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## QUESTESI

# Kit for QSI Evaluation Reporters

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## QSI Evaluation Reporter's Guide

### Background Information

Most of us who will serve as a Reporter have read through the QSI "Kit" for Referents, Advisors, and Auditors. The contents have discussed at length over the past year --- notably, the Referential, the QSI view of social responsibility and sustainability education, and the QSI 'open' approach to evaluation, standards, and criteria.

### The role of the reporter

The Reporter is a member of the audit team, bringing a separate set of eyes and ears to the event. The Reporter is more than a witness or simply a writer; he or she should understand the points to be evaluated and the relevance of data obtained before and during the visit. The Reporter may ask for clarifications during discussions, or mention gaps or 'gray areas' to the team leader. In the end the Reporter has an editorial and quality control function: to make certain that the opinions of the Auditors are accurately expressed and supported by evidence.

### Preparation for an evaluation visit

The reporter should be as well prepared as any team member. That means:

- a. Familiarity with the QSI standards and criteria (indicators).
- b. Familiarity with the contents of the Self-Assessment Report.
- c. Familiarity with documentation that the Faculty may cite in discussions with the team. (e.g., items referenced to URLs in the SA report)
- d. Prior to the visit, working with other team members to identify the issues and questions that should be pursued during the visit. (The team must be selective in choosing topics for its visit agenda)

### Reports

The Reporter has a role to play in three reports. **First**, a preliminary report which distills the findings, opinions, and initial recommendations of each Auditor. This initial report will follow the general outline of the evaluation items in the "Kit" and Auditor's Guide. This material must be edited before any release to the institution. At this stage, the findings may include statements to the effect that, based on the SAR and visit findings, a given objective or criterion has, or has not been met. No overall or summative judgments on the matter of recognition will be included at this stage. The institution will be invited to comment and offer corrections for any factual errors or omissions.

Second, the preliminary report then be edited further, to produce a fully synthesized report and recommendation to the Awarding Body. This should be a shared effort of the Team Leader and Reporter. The recommendation must establish whether the institutional or departmental effort reaches or exceeds a threshold for recognition, whether specific areas are worthy of recognition or caution, and the level of attainment.

### Outline of the Final Report

The final report will be issued in two versions: one for the Awarding Body and one for the institution. This report will be a further distillation or synthesis of the information presented in advance, and judgments based on the content of the site visit. The report should be suitable for adoption (or revision) by the Awarding Body.

In general the contents of the Final Report will include:

A synthesis of the narrative responses in the SAR, which establish a context for understanding what the institution and its faculties have done in terms of SRSE.

A brief reflection on the Inventory of SRSE program, course, and project offerings; the breadth of topics; the number of disciplines involved in the total effort.

A synthesis of the findings for each of the Dimensions. This may include an aggregate rating for a Dimension, as well as comments on significant ratings, high, low, or “none”. Some of the standards and criteria have a more distinct importance; e.g., transverse skills, contextual awareness, strategic planning and action, cooperation in R&D, and the “cultural” development of students. Such areas may call for comment.

A total of ratings accrued by Dimension and overall.

Audit Team recommendation (to be omitted from the Institutional report)

Awarding Body decision as to recognition and the level of fulfillment across the four Dimensions.

### **Auditors and Reporters Guides**

The ‘Auditors Guide’ has been extracted from the larger “Kit.” It will serve as a working document for the auditors, prior to and during the visit. It has been adapted here for use by Reporters. Depending on the Team’s selection of issues to be pursued during the visit, certain items in the Auditor’s Guide may not come up in the discussions. However, all issues should be addressed in the Self-Assessment or in supporting documents. The Reporter’s Guide may prove useful for an inventory of what the Team is presumed to know about the institution, department, and SRSE program.

At the end of the visit each Auditor’s Guide should contain findings, ratings, notes and recommendations. These are internal working documents that will not be released, but will supply critical input to the Reporter. The Reporter’s task is to digest the material and to produce a literate report of findings.

### **Synthesis**

The initial ‘visit’ report will not include Auditors’ recommendations on the level of recognition, type of award, or recommendations. The Audit Team will convey its recommendations to the Awarding Body, where the final decision will be made.

