and funding guidelines. The NRF emphasizes ethical AI use, urging researchers and evaluators to adopt responsible practices. Additionally, the NRF advocates for cross-border collaboration, proposing AI-driven platforms to connect researchers addressing global challenges.

Indonesia National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN)

BRIN's Directorate of Research and Innovation Funding is exploring AI applications across multiple stages of research management:

(1) Proposal Identification: AI analyzes proposal alignment with funding schemes, predicts selection outcomes, and powers chatbots offering submission guidance.
(2) Proposal Selection: AI matches submissions against scheme requirements.
(3) Funding Allocation: Predictive models assist in budgeting and recipient selection.
(4) Monitoring & Evaluation: AI evaluates research progress and budget usage, providing actionable feedback.

BRIN also prioritizes data infrastructure, developing the Indonesia National Scientific Repository for secure data access and collaborating with tech units to optimize processes and mitigate risks.

Thailand Science Research and Innovation (TSRI)

TSRI leverages AI primarily through its National Research and Innovation Information System (NRIIS), focusing on:

(1) Proposal Screening: Eliminating redundancies and plagiarism while identifying top teams.
(2) Resource Optimization: Matching research demand with supply.
(3) Data Dashboards: Providing real-time insights for funding priorities and sectoral research directions.

(4) Performance Analysis: Allocating resources based on historical R&D outcomes.
Key tools include ThaiRAP (a SciVal-like system analyzing research performance) and AI-driven demand-supply mapping aligned with Bangkok's policies. While Thailand currently uses AI for descriptive analytics (data visualization), future goals include diagnostic, predictive, and prescriptive applications. Challenges like data quality and governance persist, prompting collaboration with the Government Big Data Agency to develop tailored algorithms that complement—not replace—human decision-making.

National Foundation for Science and Technology Development (NFSTD), Vietnam

NFSTD highlights AI's potential in reviewer matching for proposal evaluation and simulating experimental data. However, the agency cautions against over-reliance on AI, noting its limitations in identifying optimal reviewers. Regulatory frameworks for AI-generated simulation data storage are also deemed critical.

Australia Research Council (ARC)

Applicants are warned that AI-generated content carries risks, as the technology remains imperfect. While not banning its use, the ARC advises applicants to weigh potential consequences. The use of AI in peer review is strictly prohibited by the ARC's AI policy, according to the Program Policies and Statements '*Policy on the use of Generative Intelligence in the ARC's grant programs*'.

2. Working Together in Co-Creation to Address Global Challenges

2.1 Background introduction

The Background paper was introduced by Ozlem Doğan and Fatih Esen, TÜBITAK, Türkiye. The discussion paper include three core sections:

(1) Co-Creation for Grand Challenges: Essence of a Holistic Approach
(2) The Role of Public R&D and Innovation Funding Institutions: Recommendations for Co-Creation in Global Challenges
(3) Future Directions and Opportunities.

The speaker emphasized the significance of Co-creation as a collaborative strategy to address grand challenges and introduced the definition and scope of Co-creation:

(1) Co-creation is defined as the process of the joint generation of added value between research, industry, and possibly other stakeholders, such as civil society.
(2) Co-creation facilitates multilevel dialogues on co-planning, co-implementation, and co-monitoring/co-evaluation of activities
(3) Co-creation is a long-term, road map-driven approach requiring active stakeholder involvement from the planning stage onward, contrasted with cooperation, which is typically short-term, case-based, and focused on complementary skills.

The introduction also outlined the critical role of Public R&D and Innovation Funding Institutions. It's suggested to design funding mechanisms that promote collaborative research, facilitate international partnerships, support capacity building, and disseminate best practices & translating co-created knowledge into effective practices

2.2 Keynote Speech

A Keynote speech titled "*Finding safe zones to work together to address global challenges*" was delivered by Xue Lan, Dean of Schwarzman College and School of Public Policy and Management,Tsinghua University. The keynote introduced the global challenges and the need for joint research, obstacles in global S&T collaborations, and finding safe zones to collaborate.

The speaker presented 3 examples of climate overshoot, genome editing technologies and the public health and AI safety research to exemplify the importance of co-creation in joint research. The speaker identified 3 major obstacles to international collaboration: Research norms and ethical concerns, and geopolitical issues. It requires coordination research on controversial issues, generate consensus for different norms and ethical concern, and respond to the interference of geopolitics in global science.

Finally, the speaker advocated finding safe zones for international cooperation:

(1) Research foundations need to coordinate and work together to identify safe zones to support research and governance of some urgently needed research areas like climate overshoot;
(2) Research foundations need to jointly support global dialogue to generate consensus on basic principles and standards that strengthen ethical review, accountability, and transparency in sensitive research areas, such as genome editing research;
(3) US and Chinese research foundations should collaborate to identify safe zones for researchers from both countries to work together, including basic research, and selected domains in frontier research that is public good in nature.

2.3 Panel Discussion

The panel discussion was chaired by Chen Jing, Director of Division of American and Oceanian Affairs, NSFC. Participants are invited to shared their opinions, practices and experiences related to Working Together in Co-Creation to Address Global Challenges. The panel explored strategies for fostering global cooperation in Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) to address shared challenges like climate change, data security, and interdisciplinary collaboration. Speakers emphasized the need for inclusive governance frameworks, trust-building, and adaptive funding models to enhance co-creation across borders.

