



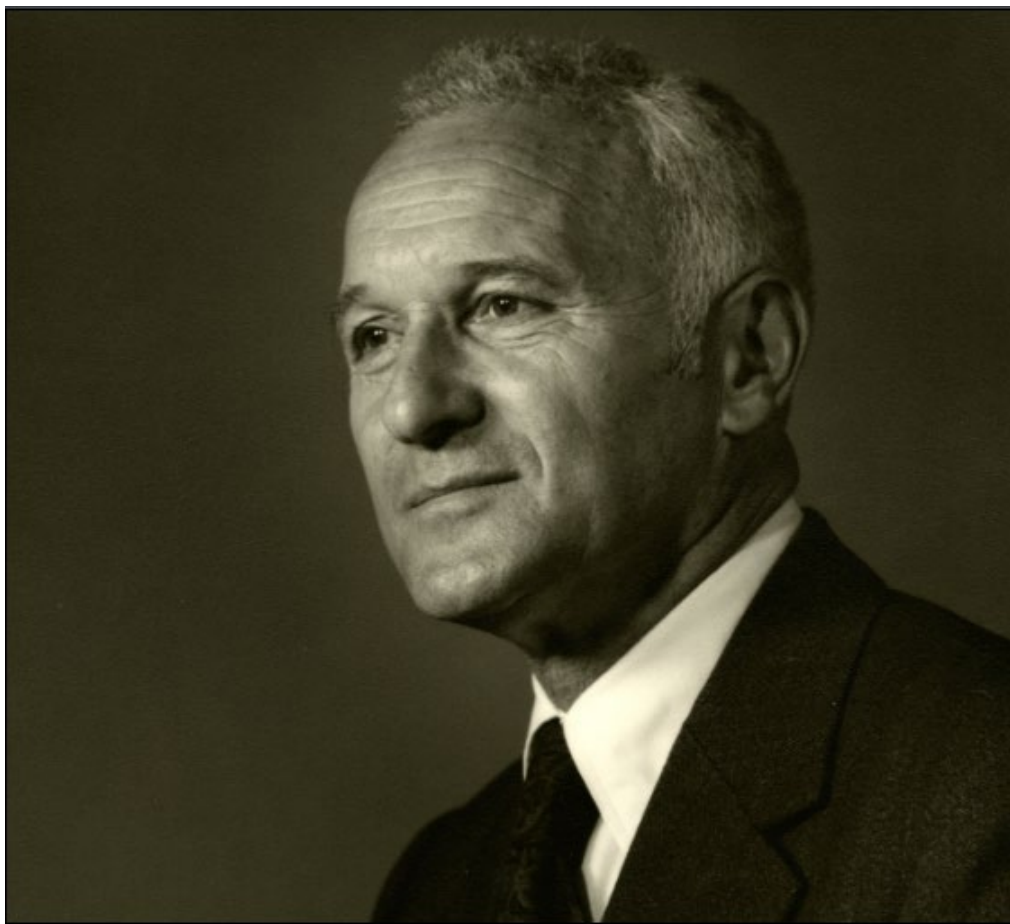
The ins and outs of ethical research and integrity

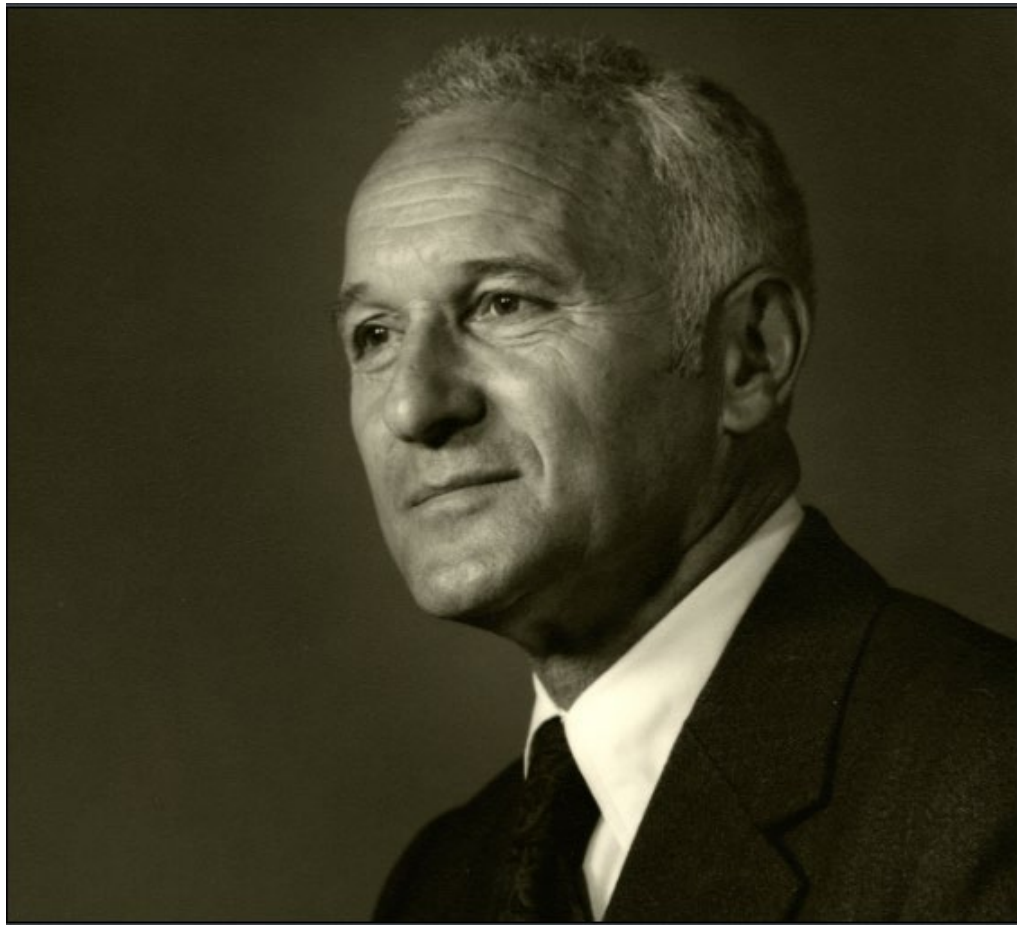
Sarah Claes & Marianne De Voecht

Research, Innovation & Valorisation Antwerp (RIVA)





