

## Ethical and responsible research at the CSMC

*'Treat others as you would like others to treat you.  
Treat others' objects as you would like others to treat yours.'*

### Preamble<sup>1</sup>

The Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (CSMC) and its Cluster of Excellence 'Understanding Written Artefacts' (UWA) include a large international community of scholars from the humanities, natural and computer sciences working in close collaboration to study written artefacts from the beginning of writing to the present day and belonging to humankind's cultural heritage. Throughout their research, researchers interact with people, such as citizens, colleagues and officials, as well as institutions. Such large-scale, global and cross-disciplinary collaborations should be carried out in accordance with ethical and responsible research practices. The purpose of this document is to provide a brief overview of common issues with the ethical treatment of researchers, artefacts and data.

### A. Researcher

#### As a researcher, you act ethically when you

**accept** conventions being different across disciplines, countries, cultures and other value concepts  
**comply to laws**, regulations and customs of states, institutions and societies you work in/with,  
**acknowledge all contributions** to your research including those by 'hidden workers,'  
**share all results** of your research by making them accessible not only to the international scientific community but also to local and regional stakeholders, and to the general public,  
**safeguard and help colleagues** in precarious conditions (e.g. financial, political),  
**avoid cooperation** with institutions and colleagues who are in conflict with the UN Declaration of Human rights or  
**be aware** of 'double discourse' and of impediments to the freedom of research and  
**act according to your own conscience** and you  
**use generative AI technology** according to the DFG guidelines. In case of further questions on generative AI, please contact the head of the CHAI institute at the Philosophy department of the University of Hamburg.

### B. Artefacts

#### Working on artefacts, you act ethically when you

**establish the provenance** of the objects you want to study as part of your research,  
**encourage the owner** of unprovenanced objects (i.e. objects acquired in violation of the laws of their country of origin and international legislation) to return them to the country or group of origin and  
**educate the public** about cultural heritage, illegal trafficking and the legal and moral consequences resulting from taking part in it.

### C. Data

#### Treat the data **FAIR**

- (F)indable:** Research data can be found on the internet and are citable.
- (A)ccessible:** Research data are accessible open or on request.
- (I)nteroperable:** Research data can be technically reused through software.
- (R)e-usable:** Research data are well documented and can be used for new research.

Ensure that that the people for whom you are responsible for take note of these recommendations and follow them. Distribute them and thus raise awareness of the issues they address.

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<sup>1</sup>DFG document on good practices in research:

[https://www.dfg.de/download/pdf/foerderung/rechtliche\\_rahmenbedingungen/gute\\_wissenschaftliche\\_praxis/kodex\\_gwp\\_en.pdf](https://www.dfg.de/download/pdf/foerderung/rechtliche_rahmenbedingungen/gute_wissenschaftliche_praxis/kodex_gwp_en.pdf)

The European Charter for researchers: <https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs/charter/european-charter>