The panelists of this session are listed as follows:

(1) Sepalika Sudasinghe, Director General, National Science Foundation (NSF), Sri Lanka
(2) Shigeo Morimoto, Vice President, Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST)
(3) Hyuk Jeong, Head of NRF Beijing Office, National Research Foundation of Korea (NRF)
(4) Li Wencong, Director, Division III, Department of International Programs, NSFC
(5) Ron Xavier, Counsellor (Science & Innovation), Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE), New Zealand Embassy Beijing

2.3.1 Main discussion points

The panelists underscored that co-creation in RDI demands a balance of innovation, inclusivity, and pragmatism. By adopting adaptive governance frameworks, prioritizing risk mitigation, and investing in human capital, global stakeholders can translate research into tangible solutions for challenges like climate change and inequality.

Recommendations

(1) Design inclusive governance models that prioritize equal partnerships for Global South stakeholders and integrate social impact criteria (e.g., community needs alignment) into research evaluation frameworks.
(2) Mandate robust cybersecurity protocols, including strict data privacy standards and secure infrastructure for international collaborations.
(3) Provide training for researchers on best practices in international projects.
(4) Invest in capacity-building programs to develop interdisciplinary talent, prevent brain drain, and address expertise gaps through workshops, training, and initiatives.
(5) Build trust by actively involving end-users and communities in co-planning research agendas.
(6) Develop hybrid funding models that blend competitive grants with locally driven priorities.
(7) Promote open-access scientific infrastructure to lower collaboration barriers and foster transparency in global research partnerships.

(8) Facilitate multilateral policy dialogues to harmonize data-sharing rules, address security concerns.
(9) Engage policymakers at an early stage to ensure research outcomes inform national and global strategies.

2.3.2 Practices and Experience Shared by Funding Agencies

Sepalika Sudasinghe, Director General, National Science Foundation (NSF), Sri Lanka

Sepalika Sudasinghe emphasized the unique challenges faced by Global South nations, particularly the urgency of addressing poorly understood local problems such as climate change. She stressed the need for political consensus to develop actionable strategies and frameworks. To bridge the gap between theory and practice, she advocated for a governance, risk, and compliance framework that actively involves researchers, funding bodies, and organizations. She highlighted the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration, urging stakeholders to move beyond traditional disciplinary silos and create ecosystems that encourage interactive, cross-sector innovation. Her vision centered on equitable participation to ensure solutions are both contextually relevant and globally scalable.

Shigeo Morimoto, Vice President, Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST)

Shigeo Morimoto shared Japan's experience through JST's flagship international programs. The e-ASIA initiative fosters regional scientific communities to solve shared challenges, demonstrating how co-creation can unite diverse stakeholders. SATREPS integrates social impact criteria, encouraging dialogue between researchers and communities to ensure real-world applicability. The NEXUS program prioritizes human capital development to encourage brain circulation, while AJ-CORE promotes equal partnerships with Sub-Saharan African nations through equitable research contributions, aligning with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Morimoto underscored the importance of balancing innovation with inclusivity, capacity-building, and trust to sustain cross-border collaboration.

Hyuk Jeong, Head of NRF Beijing Office, National Research Foundation of Korea (NRF)

Hyuk Jeong addressed risks posed by emerging technologies, particularly data privacy breaches and cyberattacks, which he identified as critical barriers to international cooperation. As a research funder, he urged global science agencies to adopt stringent data security protocols and embed cybersecurity as a core criterion in funding agreements. He emphasized proactive measures, such as standardized privacy frameworks and secure collaboration platforms, to mitigate risks without stifling innovation.

Li Wencong, Director, Division III, Department of International Programs, NSFC

Li Wencong introduced China's experience in co-creation where local governments,

industries, and researchers collaborate seamlessly and the challenges in international partnerships. Key barriers included restrictive data-sharing policies, national security concerns, and trust deficits. To address these, NSFC organizes international workshops to identify sensitivities and develop roadmaps for collaboration. Additionally, NSFC leverages open-access large-scale scientific facilities to attract global talents, fostering transparency and shared ownership of research outcomes.

Ron Xavier, Counsellor (Science & Innovation), Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE), New Zealand Embassy Beijing

Ron Xavier outlined strategies for global funders, particularly in the Global South, to enhance research-policy linkages: involving end-users early, building trust through cultural awareness, and adopting hybrid funding models (competitive grants alongside community-driven priorities). To address disciplinary fragmentation, he recommended dedicated funding for interdisciplinary research and capacity-building programs to strengthen collaboration and community engagement skills.

3. Gender and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

3.1 Background

The EDI Working Group continues the work of the Gender Working Group formed in 2017 to contribute to implementing the Statement of Principles and Actions: Promoting the Equality and Status of Women in Research (endorsed in 2016). As of 2023, to accommodate the increased mandate, the Gender Working Group was renamed EDI Working Group.

The EDI WG is advancing the following initiatives:

(1) Promoting the integration of an equity, diversity, and inclusion lens into the design of the GRC's vision for the next ten years, strategic planning, road map, and annual themes.
(2) Striving to integrate relevant EDI considerations in GRC-developed programs, resources, and future work streams.
(3) Working to build knowledge and provide strategic and transformative analysis and advice to the GRC and the member organizations on an ongoing basis.

3.2 EDI aspects related to AI and Co-creation

The integration of AI into research management presents transformative opportunities but also risks systemic inequalities if not carefully governed. AI systems trained on biased or non-diverse datasets can perpetuate disparities in critical areas such as funding allocation, reviewers selection. To mitigate these risks, funding agencies must audit AI tools for bias, enforce diverse data collection practices, and adopt frameworks like algorithmic impact assessments to ensure fairness.