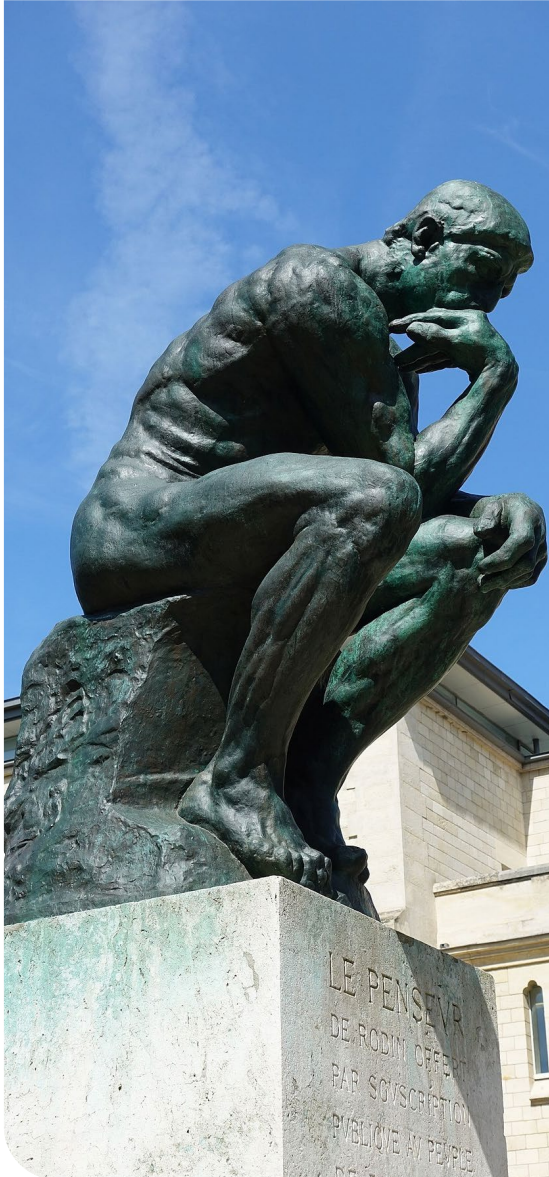




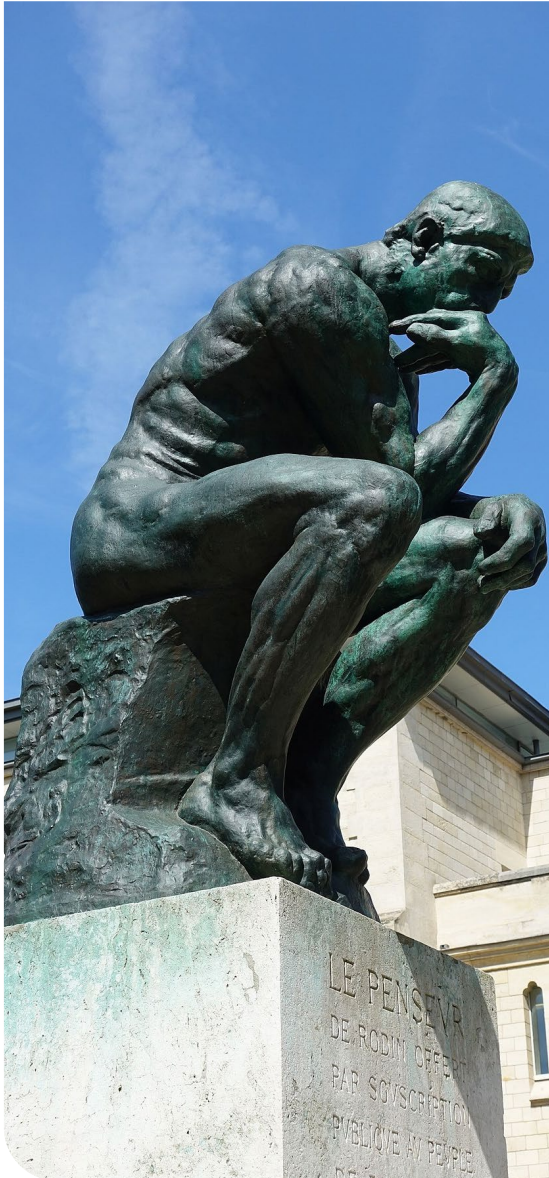
What went wrong?

Research ethics

Sarah Claes

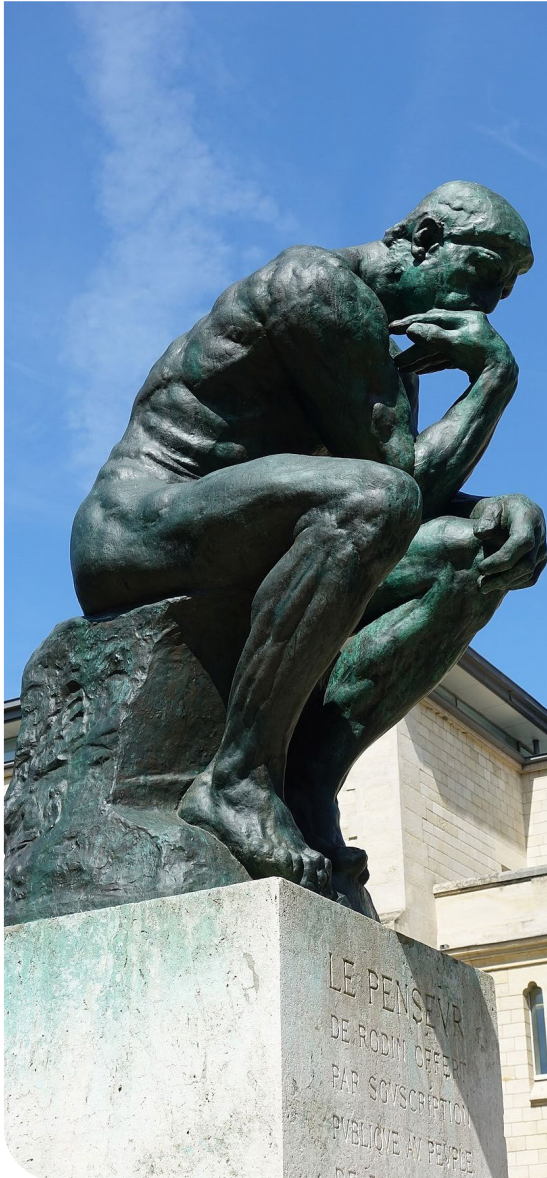


No harm principle!



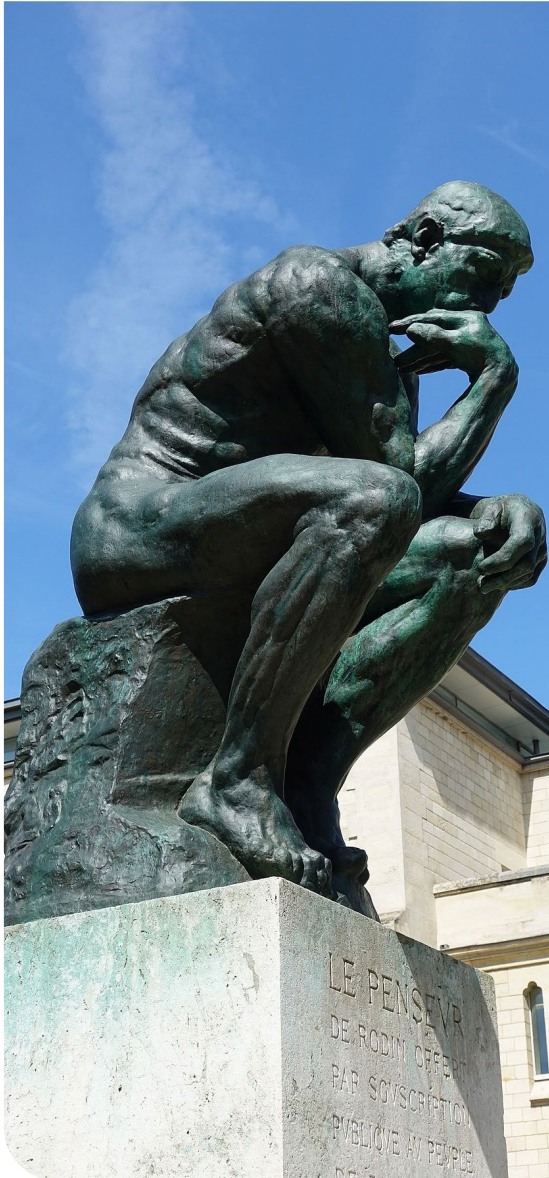
Voluntary participation

- Participants have a right to be informed
- Participants have a right to consent



