



STANDARD ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

15.01.01.M5.01 Principal Investigator Eligibility on Sponsored Agreements

Approved March 30, 2016

Revised August 16, 2021

Next Scheduled Review: August 16, 2026

Standard Administrative Procedure Statement

This Standard Administrative Procedure identifies the requirements for PI Eligibility on sponsored agreements, proposals, and projects.

Definitions

Principal Investigator (PI): This individual has been designated by the University and the sponsor as the responsible person for overall administrative, fiscal, scientific and technical direction and conduct of a sponsored project within the terms and conditions of the award and in accordance with University and System rules and regulations. Where there are other PIs on the grant designated by the University and the sponsor, they are referred to as Co-PIs. In these cases, the PI assumes the role of project leader or lead PI and is listed first on the proposal.

Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI): This individual has been designated by the University and the sponsor as a Co-PI and shares the responsibilities for the sponsored project with the PI. In addition to responsibilities for the administrative, compliance, scientific and technical direction of a sponsored project, the Co-PI has fiscal authority and may oversee the spending of a sponsored project in accordance with its terms and conditions.

Co-Investigator (Co-I): As an investigator on a sponsored project, this individual is responsible for the conducting of research within the terms and conditions of the award and in accordance with University and System rules and regulations. Individuals serving in this role must be approved by the University through the normal administrative channels. Co-Is do not have fiscal authority by virtue of their title but can be given authority if delegated in writing by the PI.

Collaborator: An individual who commits to contribute to the scientific development or execution of the project, but does not commit any specified measurable quantified level of effort on the project. Individuals qualifying for the role of PI, Co-PI, or Co-I and/or contribute measurable effort

may not be listed as a collaborator. Individuals are not expected to meet the eligibility criteria defined in TAMU Rule 15.01.01.M5 to serve as a Collaborator on a sponsored research proposal and/or project.

Retired Faculty: Retired Faculty are faculty who have officially retired from the University.

Official Procedure/ Responsibilities/ Process

1. ELIGIBILITY TO SERVE AS PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR (PI)

Eligibility to act as a University Principal Investigator, Co-Principal Investigator, or Co-Investigator on a sponsored project is limited to university employees (generally faculty), excluding positions for which student status is a requirement. Non-faculty University principal investigators must hold a faculty-equivalent research position to serve as a Principal Investigator, Co-Principal Investigator, or Co-Investigator on a sponsored project, or be granted an exception based on the approval of the Vice President for Research (VPR) or designee. A request for an eligibility exception may be made utilizing the [Principal Investigator Eligibility Request Form](#), which should be signed by the Department Head and Dean prior to submission to the VPR or designee for approval. For those who do not report to an academic college, the appropriate unit head will submit the required [form](#) to the VPR for approval. All individuals who serve in the role of a principal investigator on University sponsored projects must be employed by the University in a budgeted position.

2. SPECIAL CONDITIONS:

Persons with the following titles are authorized to be Principal Investigators, Co-Principal Investigators, or Co-Investigators within the identified limitations as determined and approved by the department/center, and the Dean of the college or unit head, in which the person is appointed. VPR or designee approval is not required for the following titles:

Retired / Emeritus Faculty: Participation as a Principal Investigator requires Department Head and Dean approval. Retired Faculty wanting to serve as a Principal Investigator, Co-Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator must be re-employed by the University and placed on payroll for the percentage of time they will serve as a Principal Investigator, Co-Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator at the time of award. Retired Faculty not serving in these roles may work on projects as a Collaborator, not requiring employment.

Postdoctoral Research Associate: Individuals holding the position of Postdoctoral Research Associate (Title Code 7360) can serve as a Principal Investigator, Co-Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator, with the approval of their Department Head and Dean, contingent upon the PI Eligibility requirements of the sponsor guidelines and the specific discipline objectives of the college/center and the role performed by the individual.

Postdoctoral Research Associates are not eligible for blanket eligibility exceptions, and may receive individual proposal eligibility approvals only.

Visiting Faculty: As members of the faculty, Visiting Faculty and faculty equivalent may serve as a Principal Investigator, Co-Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator.

Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

[University Rule 15.01.01.M5, Preparation, Review and Submission of Sponsored Project Proposals](#)

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