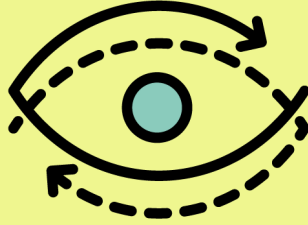


HOW TO GUIDE



TRUSTpilot

**How to
Create and Implement a Reproducibility
Promotion Plan (RPP)
for
Research Funding Organisations (RFOs)**

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Authored by Mads P. Sørensen and Anna Vigsø Pedersen

Foreword

The **TRUSTparency project** aims to improve the trustworthiness of research by fostering transparency, collaborative policymaking, and field-specific approaches to reproducibility.

A central ambition of TRUSTparency is to support **Research Funding Organisations (RFOs)** in developing their own **Reproducibility Promotion Plans (RPPs)**. An RPP is a practical tool that helps organisations identify, implement, and evaluate concrete interventions to promote reproducibility in funded research.

RPPs should be created by the funding organisations themselves to ensure relevance to their specific context. Each RPP should describe what the funding organisation will do to strengthen reproducibility of funded research, including which interventions will be introduced.

An RPP should also describe how progress will be assessed, how responsibilities are distributed, and how often the plan will be reviewed and updated. In this way, RPPs function both as organisational guidelines and as flexible implementation frameworks that help translate reproducibility principles into practical and sustainable action.

This document provides **a step-by-step guide to creating and implementing an RPP**.

How to create and implement an RPP?

Introduction

This guide supports **Research Funding Organisations (RFOs)** in designing and implementing a **Reproducibility Promotion Plan (RPP)**. An RPP is intended to help funding organisations identify interventions, prioritise them and carry out concrete actions that strengthen replicability and reproducibility of the research they fund.

The guide is structured around the six-step cycle shown in **Figure 1**: A. Prepare, B. Create, C. Execute, D. Assess, E. Institutionalise, and F. Repeat. Together, these steps provide a practical framework for developing an RPP, putting it into action, evaluating progress, and embedding successful practices within the organisation.

Importantly, the model presents reproducibility promotion as a cyclical and iterative process rather than a one-off activity. In the first cycle, the funding organisation prepares the groundwork, creates an RPP, implements selected interventions, assesses their effects, and works to institutionalise effective practices. The resulting RPP, together with the lessons learned during implementation, then becomes the starting point for the next cycle of revision, improvement and implementation of additional interventions.

As input to the first cycle, organisations can draw on [TRUSTparency's toolbox](#) of reproducibility interventions and training materials. The Toolbox also provides training on how to work with the RPP framework, which consist of this *How to guide* as well as a *Primer* and a *Template* for writing an RPP.

The sections below introduce each of the six steps in **Figure 1** and provide guidance on how they can be used to develop, implement and continuously improve an RPP.

