

Towards RRI Eco-Systems: ■ the funder's perspective ■ struggling with where to start

**EARTO conference 2019
Session “Towards RRI Eco-Systems”**

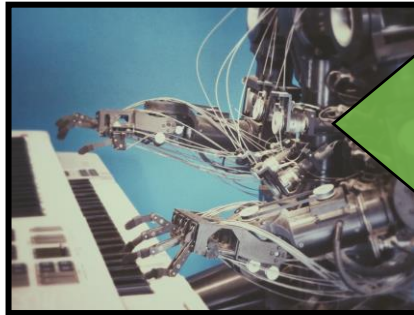
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R&I ECO-SYSTEMS ARE A MESSY PLACE

what are we looking at?

NEW
HORIZON



<https://unsplash.com/photos/U3sOwViXhkY>

designed system

tame
problem

vs.

wicked problem
situation

Eco-System



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Characteristics of the R&I Eco-Systems

- **huge:** 61.171 FTE, 3.385 companies in R&I [in Austria in 2011]
- **non-monolithic:** neither in intent nor in design
- **historic:** actualities in place
- **non-static:** appearing, changing, disappearing, reappearing
- **non-rational:** there are people involved!
- **emergent:** you can't predict its future shape

It's been an Eco-System from the start!

What is RRI?

- RRI is a term coined by the DG Research & Innovation.
- Under this term, the DG has funded a broad portfolio of projects.
- These projects develop recommendations, concepts and tools for the transformation of European science and innovation systems and initiate change processes.

What is the focus of this transformation?

- greater focus on the needs, expectations and values of European citizens
- systemic contribution to a desirable and democratic society that is economically, environmentally and socially sustainable for many generations

**RRI started out as a policy idea and
turned into an academic field!**



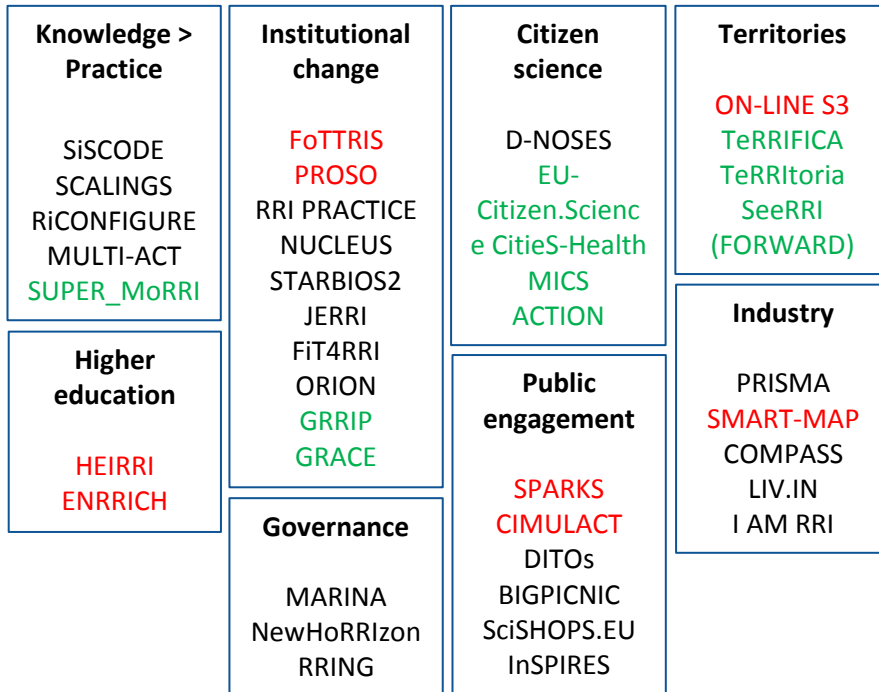


RRI IS NOT A MONOLITH

understanding RRI

What are we looking at?

- 41 RRI projects funded by SwafS in 2014-2019
- 181 projects flagged “RRI” funded in 2012-2017



41 projects (33 active, 11 starting, 8 ended), 01/2019



A multiplicity of tools, concepts, experiments, etc. in a box labeled „RRI“

<https://unsplash.com/photos/tfFWBhEACcQ>

What do we conclude from the above?

- You can not replace an eco-system with a designed system. Instead you have to carefully transform the existing eco-system.
- You have to introduce one little change at a time. To do that you have to select elements of RRI and place them.
- Also, you have to monitor for impact. Due to the high complexity, strong interlinkage and resilience of the eco-system it is extremely hard to predict the impact of an intervention. → You really need to follow an experimental approach!
- Keep in mind you want to avoid a mono-culture!