The Reporter will play a key role in preparing a report to the Awarding Body. That report should be as well-synthesized as possible. It not go into exhaustive detail; rather, it should give an overview of the findings or ratings for the major topics of the SAR and evaluation. For example, the Narrative response items can be aggregated as “Context.” Each of the four Dimensions can be summarized as an overall rating with remarks on strengths, weaknesses, or areas in which there was no ratable response.



## Self-Assessment Report organization

The self-assessment report (SAR) is the basic information resource for the evaluation. It has three sections:

1. **Questions that require a brief and well-focused narrative response.** We are interested in the context for your sustainability effort, the organization and development of SRSE-related programs and activities, and finally, the origins of strategic initiatives and the deployment of policies between institutional levels.

2. **An institutional Inventory** of programs, concentrations, elective options or clusters, and projects or activities related to SRSE and topical targets. This will show where the efforts of your unit are situated in an institutional context, and the full range of topical or subject areas. Make note of joint efforts with other departments where teaching staff, support personnel, or facilities are shared.

3. **Ratings of progress in terms of objectives and indicators for the four QSI Dimensions.** The indicators provide criteria for rating; many refer to the evidence of progress. This is a general interpretation:

**0 = No evidence**

**1 = Minimal evidence of effort directed to specific objectives**

**2 = Weak, some evidence of directed effort; early stage of planning & development**

**3 = Adequate (in terms of linking objectives to implementation, action, results)**

**4 = Strong (evidence of a more substantial directed effort)**

**5 = Very strong (evidence of a fully developed effort)**

We do not wish to publish evaluation ratings in any form that might inspire competitive rankings. Our ratings are intended only to help the institution and QSI map the strengths and limitations of the SRSE programs and related activities.

The evaluation will produce a formative judgment on the extent to which the evaluated unit reaches or exceeds a threshold level of sustainability effort, overall and within each of the four Dimensions.

It is important to recognize the diversity of institutional choices, actions, and outcomes. The efforts of each institution will rest upon different assumptions. Thus, an institution that is strong in even one of the four Dimensions should be recognized for that effort. This approach is discussed in the Referential document.

## The Reporter's Guide

**Questions for Narrative Response:** These questions may provide “context” for understanding the content of the SAR and discussions with faculty during the visit.

### 3.1.1 Organization of Social Responsibility & Sustainability Education (SRSE)

- a. Does more than one administrative office, division, school, or department have specific responsibilities for SRSE education?

**Who is responsible? Is responsibility concentrated, dispersed, or just not clear?**

- b. Is “social responsibility” taught in any non-technical or technical departments or faculties?

**Which faculties think about and teach “social responsibility”?**

- c. How is SRSE education delivered? In the form of elective courses, as a defined “concentration” or “option”, a degree program, projects, or a mixture of formats?

**What formats are used to deliver SRSE education?**

- d. Can students in any engineering degree program take elective courses related to sustainability? Who can participate in SRSE problem- or project-based studies?

**Who is allowed to engage in SRSE coursework and learning projects?**

- e. Did you engage in “benchmarking” in the planning process for your SRSE program? Briefly outline the problem(s) that you wanted to solve through benchmarking, where you sought and found solutions, and how the findings have been applied.

**Was “benchmarking” significantly involved in planning the SRSE program? To what effect?**

- f. Did the planners obtain useful information from publications, “experts”, or by attending conferences? (briefly describe)

**Any references made to inputs from conferences, publications, or expert advice?**

- g. If you and your colleagues (faculty) were just starting to develop the program under review, what would you do differently?

**This may come up in faculty reflections on strengths, weaknesses, and their planning process.**

### 3.1.2 The Strategic Environment

**Note to Reporters: Give close attention to any discussion on these four points.**

- a. Is there an institutional, divisional, or school strategy for SRSE planning and action?

**A critical point. The SRSE strategy should appear in a readily-accessible document. If it doesn't, or if there is no published strategy, flag this for further attention.**

- b. Does SRSE strategy and action more often originate in, or flow from, departments or program faculties? Where did the initiative for your program originate?

**Basic question: Where and how does SRSE strategy originate and then flow through the institution? The origin of a strategic initiative may have an impact on the extent of its effects within the institution.**

- c. Regardless of the origin of SRSE strategy and action, do these initiatives receive the support needed for success?

