

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH POLICY 11-01-02

CATEGORY: RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION
SECTION: Research
SUBJECT: Rights, Roles, and Responsibilities of Sponsored Research Investigators
EFFECTIVE DATE: April 3, 1992
PAGE(S): 4

I. SCOPE

This policy establishes the roles, rights, and responsibilities of faculty investigators in the management of sponsored research projects, the protection of the academic and research integrity of such projects, and the resolution of conflicts with colleagues and administrative supervisors.

II. POLICY

The University should not accept awards or enter into agreements for the support of research which confer upon another party the power to censor or exercise effective veto over the dissemination of results and conclusions arising from research. Short delays, usually up to six months, may be permitted to allow industrial sponsors to take out patent applications; these conditions must be specified in the initial awards.

- No agreement should preclude the right of researchers to publish the results of their research. See Policy 11-02- 01, Patent Rights and Technology Transfer and University policy on Secret Research for certain exceptions.

A member of a research team who questions in good faith the handling of a research project should be protected from reprisals by other researchers or administrators. On the other hand, researchers require equal protection from unsupported charges or charges made out of ignorance, misinterpretation, or malice.

The University and its agents will operate under University policies on Sponsored Projects or revision of those policies. It is understood that all the rights and responsibilities set forth in these policies are subject to any legal constraints, to the availability of sufficient resources to meet these and competing demands, and all existing University policies.

Investigators have basic rights to an environment that facilitates research, and the University should encourage and facilitate research. On all sponsored projects, the University shall make reasonable efforts to:

- Expedite hiring of staff and faculty to enable work to proceed from the start of the award
- Assist departments, schools, the Office of Research, and the Office of Research Accounting to facilitate administrative tasks
- Meet the terms and conditions of the sponsored award in collaboration with the Investigators
- Disseminate to appropriate staff and faculty this document as well as more detailed procedures, methods, and responsibilities, and including checklists of administrative procedures and timetables
- Improve and expedite the delivery of essential university services to Investigators by facilitating communication between Investigators and administrators to solve

problems related to sponsored research

- Provide timely notice of all awards to Investigators and to provide notice to investigators of special conditions that require University and/or Investigator acceptance
- Provide timely and accurate monthly accounting reports to Investigators

Investigators have the following responsibilities:

- To create the project
- To inform all responsible administrative persons of the aims, needs, and expectations of the project early enough so that all parties understand the full implications and meanings of the award
- To avoid conflict of interest
- To maintain academic and research integrity
- To ensure that research is conducted safely and in compliance with all state and federal health and safety regulations
- To conduct the work supported by the award in a timely and professional manner
- To conduct the project in a manner consonant with the teaching and research mission of the University
- To submit progress and final reports as may be required under the terms of the award
- To follow University and sponsoring agency guidelines for the use of animal and human subjects in research
- To report patentable and other commercially valuable findings in accordance with the University Patent Policy
- To acknowledge all sponsors of the research project in any official communication regarding the research

The Principal Investigator has the following additional responsibilities:

- In collaboration with Co-Principal Investigators, to develop the project, allowing adequate time for review and comments by department and school officers, relevant research review committees, and the Office of Research
- To share with all Co-Principal Investigators the planning and development of the project to meet the objectives of the award
- To take appropriate action so that the Office of Human Resources clearly states the terms of appointment of non-signatory staff members, including secretaries and research staff
- To follow the guidelines on appointment and termination for all research associates and research fellows
- To ensure compliance with the specific terms and conditions of each award as stated in the contract or grant documents and with all administrative requirements
- To manage all budgetary matters relating to the project, among those including: incurring expenditures made prior to the receipt of a fully executed award only after obtaining specific authorized approval, controlling expenditures so as not to exceed

the total amount of funds awarded, and adhering to specific budget category expenditure limits; obtaining prior approvals (from the agency and the University) for budget changes; reviewing monthly accounting reports and, upon expiration of the contract, making adjustments to clear all expenses

Investigators have the following rights:

- The individual Investigator should not be the subject of institutional coercion with respect to particular research projects
- Once signed and submitted, the University should not modify or change the proposal without consultation with Investigators
- Once accepted by the University, the University must not change the condition of the award unless unusual or extenuating circumstances arise; and in such circumstances changes will be made with full consultation of the Investigators; Investigators have the right to appeal such decisions
- Investigators have full right to publish their findings, except as provided under the University Patent Policy and Policy on Secret Research. Authorship credit should reflect the relative contribution of research team members, should be determined as early as possible in the project, and should be given only to active participants in the project

Settling Disputes

Investigators should attempt to resolve disputes with administrative officers or among professionals engaged in research by informal means. Disputes may arise because of interpretation of this policy or other reasons involved in the project. All parties should present their views to the next higher level administrator in an effort to achieve mutually agreeable solutions.

Procedure 02-03-01, Faculty Grievances, (or its revision) establishes the procedure for settling disputes that arise under this policy or disputes arising for other reasons involved in the project. Investigators (including research associates) who are unable to achieve a mutually agreeable solution on their own initiative will then invoke the Faculty Grievance Procedure for settling the dispute.

Disputes over research issues require evaluation by persons familiar with the scientific, intellectual, or managerial issues involved. In disputes on research awards, especially when there are accusations of disputed ownership of data, misuse of funds or violations of accepted practice, review panels must include persons with specific intellectual or scientific qualifications.

In cases of alleged scientific, intellectual misjudgment, or fraudulent reporting or any other matters subject to Policy 11-01-10, Research Integrity, the University will follow this policy or its revision.

Implementation

Concerns and problems of Investigators arising from issues addressed in this policy should be reported to the University Senate Executive Committee for referral to appropriate Senate committees and/or to the University Research Council.

Review

The University Senate Executive Committee and the University Research Council should evaluate the operation of this policy biannually.

Federal Requirements

The University will provide training to University personnel as required by Federal regulation. All University personnel subject to federal funding agency requirements must complete that training and any mandated disclosures in full compliance with the specific requirements of the funding agency. Please refer to the [Office of Research Protections](#) for additional details on those requirements.

III. REFERENCES

[Policy RI 10, Intellectual Property](#)

[Policy RI 07, Research Integrity](#) (formerly 11-01-01)

[Policy RI 01, Conflict of Interest Policy for Research](#) (formerly 11-01-03)

[Procedure AC 22, Faculty Grievances](#) (formerly 02-03-01)