Open Research Pilot case studies: research integrity and reproducibility

This is the third blog in our series marking the end of the [Open Research Pilot](#) (a two-year initiative involving [University of Cambridge research groups](#), University Research Support, and [Wellcome Trust's Open Research Team](#)). Professor David Savage tells the Research Support Team how he is concerned with how to improve and ensure research integrity and reproducibility.

START OF PROJECT

Professor Savage applied for the project as a direct result of two points mentioned in the original project call for participants:

- 'are you in favour of more transparency in research?'
- 'are you concerned about research reproducibility?'

He hoped to gain further insight into ways in which the appropriateness and authenticity of scientific research could be improved. He also hoped that through discussion, his group might be able to come up with new and – hopefully – effective ways to improve the current state of play in this respect.

PROJECT IN PROGRESS

At the start of the project, Professor Savage enjoyed the discussions about research integrity – his interest in this aspect was shared by a member of the project support team, Dr Marta Teperek. However, after Dr Teperek's departure in June 2017, and as the project progressed, it became increasingly evident to Professor Savage that the project, whilst motivated by the ideals around transparency and reproducibility, was more directly focused on other more practical aspects of open research such as data sharing.

Although he appreciates that these practical considerations were a major motivation for the other participants, he felt he did not have as much to contribute or gain from this focus. Research in his field of human genetics has been conducted in an open way for many years: the benefits have been huge; for example, studies can be done on much larger populations than previously practical due to open data.

LOOKING AHEAD

Whilst his own views of open research have not changed much over the course of the project itself, what he did learn from the project is that the area of open research is generally of increasing interest and importance, and is likely to be mandated by funding bodies and academic institutions shortly.

As told to the Open Research Pilot Research Support Team