

## ERIH and Art History – RIHA resolution

ZI-News

ERIH and Art History - a joint resolution of RIHA

RIHA, the International Association of Research Institutes in the History of Art ([www.riha-institutes.org](http://www.riha-institutes.org)), sharply criticizes the clandestine way in which the European Science Foundation (ESF) has developed and monitored the European Reference Index for the Humanities (ERIH) since 2001, and is extremely concerned about its present and future application.

See:

<http://www.esf.org/research-areas/humanities/erih-european-reference-index-for-the-humanities/erih-initial-lists.html>

Following discussions at the General Assemblies in Rome (Nov. 6-8, 2008) and Ljubljana (Nov. 6-7, 2009), RIHA has adopted the following resolution on November 7, 2009:

1. The qualities of scholarly work in the humanities cannot be assessed in simple numbers or metrics; principles which were developed in the context of the natural sciences cannot be transferred to or employed in the humanities, since these work differently, in particular with regard to the relevance of research for different audiences or readerships, and its impact on these constituencies.
2. RIHA strongly opposes the idea that, in the field of art history, the place of a publication (in a journal that has been assigned to category A, B, or C) is indicative of the quality of the individual article or contribution.
3. The categorization of journals does not reflect the needs of scholars. RIHA will not deliver data to ERIH or to any similar quantitative indices of research quality that can be used for assessing the quality of individual scholars, departments, or institutions.
4. RIHA strongly opposes the idea that a specific number of articles in any journal can serve as a means to establish the scholarly potential of a candidate for career promotion (as practised, e.g., in Poland).
5. RIHA strongly deplores the current practice of linking directly the

funding of a research institute to the number of articles published by the staff of that institute. RIHA considers this practice to be meaningless with regard to the quality and impact of an institute's daily work.

6. All RIHA member institutes hereby declare that they will never use ERIH data for assessing the quality of applications for grants and fellowships, research projects, or for temporary or permanent positions as staff members. Rather, they will rely on specific criteria appropriate to the individual case.

7. RIHA strongly urges all European art historical institutions (museums, galleries, universities, cultural heritage organizations etc.) not to use ERIH, and to lobby their respective ministries to ensure that ERIH is not employed at local, regional, federal, or national level.

Reference:

ANN: ERIH and Art History - RIHA resolution. In: ArtHist.net, Mar 17, 2010 (accessed Jul 3, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/32377>>.