**Issue: If an SRSE initiative starts at department level, can it be adequately supported?**

- d. Which departments have been visibly successful in dealing with SRSE issues? What explains their success?

**Issue: Whether there are other noteworthy SRSE programs that are not participating in this evaluation.**

### 3.1.3 The Efforts of the Department

The department was asked to give a brief evaluative summary of its SRSE program(s) or offerings; e.g., the strengths, accomplishments, limitations, and work in progress.

**Reporters should read this part of the SAR. It should provide a context for understanding what is presented in the SAR and in your discussions with faculty.**

#### **Reporter's Notes:**

### 3.2 Institutional Inventory: SRSE-Related Programs, Concentrations, Options, Projects and Activities

To Reporters: This is an inventory of the Institutional offering of SRSE programs, concentrations, projects and activities. This should indicate the breadth, depth, and topical range of SRSE education. Reporters should make note of entries in sections 3 and 4, projects and student involvement in non-curricular activities. Those items may be more difficult to validate.

Institution	Department	Topical Target / Learning Objective
<b>1. Degree Program Titles</b>		
<b>2. Concentrations and Elective Options</b>		



3. Sustainability-Related Projects in Curriculum	Department	Topical Target / Learning Objective
4. Student Involvement (Non-curricular activity)	Department	Topical Target / Learning Objective

Reporter's Notes:

### 3.3 Self-Ratings in the Four Dimensions

To Reporters: The departments were asked to give self-assessment ratings for various aspects of the four Dimensions. We also asked for access to the supporting documents, preferably in URL links or attached files.

#### 3.3.1 Dimension 1: Institution, Faculty or Departmental Unit

**RATING**  
Dimension 1  
Evidence of Institutional/ Faculty  
recognition & action

**0 = No**  
**1 = Minimal**    **2 = Weak**  
**3 = Adequate**    **4 = Strong**  
**5 = Very strong**

**URL or location of supporting documents**  
(e.g., strategic and organizational plans, meeting agendas or minutes, white papers, mission & policy statements, etc.)

	OBJECTIVES	INDICATORS	Issues for the Reporter Enter rating here - place notes at end of section
1a	The institution and its academic units recognize <b>social responsibility</b> as an important or key element of institutional identity & values and as a common thread in matters of sustainability	<p>A stated commitment to sustainability as a matter of institutional <u>identity</u> and <u>values</u> (<i>documented in mission statements, strategic objectives &amp; plans, policy statements, annual reports, accreditation filings, brochures and catalogues, web site content, etc.</i>)</p> <p>The institution (overall or at unit level) has expressed a commitment to sustainability by the creation of positions (Vice-Rector, Dean etc.) and/or competent committees (a Council, Task Force, etc.), or by assigning responsibilities to existing personnel and/or governing bodies and committees.</p> <p>The institution (overall or at unit level) has published criteria for hiring, tenure, and promotion that recognize faculty members' contributions to sustainability through scholarship, teaching, consulting, or campus and community activities.</p> <p>The institution has established multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary structures (such as an institute/center) for research, education and policy development on sustainability issues</p>	<p>Existence of formal documents that indicate recognition of the concept of social responsibility</p> <p>Existence of positions and/or competent committees that indicate recognition of the concept of social responsibility</p> <p>Sustainability background is recognized in policy for faculty, hiring, tenure, promotion.</p> <p>Existence of institutes/centers for SRS research, education, policy</p>

1b	<p>Institutional management (overall or unit level) treats sustainability as an integral part of the overall <u>operational management strategy and practices</u></p>	<p>Institutional and/or unit-level documents clearly show that sustainability strategies have an effect on the planning, implementation, and realization of <u>operational objectives</u> (short, middle or long term goals).</p>	<p><b>Evidence of effect of sustainability strategy on planning and operations at institutional / unit level</b></p>
1c	<p>Specifically, the Institution (and/or its units) includes good practices for sustainable development in <u>campus projects</u> (e.g., green or ‘eco’ building construction, renovation, landscaping, energy and water conservation, waste reduction, re-cycling, purchasing, etc.)</p>	<p>Institutional and/or unit-level documentation indicates the integration of good practices in everyday campus life and operational management</p>	<p><b>Does institutional literature speak of a “green” campus or sustainable operations? If so how strongly?</b></p>
1d	<p>The Institution (and/or units) provides opportunities for faculty and staff development to enhance understanding, teaching &amp; research in social responsibility/ sustainability</p>	<p>Institutional documentation indicates that it organizes or facilitates faculty and staff access to conferences, seminars, lectures and continuing education on sustainability issues</p>	<p><b>Evidence that the institution or faculty unit provides tangible support for faculty/staff attendance at conferences, seminars, etc.</b></p>

