

# **University Reform, Globalisation and Europeanisation (URGE)**



## **Project Management Authorship Protocol**

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# URGE: Authorship Protocol

There are two main reasons why it is important for participants to the URGE project to agree an authorship protocol;

1. The URGE project involves creating new knowledge out of the ‘transfer’ and exchange of research results, ideas and insights that we have accrued from our current or previous research. Some of these ‘results’ may already have been published, in which case attribution is straightforward, but others may be ideas people are still mulling. To be able to engage confidently in discussion and the exchange of ideas in workshops and in informal settings, we need to be sure that, if a participant uses or builds on another’s ideas, they will be properly acknowledged.
2. Participants in the URGE project span from professors to early researchers who are trying to establish their careers. Where there are such differences in formal status, it is sometimes daunting to open a discussion with a senior academic about publishing conventions. To establish an intellectual environment conducive to open discussion, it is important that we establish methods for participants to raise issues of attribution and authorship.

Using other people's ideas and expressions is part of the fabric of academic research, and equally, it is generally accepted that failure to acknowledge your intellectual debt to others is dishonest. In a knowledge exchange project, whose success depends largely on the quality of conversations over four years, situations might arise which are not so ‘cut and dried’, and someone could be using another participant’s idea without realising.

## **Confidentiality**

If a participant wishes to contribute to a discussion by using some material that is sensitive or confidential, then he or she should clearly state that the material is confidential, and all participants must respect that and not refer to the material outside of the meeting.

## **Authorship**

In general, the convention will be:

- If several people have contributed equally to a publication, then their names will be listed in alphabetical order.
- If one person has played a more substantial role than the co-authors, then the major contributor will be named first, and the rest in alphabetical order.
- If one person has coordinated the whole publication and edited the other contributions, that person should be ‘editor’, and the others ‘contributors’.

## **Attribution**

In general, the convention will be:

- A footnote on the first page or an ‘Acknowledgement’ section at the end, saying that the author’s involvement in URGE has contributed to this publication, and mentioning any people within URGE who have made any special contribution (e.g. an important influence on particular ideas or useful comments on a draft).
- If an author uses an idea that came out of a presentation or a discussion (however informal) with another URGE participant e.g. at a workshop or in an email exchange, then a footnote at that point in the paper should acknowledge that contribution.

## **Discussion of publication and authorship**

The detailed outline for each work package should include plans for publication. This will include URGE working paper(s) and may include other articles, journal special issues, edited volumes or website contributions. Questions of authorship and attribution must be discussed when formulating the detailed outline, and every time ideas about publication evolve subsequently. That is, discussions of publication should not just be ‘what’ but also ‘who’ in terms of authorship and attribution.

## **Failsafe**

Each working paper or other publication arising from the project should be circulated to all participants in draft, with an invitation to comment within two weeks. Often these comments will be of the usual kind, helping academic peers to sharpen their argument, but this two week period is also an opportunity for anyone to point out that some material or an argument used in the text came from a contribution or comment made at a workshop or other interchange. While the individual concerned is welcome to raise such a query on their own behalf, others may also do so, as it is a collective responsibility to notice and discuss such issues. If the author agrees that this was a source of the information or argument, it is expected that they will make an attribution. If an issue is not easily resolved, it can be referred to the management team (SW, SLR, CS) or such of them as are not directly involved in the case.

## **Authorship OR Attribution?**

The borderline between authorship and attribution is a perilous grey area, which hopefully we won’t encounter. But if a participant feels their written contribution to a text has been so great that they should have the status of author, then the management team (SW, SLR, CS) or such of them as are not directly involved in the case, will investigate and advise the people concerned.

SW

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