



## ASSIGNMENT OF PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR/PROJECT DIRECTOR

**Policy Number:** 1.0.1

**Version Number:** 003

**Classification:** Conduct of Research

**Effective Date:** February 12, 2013

**Responsible University Office:** Vice President for Research

### 1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to specify who may serve as Principal Investigator/Project Director on behalf of Clemson University, and to provide an administrative process when exceptions to the policy are deemed necessary.

### 2.0 Applicability

This policy applies to all individuals who request the role of Principal Investigator/Project Director on behalf of Clemson University for both funded and unfunded research.

### 3.0 Government Rules and Regulations

NA

### 4.0 Definitions

**Adjunct Faculty-** Individual fulfilling current eligibility requirements as defined by the Faculty Manual.

**Emeritus Faculty** – Individual fulfilling current eligibility requirements as defined by the Faculty Manual

**Graduate Research Assistant** – Individual fulfilling current eligibility requirements as defined by The Graduate School.

**Principal Investigator/Project Director** – Eligible faculty or staff member who bears prime responsibility for the scientific, programmatic and financial responsibility for a project, either funded or unfunded.

### 5.0 Policy

The duties that are delegated through the assignment of an individual as the Principal Investigator or Project Director require that the individual placed within that role has appropriate,

formal and legal institutional authority to supervise, direct or otherwise control all decisions necessary for successful project performance. Therefore, the University has designated the following categories of personnel as **ELIGIBLE** to serve as Principal Investigator or Project Director:

- All full-time regular faculty, regardless of academic rank;
- Visiting faculty/scientists during the time they are employed by the University;
- Full-time staff including research faculty and post-doctoral scholars;
- Other University employees as designated by the approval of the Vice President for Research using the Request to Serve as Principal Investigator/Project Director form (paper form or InfoEd eForm)
- Graduate and doctoral students submitting an IRB for purposes of completing research to fulfill graduate thesis or dissertation requirements. This exception applies to IRB submissions only and a faculty advisor must be named on the research team.

In recognition of its oversight role of the University's project performance, personnel supervision, legal responsibilities and various internal and federal compliance requirements associated with sponsored program accounts, suitable level of institutional oversight toward responsible and accountable project conduct must be legally sustainable within the University's policies and procedures. Therefore, employment status serves as an important determinant for proper assignment as Principal Investigator/Project Director.

Categories of employees **INELIGIBLE** to serve as Principal Investigator/Project Director include:

- Adjunct or Emeritus Faculty and Other Individuals Not Employed by the University
- Graduate Research Assistant (GRA) – The standard, appropriate action if a sponsor requires such specific personnel is to name a faculty member (e.g. the student's advisor) with the necessary technical qualifications to serve as the project's PI.
- Temporary Employee and Temporary Grant (TGP) Employee – Temporary and temporary grant employees' termination dates coincide as a matter of routine with the completion date of a sponsored project. The University has significant obligations to the sponsor associated with the project's completion that can require effort of the PI past the sponsor authorized completion date of the project. The University's preference is that the duties be assigned to a permanent faculty position. Care must be observed with the appointment of an individual Principal Investigator whose official actions are sanctioned and reimbursed only within the period of project performance. Consequently, assignment may be conditioned upon certain actions (e.g. appointment of Co-Investigator from within the faculty or extra oversight by the department chair).

#### Variance to the Policy

Upon request of the chair of the department where the research funding resides, and concurrence by the Dean or applicable Associate Dean, the Vice President for Research or his designee may grant a variance of this policy when circumstances sufficiently warrant such action to further the goals of Clemson University.

## 6.0 Responsibilities

Eligible Faculty/Staff: Complete Sponsored Programs Certification Program no later than at time of award, and maintain active certification during the period of performance, including any extension periods.

Ineligible Faculty/Staff: Obtain required approvals from department chair, College Associate Dean, and Vice President for Research

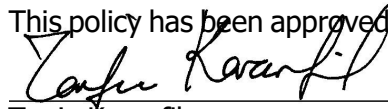
College Pre-Award Support Centers - Complete Request to Serve as Principal Investigator/Project Director Form in InfoEd or Division of Research approved paper form

## 7.0 Sanctions for Non-Compliance

Clemson University reserves the right to reject or return funding received by unapproved individuals, and proceed with appropriate personnel actions as necessary.

## 8.0 Approval Signatures

This policy has been approved by:

  
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Tanju Karanfil  
Senior Vice President for Research, Scholarship  
and Creative Endeavors

December 4, 2024

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Date

REVISION HISTORY		
EFFECTIVE DATE	REVISION NUMBER	MODIFICATION
February 12, 2013		
July 1, 2018	1	Clarification of language and reformat of policy
August 21, 2023	2	Clarification of PI Certification Requirements
August 9, 2024	3	Clarification of graduate and doctoral students as PI for IRBs supporting their graduate research requirements