**Reporter's Notes & Summary Impressions, Dimension 1, Institutional and Faculty Awareness and Commitment**

### 3.3.2 Dimension 2: Education & Curriculum

To Reporters: The faculty was asked to prepare a table for each program, concentration, or option to be evaluated. Each table should have the following information on the first page. This section largely deals with the conception and planning of SRSE programs.

	Title of programs, concentrations, options, etc., to be evaluated:			
	Topical target areas for the program, concentration, or option under review: (examples of topical targets are shown at right; add new targets as needed)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Environment (pollution, waste management, remediation)</li> <li>2. Energy (consumption efficiency, conservation, recycling, conversion)</li> <li>3. Eco-building &amp; design</li> <li>4. Life-cycle analysis</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Natural and water resources</li> <li>6. Eco-systems and Bio-Diversity</li> <li>7. Safety, health, and risk</li> <li>8. Economic, social, and political aspects of sustainability</li> </ol>	URL or location of supporting documents
	<b>RATING: Extent of realization</b>	<p><b>0 = No</b></p> <p>1 = Minimal    2 = Weak    3 = Adequate</p> <p>4 = Strong    5 = Very strong</p>		
	<b>OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>INDICATORS OR EVIDENCE</b>	<b>Issues for the Reporter (Auditors Enter rating here)</b> Give a summary impression at end of section	
<b>2a</b>	The program plan includes the scientific /technical knowledge, practical skills, and non-technical subjects essential for teaching and learning sustainability in the context of the topical target areas chosen by the faculty	The program documentation clearly identifies the subjects to be taught, sustainability-related learning objectives & outcomes, and the way in which outcomes will be assessed. Extent to which the institution and departments offer courses and projects pertinent to sustainability	Issue: Clear identification of subjects, learning objectives & outcomes, assessment approach.	
			Issue: Breadth, depth, relevance of the course and project offering.	

<b>2b</b>	The program plan reflects an institutional, school, or department rationale for selection of sustainability-related topics, the associated methodologies, techniques and tools, including the use of project-based or problem-led education techniques	The documentation explains how, why, and by whom these choices were made, with particular attention to the design of learning projects and problems	<b>Issue: The rationale for choices that affect what is taught, the approach, and the use of project or problem-based learning. In short: WHY did they make the choices or decisions that shaped this program?</b>
<b>2c</b>	The teaching and learning plan comprehends the “transverse skills” that graduates will need to recognize and effectively deal with sustainability problems	The program faculty has identified what it considers to be transverse skills. It is clear why, where, and how such skills will be developed and verified	<b>Issue: Whether “transverse skills” are addressed in the teaching &amp; learning plan. Is what you see or hear convincing?</b>
<b>2d</b>	The program under review is designed to give graduates the broader “contextual awareness” needed to deal with sustainability issues and problems.	Contextual Awareness is a “transverse skill” that cuts across different disciplines and types of problems.	<b>Issue: Whether the teaching/learning concept or plan recognizes Contextual Awareness.</b>
<b>2e</b>	The institutional unit (department) has taken steps to address sustainability learning objectives, outcomes, and competencies in the external quality assurance and internal review systems	Documents or reports for internal and/or external quality assurance should confirm that sustainability teaching and learning is suitably evaluated.	<b>Issue: Whether sustainability learning objectives &amp; outcomes are addressed in the internal and external quality assurance systems</b>

## Reporter's Notes and Summary Impressions: Dimension 2, Education & Curriculum

### 3.3.3 Dimension 3: Student Involvement & Cultural Development

**Note to Reporters:** This refers to efforts of the Institution or teaching unit to engage students and graduates in the “culture” of social responsibility and sustainability (SRS). This Dimension can be difficult to fulfill, so these efforts can be a mark of distinction.