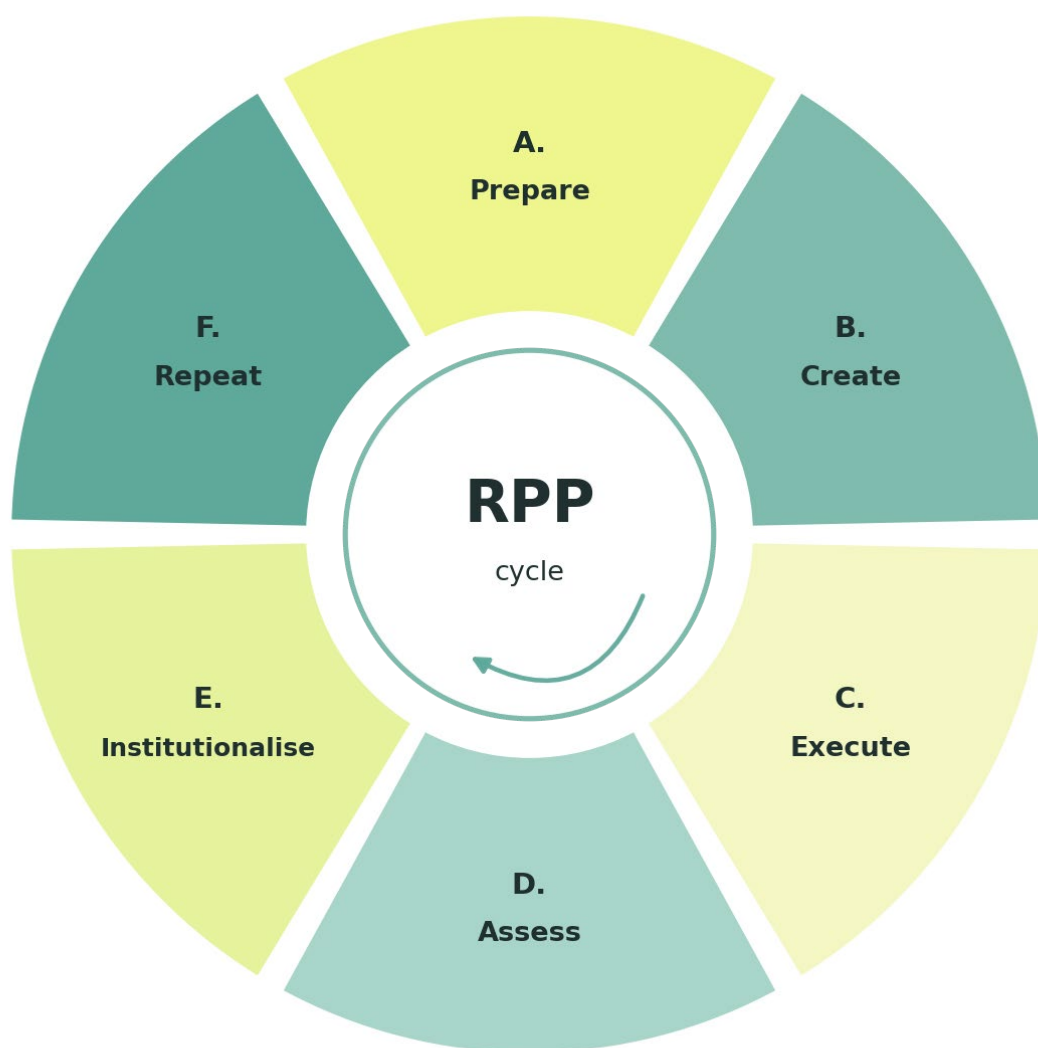


Figure 1: TRUSTparency's design and implementation model for Reproducibility Promotion Plans (RPPs).

RPP**Step-by-step plan for creating and implementing an RPP**

In the following, we outline a step-by-step process for creating and implementing an RPP. It is important to underline that this guide represents one possible route towards developing an RPP. The process may look different in your organisation, depending on its needs, structures, resources, and context. This step-by-step guide should therefore be used as inspiration rather than a fixed model. The most important aim is to create an RPP that responds to real needs in the funding organisation and can be implemented in practice.

A**A. Prepare****Mandate**

Before creating and implementing a **Reproducibility Promotion Plan (RPP)**, the organisation should secure a clear **mandate** for the work. This mandate should not only come from relevant senior management within the organisation, but should also be grounded in the needs, expectations, and support of the organisation's core stakeholders.

Before moving to implementation, diagnosis, or any first formal steps, the organisation should therefore carry out a **stakeholder inventory**. This should include identifying and engaging relevant internal and external stakeholders, such as research-performing organisations, researchers, grantees, research support staff, ethics and integrity bodies, and other partners. This work could include **stakeholder mapping** to identify all relevant external and internal stakeholders, including those with the greatest interest in reproducibility and those with the highest influence. Guidance on how to conduct stakeholder mapping is available [here](#).