Inclusive research teams are essential to designing equitable AI systems. Diverse teams—spanning gender, ethnicity, disability, and interdisciplinary expertise—are better equipped to identify biases and ensure AI applications meet the needs of varied populations. Under-resourced institutions often lack access to advanced AI tools, widening global disparities. Therefore, open-source platforms and funding for equitable technology distribution can democratize access, while AI-powered tools like language translators can bridge barriers for non-English-speaking researchers.

EDI principles are vital for co-creation to address global challenges. Diversity enriches research by valuing contributions from all backgrounds, while inclusivity ensures underrepresented groups, like women and indigenous communities, are meaningfully engaged. Equality dismantles systemic barriers, ensuring fair opportunities regardless of identity. Participatory methods, such as citizen science, foster interdisciplinary collaboration and culturally responsive solutions.

Research funders play a key role by embedding EDI into policies. Equitable access to

funding, inclusive project designs, and partnerships across sectors amplify research impact and societal progress. Prioritizing EDI drives innovation, supports diverse talent, and ensures science addresses real-world inequities effectively.

3.3 Panel Discussion

The panel discussion was chaired by Ajeng Arum Sari, Director of Research and Innovation Funding, National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN), Indonesia. This panel discussion explores how research funding agencies operate equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in global contexts and overcome systemic barriers. By addressing shared challenges, including AI integration and under-representation, the panel underscores actionable strategies to transform research ecosystems into equitable, sustainable drivers of innovation.

The panelists of this session are listed as follows:

(1) Christina Twomey, Chief Research Officer, Australian Research Council (ARC)
(2) Akie Hoshino, Director of International Program Department, Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS)
(3) Orakanoke Phanraksa, Head of International Affairs Division, Thailand Science, Research and Innovation (TSRI)

Christina Twomey, Chief Research Officer, Australian Research Council (ARC)

The ARC funds basic and applied research across all disciplines except medical science, with equal success rates for women and men. However, female applicants decline with seniority, limiting leadership representation. While prioritizing Indigenous researchers, culturally diverse groups remain underrepresented. The Centers of Excellence scheme ($35M over 7 years) now mandates equity-focused criteria, requiring diverse teams, mentorship plans, and inclusive governance. ARC highlights embedding equity in scheme design and assessment as key to driving systemic inclusion, particularly in male-dominated fields.

The ARC uses its Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence (ROPE) framework to address gender equity by evaluating applicants' research output relative to available time (factoring in career breaks for caregiving, cultural duties, or part-time roles) and prioritizing quality (e.g., top 10 publications) over quantity. Initiatives include tailored fellowships for women, Indigenous-led grants, and discipline-specific success rate analysis to uncover hidden disparities. The ARC stresses that equity policies require actionable strategies (e.g., quotas, anonymized reviews) to move beyond rhetoric and drive systemic change.

Akie Hoshino, Director of International Program Department, Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS)

JSPS dedicates to advancing fundamental research across disciplines—including humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences—and EDI is one of the priorities of the

organization. A key focus of JSPS is addressing Japan's stark gender disparity in research, where only 18% of researchers are women. To address this, JSPS offers gender-neutral support programs for researchers returning after career interruptions (e.g., childcare, family leave), resources for work-life balance (e.g., career continuity post-childbirth), and a website sharing strategies and success stories to empower female researchers. Despite JSPS's own majority-female staff, systemic gender gaps in Japan's broader research sector remain a critical challenge. Additionally, while JSPS acknowledges the growing role of AI in research, it currently faces challenges integrating AI into its program operations and emphasizes cautious, strategic adoption moving forward.

Orakanoke Phanraksa, Head of International Affairs Division, Thailand Science, Research and Innovation (TSRI)

TSRI allocates research funding to 9 Thai Research Councils spanning disciplines from natural sciences to humanities, focusing on global challenges like climate change and food security. TSRI emphasizes transdisciplinary research, engaging policymakers, local communities, and stakeholders to address issues such as Southeast Asia's PM2.5 air pollution crisis. Recent initiatives include mapping the ASEAN research ecosystem across 11 countries and promoting talent mobility programs to prepare future scientists. TSRI prioritizes inclusive selection criteria, ensuring diversity in gender and ethnicity for participants in funded projects, alongside merit-based evaluations. While TSRI does not directly fund research, it commissions experts to strengthen regional collaboration and sustainable solutions. The speaker highlighted the need for collaborative, inclusive approaches to tackle shared challenges and invited insights on integrating equity, EDI and AI into research frameworks.

4. Responsible Research Assessment (RRA)

4.1 Background

Responsible Research Assessment (RRA) Working Group was established in 2021 September. The mission is to facilitate and support the adoption of RRA globally by promoting a collective understanding of responsible approaches to research assessment, learning through collaboration, and openly sharing good practices to guide collective advancement. RRA working group comprises over 20 funding organisations from 18 countries across the globe. The group's membership includes representation from every region of the GRC, ensuring a worldwide perspective and outreach among global funders.

4.2 Highlight Recent Publication 11 Dimensions of RRA

Mohammed Alshareef highlighted recent publication of RRA Working group, *11 Dimensions of Responsible Research Assessment (RRA)*, outlines a comprehensive framework to guide ethical, equitable, and impactful research evaluation. Organized into three categories: guiding principles, governance and strategy, and process and methodology:

Guiding Principles:

(1) Responsible commitment to and promotion of research integrity and the responsible conduct of research
(2) Responsible approaches to incentivizing open research
(3) Responsible commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion in research
(4) Responsible responses to the effects of global challenges and emergencies on research

Governance and Strategy:

(5) Responsible administration and monitoring of research assessment processes
(6) Responsible approaches to research assessment reform
(7) Responsible use of influence on institutional policies and practices

Process and Methodology:

(8) Responsible use and dissemination of research assessment criteria
(9) Responsible assessment of research contributions and achievements
(10) Responsible approaches to impact assessment
(11) Responsible approaches to reviewer and panel recruitment and training

4.3 RRA Case Studies

Joanne Looyen presented case studies illustrate practical RRA implementation across four contexts: Argentina's CONICET reduced reliance on traditional metrics, integrating narrative CVs and repository analytics; Ireland's HRB embedded Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) in grant assessments to align research with societal needs; New Zealand's MBIE introduced optional narrative CVs to highlight diverse contributions beyond academia; and the UK's FRAP prioritized evidence-based policy reforms through

sector-wide collaboration. These examples underscore the adaptability of RRA principles to cultural and institutional contexts, balancing accountability with inclusivity. The working group's advocacy and actionable guidance highlights a global shift toward research assessment that values societal impact, transparency, and equity as core outcomes.