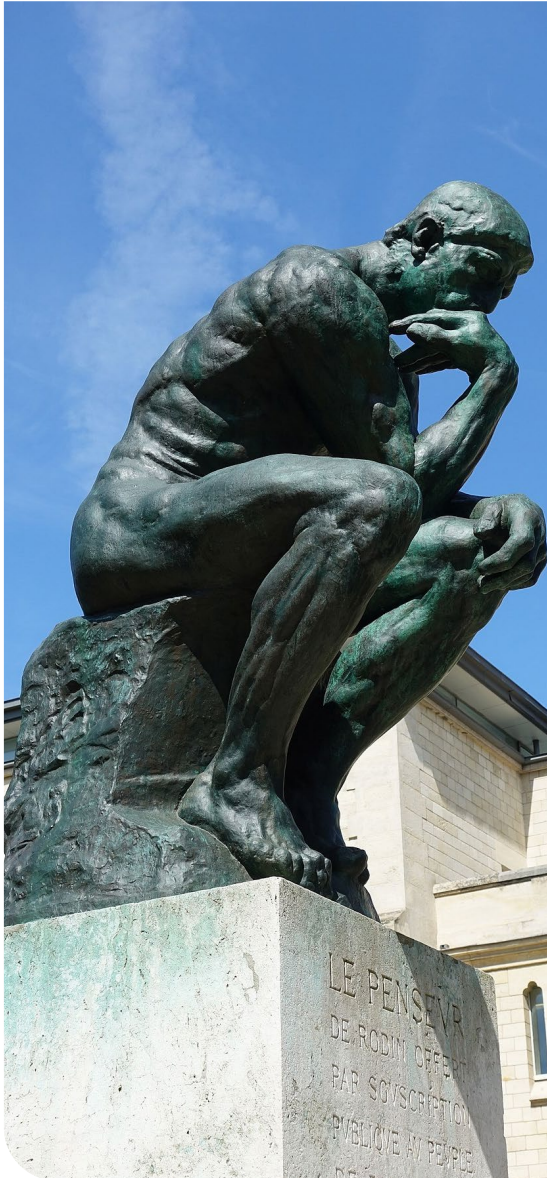
Clinical trials & studies

- Including animal experiments
- Heavily regulated
- Mandatory ethical screening by law



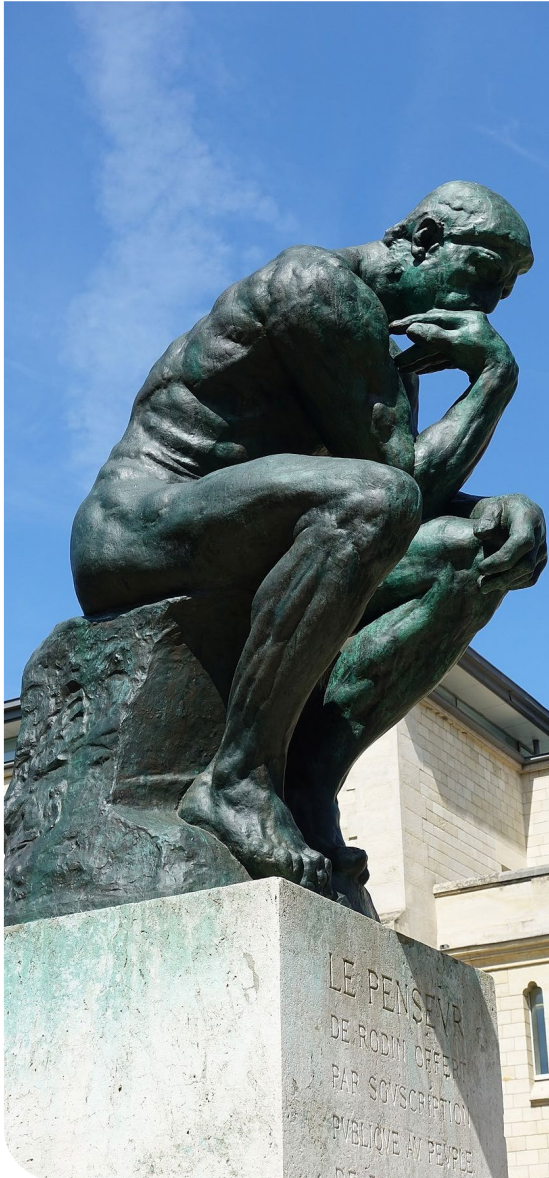
Working with vulnerable groups

- Context-specific
- What are vulnerable groups?
- Special considerations for minors



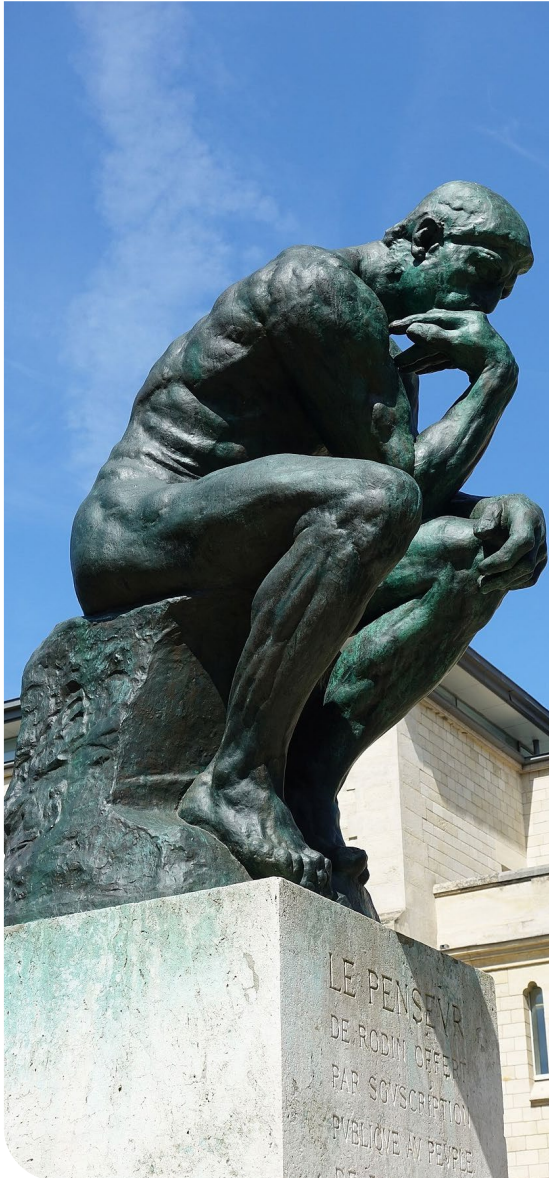
Follow-up and incidental findings

- Provide safety nets for participants
- Obligation to report?