At this stage, it is important to have conceptual conversations with relevant stakeholders, such as programme officers, grant managers, research policy advisers, review panel coordinators, and representatives of funded research communities, to clarify needs, expectations, possible overlaps with existing structures, and the potential role of the RPP in the organisation. This preparatory dialogue should also allow discussion of the RPP itself: whether it is needed, what purpose it should serve, and how it can complement rather than duplicate existing mechanisms. It will likewise be important to discuss why reproducibility matters and how an RPP can support existing institutional goals. Ideally, the RPP development process should include both internal and external co-creation,

beginning already here in the preparation phase and continuing through feedback loops in later steps.

The organisation should also recognise that other structures, policies, committees, and procedures may already exist — some of which may be legally mandated or institutionally more powerful. The RPP should therefore not be developed in isolation but should identify its specific niche and added value in relation to these existing structures.

In practice, the work on the RPP may be delegated to a small group within the organisation. However, visible leadership support is essential for giving the process legitimacy, allocating resources, and engaging internal and external stakeholders.

The [TRUSTparenCy toolbox](#) contains a number of quality-checked interventions that can support reproducibility efforts in the funding organisation. It also includes training materials on key reproducibility concepts and co-creation.

Diagnosis

Building on the previous step, the next step is to understand what kind of change is needed. The organisation should examine how reproducibility is currently supported, which policies, procedures, and commitments are already in place, and where there are gaps. This diagnosis should pay particular attention to existing commitments relevant to reproducibility and research culture, including commitments linked to initiatives such as CoARA, DORA, open science policies, or research integrity frameworks. The organisation should assess how these commitments overlap, where they differ, what specific obligations or expectations they create, and how they relate to the aims of the RPP.

This diagnosis should help identify which reproducibility problems need to be addressed and which interventions from **the TRUSTparenCy toolbox** the organisation wants to implement to support better practices. It should also consider what resources, knowledge, tools, or guidance existing commitments already provide, what aspects have already been implemented, and what remains lacking. In this way, the diagnosis can help ensure that the RPP builds on existing work rather than duplicating it.

The diagnosis should also examine the conditions that may support or constrain the implementation of reproducibility interventions. This includes **considering the resources required**, such as time and infrastructure; the organisation's **receptiveness** to particular interventions, including existing knowledge and regulations; and the **relevance** of different interventions for the type of research that the funding organisation supports. Selected parts of [TRUSTparenCy's 9-dimensional classification scheme](#) could be used to structure this assessment.

Funders may also find inspiration in the [TIER2 project's recommendations](#) on practices for fostering reproducible research in funding organisations. More

broadly, the diagnosis should not only focus on gaps and challenges, but also serve as an opportunity to identify existing good practices and consider how these can be strengthened, scaled, or built upon.

The diagnosis should also clarify the preferred approach to change, e.g. specifying how stakeholders will be involved. If stakeholders outside the organisation are expected to contribute, the RFO should consider how they will be meaningfully involved, whether they have time to participate, and how possible resistance to such initiatives can be addressed.

As a minimum, research performing organisations and other relevant external stakeholders should be informed about the process and invited to comment on drafts and ideas, particularly on the feasibility of planned interventions and the kinds of institutional support required. Funding organisations may also ask research performing organisations to specify, as part of the application process, what institutional support they will provide to ensure reproducible research practices, such as training in open and reproducible methods, access to data stewardship and research integrity advice.

Assessing Readiness

After diagnosing needs and priorities, the organisation should assess its readiness to develop and implement the RPP. This means considering whether sufficient leadership support, resources, expertise, time, and organisational capacity are available. Key questions include: What budget is available? Where should the process begin? Which units are most in need of support, and which are most ready to engage?

The RPP does not need to be implemented everywhere at once. Starting with one or two interventions within a single funding programme can be an effective way to learn from experience, build momentum, and generate examples that can later be adapted for other programmes.