Key Points of Discussion on case studies:

(1) Participants stressed the need for practical case studies to guide responsible research impact measurement, EDI integration, and international collaboration.
(2) CV assessment challenges—such as inconsistent frameworks and unclear expectations—highlighted calls for harmonized evaluation criteria and workshops to improve transparency.
(3) Despite known limitations, reviewers often default to journal impact factors due to their simplicity. Solutions include standardized training and shared evaluation toolkits for funding agencies.
(4) Criticism centered on undervalued local/indigenous research, with proposals for new metrics to recognize community-driven contributions beyond high-impact journals.
(5) Interdisciplinary collaboration was urged to align AI development with ethical assessment frameworks and EDI goals, potentially through dedicated working groups.

4.4 GRC Global Survey on Responsible Research Assessment (RRA)

The Research and Researcher Institute (RoRI), based at University College London (founded 2019), presented its second GRC survey on RRA. This initiative builds on its 2020 survey, which catalyzed significant engagement and publications. RoRI's mission focuses on advancing research systems through evidence-based solutions, operating as a think tank to bridge academic insights and practical implementation. The survey aims to inform ethical, equitable, and innovative practices in research funding, with a particular emphasis on balancing AI integration with responsible governance.

2024 Survey Objectives

(1) Comparative Analysis: Track progress since 2020 and evaluate global shifts in research assessment practices.
(2) AI in Research Funding: Map the adoption, types, and perceived benefits of AI tools among global research funders.
(3) Intervention Evaluation: Assess the impact of 38 grant-funding interventions, including partial randomization, demand management, and normalized application processes.

Key Outputs

(1) A GRC Summit Report (May 2025) synthesizing findings.
(2) A foundation for future policy research on individual interventions.
(3) An open anonymized dataset for GRC participants to analyze trends and solutions.

4.5 Next Steps

(1) Assess survey results following the 6th of January deadline;

(2) Request an extension to the RRA WG mandate (currently scheduled to end in 2025), supporting participant organizations with RRA principles to their respective research and innovation systems;

(3) Continue to collect case studies in line with our vision and produce a booklet of these for unveiling at the 2025 annual meeting. Examples could be practices or assessment of international collaborations, training for reviewers, organizing highly effective panel meetings, and the use of narrative series in common context among others;

(4) Develop and deliver RRA's self-assessment tool and roadmap for funders. This tool will help people with their understanding and application of RRA principles.

5. Multilateral Engagement (MLE)

5.1 Background

The GRC aims to facilitate and promote collaboration among participant organizations to support global science, foster the worldwide research community, and address global challenges. The MLE-WG was established on June 1, 2023, during the 11th GRC Annual Meeting in The Hague, in response to the broad interest among GRC participants for stronger multilateral engagement.

It has the following objectives:

(1) map the landscape of available multilateral funding mechanisms/programmes globally;

(2) scope possible roles for the GRC in facilitating multilateral engagement; and

(3) develop options for respective implementation and a roadmap for multilateral collaboration.

5.2 Updates of MLE Working Group Activities

5.2.1 Desktop study

From Aug 3 to Sep 30, 2023, and Feb 19 to Mar 4, 2024, the working group conducted a desktop study to explore the mechanisms for addressing global and regional challenges. Key findings include:

(1) Purpose of the Mechanism:
- To tackle global/regional challenges such as sustainability (climate change), entrepreneurship, technology transfer, industrialization, and research talent development.
- Capacity building and human resource development.

(2) Funding Mechanism:
- Joint calls for proposals using a peer review system with virtual common pot budgeting.
- R&D priorities include global sustainability challenges (energy, water, environment, health) and emerging technologies (AI, cybersecurity).

(3) Challenges:
- Lack of funding, capacity, and experience.
- Negotiations among multiple countries, power imbalances between the Global North and South, and differences in administrative years, fiscal years, time zones, and languages.

5.2.2 Multilateral Engagement Event

The working group organized an integrated event combined eight side events aligned with its objectives. Key outcomes from the event include:

Session 1: Harmonizing Transdisciplinary Collaboration and Multilateral Funding for Global Sustainability

- Explored the link between transdisciplinary collaboration and multilateral funding using case studies from NSF (US) and FAPESP (Brazil).
- Discussed innovative institutional arrangements and funding tools for sustainable solutions.
- Highlighted the importance of clearly defining "mission-oriented" and "transdisciplinary" approaches through the GRC.

Session 2: Scaling MLE Projects Globally: Best Practices for Synergy and Inclusion

- Showcased best practices from Africa, Asia, Latin America, and MENA regions.
- Emphasized language inclusivity, equity for emerging researchers, and agency convergence (e.g., Belmont Forum).
- Stressed the importance of South-South cooperation, co-financing, and science diplomacy to address geopolitical tensions.
- Highlighted the role of multilateral platforms in strengthening North-South and South-South partnerships, establishing common standards, and leveraging regional networks for global impact.