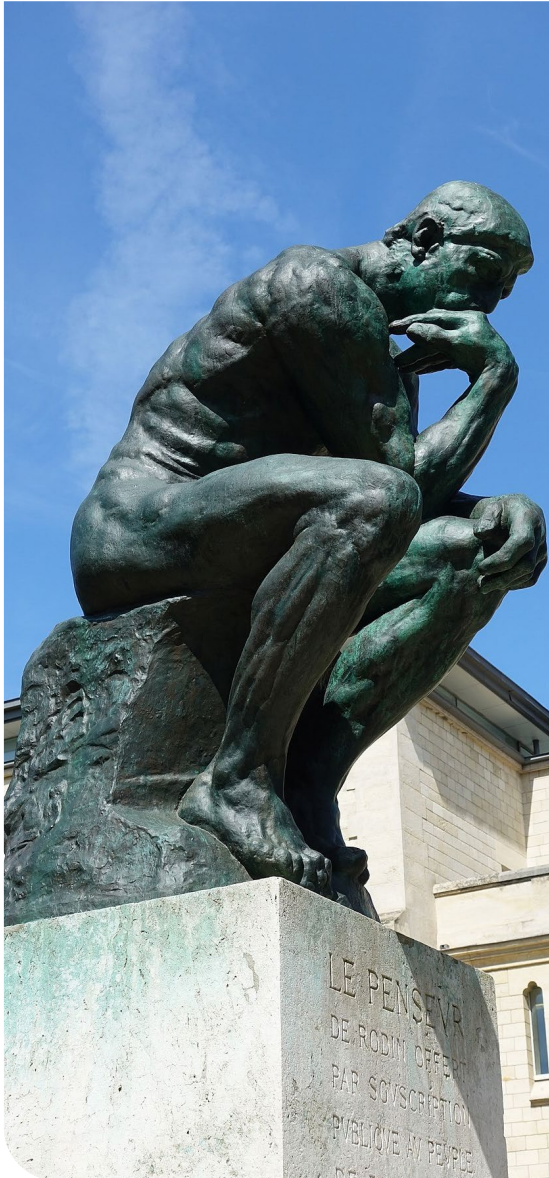
Respect for human rights

- Does(/might) your research activity lead to
OR
- Is a partner directly/indirectly involved in human rights violations?
e.g. Technological applications, Artificial Intelligence, pathogens or toxins,...



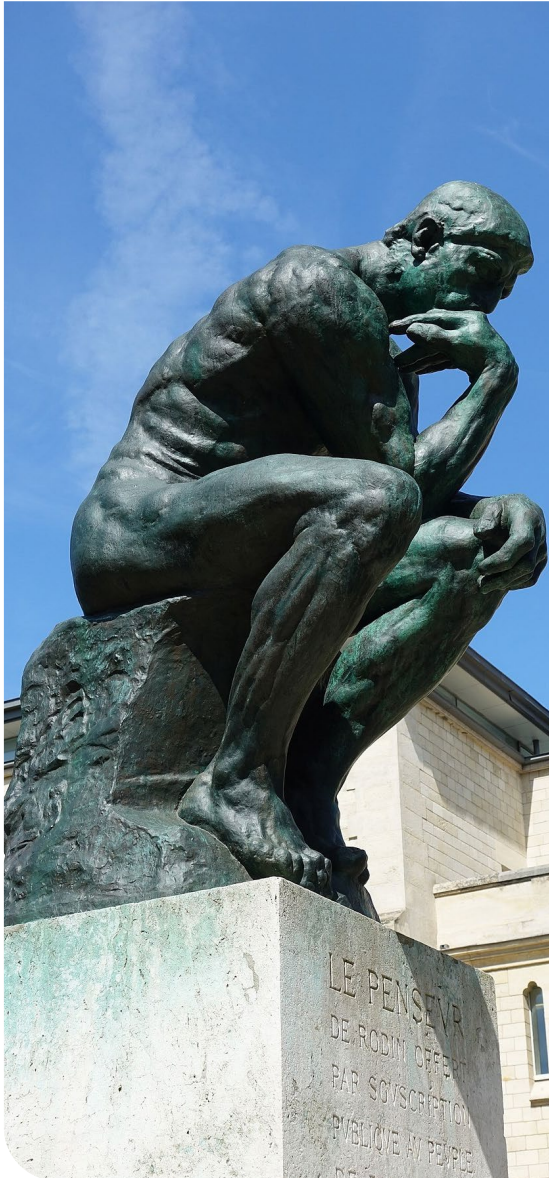
Potential for misuse

- Can your research be potentially misused for unethical purposes in the wrong hands?
e.g. interrogation techniques, night vision equipment, facial recognition,...



New emerging technologies

- Military applications
- E.g. AI



Ethics dumping

- Performing research abroad to avoid strict regulations.

The basics

- The well-being of human participants and laboratory animals
- The well-being of those carrying out the research activity
- The interests of the wider society
- Respect for cultural heritage, human rights and the environment
- The safety of individuals or groups with special attention for minority or vulnerable groups
- Safeguarding the reputation of the research group, the faculty, the university and the scientific practice as a whole.

[Code of conduct](#)

Ethics Committees

Committee for Medical
Ethics UZA-UAntwerp

ethisch.comite@uza.be

Ethics Committee for
Animal Testing

ecd@uantwerpen.be

Ethics Committee for the
Social Sciences and
Humanities

eashw@uantwerpen.be

Ethics Committee for
Misuse, Human Rights &
Security (MiHRS)

mihrs@uantwerpen.be

Research Misconduct & Research Integrity

Marianne De Voecht

Are we on the same page?

▪ Research Integrity

- researchers conduct their research according to **appropriate ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards.**

▪ Research Misconduct

- Traditionally defined as fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism.
- Recent years: violations of good research practice
 - Withholding research data or results without justification
 - Hiding the use of AI or automated tools in the creation of content or drafting of publications (also: risk of plagiarism or IP infractions)
 - Chopping up research results with the specific aim of increasing the number of research publications
 - ...

Let's take a moment to focus on AI: What are the main challenges with regard to research?



REFERENCES:
RISK FOR PLAGIARISM OR
IP-VIOLATIONS



INFO NOT ALWAYS UP TO
DATE



BIAS, HARMFUL CONTENT
AND MISTAKES



PRIVACY AND IP



ACKNOWLEDGE USE



Why does Research Integrity matter?

- Scientific and scholarly research
 - To understand the world we live in
 - As a basis for further research
 - To solve real-life problems

➡ Almost everybody has a potential interest in the way research is done and its outcomes.

➡ Integrity, quality and legitimacy of research are inextricably connected.

