

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTIONAL POLICY FOR TRAINING AND OVERSIGHT IN THE
RESPONSIBLE AND ETHICAL CONDUCT OF RESEARCH

I. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to establish a plan for complying with Section 7009 of the American Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education, and Science (COMPETES) Act¹, as implemented by the National Science Foundation² (NSF), to provide appropriate training and oversight in the responsible and ethical conduct of research to undergraduates, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers who will be supported by NSF funding to conduct research.

II. Applicability

This Policy applies to all projects funded by the National Science Foundation that result from proposals submitted on or after January 4, 2010 or for deadlines that fall on or after January 4, 2010.

III. Definitions

- A. **Research** includes the exploration, discovery, interpretation, revision, and sharing of knowledge, including the creation of works for the enlightenment and intellectual stimulation of humans across all disciplinary fields from the arts and humanities to the sciences.
- B. A **Researcher** is anyone who contributes to the process of research according to the standards in his/her field.
- C. **Responsible Conduct of Research**³: Conducting research in ways that fulfill the professional responsibilities of researchers, as those responsibilities are defined by their professional organizations, Michigan State University (MSU) and, when relevant, governmental and other entities that support and regulate research.

¹ 42 U.S.C. 1 1862o-1

² 74 Federal Register 42126-42128.

³ Adapted from Steneck, Nicholas H. 2006. Fostering Integrity in Research: Definitions, Current Knowledge, and Future Directions. Science and Engineering Ethics. 12:53-74.

- D. **Research Integrity³**: The quality of possessing and steadfastly adhering to high professional principles, standards, and obligations, as prescribed by professional organizations, MSU, and, when relevant, governmental and other entities that support and regulate research.
- E. **Research Ethics³**: The critical study of the moral problems associated with, or that arise in the course of, pursuing research.

IV. Institutional Policy Regarding Training in the Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research

- A. Each student and postdoctoral researcher appointed as an hourly employee, graduate assistant, postdoctoral fellow, research associate, or visiting researcher who contributes to the design, conduct, or reporting of an NSF-funded project shall be trained in the responsible conduct of research, research integrity, and ethical responsibilities associated with the conduct of that research project. A minimum of five hours of formal training is required for each such student and postdoctoral researcher. Training shall be updated annually (minimum of three hours) throughout the student's or postdoctoral researcher's appointment on the NSF-funded project.
- B. Responsibility for planning and decisions concerning the nature, content, and extent of the training required by this Policy is delegated to the lead department, school, and/or graduate program through which the proposal for the research project was submitted to NSF.
- C. MSU will authorize submission of proposals to the National Science Foundation only if the lead department, school, and/or graduate program has previously submitted a written summary of the unit's plan for training to the Dean of the Graduate School. Plans must be approved by the collegiate dean responsible for the department, school, and/or graduate program prior to submission to the Graduate School. The Dean of the Graduate School will provide to the Office of Contract and Grant Administration a list of units that have submitted written plans. Plans must annually be updated and/or verified as being current.

Alternatively, colleges may elect to submit a common written plan for designated departments, schools, and/or graduate programs affiliated with that college.

- D. Written assurance shall be provided by sub-recipients that a comparable institutional plan has been implemented.

V. Institutional Policy Regarding Oversight of Training in the Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research

- A. Each department, school, and/or graduate program for which a plan has been submitted shall be responsible for documenting that training has been provided

according to its plan. For graduate students, this will be recorded in the GradInfo database system.

- B. Each unit will report each academic term to the Graduate School the status of training provided to each student and postdoctoral researcher to whom this Policy applies according to a template or system prescribed by the Graduate School.
- C. An initial individual appointment, not to exceed one semester for students and one year as a postdoctoral fellow, research associate, or visiting researcher, will be approved whether or not the required training has been provided at the time of that appointment. Subsequent appointments in the same or different positions / units will only be approved if training, significant progress with training, or updated training, as required, has been reported.

VI. Policy Violations

Misrepresentation of the information required to be documented or reported under this Policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.