

Ensuring research integrity

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Canada needs an agency to investigate research misconduct, states an editorial in *CMAJ* (*Canadian Medical Association Journal*).

Although honesty, accuracy and professionalism of scientists are vital for [research integrity](#), there have been many public examples of serious research misconduct. [Conflicts of interest](#), author misrepresentation and manipulation of data are other issues that also affect scientific and academic research.

[Scientific journals](#) can and will investigate misconduct when detected, and academic institutions will investigate if it is reported before submission to a journal. However, there is an inherent [conflict of interest](#) when an institution investigates one of its own researchers as the need for an institution to maintain a positive reputation with respected faculty is necessary to attract and keep grants, sponsorships and donations.

"We need a better system to prevent, report and respond to allegations of research misconduct," writes Dr. Matthew B. Stanbrook, Deputy Editor, *Scientific*, with *CMAJ* editors.

The authors suggest that Canada needs a new agency with the mandate and power to investigate allegations of research misconduct.

Alternatively, an existing authority such as the Panel on Research Ethics could be given this role with increased powers. The cost of the agency could be shared between the federal government, which provides significant funding of research, and academic institutions as part of taking responsibility for their research staff.

"Such an agency would be likely in any case to have better resources for investigations and satisfactorily resolve allegations in a timely manner," write the authors. "But its real benefit for the public and researchers alike would lie in independent and transparent public reporting."

Provided by Canadian Medical Association Journal

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