Procedure for complaints @UAntwerp

- **Independent Contact Point for Research Integrity**
 - Prof. Willem Lemmens
- **Committee for Research Integrity**
 - Create awareness and give advice to researchers
 - Investigate possible violations of research integrity
 - Flemish Committee for Research Integrity
- **Confidential counsellor for RI**
- **Guidelines:**
 - Code of Conduct
 - Guidelines for AI in Research
 - Authorship Guidelines



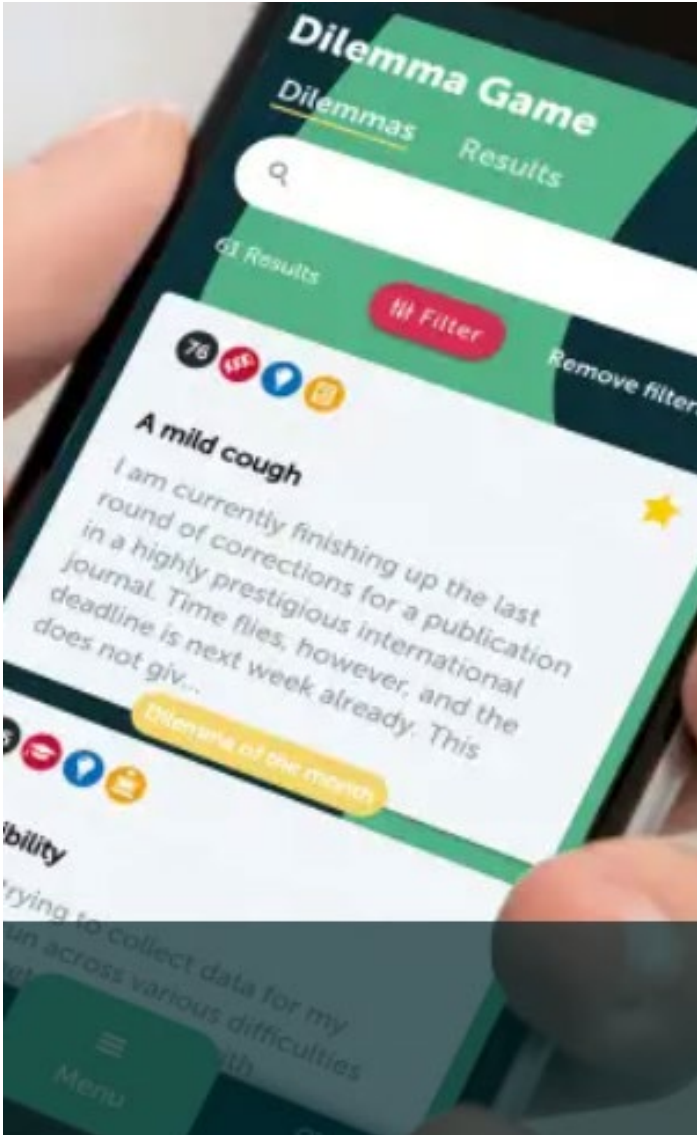
Mind the GAP

- Interuniversity online training tool on research integrity
- Available on Blackboard (after login)
- 4 Basic modules + 2 extra modules (ethics & GDPR)
- Approximately 8 hours to complete
- Final test (80% or higher to receive certificate)
- Important: compulsory for starting PhD researchers
- **New: Mind the GAP – The Podcast**

Cases (Dilemma Game)

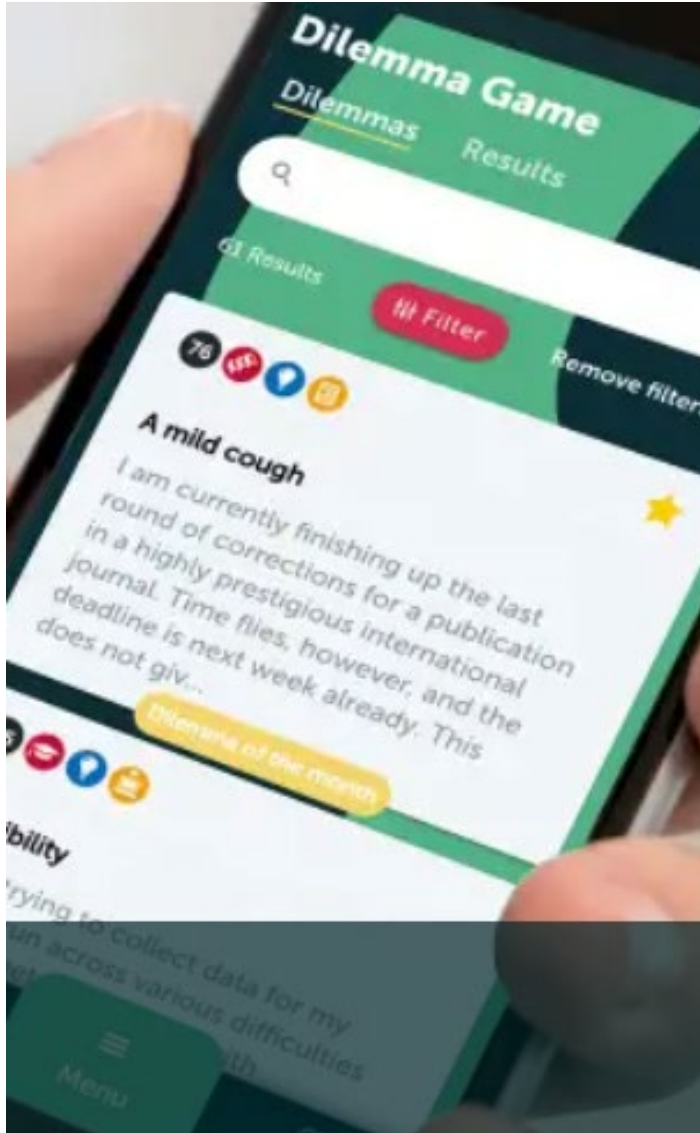


© Scott Adams, Inc./Dist. by UFS, Inc.



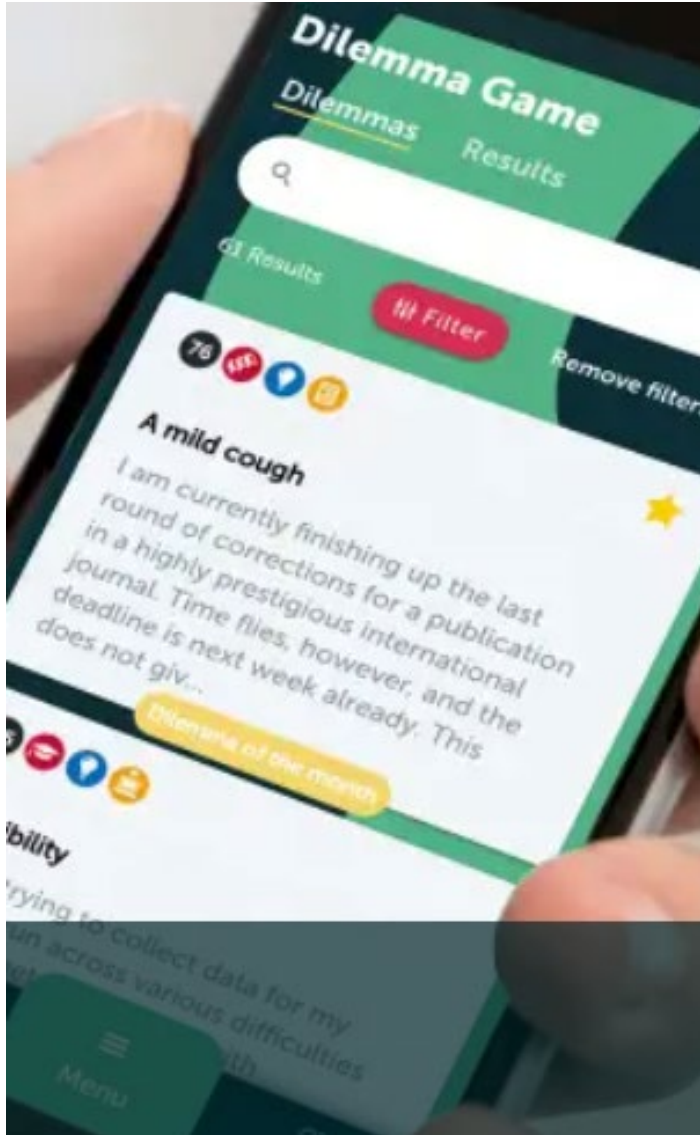
Free lunch?