Session 3: Towards Equity and Solidarity: Fostering Inclusive and Responsible Cooperation in Global Research

- Addressed equity and solidarity in global research, focusing on decolonizing science, responsible internationalization, and impactful collaborations.
- Highlighted capacity-building initiatives, such as the Swiss Center for Scientific Research in Côte d'Ivoire and the Science Fund of Serbia.
- Confirmed the importance of a "Code of Conduct" to guide research relationships, addressing integrity, ethics, equity, security, and reciprocity.
- Explored collaborative approaches to advance research software development and shared success stories of funding mechanisms.
- The GRC is expected to facilitate dialogues on responsible internationalization and research software development.

5.3 Panel Discussion

The panel discussed progress and challenges in fostering equitable global research partnerships. Key points included balancing regional disparities, addressing geopolitical and cultural barriers, and enhancing stakeholder collaboration.

The panelists of this session are listed as follows:

(1) Rong Nianhe, National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC), China
(2) Orakanoke Phanraksa, Thailand Science Research and Innovation (TSRI), Thailand
(3) Michael Bright, UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), United Kingdom

(4) Enrico Paringit, Philippine Council for Industry, Energy, and Emerging Technology, Research and Development (DOSTPCIEERD), Philippines

Rong Nianhe, National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC), China

- Emphasized comparative studies between Global North and South to ensure equitable benefits from multilateral mechanisms.
- Stressed the importance of "top-down design" for sustainable governance and shared examples of NSFC's regional balance initiatives (e.g., programs for less-developed western China).

Orakanoke Phanraksa, Thailand Science Research and Innovation (TSRI), Thailand

- Identified challenges in multilateral engagement:
  - Divergent common interests between Global North and South.
  - Geopolitical tensions, IP management complexities, and language barriers.

Michael Bright, UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), United Kingdom

- Noted the dual nature of global research: opportunities for collaboration vs. intensified competition.
- Advocated for flexible, equitable GRC mechanisms that address contextual, cultural, and language disparities.
- Urged balancing academic impact with societal needs to ensure humanity-wide benefits.

Enrico Paringit, Philippine Council for Industry, Energy, and Emerging Technology, Research and Development (DOSTPCIEERD), Philippines

- Called for inclusive stakeholder engagement (e.g., workshops for funders, researchers, and end-users).
- Proposed strategies:
  - Sharing funding mechanisms and best practices.
  - Supporting researcher mobility and capacity-building programs.
  - Strengthening research community networks for knowledge exchange.

Recommendations

(1) Develop equitable frameworks for partnerships, addressing disparities in resources and priorities.
(2) Prioritize stakeholder inclusivity by involving beneficiaries in research design and dissemination.
(3) Mitigate geopolitical and cultural barriers through transparent IP agreements and multilingual communication tools.
(4) Enhance researcher mobility and training to foster cross-border collaboration.
(5) Balance academic excellence with practical, localized impact in funding decisions.

Annex

2024 Global Research Council Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting

Beijing, China

October 29-November 1, 2024

Co-Hosts:
National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC)
National Science Foundation of Sri Lanka (NSF Sri Lanka)

Contents

About Global Research Council

The Global Research Council (GRC) is a virtual organisation, comprised of the heads of science and engineering funding agencies from around the world, dedicated to promote the sharing of data and best practices for high-quality collaboration among funding agencies worldwide.

The worldwide growth of public support for research has presented an opportunity for countries large and small to work in concert across national borders. Cooperation and collaboration can enhance the quality of science, avoid unnecessary duplication, provide economies of scale, and address issues that can only be solved by working together. Research funding agencies have a responsibility to meet these objectives on behalf of the research communities.

The purposes of the Global Research Council thus are sixfold:

1. To improve communication and cooperation among funding agencies;
2. To promote the sharing of data and best practices for high-quality research cooperation;
3. To provide a forum for regular meetings of the Heads of Research Councils;
4. To respond to opportunities and to address issues of common concern in the support of research and education;
5. To be a resource for those institutions wishing to build a world-class research landscape;
6. To explore mechanisms that support the global science enterprise and the worldwide research community.

About GRC Asia Pacific Regional Meeting

The 2024 Global Research Council (GRC) Asia Pacific Regional Meeting, hosted by the National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC) and the National Science Foundation, Sri Lanka (NSF Sri Lanka), will take place in Beijing, China from 29th October to 1st November, 2024.

This meeting is one of five parallel regional meetings that will contribute insights and input to the 13th Annual GRC Meeting in 2025. The GRC is a virtual organization that promotes collaboration and the sharing of data and best practices among funding agencies worldwide.

The 2024 Asia Pacific Regional Meeting's main topics for discussion are:

1. Research Management in the Era of AI
2. Working Together in Co-Creation to Address Global Challenges
3. Discussion on Gender and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)
4. Responsible Research Assessment
5. Multilateral Engagement

Online Participation:

Website: https://www.nsf.gov.lk/index.php/login

Zoom Meeting link:

Day 1, October 30:
https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwlcuqsrD0rGNBaAdOZAZC09Zwau5bbGe_v

Day 2, October 31:
https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJEpceihqTkoHdTjJQ7XPjpmsNtANCXWCKRe

GRC Asia Pacific Regional Meeting Co-Hosts

National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC)

The NSFC was established on February 14, 1986, with the approval of the State Council of China. Since 2018, NSFC has been affiliated with the Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST) but still keeps its due independence in the operation of the National Natural Science Fund, responsible for designing funding plans and programs, conducting reviews, making funding decisions, and supervising the implementation of its grants.