Identifying the Right People

A successful RPP depends on involving the right people. The funding organisation should identify individuals and groups who can help shape, promote, and implement the plan across its funding activities. This may include senior leadership, programme officers, grant managers, evaluation and assessment staff, research integrity or open science advisers, data and methodology specialists, legal and policy staff, and communications or stakeholder engagement teams. It will be particularly important to involve staff who work directly with existing funding programmes and who understand the research fields, communities, and grant mechanisms through which reproducibility measures may be promoted.

If not already completed during the Mandate step, stakeholder mapping can be used at this stage to identify relevant internal and external stakeholders, including grantees, applicants, reviewers, panel members, research-performing organisations, other funders, policymakers, infrastructure providers, and disciplinary communities. Guidance on **stakeholder mapping** is available [here](#).

The funding organisation can form a change coalition by bringing together those with formal authority over funding policies and assessment processes and those with practical knowledge of how requirements are implemented by applicants, reviewers, and grantees. This creates a supportive environment for discussing reproducibility, identifying challenges, and developing feasible, field-sensitive guidance or requirements.

In-house methodological and data analysis skills can support the development of proportionate reproducibility guidance, criteria, and grant requirements, as well as help identify existing good practices, gaps, and support needs across funding portfolios and processes.

Training may be needed to establish a shared understanding of reproducibility and align expectations across programme teams, reviewers, panel members, and other stakeholders. This can support consistent integration of reproducibility into calls, application forms, review criteria, grant agreements, monitoring, and reporting. Relevant training materials are available in [the TRUSTparency toolbox](#).

Together, the four sub-steps in A. Prepare help ensure that the RPP becomes more than a policy document. With a clear mandate, a careful diagnosis, a realistic assessment of readiness, and the right people involved, an RPP can become an effective tool for promoting reproducibility through the funding organisation's policies, programmes, assessment processes, and relationships with the research communities it supports.

B**B. Create**

In this step, the **Reproducibility Promotion Plan (RPP)** is written. The RPP should describe which reproducibility topics will be addressed, how they will be addressed, which interventions will be used, and who will be responsible for carrying them out. It is crucial to be specific and to provide links to relevant resources, such as [training materials](#). The RPP should also be informed by the funder's focal research areas, the institutional capacities of the research organisations it supports, and the available support structures that may enable or

constrain reproducibility efforts. This helps ensure that reproducibility goals are realistic, proportionate, and well aligned with different research contexts.

Creating the RPP involves at least the following seven steps:

1. **Specifying goals:** Define goals for change at the individual, unit, and organisational levels.
2. **Ensuring employee participation:** Involve all relevant staff groups to build legitimacy and create a supportive foundation for the envisioned change. Here, the organisation can draw on the stakeholder mapping carried out in the previous step (see A. Prepare) to identify who should be involved and agreeing on a shared vision for both the process and the outcome of the change.
3. **Describing the organisational setup:** Explain how the envisioned change will be implemented within the organisation, including relevant structures, roles, and responsibilities.
4. **Using TRUSTparenacy's toolbox:** Identify the interventions and training materials in the TRUSTparenacy toolbox that best match the goals. It is important that the RPP remains discipline sensitive and relevant for the research areas that are supported by the funder. Where reproducibility is especially important, funders can highlight these contexts and provide targeted guidance on how appropriate standards can be maintained.
5. **Specifying actions and responsibilities:** Describe the concrete actions to be taken, who will be responsible for each intervention, who will be accountable, and who will lead the process.
6. **Setting the timeline:** Define the timeline for implementing the interventions included in the RPP.
7. **Specifying indicators and targets:** Identify the indicators and targets that will be used to assess the effectiveness of the interventions.

A template for writing an RPP can be found [here](#). Organisations may also use their own templates if they already have institutional templates for change projects.

It is important to emphasise that the first RPP can also help fertilise the ground for future RPP cycles. In particular, it can support broader cultural change by contributing to a more open, safe, and inclusive research culture — one that is more receptive to experimenting with and testing future reproducibility interventions.

C**C. Execute**

In this step, the **Reproducibility Promotion Plan (RPP)** is put into practice. Before implementation begins, the people involved in your organisation — including the change coalition — should share a clear understanding of the plan's purpose, the intervention(s) to be introduced, and their respective roles and responsibilities.

