



## POLICY FOR OFFICIAL SIGNATURE AUTHORITY AND LEGAL APPLICANT

**Policy Number:** 1.0.3

**Version Number:** 001

**Classification:** Conduct of Research

**Effective Date:** February 4, 2002

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

### 1.0 Purpose

The Board of Trustees has delegated to the Vice President for Research the signature authority necessary for effective policy administration and compliance oversight associated with grant and contract management. The purpose of this policy is to specify authority to negotiate binding grants and contracts between the University and its sponsors or other parties engaged in research-related activities.

### 2.0 Applicability

This policy applies to all Clemson University faculty, staff and students.

### 3.0 Government Rules and Regulations

NA

### 4.0 Definitions

Grants and contracts – All documents requiring the signature of Clemson University’s Authorized Organizational Representative. Examples include but are not limited to proposal submissions, award documents, contracts, data use agreements, Memoranda of Agreement, Letters of Agreement.

### 5.0 Policy

The Vice President for Research (or his/her designee) is the official signature authority for all legal documents associated with Sponsored Program Activities. The signature of the Vice President for Research certifies that:

- Project proposals for external funding meet the University’s mission, objectives and sponsor’s solicitation requirements;
- Grant or contract awards will be performed within the constraints of the grant or contract terms and conditions; and

- The University will maintain, or implement, if necessary, operational policies and procedural standards that comply with appropriate federal policies or regulations. Compliance with federal policies or regulations is essential to the University's ability to continue to conduct or grow research.

Sponsored program awards are legally binding contractual agreements, consequently:

- Only the Vice President for Research (or his/her designee) is authorized to negotiate and/or execute such agreements on behalf of the University;
- Principal Investigators, administrative or academic officers through the vice presidential level are not authorized to assume those responsibilities;
- Proposals and awards must clearly identify Clemson University preceding the performing academic unit's name as the official Applicant and Recipient Organization (e.g. Clemson University, on behalf of the College of Science);
- All proposals that are accountable within the University's Fund 20 code – CU Sponsored Program Activities – must be approved through the Office of Sponsored Programs prior to submission to an external sponsor;
- All notifications of an award and associated administrative correspondence are to be addressed or forwarded directly to the Office of Sponsored Program.

The Office of Sponsored Programs is the only University office officially delegated with the authority to negotiate binding grants and contracts between the University and its sponsors. Faculty members are encouraged to make preliminary contacts with their potential sponsor relative to the scientific and technical aspects of proposals. However, the Office of Sponsored Programs must perform all contractual matters and commitments of University resources.

## 6.0 Responsibilities

When presented with documents for signature related to proposal submission or award acceptance for any grant, contract or research-related agreement, all faculty, staff and students should contact the Office of Sponsored Programs for review, approval, and signature.

## 7.0 Sanctions for Non-Compliance

**First Violation:** The unauthorized signer, his/her immediate supervisor where appropriate and his/her department chair will meet with the Vice President for Research resulting in a Memorandum of Record detailing the offense with a copy of the signature policy attached, which will be maintained on file in the Office of the Vice President for Research.

**Second Violation:** The unauthorized signer, his/her supervisor, department chair and dean will meet with the Vice President for Research, resulting in a formal letter of reprimand to be placed in his/her departmental file, college file and recorded in the Office of Vice President for Research file.

Third Violation: A memorandum to the unauthorized signer and his/her immediate supervisor where appropriate and department chair detailing the new offense, previous official action, and notification regarding the forfeiture of all associated incentive return funds. A formal letter of reprimand will be placed in the unauthorized signer's Office of Human Resources personnel file, departmental, college and Vice President for Research file. Any person found to have violated this policy on three or more occasions may also be subject to further appropriate disciplinary action, including but not limited to reassignment, demotion, suspension or termination of employment.

In all cases where the unauthorized signer is either the department chair or dean, meetings with the Vice President for Research will include the immediate supervisor.

### 8.0 Approval Signatures

This policy has been approved by:

  
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 Tanju Karanfil  
 Vice President for Research

July 1, 2018  
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 Date

REVISION HISTORY		
EFFECTIVE DATE	REVISION NUMBER	MODIFICATION
February 4, 2002		
July 1, 2018	1	Clarification of language and reformat of policy, encompassing the Policy for Violation of Official Signature Authority by Principal Investigator