**The existing Eco-System needs
more defacto-RRI!**



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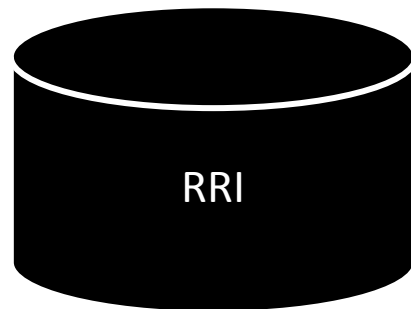


WHAT'S IN THE BOX LABELLED RRI?

selecting the concept that are most talked about

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A broad portfolio of mostly very specific things



RRI Tools project [2016]

- Gender Equality
- Open Access
- Ethics
- Governance
- Science Education
- Public Engagement

Stilgoe et al. [2013]

- Anticipation
- Reflexivity
- Inclusion
- Responsiveness

Fabian Schroth et al. [2018]

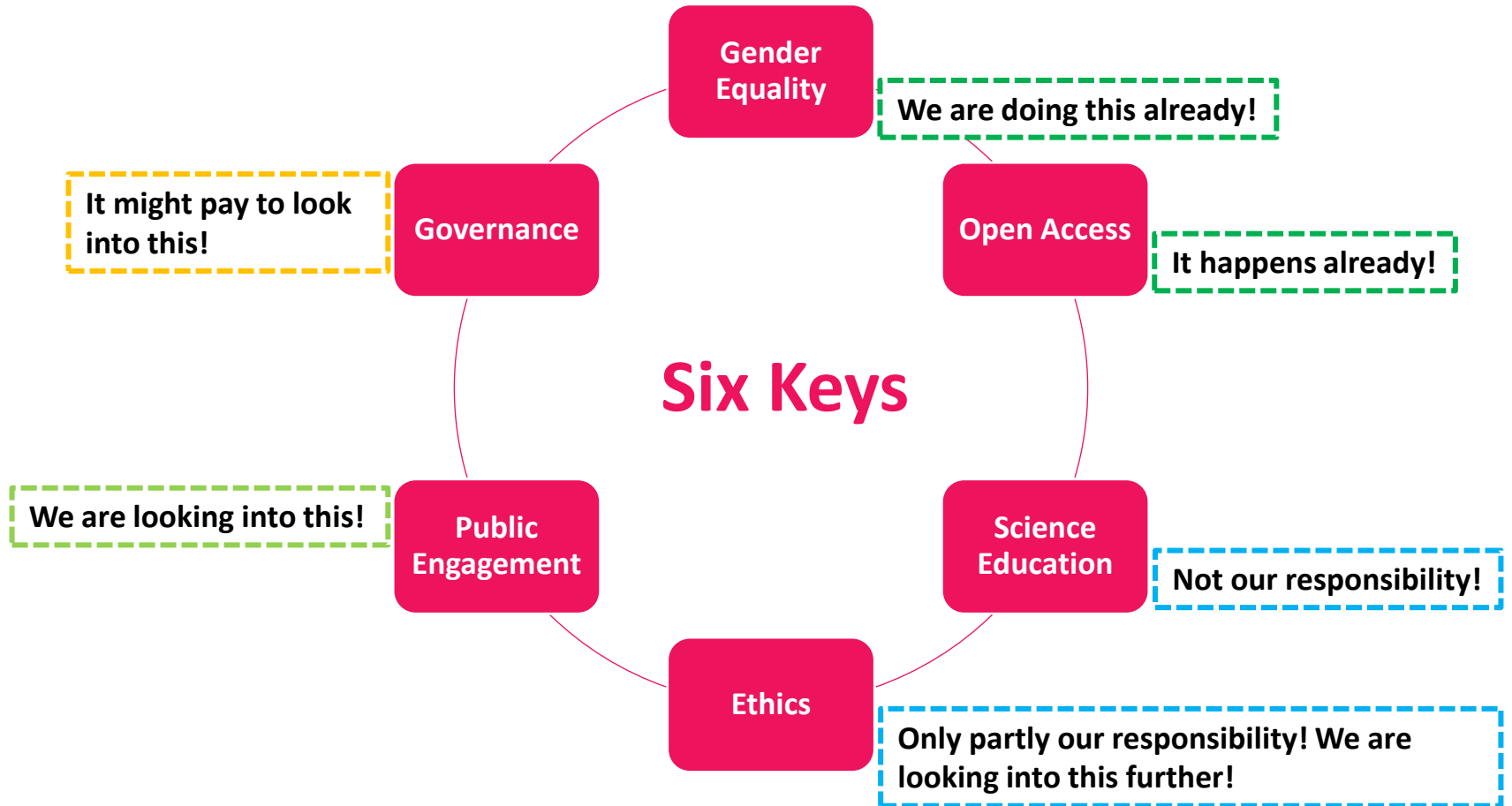
- Between normativity and participation



IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SIX KEYS

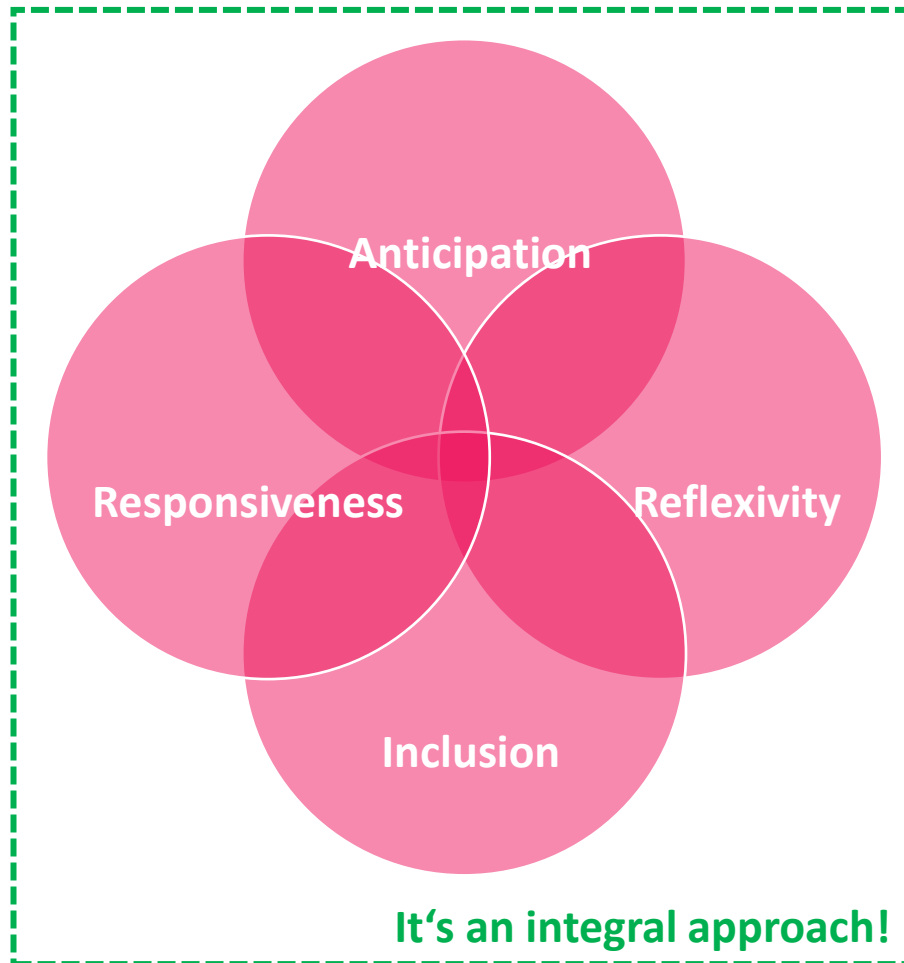
where are we and what's the funders perspective?

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N ■ ■ THE FOUR PROCESS DIMENSIONS what can we learn from Stilgoe et al.?

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Why are funders fond of this?

- It helps to protect their investments.
- It helps to reduce the number of stranded innovations.
- It helps to ensure societal impact.

Why is it still happening so little?

- Its economic benefits are often little understood.
- There are concerns that it will reduce economic benefits and make project proposals too complex.

Where are we at FFG?

- We have some experience with TA, CTA and other formats that pick up on one or more of the four process dimensions.
- In many programs we pay for it if it is sufficiently integral to a proposed project and its value is explained.

The process dimensions need to be promoted and funds made available!



BETWEEN NORMATIVITY AND PARTICIPATION

the fundamental tension and how to address it

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Normative goals of innovation

SDGs

sustainability

Grand Challenges

European values



Interests, needs and requirements of the
actors forming the R&I Eco-Systems



We need
participatory
spaces to
negotiate these
tensions!

Objectives for such participatory spaces

- define normative goals and make them transparent
- identify interests, needs and requirements and make the transparent
- make goal conflicts transparent and confrontable

Characteristics of such participatory spaces

- spaces for reflection, exchange and shared visioning
- methodically supported
- focussed on concrete innovations

Where are we now?

At the beginning of a necessary and very beneficial transformation of the European R&I Eco-Systems.