- I am starting my PhD project and as a first task I am asked to rewrite a paper by a former PhD colleague who has meanwhile left academia. I notice the paper needs only small changes and the reviewers are very mild and friendly, so the paper may get accepted in the next round. My professor suggests putting me as last author, to support my academic career, despite my limited contribution to the actual research process. He will himself be the first author. The former PhD has agreed that others can use his work, but no specific agreements were made. What do I do?



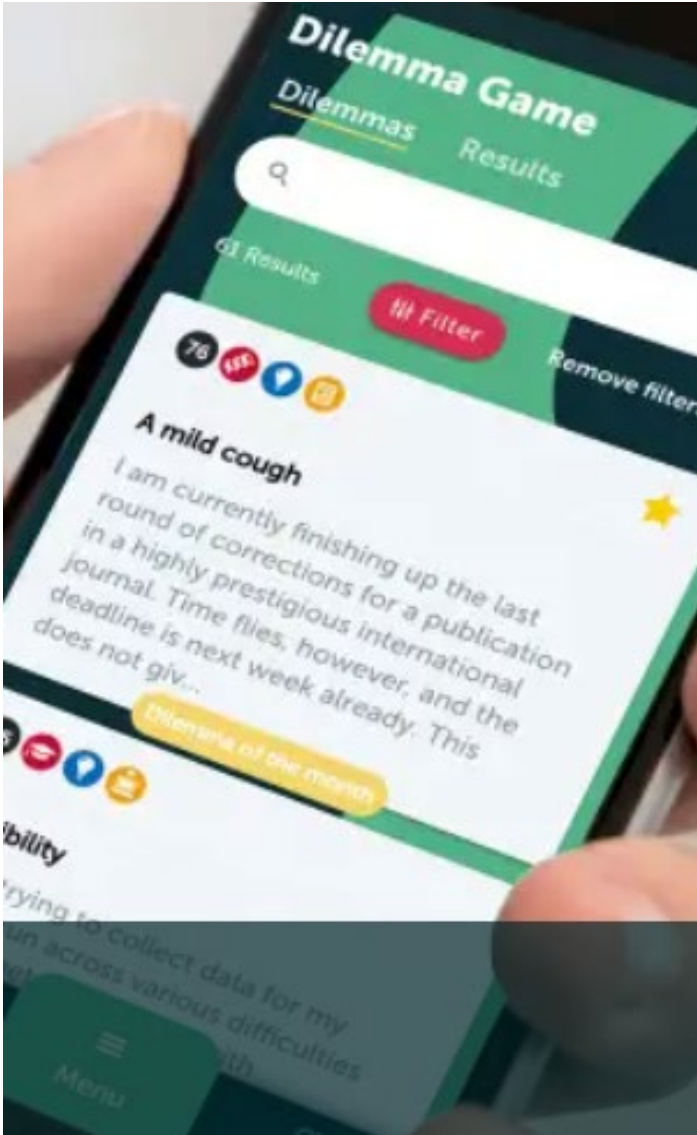
Free lunch?

- A I agree to the offer and get listed as last author.
- B I suggest that I should be mentioned in a footnote, but not listed as author.
- C I contact the former PhD and ask him whether he wants the publication in his name.
- D I decline the revising job; I do not want to be involved



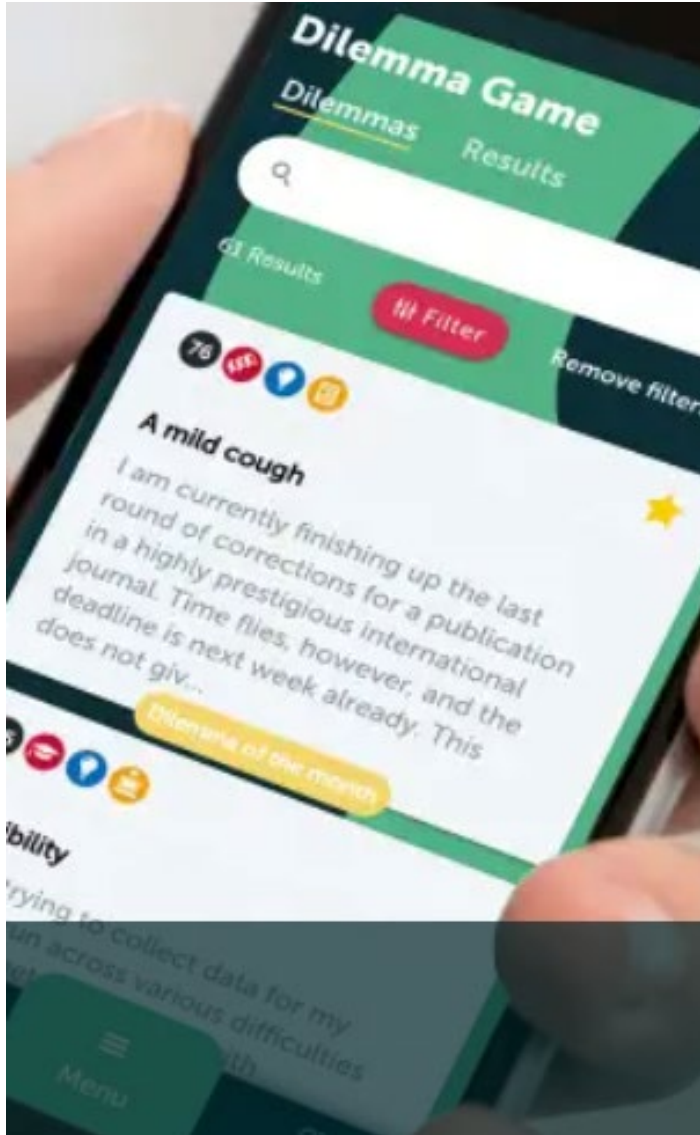
Friendly reviewer

- I am working as a PhD researcher and have almost finished my thesis. Within a few months I will start working at another institute on the same type of research. I have just submitted the last chapter of my dissertation to a journal. Yesterday, I received an email from my future boss in which he asks me to provide him with some review suggestions for my own paper. As it happens he is one of the reviewers. In this way, I am better prepared to respond to his review report and can increase the chance of acceptance. For both of us it will be good to have the manuscript accepted in a prestigious journal, as it will boost my career and increase the chances for getting grants together with my future boss. What do I do?



