



## European Regional Meeting of the Global Research Council

### **Research Management in the Era of AI and Working Together in Co-Creation to Address Global Challenges**

Movenpick Hotel, Lembitu 12, 10114  
Tallinn, Estonia  
**28–31 October 2024**

#### **HOST AND CO-HOST**

The Estonian Research Council (ETAG) and Science Europe.

#### **DATE AND TIME**

Monday 28 October, Tuesday 29 October (whole day), Wednesday 30 October (morning). A welcome reception and dinner are scheduled on the evening of Monday 28 October.

#### **TARGETED AUDIENCE**

Representatives of GRC participating organisations: Head of Research Councils (HORCs), programme and international affairs managers.

#### **FORMAT**

The meeting will take place in a hybrid format. Participants are warmly invited to join the meeting in Tallinn, but remote participation will also be accommodated.

#### **TOPICS**

As announced in the 2024 GRC Annual Meeting, the topics for the 2025 GRC Annual Meeting are:

- Research Management in the Era of AI
- Working Together in Co-Creation to Address Global Challenges

# Context and Objectives

## GRC REGIONAL MEETING

The 2024 Regional European meeting of the Global Research Council (GRC) has been jointly organised by the Estonian Research Council (ETAG) and Science Europe.

In 2024, each [GRC regional meeting](#), convened across the globe, will contribute to shaping the agenda for the [2025 Annual Meeting](#). The 2025 GRC Annual Meeting Host will be hosted by Research, Development, and Innovation Authority (RDIA) in partnership with King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology (KACST) from Saudi Arabia. The meeting will be co-hosted by the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Türkiye (TÜBİTAK) from Turkey. The venue is the city of Riyadh in Saudi Arabia, and the meeting dates are from 18 through 22 of May, 2025. This significant gathering is a collaborative effort between the Estonian Research Council (ETAG) and Science Europe.

The topic for discussion for this edition will be research and sustainability and will be developed in two sub-topics, namely:

- Research Management in the Era of AI
- Working Together in Co-Creation to Address Global Challenges

These topics are of increasing importance in the research policy debate in recent years. AI is a fast-moving area and is considered more than a tool of reshaping things. Discussions could present the AI application risks, lack of boundaries, clear guidelines, ethics, patent, and copyrights implications. The AI topic is aligned not only with the outcomes of the 2023 GRC Foresight Report in which the AI was one of the recommended thematic focuses that will shape the future of the GRC but also the topic is aligned with the G20 held in India.

The discussions taking place during the Regional Meetings are intended to input the development of a Statement of Principles, due to be adopted at the Annual Meeting of the GRC in 2025.

The specific questions for all the sessions are presented in the programme below.

# Draft Programme

All times are in EET.

28 October 2024

**15.00–19.00** Arrival and check-in

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**19.00–22.00** *Welcome Reception*  
*Movenpick Hotel, Lembitu 12, 10114, Tallinn, Estonia*

29 October 2024

## Welcome and Introduction

**08.30–09.00** *Registration & Welcome Coffee*

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**09.00–10.00** **Introductory Speeches and background information**

- **Anu Noorma**, Director General of the Estonian Research Council (ETAG)
  - **Mari Sundli Tveit**, Chief Executive of the Research Council of Norway (RCN), President of Science Europe, Member of the GRC Governing Board
  - **Kristina Kallas**, Minister of Education and Research of Estonia
  - **Jüri Ratas**, Member of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy, European Parliament
  - **Signe Ratso**, Deputy Director-General for Research and Innovation, European Commission (*video address*)
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**10.00–10.15** **Keynote speech**

- **Meelis Kull**, Associate Professor in Machine Learning, University of Tartu; Principal investigator in the Estonian Centre of Excellence in Artificial Intelligence
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## Topic 1 – Research Management in the Era of AI

**10.15–10.30** **Presentation of discussion paper on “Research, Development and Innovation in the Era of AI” (15’)**

- **Sakhar Alkhereyf**, Co-chair of the Scientific Committee, Assistant Research Professor, KACST, Saudi Arabia
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**10.30–11.00** *Coffee Break & Group photo*

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**11.00–12.15** **Keynote speech (15’)**

- **Maarja Kruusmaa**, Chief Scientific Advisor to the European Commission, Tallinn University of Technology

**Panel Discussion (60’)**

- **Francisco Javier Moreno Fuentes**, Vice-President for International Affairs of the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC), Governing Board Member of Science Europe
  - **Nenad Filipović**, Acting Director of the Science Fund of the Republic of
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Serbia (SFRS)

- **Ágúst Hjörtur Ingbórsson**, Director General, Rannís, The Icelandic Centre for Research
- **Gintaras Valinčius**, Chairman, Research Council of Lithuania

#### Moderator

- **Christopher Smith**, Executive Chair of the Arts and Humanities Research Council, UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), Governing Board Member of Science Europe

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**12.15–13.30** *Buffet Lunch*

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#### **13.30–14.15** Breakout discussions

**QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION** *(based on the RDIA/KACST/TÜBITAK discussion paper):*

- The benefit of incorporating AI technology into the management of research funding such as optimising document processing, predict funding requirements, ensure financial compliance, enhance communication, and refine the peer-review process.
- The use of AI to drive efficiency, increase transparency, and promote fairness in the allocation of research funds.
- The potential challenges including technological investment costs and concerns over data privacy.
- The potential rewards of AI implementation in research funding management.
- How can we help secure our future scientific and societal advancements?
- Discuss and recommend solutions for ethical, privacy, and integrity concerns and the regulations for using AI tools in generating grant proposals and writing publications. Suggest comprehensive regulations, a robust utilisation framework, and maintenance of adequate data security, to harmoniously integrate AI without compromising on ethics, integrity, and culture of the research ecosystem.

