Institute for Medical Research and Occupational Health

Social Responsibility in Science and Higher Education

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Moral Issues

Science and technology have a significant impact on society and policy.

In 1955 Albert Einstein, Bertrand Russell, and other eminent scientists issued a manifesto urging scientists to "think in a new way" about their moral responsibilities in the nuclear age.

Today, the need for social responsibility in science and technology extends beyond nuclear nonproliferation concerns to many other issues.

Paradox

R&D in science and technology as well as higher education are expected to provide benefit to the overall worldwide society through creation of new knowledge and training of engineers and skilled workforce.

Paradox:

Considering a world as a whole, despite globalization processes, advances in science and technology have not translated to sustainable advances in quality of life for the majority of human race.

Areas

The need for social responsibility in science and technology extends beyond nuclear nonproliferation concerns to:

- health and especially public health issues (e.g. pharmaceutical industry, neglected diseases etc.)
- the impact of emerging technologies (nanotechnology, biotechnology)
- energy
- environment issues (climate changes)
- etc.

Social Responsibility and Ethics

Closely connected

Pressure is applied on industry to improve business ethics through public, initiatives, laws and even ISO standards

Examples:
- Epidemiological studies and marketing in pharmaceutical industry
- Openness / Restriction to information

Public trust

Higher education institutions and public institutes receive considerable amount of public money.

Public trust, therefore, is associated not only with scientists, but also with the scientists' institutions.

Lack of control in this environment could have devastating financial and political implications.

Scope of Responsibility

Matters of integrity and reputation have to be scrutinized along with capacity to produce good output, i.e. educated young generation and quality research results

The scope of responsibility, therefore, extends beyond the walls of a single institution into the world.

Open Questions

Social responsibility
performance indicators in the area of science and higher education

Morals - Social Responsibility Questionnaire

http://www.bbc.co.uk/science/humanbody/mind/surveys/morals/

Regarding Croatia, social responsibility in R&D in science, tehnology and higher education is important part of Croatian accession to EU.
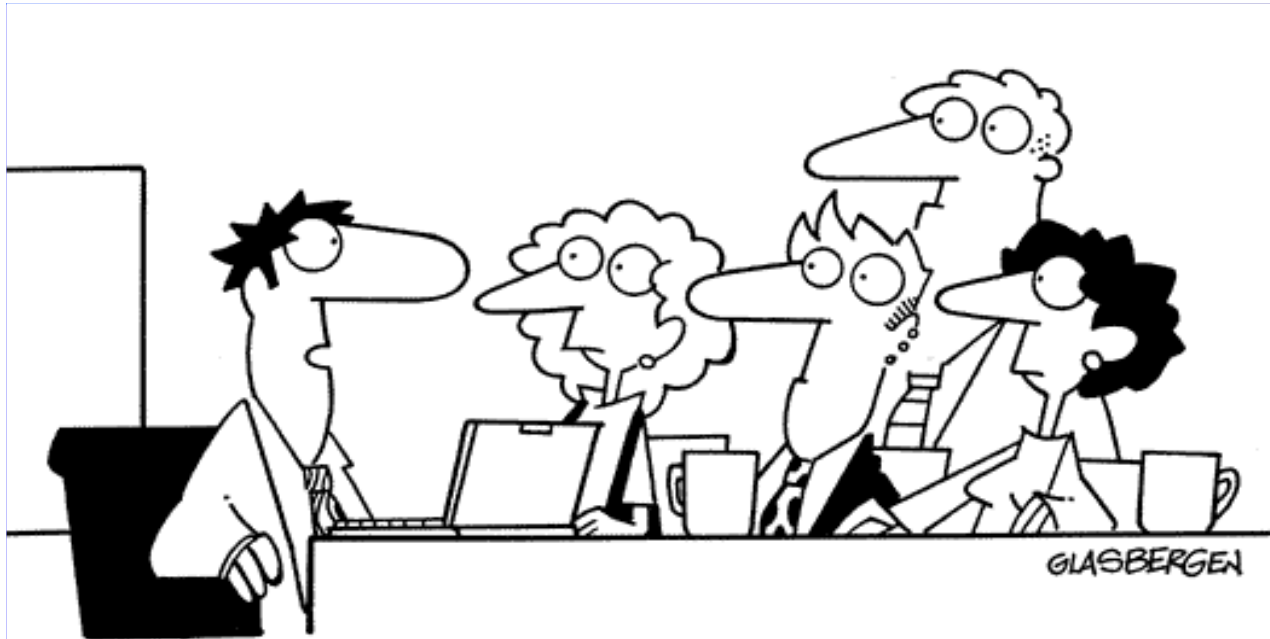
Thank You
for Your
Attention!