

Office of Academic Affairs

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December 11, 2019

Memorandum For: Phil Lesch, Executive Director, PSU-AAUP
José Padiñ, President, PSU-AAUP
David Hansen, Vice President of Collective Bargaining, PSU-AAUP

From: Debra Mayo-Kelley, DAELR, OAA

Through: Shelly Chabon, Vice Provost, OAA

Subject: PI Eligibility – Final Document

Attached please find the PI Eligibility final Policy.

In order to complete the process, the MOU will need to be ratified prior to signing off on the Policy and indicating an effective date.

cc:
OAA – AAUP Notice - files

Research Policy: Principal Investigator/Project Director Eligibility and Responsibility

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1.0 Policy Summary Statement

The Principal Investigator (PI) or Project Director (PD) is the individual designated by Portland State University (PSU) and approved by an external funding agency (sponsor) to direct a sponsored project awarded to the University. Proposals submitted for extramural funding of research, training and public service projects, as well as awards received for such projects (sponsored projects) must name an eligible employee of the institution to serve as PI/PD. Eligibility to act as a PI/PD or Co-Investigator (Co-I) on sponsored projects is a privilege limited to employees of Portland State University. The PI/PD on a PSU sponsored project is accountable for all aspects of the project and is responsible for the management of funds awarded to PSU. Therefore, individuals serving as PIs must have sufficient authority as an employee of PSU to hold this role. This policy outlines the assignment-related criteria for serving as a PI on a PSU sponsored award.

2.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the assignment-related criteria for PSU employees to be assigned to the role of Principal investigator/Project Director (PI/PD) and Co-Investigator on an externally-funded sponsored project. Additionally, this policy is to ensure that sponsored projects are conducted by those who have the requisite training, skill, commitment, resources, and the appropriate relationship to the University.

3.0 Definitions

Principal Investigator (PI): The individual assigned by PSU who meets assignment-related criteria established by PSU and approved by the sponsor to direct the project or activity being supported by the award; responsible and accountable to both PSU and the sponsor for the appropriate fiscal management, conduct, and reporting of the sponsored project. This role is typically associated with research projects.

Project Director (PD): This term is synonymous with Principal Investigator (PI) for purposes of this policy and by many sponsoring agencies. It is often used to describe the individual assigned to direct sponsored projects for training or non-research activities.

Co-Investigator (Co-I): An individual who is assigned by PSU and shares with the PI/PD the responsibility for the conduct of a sponsored project and makes a significant contribution to the project.

Sponsored Project: Externally-funded activities in which a formal written agreement, such as a grant, contract, or cooperative agreement, is entered into by the University and the sponsor, typically in response to a proposal submission.

4.0 Policy

PSU is legally and financially responsible and accountable to sponsors for awards issued to and accepted by PSU. The Principal Investigator (PI) is the individual assigned by Portland State University (PSU) and approved by the sponsor to direct a sponsored award. The PI is the primary individual in charge of the sponsored award. The PI has primary responsibility for achieving the technical success of the project. The PI has primary responsibility for the proper stewardship of award funds. The PI has primary responsibility and is accountable to the University and sponsor for the proper programmatic, scientific or technical conduct of the project and its financial and day-to-day management.

An individual may be assigned a PI/PD role if they have the requisite education, training, skill, and commitment as determined by the head of the PSU division in which they are employed, as well as the appropriate relationship to the University as outlined in this policy.

4.1 Principal Investigator/Project Director (PI/PD) Eligibility Requirements

To be automatically eligible for assignment as a PI/PD on a PSU sponsored project, the individual must be a faculty member paid by PSU with an active PSU employment agreement in the following employee groups (rank and tenure status):

- Tenure-related faculty with the ranks of Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, or Professor.
- Tenure-related faculty in University or Administrative service.
- Non-Tenure Track Faculty with the rank of Research Assistant Professor, Research Associate Professor or Research Professor and an appointment of 0.5 FTE or greater as defined in the AAUP collective bargaining agreement.
- Emeritus faculty who were approved PIs prior to retirement (with the approval of their department chair and dean).

Persons in roles other than those described above may apply to be assigned as a PI/PD as outlined in section 4.3. Individuals affiliated with PSU only through a courtesy appointment are not eligible to be assigned as PI/PD. In rare circumstances, individuals with courtesy appointments may be authorized to serve as a Co-Investigator if an exception is granted in accordance with section 4.3 of this policy.

In instances where sponsor-specific PI requirements are more restrictive than this policy, PSU will follow the more restrictive requirements as necessary. If the sponsor's requirements are less restrictive than PSU's policy, PSU's policy shall take precedence.

4.2 Co-Investigator (Co-I) Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for assignment as a Co-Investigator on a PSU sponsored project, the individual must have qualifications consistent with a Research Associate or higher ranks and have written endorsement from the department chair and dean, or meet the eligibility requirements to serve as a PI as outlined in section 4.1.

4.3 Exceptions to PI/PD Eligibility Requirements

Individuals in employment categories not listed in Sections 4.1 and 4.2 may be assigned to the role of PI/PD or Co-Investigator through an exception process managed by the office of Research and Graduate Studies. Requests for PI eligibility may be submitted on a case-by-case basis or for an indefinite time period.

For projects in academic units, application for PI/PD or Co-Investigator status must be prepared in cooperation with the department chair or supervisor and submitted by a Dean or University Center Director (Division Head) on behalf of an individual applicant to the Associate Vice President in Research and Graduate Studies following RGS procedures.

For projects in non-academic units, application for PI/PD or Co-investigator status must be prepared in cooperation with the unit supervisor and submitted by the appropriate senior administrative official in the division (Division Head) to the Research and Graduate Studies following RGS procedures.



In all cases, the Division Head will affirm they understand that their unit is responsible for: (1) ensuring the individual follows all pertinent compliance and award administration requirements, (2) completion of all required reports and deliverables, (3) any financial liabilities such as over-expenditures, and (4) providing space and access to other facilities and/or resources needed to effectively carry out the project through the term of the award.

4.4 Principal Investigators for External Awards for Students or Other Trainees

Faculty advisors or mentors will be designated as the PSU Principal Investigator of record for external fellowships or other student awards. Trainees, whether or not they are employees (such as postdoctoral scholars or students), may apply for external fellowships and mentored career development awards only with the approval of a PSU faculty advisor or mentor as indicated either on the application and/or the PSU proposal internal approval form. Graduate students, postdoctoral scholars and other trainees may not normally serve as a PI or Co-PI on investigator-initiated sponsored awards.

4.5 Responsibilities of the Principal Investigator

PIs/PDs/Co-PIs must faithfully execute their responsibilities including: conducting research and production of deliverables as required in the grant or contract, following applicable federal, state and local guidelines and regulations, following PSU policy and rules, submitting required reports in a timely manner, and any other specific guidelines required by the research sponsor or PSU. Failure to fulfill PI duties and responsibilities may result in the loss of PI role assignment, and/or result in discipline for just cause.

References:

Procedure: Principal Investigator/Project Director Eligibility Exception Request
Principal Investigator/Project Director Eligibility Exception Request Form

Proposed Effective Date: As soon as possible following ratification of MOU with AAUP

Policy Approved by Interim Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies on _____