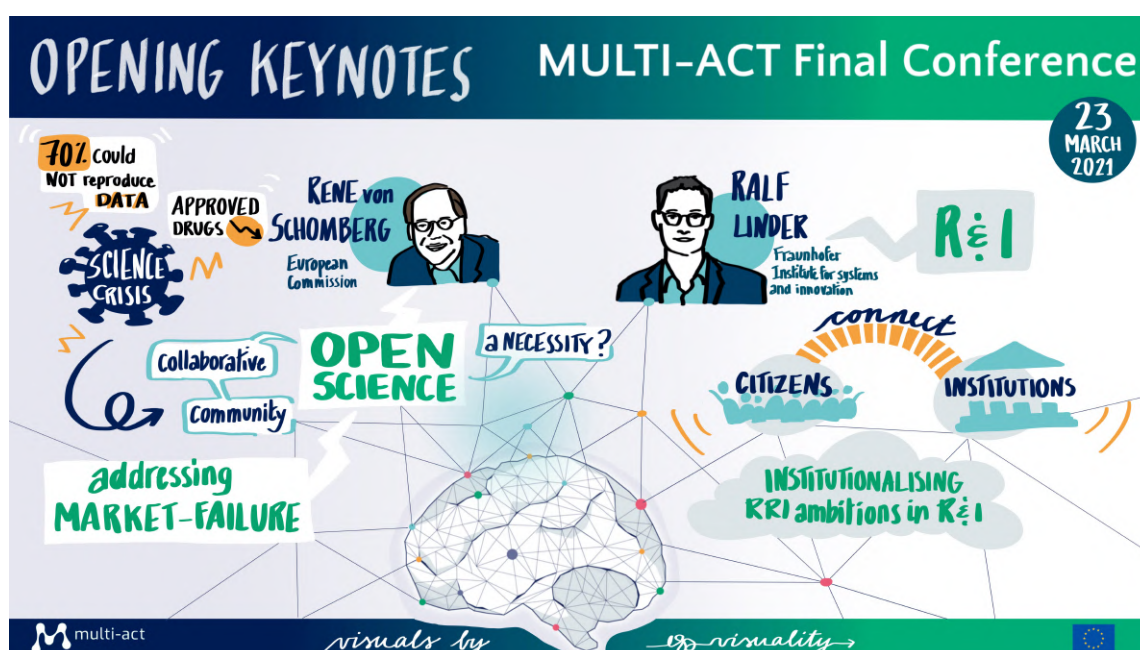


MULTI-ACT Final Conference

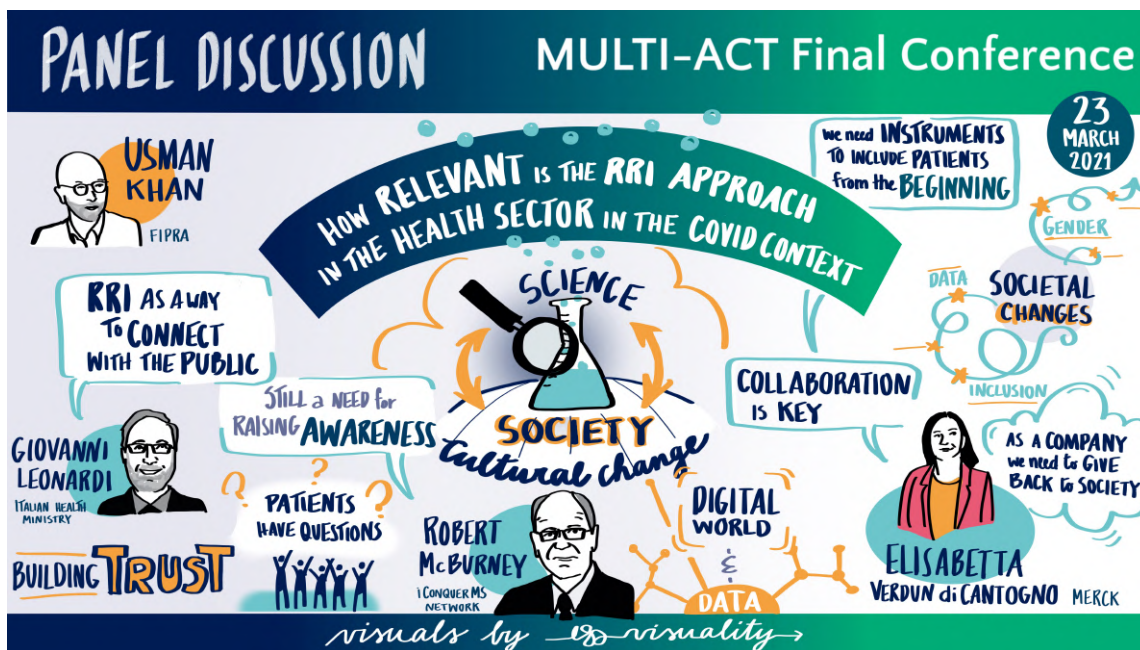
On Tuesday, **23 March 2021**, the MULTI-ACT project organised its final conference with a view to showcase the work done and the results achieved over the past years. The MULTI-ACT project was funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme and aimed to increase the impact of health research on people with brain disorders, creating and implementing a new model allowing for the effective cooperation of all relevant stakeholders.