	<p><b>RATING</b> Evidence of activities &amp; efforts</p>	<p><b>0 = No</b> 1 = Minimal    2 = Weak    3 = Adequate 4 = Strong    5 = Very strong</p>	<p>URL of documents supporting rating (e.g., strategic plan, minutes of meetings, white papers, mission &amp; policy statements, proposals, reports, publications)</p>
	<p><b>OBJECTIVES</b></p>	<p><b>INDICATORS OR EVIDENCE</b></p>	<p><b>Issues for the Reporter</b> (Auditors enter rating here) Give a summary impression at end of section</p>
<p><b>3a</b></p>	<p>Student awareness of SRS issues is cultivated through student advising and information processes that use effective techniques to reach students individually or in groups</p>	<p>Evidence that sustainability is addressed by advisors, in presentations to groups, and in printed or online materials intended for students</p>	<p><b>Issue:</b> Effective methods for advising students about sustainability. This should be a question for any students who participate in the visit.</p>
<p><b>3b</b></p>	<p>Institutional concern for, and commitment to, sustainability is expressed through campus activities designed to give internal and external visibility to the subject and to involve students</p>	<p>Documentation of seminars, conferences, guest speakers, Earth Day events, organized visits to industries and sites of environmental significance (in the past 4 years)</p>	<p><b>Issue:</b> A history of special events related to social responsibility and sustainability</p>
<p><b>3c</b></p>	<p>A productive dialogue between the engineering faculty or school, its departments, employers and practitioners concerning sustainability and the aptitudes, attitudes, and capacities sought in candidates for employment. This produces information that is communicated to students and integrated in the teaching &amp; learning plan.</p>	<p>Evidence of such a dialogue and its impact on teaching &amp; learning objectives and plans. (i.e., meeting agendas, reports, summaries)</p>	<p><b>Issue:</b> Internal and external dialogue on plans for sustainability teaching and learning.</p>



<p><b>3d</b></p>	<p>The institution or engineering faculty/school tracks the placement of graduates and seeks alumni feedback on sustainability issues. Alumni feedback is communicated to the students.</p>	<p>Evidence shows how this function is conducted, the nature of the information obtained, and the use of such information. This may be drawn, in part, from placement data prepared for quality assurance purposes.</p>	<p><b>Issues: The tracking of graduates and feedback from them on sustainability issues.</b></p>
<p><b>3e</b></p>	<p>There is encouragement and support for student participation in sustainability-related activities <b>based inside or outside</b> of the institution. Such activities may complement, but not be part of the formal curriculum. (e.g., the work of community organizations, networks, NGO's, local or regional efforts to address environmental health problems)</p>	<p>The evidence shows the extent of institutional support for student involvement in sustainability activities inside or outside the institution.</p>	<p><b>Issue: Actual institutional support for student involvement in sustainability-related activities, on or off campus.</b></p>

## **Auditor's Notes and Summary Impression, Dimension 3, Student Involvement and Cultural Development**

### 3.3.4 Dimension 4: Research & Innovation (in Cooperation with Industry, Enterprises, Organizations, and other HE Institutions)

Note to Reporters: The issue here goes beyond a purely internal research agenda for sustainability. A strong internal agenda should not be discounted, but cooperative research & development ventures with outside institutions and organizations is highly desirable.

	RATING Evidence of Institution/Faculty recognition & action	0 = No 1 = Minimal 2 = Weak 3 = Adequate 4 = Strong 5 = Very strong	URL or location of supporting documents
	OBJECTIVES	INDICATORS OR EVIDENCE	Issues for the Reporter (Auditors enter rating here) Give a summary impression at end of section
4a	The research agenda of the institutional unit or department includes subjects clearly related to sustainability	A credible estimate of the percentage of faculty members teaching or doing research on sustainability issues. [Such information may be found in existing reports or publications]	Issues: Is there credible data on the percentage of the faculty teaching or research on sustainability?
4b	The Institution (or its units) contributes to sustainable development through formal partnerships or working relationships at regional, national or international levels	There is evidence of such activity in institutional and/or unit-level reports, publications, and in reports issued by external R&D partners	Issue: Is there evidence of SRSE partnerships or working relationships at regional level and beyond?