With its main mission of supporting basic research, NSFC has developed a merit-review system to select the best proposals and formed a well-operated system to inspire innovations. The funding programs of NSFC can be grouped into four categories: exploration, talent, infrastructure, and convergence. As the main funding source for basic research in China, NSFC has contributed to the improvement of China's innovation capability by focusing on the fundamental research, frontiers of science, and talent fostering, while equally emphasizing talented teams and interdisciplinary research. In 2024, NSFC received 384,564 applications and invested 36.31 billion yuan in basic research grants. More details: https://www.nsfc.gov.cn/english/site_1/index.html

National Science Foundation Sri Lanka (NSF Sri Lanka)

The NSF functions under the purview of the Ministry of Education. Its dedicated service to the nation extends over 54 years. The organization was initially established as the National Science Council (NSC) in 1968 (Act No. 09 of 1968). NSC was restructured as the Natural Resources, Energy and Science Authority (NARESA) in 1982 (Act No. 78 of 1981). After 16 years of service, NARESA was reorganized as the National Science Foundation (NSF) in 1998 by the Act No. 11 of 1994. More details: https://www.nsf.gov.lk/index.php/about-nsf/nsf-at-a-glance

Overall Arrangement

Tuesday, October 29	
14:00-18:30	Registration (Building 3, Yingbin Building)
18:30-20:00	Welcome Dinner (Jufu restaurant, First floor, Friendship Palace)
Wednesday, October 30	**DAY 1**
08:30-10:00	Opening Ceremony
10:00-11:35	Theme 1: Research Management in the Era of AI
11:35-14:00	Lunch (Buffet, at Coffee Shop, First floor, Friendship Palace)
14:00-15:00	WG: Responsible Research Assessment
15:00-15:20	Tea Break
15:20-16:20	WG: Discussion on Gender and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)
16:20-17:25	WG: Multilateral Engagement
18:30-20:00	Formal Dinner (Junting Chinese Restaurant, Grand Building)
Thursday, October 31	**DAY 2**
09:00-11:50	Theme 2: Working Together in Co-Creation to Address Global Challenges
11:50-12:00	Closing Remarks
12:00-14:00	Lunch (Jufu restaurant, First floor, Friendship Palace)
14:00-17:00	Side Event: Science for sustainable development & transdisciplinary research
18:30-20:30	Buffet (Jufu restaurant, First floor, Friendship Palace)
Friday, November 1	**DAY 3**
09:00-12:00	Academic Visit (Gathering time: 8:45, Building3, Yingbin Building)

Agenda

October 29, 2024 (Tuesday)

Time (UTC+8)	Items
14:00-18:30	Registration and hotel check-in
18:30-20:00	Welcome dinner

Day 1:October 30, 2024 (Wednesday)

Time (UTC+8)	Items	Speakers
8:00-8:30	Registration and coffee	
Opening Ceremony Moderator: Zhang Yongtao, Acting Director General, Bureau of International Cooperation, NSFC [8:30-9:30] 60 min		
8:30-8:40	Welcome speech	Lan Yujie Vice President of NSFC, China
8:40-8:50	Welcome speech	Sepalika Sudasinghe Director General of NSF, Sri Lanka
8:50-9:10	Welcome and Introduction to GRC	Michael Bright GRC Acting Secretariat UK Research and Innovation
9:10-9:30	Introduction of Participants by agencies	
9:30-10:00	Group photo and Tea break	
Topic 1: Research Management in the Era of AI Moderator: Dr Inoka Sandanayake, Scientific Officer, Research Division, National Science Foundation, Sri Lanka.[10:00-11:30] 90 min		
10:00-10:05	Introduction to the session	Moderator: Inoka Sandanayake, Scientific Officer, Research Division, National Science Foundation, Sri Lanka
10:05-10:15	Background Paper introduction	Maha Almozaini, General Manager of the Grants Planning and Design, Research development and innovation authority (RDIA), Saudi Arabia

10:15-10:35	Keynote speech	Xiong Hui, Vice president and Chair Professor, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
10:35-11:35	Panel discussion (5 minutes each including Q&A) Moderated discussion among all meeting delegates of Topic 1 (40min)	Chair: Mohammed Alshareef, General Manager of the National RDI Observatory, Research development and innovation authority (RDIA), Saudi Arabia Panelists: 1. Sunyoung Yoo, Senior researcher, National Research Foundation of Korea (NRF) 2. Ajeng Arum Sari, Director of Research and Innovation Funding, Indonesia National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN) 3. Pongpan Kaewtatip, Vice President, Thailand Science Research and Innovation (TSRI) 4. Nguyen Dinh Pham, Chief Executive Officer, National Foundation for Science and Technology Development (NFSTD), Vietnam Support: Wang Yue, Division of Foreign affairs Planning, Bureau of International Cooperation, NSFC
11:35-14:00	Lunch break (First floor, Friendship Palace)	
WG Meeting 1: Responsible Research Assessment Moderator: Zhang Yiwei, Division of Asia, Africa and International Organization, Bureau of International Cooperation, NSFC | [14:00-15:00] 60 min		
14:00-14:05	Introduction	Zhang Yiwei, Program officer, NSFC
14:05-14:20	Highlight recent publication 11 Dimensions of RRA. (15 minutes)	Mohammed Ahmad S. Al-Shamsi (Co-Chair), King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology (KACST), Saudi Arabia
14:20-14:50	RRA case studies (30 minutes)	Joanne Looyen, Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment (MBIE), New Zealand (Online)
14:50-14:55	High-level findings from our ongoing survey of GRC participants on RRA. (20 minutes)	Recorded video
14:55-15:00	Wrap up	Grace Estillore, DOST PCIEERD Philippines (Online)
15:00-15:20	Tea break	