The conference was opened by **Dr. Paola Zaratin¹**, who introduced the project objectives, ambitions, and outcomes. Dr. Zaratin underlined the need to ensure sustainability in brain research through new multi-stakeholder and multidisciplinary managerial models in line with the Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) approach to enable a unique health research ecosystem through patient participation. She concluded mentioning how the MULTI-ACT project was listed as a model expected to produce institutional changes in participatory research and governance via an innovative co-accountability strategy.

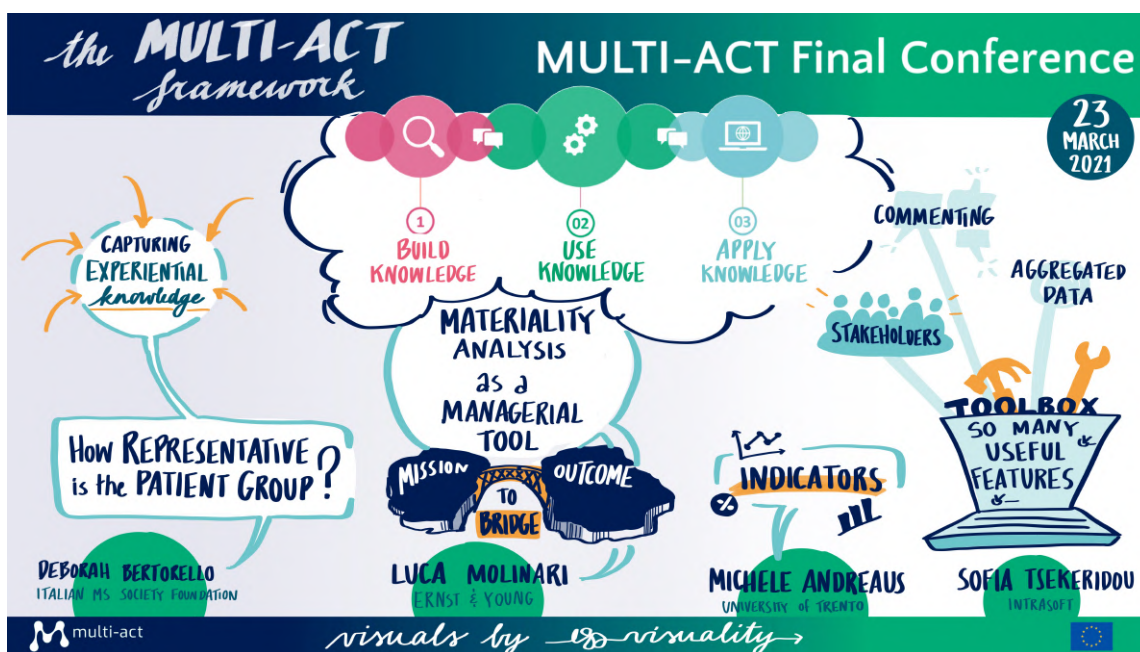
The conference continued with two keynotes addressing the 'what', 'how', and 'why' of RRI by **Dr. René von Schomberg²** and **Dr. Ralf Linder³**. Dr. Schomberg discussed the definition and rationale of 'Open Science' and how it is linked to the concept of Responsible Research and Innovation. He mentioned how RRI represents a new paradigm in which social systems institutionalise co-responsibility as a driving force for socially desirable innovation by giving innovation a direction and, whenever possible, shaping its characteristics. In the following keynote, Dr. Ralf Linder discussed the policy developments that facilitated the emergence of RRI and its current presence at national and international policy levels. He mentioned that within R&I institutions, there is a low awareness of the policy concept of RRI, but a high degree of openness to and interest in responsibility ambitions, as well as numerous RRI-related programmes in place, even if not explicitly called 'RRI'.



