I have been following the Research Integrity Inquiry with interest, but one issue that I have not seen discussed is the need for a network across research-intensive HEIs to: 1) conduct research into the factors that contribute to the poor reliability of scientific findings, 2) provide robust training to researchers at all career levels, and 3) produce briefing notes to key stakeholders (funders, governmental departments, and so on).

I have discussed the need for this with a range of research funders (UKRI, BBSRC, ESRC, MRC, Wellcome) and other stakeholders (Academy of Medical Sciences), and they all appreciate the need for such a network. At present, however, they have no funding mechanisms that could evaluate proposals, and so this enthusiasm has not led to real action. At the same time, I have begun to explore collaborative relationships between universities that could help to share best practice and harmonise training, but in the absence of a formal network this is laborious.

UK science is world leading, and in my opinion this debate around how to improve the quality of our work is a sign of this strength – that we are sufficiently self-confident to strive to be self-critical in order to improve. However, if we are to make real progress this will require genuine commitment from the key stakeholders (funders, journals, institutions, etc.) and support to coordinate this activity.

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