WG Meeting 2: Discussion on Gender and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

Moderator: Thilinakumari Kandanamulla, Asia Pacific Regional Co-representative of the GRC EDI Working Group (National Science Foundation, Sri Lanka) | [15:20-16:20] 60 min

15:20-15:30	An introduction to the GRC GWG and the Work streams	Thilinakumari Kandanamulla, Senior Scientific Officer, National Science Foundation, Sri Lanka
15:30-15:40	**Intervention 1:** EDI aspects related to Research Management in the Era of AI	Qiu Zeqi, Boya distinguished Professor, Peking University
15:40-15:50	**Intervention 2:** EDI aspects related to Working Together in Co-creation to Address Global Challenges	Sepalika Sudasinghe, Director General, National Science Foundation, Sri Lanka and Senior Consultant to Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration the Civil Service college Sri Lanka.
15:50-16:05	Panel Discussion	Moderated by: Ajeng Arum Sari, Director of Research and Innovation Funding, National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN), Indonesia Panelists: 1. Christina Twomey, Chief Research Officer, Australian Research Council (ARC) 2. Akie Hoshino, Director of International Program Department, Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) 3. Orakanoke Phanraksa, Senior Advisor for International Affairs, Thailand Science, Research and Innovation (TSRI)
16:05-16:15	Q & A	
16:15-16:20	Concluding Remarks (Online)	Nicola Jenkin, ASPAC Regional Chair of the GRC EDI Working Group and Manager, Service Design and Reporting, Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment, New Zealand

WG Meeting 3: Multilateral Engagement

Moderator: Osamu Kobayashi, Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST), Japan | [16:20-17:20] 60 min

Background:

Multilateral Engagements (MLE) play a crucial role in advancing global research, particularly in tackling complex issues like climate change, health, and sustainability. However, differences in governance, funding processes, and administrative burdens pose major challenges. The mini-panel of this session will focus on key issues, including funding decisions and the disparities in participation between the Global North and South, with a special focus on insights from the Asia-Pacific region.

16:20-16:50	Multilateral Engagement Working Group Annual Progress Report 2023- 2024	Osamu KOBAYASHI, Co-Chair of MLE WG
16:50-17:20	Panel Discussion: Addressing Challenges in Multilateral Engagement	Moderator: Osamu KOBAYASHI, Co-Chair of MLE WG Panelists: 1. Rong Nianhe, National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC), China 2. Orakanoke Phanraksa, Thailand Science Research and Innovation (TSRI), Thailand 3. Michael Bright, UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), United Kingdom 4. Enrico Paringit, Philippine Council for Industry, Energy, and Emerging Technology, Research and Development (DOST-PCIEERD), Philippines (online)

1. Introduction (3 minutes)
2. Topic 1: Funding Decisions in MLE (10 minutes)
   Discussion on current funding decision-making challenges.
   -How are funding decisions made?
   -What are the challenges in funding consensus?
3. Topic 2: North-South collaboration in MLE (10 minutes)
   Discussion on participation and workload issues.
   -How can we balance global and local research priorities?
   -How to organize and structure MLE schemes more effectively, focus on clear roles and responsibilities for each funder while considering their administrative workloads?
4. Conclusion and Next Steps (5 minutes)
   -Summary of key takeaways from Panelists

17:20-17:25	Close of Day 1 Chen Jing, Director of Division of American and Oceanian Affairs, NSFC
18:30-20:00	Formal Dinner (Junting Chinese Restaurant, Grand Building)

Day 2: October 31, 2024 (Thursday)

Time (UTC+8)	Items	Speakers
9:00-9:05	Welcome	Zhang Yongtao Acting Director General, Bureau of International Cooperation, NSFC
Topic 2: Working Together in Co-Creation to Address Global Challenges Moderator: Rong Nianhe, Division of Asia, Africa and International Organization, NSFC		
9:05-9:10	Introduction of the session	Moderator, Rong Nianhe, Deputy Director, Division of Asia, Africa and International Organization, NSFC
9:10-9:25	Background Paper introduction	Ozlem Doğan and Fatih Esen, TUBITAK (Online)
9:25-9:45	Keynote	Xue Lan, Tsinghua University
9:45-10:45	Panel Discussion (5 minutes each including Q&A) Moderated discussion among all meeting delegates of Topic 2 (35min)	Chair: Chen Jing, Director of Division of American and Oceanian Affairs, NSFC Panelists: 1. Sepalika Sudasinghe, Director General, National Science Foundation (NSF), Sri Lanka 2. Shigeo Morimoto, Vice President, Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST) 3. Hyuk Jeong, Head of NRF Beijing Office, National Research Foundation of Korea (NRF) 4. Li Wencong, Director, Division III, Department of International Programs, NSFC 5. Ron Xavier, Counsellor (Science & Innovation), Ministry of Business, Imnovation and Employment (MBIE), New Zealand Embassy Beijing Support: Tang Rongda, Program officer, Division of American and Oceanian Affairs
10:45-11:00	Tea Break	
11:00-11:30	Break-out discussion (4 groups + 1 online group) instruction and briefing questions (5min) Discussion (25 min)	Moderator: Rong Nianhe, Division of Asia, Africa and International Organization, NSFC
	Guiding questions for Break out groups: 1. Based on what has been discussed above, what do you think successful co-creation initiatives are? 2. How can funder enhance researchers' and innovators' skills in interdisciplinary collaboration and community engagement? Which specific challenges and solutions do you see for your organization? 3. What role can GRC play to provide a structured framework for co-creation in RDI? what role GRC can play in promoting co-creation? 4. Which aspects of the research management system of your funding agency have been affected by AI? What practices do you take to address these challenges? 5. Are there any specific AI technologies that your organizations are using or exploring to improve research management? 6. Can you share with us one or two takeaways you learned through the past two days of meetings?	