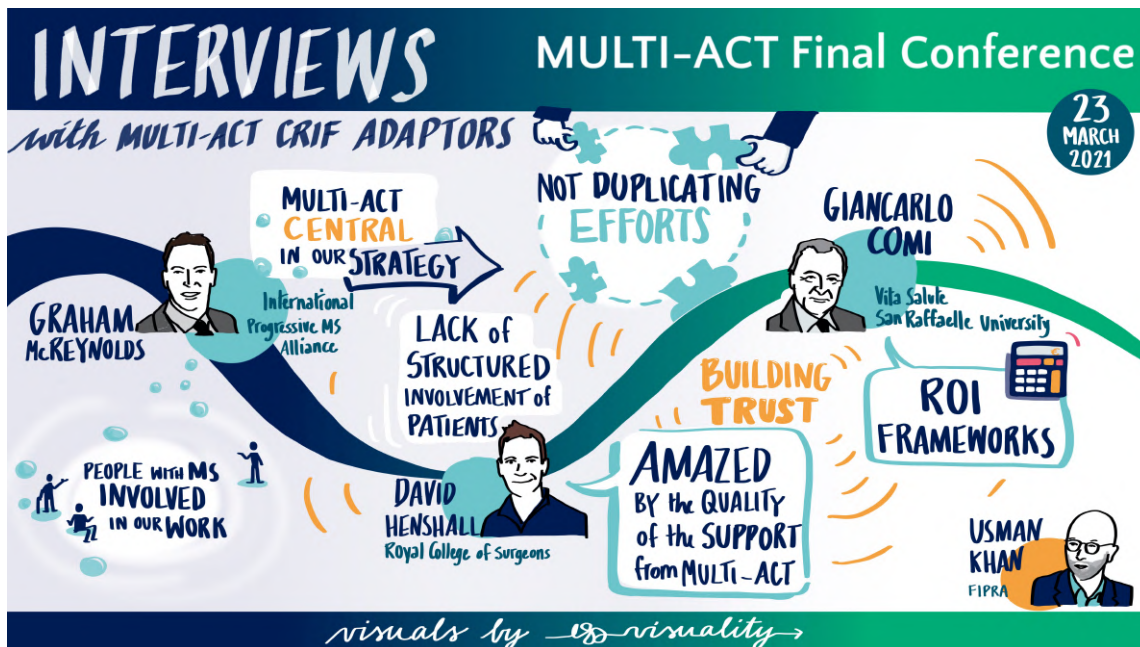
Three representatives of healthcare research and innovation, **Dr. Elisabetta Verdun di Cantogno**⁴, **Prof. Giovanni Leonardi**⁵, and **Dr. Robert McBurney**⁶ joined for a panel discussion moderated by **Dr. Usman Khan**⁷. The panellists discussed the relevance of the RRI approach in their sectors. They all agreed that more work is needed to raise the awareness on RRI, but that the COVID-19 pandemic facilitated a widespread recognition of its importance and implementation.



Finally, members of the project consortium presented the process used to develop the MULTI-ACT Collective Research Impact Framework (CRIF), described the components of the framework (the [Governance Model](#), the [Patient Engagement Guidelines](#), and the [Master Scorecard](#)), and presented the legacy of the project, the [MULTI-ACT Toolbox](#).



The closing panel with **Prof. David Henshall⁸**, **Mr. Graham McReynolds⁹**, and **Prof. Giancarlo Comi¹⁰** provided examples of the practical implementation of the MULTI-ACT model in multi-stakeholder initiatives: EPICLUSTER; the International Progressive MS Alliance; and the Multiple Sclerosis Care Unit (MSCU) of the European Charcot Foundation. The collaboration with the MULTI-ACT project enabled the initiatives to assess opportunities for improvement to establish and manage a structure with multi-stakeholder and accountable governance, and obtain concrete recommendations.



The conference concluded with the closing remarks of Dr. Schomberg who summarised the key messages presented and shared the potential for upscaling the MULTI-ACT project. To read the full event report, visit the [MULTI-ACT webpage](#). The conference concluded with the closing remarks of Dr. Schomberg who summarised the key messages presented and shared the potential for upscaling the MULTI-ACT project. To read the full event report, visit the [MULTI-ACT webpage](#).

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⁵ Research Director at the Italian Health Ministry
⁶ Chief Research Officer at iConquerMS Network
⁷ Senior Advisor at FIPRA, a European public affairs consultancy and the Good Governance Institute
⁸ Chair of EPICLUSTER, a cooperative action of epilepsy research coordinated by the European Brain Research Area
⁹ Associate Vice President, Global Initiatives at the International Progressive MS Alliance
¹⁰ President of the European Charcot Foundation