SUMMARY OF THE WORKSHOP ON GOOD PRACTICE IN RESEARCH, ETHICS COMMITTEE AND OPEN SCIENCE (15/10/2020)

On Thursday 15th October, the workshop I 'Good practices in research, Ethics Committee and Open Science' took place, organised by the University Carlos III of Madrid (UC3M) in the framework of the actions to promote and communicate tools and actions linked to the **Human Resources Award logo.**

After the greeting by the Vice Rector for Faculty, Ignacio Aedo, the Director of Human Resources at UC3M, Carmen Martín-Romo, and the Assistant Vice Rector for Faculty, Belén Levenfeld, took the floor. First, Martín-Romo said that the HR Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) is a process of self-assessment and evaluation that culminates with the EU Human Resources Award, although she clarified that it is not an award of excellence. The HRS4R, created around the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, approved by the EU in 2005, contemplates 40 principles organized into four areas, and in the case of UC3M, coexists with the Institution's own Strategy, based on five strategic axes (commitment to best practices and ethical principles; open, transparent recruitment, based on merit and ability; working conditions and professional career; training and development; and communication and participation), which nevertheless must be aligned with the principles set out by Europe.

Belén Levenfeld recalled that UC3M approved its Action Plan and achieved the seal in 2016, and that a self-evaluation took place in 2018, which was satisfactorily concluded. This will be followed by a final external evaluation in December 2021, the passing of which will require the presentation of evidence of compliance with the Action Plan, which must be fed back with new initiatives. To this end, the academic institution is seeking input from the faculty. In this sense, he assured that, of the 17 actions included in the document, 11 have already been fulfilled, three are in progress and another three are behind schedule, although all require communication actions, which is why the workshop is being held, to be followed by another five (two internal ones on gender and recruitment, two regional ones and one international one).

The first of the speakers, Sara Martín Salamanca, Deputy Vice-Rector for Science Policy, spoke in depth on the Code of Good Practice in Research and Transparency. She first gave a summary of the documents produced at the European level on this subject. "A strong Europe is a Europe with a united and robust European science," she said. He also recalled the obligation of researchers to be transparent and accountable: they must know that their activity must be audited, especially when public funding is involved. "Good science is science that is socially committed".

Focusing on UC3M's Code of Good Practices in Research and Transparency, approved in December 2017, Martín Salamanca explained that it is a set of recommendations and commitments on research practice, not only on its development but also on its transfer. It is, therefore, a research instrument that marks the lex artis of the researcher and is addressed to all researchers and to the University as the guarantor of the development of research. The content of the Code of Good Practice includes, in its most extensive part, what the activity that integrates the development of research in the proper sense should be, and also the good practices in the transfer of research from the University to society. The guiding principles of research should be, according to the document, honesty, rigour and responsibility; research should be reflexive and planned and contemplate the dissemination of results; it should respect intellectual property and assess from the outset whether it addresses ethical and data protection issues. Research activity includes aspects such as conditions linked to the implementation of the project and budget, the use of facilities and equipment, and gender measures.

For Angel Sanchez, a member of the Ethics Committee, explained the reasons that lead researchers to turn to the Committee, more than in many cases could be imagined: when the research involves human beings, human embryos or animals; when it handles personal data; when it may affect fundamental rights; when it is carried out in developing countries or with their participation; when it has applications in defence or security or when it refers to any other ethical aspect. The European Commission, he said, always finds ethical aspects, and therefore advises that when in doubt, the Committee should be consulted: it is advisable to start things early. "Don't wait for the paper to be written," he insisted. "If you are in doubt, go to the Committee: this is in the interest of the researcher. The Committee's functions include issuing the requested reports or approving or disapproving the intended research. But it is not their job to monitor the research that is then carried out: that is the responsibility of the researcher. In this regard, he clarified that UC3M's Ethics Committee evaluates UC3M projects, which means that the principal investigator must be from UC3M, as well as the funding.

In relation to the application for approval of the Ethics Committee, Sánchez explained that the UC3M website contains the Regulations, the procedure for processing applications and all the information required. In addition to the Committee, there is a specific Data Protection Subcommittee.

Eva María Méndez, **Deputy Vice Rector for Science Policy**, addressed the topic of Open Science and, specifically, the journey that UC3M is making in this regard. "It is a long road, but the idea is to make the journey with good saddlebags and with leaden feet. The Open Science Unit and the Universidad Open Science (UniOs) working group have been created as part of this journey.

According to the vice-rector, the UC3M has been working in this area for many years: when Gregorio Peces Barba was rector, he signed the Declaration of Berlin, which led to the creation of the Institutional Repository where researchers must deposit everything they do. In addition, it also works for the visibility of research, for which there is a VIVO tool, which is an expert finder, and a space has been created in the Leganés library that tries to call for open science.

Given that the UC3M wants to be in a real projection of Open Science at the European level, it included in its Strategic Plan the creation of an institutional policy that would include not only publications, but also research data policy and other actions related to open science. There were two options for doing this: top-down, from the top down, or bottom-up. In the latter case, it was essential to create a culture, which is why we are working in the long term: managing cultural change is complex and requires vision, skills, incentives, resources and an Action Plan.

To contribute to this Open Science policy, it is necessary to talk about motivators of will (money, law and rankings, as well as seduction), and therefore the Action Plan tries to create a philosophy of Open Science by seduction. This is the aim of UniOs, a discussion forum to create initiatives and be a unit of support. They have created a pilot project, Full Open Science, where they ask for volunteers from research groups and reward "taking a step forward": they want researchers to publish at least 80% in Open Access and 100x100% of the metadata. "We all know that with Open Science something has to change." The final corollary will be to create an Open Science policy, but until then the message is crystal clear: "training, training, training".

"In this context, science is like a parachute: if it doesn't open, it won't help us.