

POLICY: Principal Investigator Eligibility

The Principal Investigator (PI) or Program Director (PD) is the individual(s) approved by the University to oversee the fiscal, programmatic, and administrative aspects of a sponsored project. Grants, contracts, and other binding agreements are awarded to the institution. The PI/PD is directly responsible and accountable to the University and the sponsor for the proper conduct of a sponsored project, which includes but is not limited to: (1) scientific and technical direction; (2) resource allocation; (3) financial stewardship; (4) administrative and personnel oversight; (5) programmatic reporting; and (6) adherence to all governing sponsor and University policies and regulations.

I. PI eligibility at Duke

Only those individuals with whom the University has or intends to have an ongoing employment relationship may serve as PI/PD on projects, research or otherwise, supported by external funding sources at Duke. Individuals employed full-time at other institutions may not be PI/PD on sponsored projects at Duke University.

Members of the Duke regular rank faculty (as defined in [Chapter 3 of the Faculty Handbook](#)) in good standing with the University are eligible to serve as PI/PD as a matter of privilege on sponsored projects at Duke. Individuals who are not regular rank faculty members may be granted eligibility to serve as PI/PD with prior institutional approval. Instructions for seeking prior approval may be found in the [process for requesting PI eligibility](#). PI eligibility is also subject to sponsor requirements and restrictions.

II. PI eligibility for awards based at other institutions

Faculty with a primary appointment at Duke University may not serve as lead (or “contact” or “overall”) PI/PD on applications and awards based at other institutions unless the faculty member is on leave and has received appropriate institutional approval for the activities; this is also true for other Duke investigators (e.g., research staff and trainees). Such outside sponsored activities must be awarded to Duke via a research agreement and appropriately disclosed according to Conflict of Interest requirements.

III. Restrictions, suspensions, or revocation of PI eligibility

The University may, under certain circumstances, restrict, suspend or revoke PI privileges. Reasons for restriction include but are not limited to: (1) current investigation into possible misconduct; (2) findings of misconduct; (3) history of failure to meet deliverables or reports on current or past sponsored projects in a timely and orderly fashion; (4) unmanageable impairment of objectivity; (5) fiduciary improprieties; (6) sponsor removal of individual as PI/PD; etc.