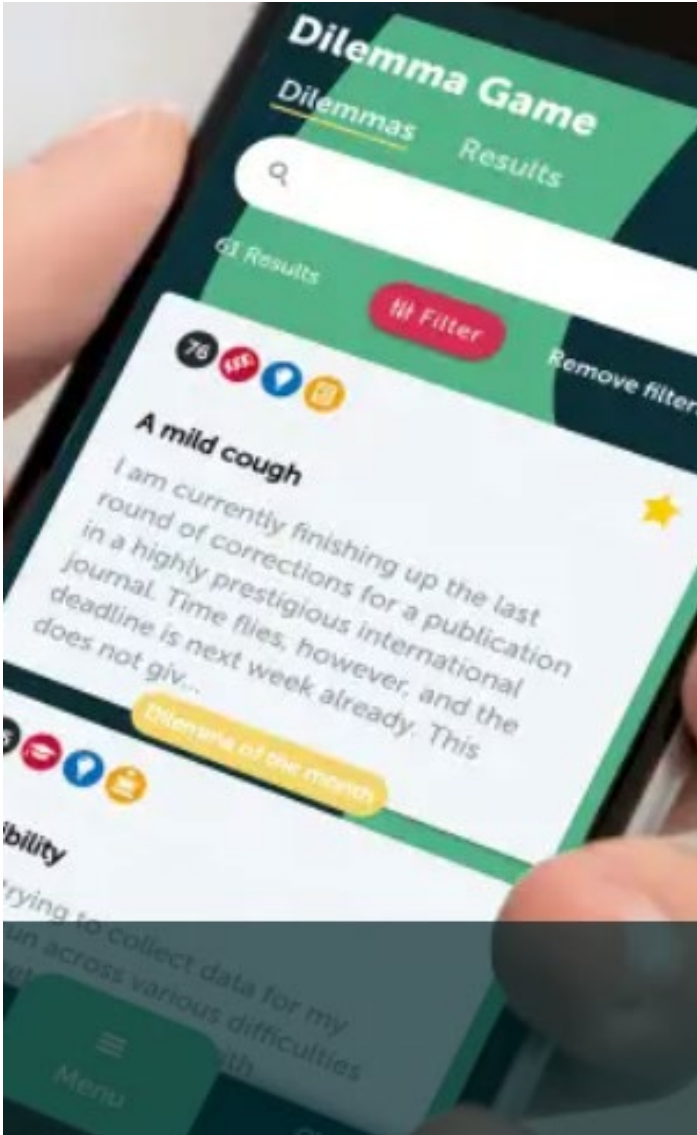
Friendly reviewer

- A I tell my supervisor about the email and let it depend on him what to do.
- B It is very important for my career to get the article published, so I send an email with some suggestions to my future boss.
- C I thank my future boss for his help, but I tell him that I cannot accept the offer.
- D I contact the editor of the journal about the offer of the reviewer.



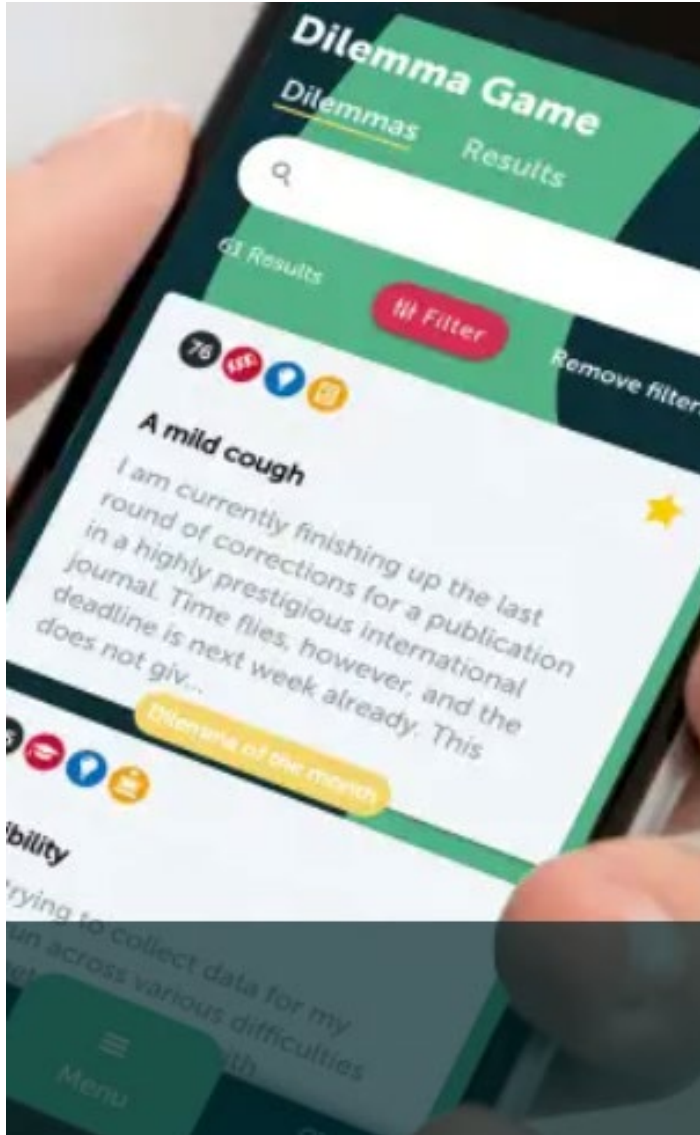
Academic grudges

- As part of my PhD I would like to write an article with a professor other than my supervisor. I think I can learn a lot from working with someone else and it is also preferable for my career to collaborate with different universities and publish in international journals. When I discuss the idea with my supervisor he lets me know that the professor in question is not suitable at all and that there is no need to collaborate with other universities. I know my supervisor personally dislikes the professor I would like to work with, but I am afraid that ignoring his opinion may influence the way he assesses my dissertation. Although a competent researcher, my supervisor is not a very accessible person who sometimes makes radical choices that I do not understand. What do I do?



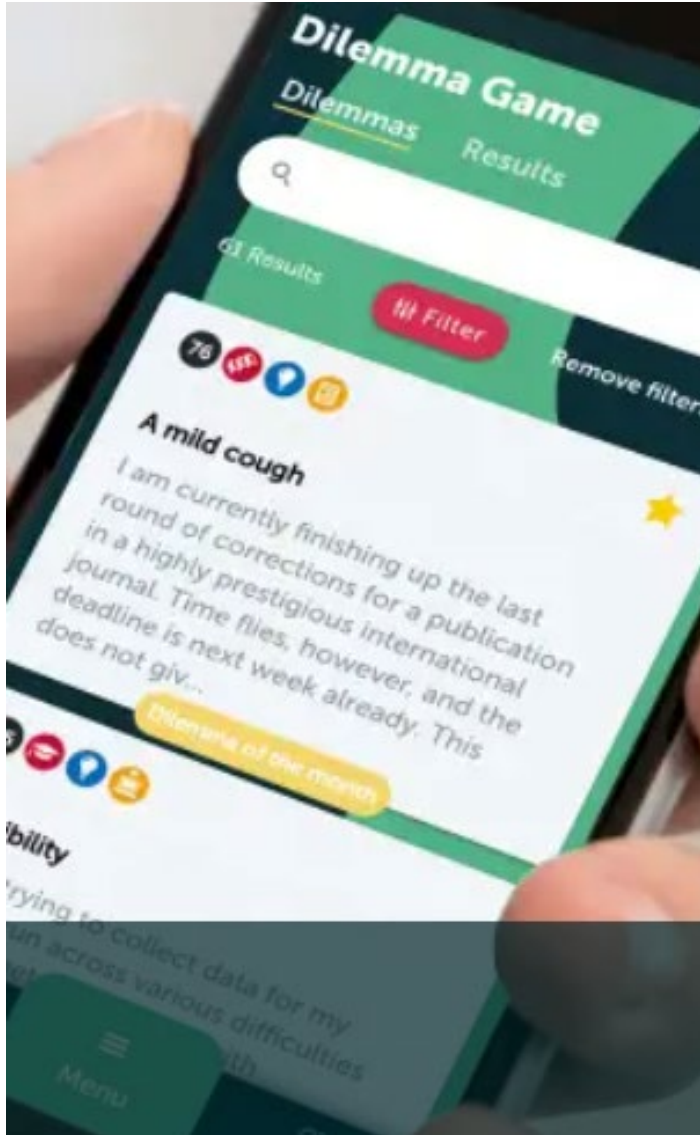
Academic grudges

- A I refrain from writing an article with this particular professor.
- B I tell my supervisor why I think he does not want me to work with the professor. If he confirms my suspicion I refrain from writing the article.
- C I decide to write the article with the other professor but make sure that it is only published after my dissertation is approved and assessed.
- D I tell my supervisor that I don't want to be restrained by his personal feelings and will write the article.