11:30-11:50	Report back and summary of each group (3-4min each, 5 groups)	Moderator: Rong Nianhe, Division of Asia, Africa and International Organization, NSFC
Closing remarks		
11:50-11:55	Sepalika Sudasinghe, Director General, NSF, Sri Lanka	
11:55-12:00	Lan Yujie, Vice President of NSFC, China	
12:00-14:00	Lunch (Buffet, First floor, Friendship Palace)	
Side event	**14:00-17:00**	
Science for sustainable development & transdisciplinary research NSFC & NSF, Sri Lanka		
18:00-	Dinner (Buffet, First floor, Friendship Palace)	

Day 3: November 1, 2024

Academical Visit:

Peking University: Laboratory and Campus
Gathering time: 8:45 AM, Building 3, Yingbin Buildinge

Originated as the Imperial University of Peking in 1898, Peking University was China's first national comprehensive university and the supreme education authority at the time. Since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, it has developed into a comprehensive university with fundamental education and research in both humanities and science. Peking University is a cradle of top-quality and creative students, a major source of cutting-edge science and knowledge innovation, and a key bridge for international exchange.

Side Event : Science for sustainable development & transdisciplinary research

Date: October 31, 2024
Time: 14:00-17:00
Location: Friendship Palace, Beijing Friendship Hotel

Agenda

Time (UTC+8)	Items	Speakers
14:00-14:10	Welcome speech	Zhang Yongtao, Acting Director General,Bureau of International Cooperation, NSFC
14:10-14:40	-Keynote Speech:Top-Level Design of the SDIC Project (30min) -Q&A (10min)	Liu Congqiang Academician of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Fellow of the International Association of GeoChemistry, and Foreign Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, Tianjin University
14:40-15:10	-SDIC Project Achievement Report 1(20min) -Q&A(10min)	Li Xinhai, Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS)
15:10-15:40	-SDIC Project Achievement Report 2(20min) -Q&A(10min)	Fu Yongshuo, Bejing Normal University
15:40-16:00	Tea Break	
16:00-16.05	Introduction to the Panel Discussion	Inoka Sandanayake, Scientific Officer, NSF, Sri Lanka
16:05-17:00	Experience in transdisciplinary research (20 min) Q & A (30 min) Concluding Remarks (5min)	Inoka Sandanayake, Scientific Officer, Research Division, NSF Sri Lanka (Moderator) 1. Mahesh Dissanayake, Head, Research Division, NSF Sri Lanka 2. Osamu Kobayashi, Director, Department of International Affairs, Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST). 3. Pongpan Kaewtatip, Vice President, Thailand Science Research and Innovation (TSRI) 4. Du Xin, Division Director, Department of Interdisciplinary Science, National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC)
17:00-17:10	Summary	Rong Nianhe, Deputy Director, Division of Asia, Africa and International Organization, NSFC

Questions for Discussion

Research Management in the Era of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

1. How can AI enhance efficiency and objectivity in research funding management, including proposal screening, data analysis, decision-making, and fostering innovation and international collaboration?
2. In what ways can AI both reduce human bias in the peer review process and funding decisions and potentially introduce or amplify other types of biases, and what strategies can be implemented to mitigate these risks and ensure fairness?
3. What are the key ethical and governance challenges associated with integrating AI into research funding—such as transparency, accountability, privacy, and data security—and how can these challenges be effectively addressed to ensure responsible use of AI?
4. How might the adoption of AI impact job roles and skill requirements within research funding agencies, and how can organizations support staff in adapting to new AI-related roles while preventing over-reliance on AI and maintaining essential human oversight in decision-making processes?
5. What roles should international collaboration, standardized policies, and ethical guidelines play in developing AI governance for research management, and how can funding agencies and organizations like the Global Research Council (GRC) facilitate responsible AI use across different regions and cultures? Specifically, should the GRC establish a dedicated AI working group, or integrate AI considerations into existing groups like Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) and Responsible Research Assessment (RRA), and how can these groups address specific issues such as equity, bias, and responsible research assessment in the context of AI?
6. How does the digital divide affect the ability of different regions to adopt and benefit from AI in research funding, and what strategies can be implemented to ensure equitable access to AI technologies and infrastructure globally, thereby reducing disparities and promoting inclusivity?
7. What are the potential long-term implications of AI integration into the research landscape including technological dependence and ethical misuse—and how can we proactively address these issues by enhancing AI literacy, establishing robust governance frameworks, and implementing effective monitoring and evaluation systems to ensure fairness and human oversight in AI-assisted funding decisions?

Working Together in Co-Creation to Address Global Challenges

1. How can co-creation platforms enhance RDI efforts directed to global challenges? How can GRC effectively provide a structured framework for co-creation in RDI which includes processes, methodologies and best practices?
2. How can joint funding schemes and resource allocation support impactful co-creation initiatives? How can funding organisations enhance researchers' and innovators' skills in interdisciplinary collaboration and community engagement? What is the role of platforms for sharing best practices and lessons learned to promote continuous improvement in co-creation initiatives?
3. Can policy influence and contribute to addressing global challenges through co-creation and How? What is GRC's role in advocating for evidence-based policymaking to ensure inclusive and equitable solutions? What are the strategies for enhancing stakeholder engagement and working closely with policymakers to effectively address complex global challenges?