

Report on the RRI Conference

November 21-22, 2016

Brussels, Belgium

Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) Tools Final Conference on “Responsible Research and Innovation in Action – Towards an Open Science and Innovation system was held on November 21-22, 2016 in Brussels, Belgium. Attended by over 250 delegates from across the globe, the gathering aimed at sharing of findings and brainstorming on the openness of research and innovation and the social impact of science. The two-day conference saw useful deliberations on the RRI tools project on the first day; while the second day was dedicated to exclusive discussions on RRI in other parts of the world, and in the future (beyond the 2020 horizon).

Dr Rajesh Tandon, UNESCO Co-Chair & Founder President, PRIA was one of the speakers at the conference, where he contributed to the plenary discussion on ‘Going global: International perspective on responsibility on November 22, 2016. In his address, Dr Tandon briefed the participants on the role of the UNESCO Chair in Community Based Research (CBR) and the kind of contributions it has been making in the field of knowledge democracy and social responsibility in Higher Education. He also shared the findings of the two of the global studies undertaken by the Chair, on Community University Research Partnerships and Training the Next Generation of Researchers in CBR.

He further shared the research trends in the Asian sub-continent and raised pertinent issues which marked the functioning of higher education in Asia and the research conducted therein. Dr Tandon also emphasized on the co-construction of knowledge, as he said that ‘*co-construction serves multiple purposes, not only academic ones, and that the ‘research institution culture should change ‘for mainstreaming RRI’.*

Views of Dr Tandon on RRI and social responsibility can also be read at: <http://unescochair-cbrsr.org/index.php/2016/12/02/science-with-and-for-society/> where he puts together his reflections from the RRI conference. Quoting Dr Tandon’s blog, ‘*Institutions of science, fraternities and academies of science and funders of science have to come to terms with the challenge of major ‘culture shifts’ in their own establishments and mindsets, if RRI has to be mainstreamed’.*