If the RPP introduces significant changes to funding workflows, procedures, requirements, or responsibilities, a gradual implementation process may be useful. This can include pilot tests, small-scale experiments, or targeted initiatives in selected funding programmes, calls, review processes, or grant schemes. Such an approach makes change more manageable and allows the funding organisation to learn from practice before scaling up.

During implementation, those affected by the RPP should be able to provide feedback and suggest adjustments. This may include programme staff, reviewers, panel members, applicants, grantees, and research institutions. Once feedback has been evaluated and any pilots completed, the change coalition should agree on the next steps, such as revising the RPP, adapting interventions, or expanding implementation to other funding programmes.

D**D. Assess**

Assessment is a crucial part of the RPP cycle. After implementation, the organisation should assess whether the selected interventions are producing the intended outcomes and whether any unintended effects have occurred. This assessment should be based on the indicators and targets defined when the RPP was created.

The assessment should consider both the effects of the interventions and the resources required to implement them. Implementation and assessment could focus primarily on the level of research institutions, as they are often the main recipients of funding calls. This can reduce the administrative burden of assessing individual grant recipients while encouraging institutional responsibility for reproducibility.

Assessment should also support learning beyond the funding organisation. TRUSTparenacy has developed an [Intervention Experience Sharing Form](#), which organisations can use to document and share their experiences with reproducibility interventions. Completed forms can be uploaded to the [TRUSTparenacy website](#). By sharing experiences, organisations contribute to an international network committed to improving reproducibility through shared good practices, challenges, and solutions.

E**E. Institutionalise**

At this stage of the cycle, the funding organisation should embed successful elements of the RPP into its longer-term structures, procedures, and culture. Based on the assessment, the RPP should be revisited and updated where needed, and resources and responsibilities should be allocated for continued implementation.

The experience gained through pilots, targeted initiatives, and the work of the change coalition should be translated into organisational policies, funding procedures, guidance, and support systems. Effective reproducibility interventions should become part of regular practice and provide a stronger basis for the next RPP cycle.

For long-term implementation, the organisation should also consider how reproducibility-related information and project data can be made machine-actionable and technically manageable across applications, grant agreements, reporting systems, and monitoring processes. At the same time, it should assess the risks and limits of automation. As application volumes increase, including through the use of generative AI tools, automation may help support assessment and monitoring, but should not replace careful judgement when evaluating reproducibility or replicability.

F**F. Repeat**

The RPP process should be repeated regularly. Each new cycle should be built on what was learned in the previous one. The assessment from one cycle can help the organisation prepare for the next, and the existing RPP can be used as the starting point for updates.

However, not all steps need to be repeated in full in every cycle. For example, once the organisation has assessed its readiness, identified the right people, and established relevant structures, later cycles may focus more on monitoring progress, updating priorities, adjusting interventions, and responding to new needs or developments.

Organisations may decide for themselves how often to repeat the cycle, but every second year may be a useful rhythm. To avoid extra administrative work, the RPP cycle can be linked to existing review processes, such as research evaluations or strategy reviews.

Repeating the cycle helps keep the RPP relevant and useful. Over time, it can also help make reproducibility a more integrated part of the organisation's everyday practices

About this document

This document was developed through a co-creation process involving internal TRUSTparency seminars and three workshops with representatives from RPOs, RFOs, and publishers. We gratefully acknowledge the workshop participants for their valuable input.

The work builds on the **Research Integrity Promotion Plan** framework developed in the SOPs4RI project, especially the guideline [How to create and implement a Research Integrity Promotion Plan \(RIPP\)](#) by Serge P.J.M. Horbach and Mads P. Sørensen.

During the preparation of this document, an AI tool (Chat GPT 5.5) was used to support the development of the figure and graphics, and for improvements to readability and clarity. All AI-generated outputs were critically reviewed and edited by the authors.