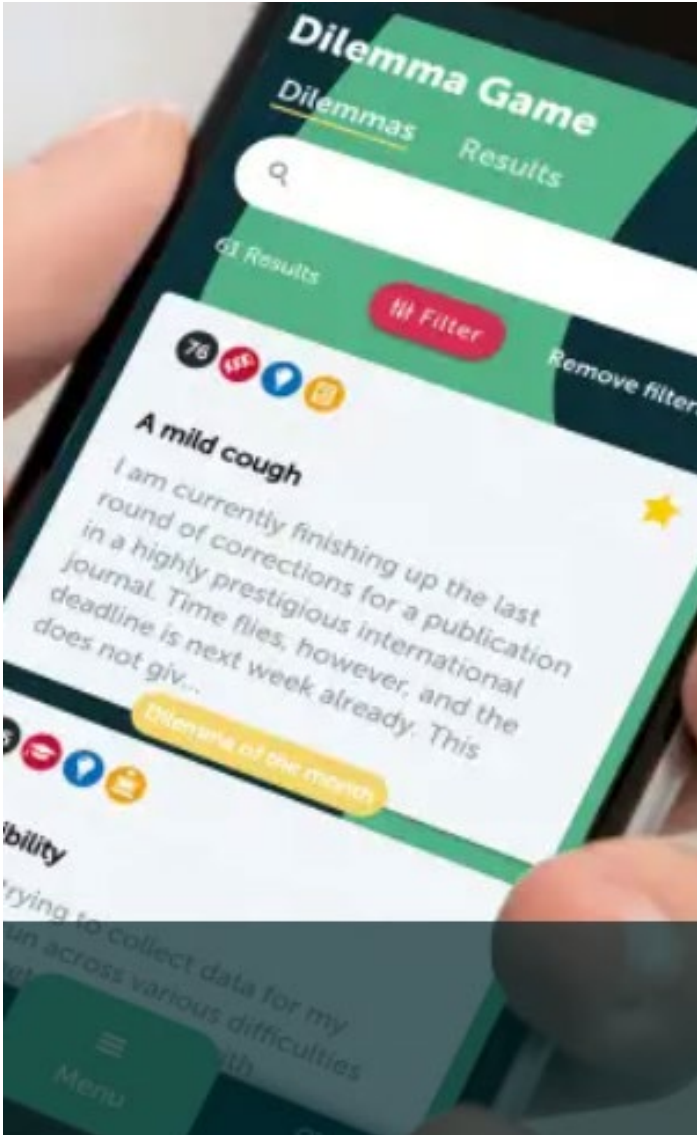
Senior methodology

- As a PhD researcher I am co-authoring an article with an experienced senior researcher who is known as an expert on the topic. Our article has just been reviewed and one of the reviewers questions our methodology. We both know that there are some weak points in our methodology, but since only one of the reviewers mentions it the senior researcher argues that we do not have to make any profound changes for the article to be accepted. In an earlier discussion we had on the topic I agreed on following the methodology proposed by the senior even though I had my doubts. What do I do?



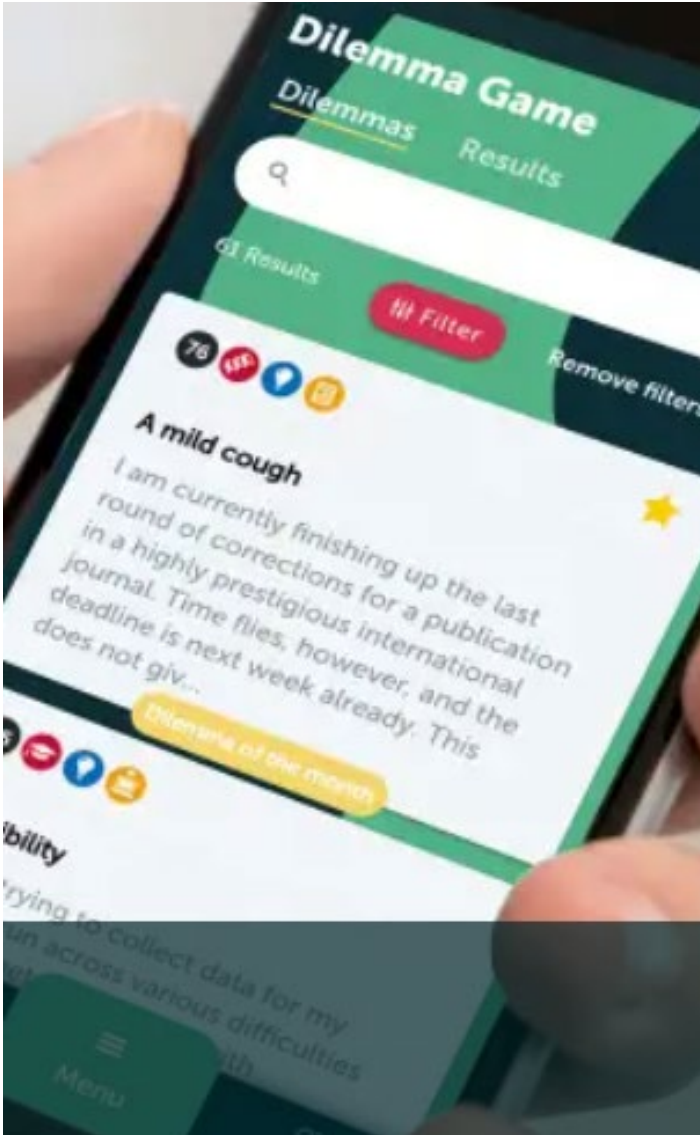
Senior methodology

- A I agree with the senior's point of view and only make some minor changes in the description of our methodology.
- B I ask my supervisor to convince the senior researcher that we have to make profound changes. If he does not succeed I go with the senior's point of view
- C I make a plea for profound changes and if they are rejected by the senior researcher I refrain from coauthoring.
- D I make a plea for profound changes and if they are rejected by the senior researcher I acquiesce to the senior's point of view.



Writing for your audience

- My PhD research is funded by a government organization. When discussing my conclusions with the organization, it becomes clear that my conclusions are much too nuanced to make any political statements. The organization asks me to rewrite my conclusions so that they offer more clear-cut statements. Based on the data I think it is impossible to say things with such certainty. When I discuss the matter with my supervisor he tells me that I need to learn to write for my audience and that I should be able to make bolder statements. I might need the government organization for financing future research. What do I do?



Writing for your audience

- A I rewrite my conclusions in the way the organization asks me to.
- B I refrain from rewriting my conclusions.
- C I decide to write an executive summary in which my conclusions are more certain and clear while keeping the nuanced conclusion in my dissertation.
- D I ask an older researcher who is very strict on scientific guidelines to decide on the matter.

Questions?



