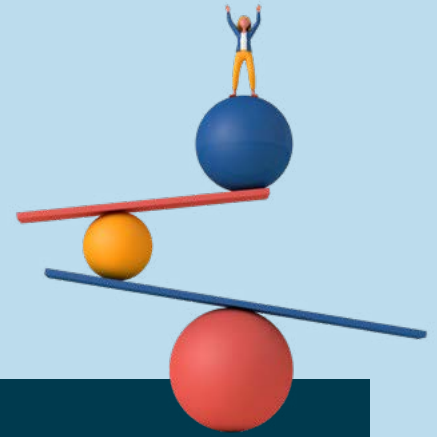


# OPERATE

*Operational procedure to assess opportunities and risks of international STI cooperation*



## Opportunities and risks in international scientific cooperation

Ministries and security authorities alone often do not have the necessary background to see which risks are worth taking in order to advance scientific endeavours. As a result, the assessment of international research cooperation is often not nuanced, cannot foresee future opportunities or to weigh opportunities against risks.

This carries the risk of uninformed decisions, to prematurely restrict collaborations that are of high benefit for humanity and knowledge creation, or that risks are not recognised and measures to mitigate them are not applied.

For a more balanced assessment, the affected scientists and experts have to be involved.

## The OPERATE application

OPERATE is an online accessible working aid developed by the German project management agency (DLR Projektträger).

*Its objectives are:*

1. to provide a methodical framework to include scientists and researchers in the assessment and weighing up of opportunities and risks when cooperating with international partners;
2. to raise awareness and foster exchange among stakeholders in higher education, research and innovation institutions on possible opportunities and risks; and
3. to enable informed decisions.



**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

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## The OPERATE application

Via a systematic 2-step assessment and discussion process OPERATE offers a framework for a standardised assessment of opportunities and risks.

- In the first step, the self-assessment, a preselected panel of experts in a given field is invited to answer a catalogue of questions regarding risks and opportunities. Based on the answers, risk and opportunity matrixes are created.
- In the second step, the group-assessment, these matrixes feed into a discussion on the risk- and opportunity level stimulating a targeted process of opportunity enhancement and risk mitigation.

OPERATE can in principle be applied to any international scientific cooperation where risks could be assumed and opportunities are explored.

The stakeholders involved in the assessment process can decide by themselves how the results will be used. The results are not binding or linked to obligations.

*Science itself must be part of an appropriate and comprehensive review of opportunities and risks.*

## Who can benefit from OPERATE?

The target group are the main risk carriers, namely scientifically responsible leadership on various levels and those who decide on the scientific orientation and project development at universities and research organisations.

Furthermore, OPERATE sensitizes scientists and administrative staff of universities and research organisations, such as departments for research funding and international cooperation.

*Participants will benefit from the assessment because:*

- they are directly involved in the assessment of a cooperation,
- develop a shared understanding,

- can transfer the results to their remit,
- are better trained for future cooperation decisions.

Cooperation is integral for science, safeguarding cooperation must thus be part of a research security approach.



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