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**14.15–14.20** *Return to Plenary Room*

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### Updates on GRC Activities

#### **14.20–15.20** Activities and Updates from the GRC Responsible Research Assessment Working Group

- **Catriona Firth**, Associate Director of Research Environment at Research England (UKRI) *(online)*
- **James Morris**, Senior Policy Officer at Science Europe *(online)*
- **Shawn McGuirk**, Director for Research Security of the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), Co-chair of the Working Group *(online)*

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**15.20–15.50** *Coffee break*

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**15.50–16.30 Update on the activities of GRC Working Group on Multilateral Engagement (20')**

- **Osamu Kobayashi**, Director of International Affairs at the Japan Science and Technology Agency, Co-Chair of the GRC Working Group (*online*)
- **Prudence Makhura**, Director of the South Africa National Science Foundation, Co-Chair of the GRC Working Group (*online*)

**Update on the activities of GRC Working Group on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion' (EDI) (20')**

- **Adrien Braem**, Co-Chair of the 'GRC Working Group Equality, Diversity and Inclusion' (EDI)

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**16.30–17.00 Plenary report on outcomes of breakout discussions**

- Rapporteurs/Moderators

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**17.30–19.00** *Walking Tour of Medieval Tallinn Old Town*

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**19.00–21.00** *Dinner*

[Restaurant Farm](#), Tallinn Old Town

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30 October 2024

## Topic 2 – Working Together in Co-Creation to Address Global Challenges

**08.00–08.30** *Registration & Welcome Coffee*

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**08.30–10.00 Presentation of the discussion paper on 'Working Together in Co-Creation to Address Global Challenges' (15')**

- **Fatih Sinan ESEN**, TÜBİTAK, Department of STI Policy, Senior Chief Policy Expert
- **Özlem DOĞAN**, TÜBİTAK, Department of STI Policy, Senior Chief Policy Expert

**Keynote speech (15')**

- **John Tumpene**, Head of the Department of Environment, Formas

**Panel Discussion (60')**

- **Prof. Ülo Mander**, Department of Geography Head of Chair, Professor of Physical Geography and Landscape Ecology, Tartu University
- **Thomas Potthast**, Director International Centre for Ethics in the Sciences and Humanities & Chair for Ethics, Philosophy, and History of the Life Sciences, Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen, Germany
- **Paula Eerola**, President, Research Council of Finland (AKA)
- **Lauma Muižniece**, Director General, Latvian Council of Science (LZP)
- **Karen Lips**, Deputy Director General, IIASA

**Moderator**

- **Mari Sundli Tveit**, Chief Executive, Research Council of Norway (RCN), President, Science Europe
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10.00–10.15 *Coffee Break*

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**10.15–11.00 Breakout Discussions**

**QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION** *(based on the RDIA/KACST/TÜBITAK discussion paper):*

- Addressing multiple challenges, including climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution, and sustainable development has scientific and societal urgency. In this context, how can the GRC community increase opportunities for working together with co-creation-based collaboration? How do these opportunities extend across disciplines, scales, and regions for more transdisciplinarity?
  - How can the GRC community increase transdisciplinary research and impact based on co-creation-based collaboration to ensure a “safe and just” world?
  - What are specific recommendations that can be shared for a “Statement of Principles and Practices for Co-Creation Based Collaboration to Address Global Challenges”? What are the most important guidelines of relevance?
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11.00–11.05 *Return to Plenary Room*

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**Updates on GRC Activities**

**11.05–11.20 Report on GRC activities**

- **Felina Wittke**, International Affairs, German Research Foundation (DFG), Interim GRC Deputy Executive Secretary, Global Research Council
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**11.20–11.45 Plenary report on outcomes of breakout discussions**

- Rapporteurs/Moderators
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**11.45–12.00 Wrap-up & Conclusions**

- **Anu Noorma**, Director General of the Estonian Research Council (ETAG)
  - **Lidia Borrell-Damián**, Secretary General of Science Europe
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12.00–13.00 *Buffet Lunch*

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**Cooperation between Africa and Europe: Best practices and future possibilities, and the role of Science Europe**

**13.00–13.30** Registrations for Africa-Europe Cooperation

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**13.30–17.00 Discussions on Africa-Europe Cooperation: Best practices and future possibilities, and the role of Science Europe**

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17.00–18.00 *Reception*

31 October 2024

### Visit to Flagship R&D Facilities, Tartu

Study visit to research and development facilities situated in Tartu, the 2024 European City of Culture.

#### Timetable Overview

**06:30-9:00**     **Departure from Tallinn to Tartu by bus from the Mövenpick hotel (breakfast on the bus)**

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**09:00-11:00**     **Visits to selected R&D facilities in Tartu**

1. Estonian Biobank and Centres of Excellence for Personalised Medicine and Transdisciplinary Studies on Ethnogenesis and Cultural Diversity
  2. The Estonian Centre of Excellence in Artificial Intelligence and the University of Tartu Centre for Entrepreneurship and Innovation
  3. R&D at the Estonian University of Life Sciences
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**11.00-12.00**     *Lunch at the Estonian National Museum (ERM)*

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**12.00-13.00**     **Museum visiting hour at Estonian National Museum**

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**13.00-15.30**     **Return to Tallinn by bus**

Additional stop at the airport around 15:00-15:15 and arrival to Mövenpick hotel at 15:30.