

# Conduct, Misconduct, and Conflict of Interest

## RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT

Many funding agencies, particularly at the federal level, require training in areas that are known collectively as Responsible Conduct of Research. Specific areas of training include:

- Data Acquisition, Sharing, and Management
- Conflict of Interest and Commitment
- Human Subjects
- Animal Welfare
- Research Misconduct
- Publication Practices and Responsible Authorship
- Mentor/Trainee Responsibilities
- Peer Review
- Collaborative Science

All investigators must complete Responsible Conduct of Research training at [www.citiprogram.org](http://www.citiprogram.org).

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) [Office of Research Integrity](#) also provides in-depth information.

## CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Federal rules require that institutions receiving funding manage any financial conflicts of interest (FCOI). This requires disclosure of such conflicts upon submission of requests for funding and annually, thereafter. According to the HHS, a FCOI may exist if (1) an investigator has a significant financial interest, and (2) the investigator could directly and significantly affect the design, conduct, or reporting of research.

HHS established standards to assure that HHS-funded grants or cooperative agreements are free from bias that may result from the investigator's financial conflicts of interest (Title 42, Part 50). Investigators must make certain FCOI disclosures to A-State, including:

- Remuneration received (salary, consulting fees, honoraria, paid authorship, etc.) when aggregated, exceeds \$5,000;

- The value of equity interest (stock, stock options, or other ownership interest) held by the investigator, their spouse, or dependent children;
- Intellectual property rights and interests (e.g., patents, copyrights), upon receipt of income related to such rights and interests.
- Updated disclosures must be made when an investigator's FCOI changes.

Investigators must complete FCOI training prior to engaging in any PHS-funded grant and at least every four years, thereafter.

For more information concerning conflicts of interest, please refer to the following:

- [Department of Health and Human Services Guidelines](#)
- [NSF Guidelines](#)
- **ASU System Policy on Conflict of Interest** -- PLEASE NOTE: Financial Conflict of Interest (FCOI) disclosures are separate from the annual Conflict of Interest (COI) statements that Human Resources department collects from all employees, in compliance with State laws.

You can always find the latest version of the [ASU system policies](#) on their [website](#).

## RESEARCH MISCONDUCT

In recent years, well-publicized cases of misconduct in university research (i.e., fabrication, falsification, and plagiarism) have aroused concern among research institutions, individual investigators, research sponsors, professional societies, and the general public. Although verified instances of such behaviors are relatively rare, they raise serious questions about the integrity of the research process and the stewardship of public and private research funds. Institutions of higher education, in particular, enjoy a centuries-old tradition of integrity and objectivity, and cases of dishonesty in the university community must be dealt with carefully and thoroughly if the institution is to merit continued public confidence and trust.

Research Misconduct includes (1) fabrication - making up data or results and recording or reporting them; (2) falsification - manipulating research materials, equipment, or processes, or changing or omitting data or results such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record; or (3) plagiarism - appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit in proposing, performing, or reviewing research, or in reporting research results. Research misconduct does not include honest error or differences of opinion.

## LASER SAFETY

The University requires training in the safe use of lasers. The program is monitored by the Director of [Environmental Health and Safety](#) and Laser Safety Officer for A-State.

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