



Pretoria, 14 November 2018

## **Joint final statement of the SA-EU Dialogue on Open Science**

The Republic of South Africa, represented by the Department of Science and Technology (DST), and the European Union (EU) embarked in October 2017 on a joint Open Science dialogue initiative, the intention of which was to use the know-how of South African and European experts to direct the institutionalisation of Open Science in South Africa. The initiative was established as a project within the SA-EU Dialogue Facility which is funded by the EU, and will be concluded in November 2018. It was undertaken by an Expert Task Group, appointed by the DST and supported by an Open Science Steering Committee in consultation with the South African Open Science stakeholder community.

The DST requested the experts (in consultation with the Department) and the stakeholders to develop an Open Science Framework with the intention of using the document as a guide in the development of a subsequent and more formal policy document, and, in time, to facilitate the adoption of Open Science as a new paradigm acting to the benefit of the South Africa's National System of Innovation. The purpose of the Open Science Framework is to formulate a set of guidelines and principles for promoting open science in South Africa.

The development of the Open Science Framework for South Africa should be seen as a commitment by the South African government to drive scientific progress and to making publicly funded scientific research results open to all researchers, companies and citizens for consultation, re-use and re-discovery. The need for a National Open Science Policy is strongly supported by the draft 2018 Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) White Paper which was launched on 10 September 2018 by the Minister of Science and Technology for public consultation. For the DST, Open Science represents a significant opportunity for growing STI output and impact.

We, the parties to the SA-EU dialogue on Open Science, acknowledge the dialogue outcomes and express hope that for Open Science to succeed in South Africa, it needs to follow a set of general guidelines, referred to as the Open Science Normative Principles, as described below:

- Open Science is a cultural and behavioural phenomenon; it must become embedded at

every level and in every aspect of the scientific endeavour, and not be perceived as separate from (or even in competition with) current research practice;

- All stakeholders in research and its communication need to take responsibility for supporting Open Science activities, which includes appropriate financial and administrative support to ensure its long-term sustainability and minimize the bureaucratic burden on researchers;
- All stakeholders, Government Departments, University and Research performing organisations and Research Funding Organisations must actively promote Open Science amongst their respective communities, and regularly and openly monitor and report on progress;
- Open Science will require a systemic shift in current practices to bring transparency across the system, to ensure ongoing sustainability for the associated social and physical infrastructures, and to foster greater public trust in Science; and
- The details of 'Open Science in practice' are still evolving; although the initial steps are clear exactly what needs to change over the longer term has not yet been fully articulated.

We, the parties to the SA-EU dialogue on Open Science, confirm our support of:

- Sustainable open access that maximizes availability and accessibility of research while maintaining ethical standards and choice for researchers;
- The principle that research data should be Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable (FAIR);
- Citizen science and public engagement - We believe that enabling the widest possible engagement with science and participation across all sections of the community is fundamental to the principles of open science; and
- Open Science as a game changer for South Africa insofar as it seeks to create an ecosystem in which scientific research is more cumulative, better supported by data, more transparent with faster and more universal access to results, and underpinned by a greater focus on scientific integrity and the public's trust in science.

The DST and the EU are committed to: (i) actively support the transition towards Open Science, and (ii) further exchanges on the strategic priorities concerning Open Science in South Africa and Europe in order to learn from each other. In doing so, the DST and the EU will share best practices and experiences, and will explore the potential of pilot (joint) actions.