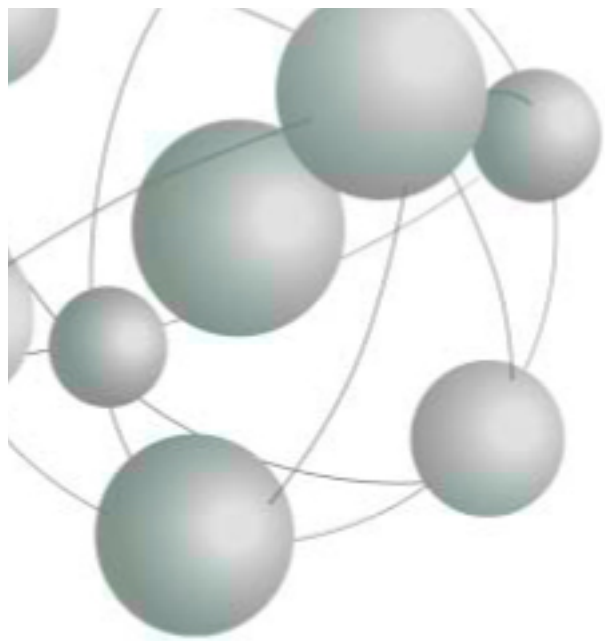
4c 1	The institution, its schools, or departments produce a significant amount of credible research or scholarship in the broad area of sustainability	An estimate of the amount of faculty research with sustainability aspects (little: < than 10%; weak: 11% to 20%; adequate: 21% to 30%; strong: 31% to 60%; very strong: >61%.  ** Make note of research which has received external recognition.	Issues: Are there credible estimates of how much faculty and student research deals with sustainability?  Is there an indication of external recognition of faculty research?
4c 2	The student aspect of research	An estimate of the amount of student research with sustainability aspects in the context of their academic programs (little: < than 10%; weak: 11% to 20%; adequate: 21% to 30%; strong: 31% to 60%; very strong: >61%	As above... also, note whether Masters-level students are doing thesis projects on sustainability topics
4d	The engineering school, departments, and faculty have active and specific linkages with industry, technological business, and the engineering profession  Such links are a source of useful current information on sustainability problems, issues, and possible solutions.	Evidence of specific linkages is found in institutional and departmental reports and publications, as well as in materials produced by external partners  The department and program faculty can demonstrate that information obtained via external links has been applied to the benefit of teaching & learning. (This may be absolved in several well-chosen examples)	Issues: Is there tangible evidence of linkages with industry, business, the engineering profession?  Issue: Credible evidence of teaching/learning benefits from external linkages. How do the students benefit from linkages for research and development?

4e	The engineering school and departments(s) are visibly involved in associations, professional or technical bodies and organizations that are actively committed to sustainability.	Evidence that external activities have had a positive effect on the conception, planning, and development of sustainability strategies within the institution and its units.	<b>Issue: What has been learned through external activities and then applied?</b>
4f	There is an operational strategy for sustainability-related research, development, and innovation projects in cooperation with industries, business firms, educational institutions or pertinent organizations.	As above, evidence can be found in internal and external publications, reports, articles, etc. Such material may be in print and/or electronic media.	<b>Issue: Evidence of a working strategy for sustainability research, development, and cooperative efforts.</b>
4g	Results of sustainability research, development & innovation projects are communicated to the students; this serves to enrich the curriculum and to stimulate student interest.	Evidence may be found in selected examples of course descriptions and student projects in which sustainability research content has become part of the learning experience.	<b>Issue: Whether sustainability research &amp; development results are communicated to the students through their courses and projects?</b>

4h	<p>The provision for sustainability-related research, innovation, and cooperation is sustainable in itself; i.e., adequate funding, research and project management support (including the initial pursuit of grants and subsidies)</p>	<p>Evidence that sustainability research &amp; development activities can be sustained; i.e., a budget that is commensurate with objectives, capable personnel, a business plan, and preferably, the support of an institutional office for research management. Existing management documents or excerpts of them may support the argument</p>	<p><b>Issue: Whether sustainability research &amp; development activities can be properly managed and sustained.</b></p>
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## Reporter's Notes and Summary Impression, Dimension 4, Cooperative Research and Innovation Efforts

# NOTES



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