

ELIGIBILITY TO SERVE AS PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

Definitions

- A Principal Investigator (PI) is an individual who has primary responsibility for the design, execution, and management of a research project and who will be involved in the project in a significant manner.
- A Project Director (PD) is an individual who has primary responsibility for the design, execution, and management of a training or public service project and who will be involved in the project in a significant manner.
- A Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI), Co-Project Director (Co-PD) or Co-Investigator (Co-I) serves in a supporting role to that of the PI or PD, but they are also involved in the design, conduct and reporting activities associated with a sponsored project.
- Key/Senior Personnel includes PI, Co-PI/PD and Co-I's, but this category may also include other personnel who contribute to the development and execution of a project in a substantive, measurable way.

Eligibility to act as a University principal investigator or senior personnel on a sponsored research project is a privilege typically limited to University employees (generally faculty members). Non- faculty University principal investigators must hold an appropriate position or provide key expertise and should at least have a master's degree to serve as a principal investigator, project director, co-principal investigator, or other senior personnel on a sponsored project. The unit head with final approval by the dean shall determine the eligibility of an individual to serve as a principal investigator in compliance with the eligibility criteria of a potential sponsor. In any case, where there is no reporting relationship to a college dean or director, the appropriate vice president or designee will make eligibility determinations. A department head, dean, or vice president (when there is no reporting relationship to a college dean) may limit an individual's status as a principal investigator or co-principal investigator on a University sponsored project. Retirees who are not employed by the University but who wish to serve in the role of a principal investigator must petition the department head for approval. Except as provided in the case of retirees, all individuals who serve in the role of a principal investigator on University sponsored projects must be employed by the University. Visiting faculty may serve as co-principal investigator in accordance with the approval requirements.

Those holding positions that are transient by nature, including Postdoctoral Research Associates (Postdocs) and other limited-term appointees are not eligible to serve as PI because these positions are temporary, and these categories of employees are often not able to commit the level of resources necessary to carry out a program of research.

An exception to the limitations discussed above may be granted, in special circumstances, if it is in the best interest of the University; however, approval through normal reporting structures including the Vice President for Research, Commercialization and Outreach is required.

It is understood that in order to be compliant with time and effort reporting requirements, all Senior/Key personnel must contribute a level of effort that enables them to meet this definition. Zero or “as needed” effort is not an acceptable level of involvement for personnel in this category.

The Principal Investigator is responsible for

- Delineating the scope of work
- Developing the proposed budget and estimated costs of the proposal
- Writing the technical, scientific, and scholarly content of the proposal
- Communicating with the program officer of the funding agency
- Coordinating with university and agency compliance committees
- Ensuring that the proposal is sent to Sponsored Research Services in sufficient time for the University to meet proposal deadlines
- Overseeing expenditures
- Preserving access to and retaining data
- Preparing and submitting required technical reports to the granting agency