



Responsible Conduct of Research for West Virginia State University

Responsible Official: Director of Sponsored Programs

Responsible Office: Office of Sponsored Programs

Effective Date: July 1, 2017

Revision Date:

Note: Grant funds cannot be spent until Responsible Conduct of Research Training is Completed!

Policy

This policy applies to principal investigators, co-investigators, technicians, research staff, undergraduate students, graduate students, postdoctoral fellow and any others who work on externally funded projects at WVSU.

Background

Passed in 2007, Section 7009 of the America COMPETES Act (America Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education, and Science) mandates that institutions receiving federal research funds ensure that faculty, staff, and students participating in research projects complete Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training. In response to this requirement, many federal agencies, such as the National Science Foundation (NSF), National Institutes of Health (NIH), and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), issued new guidelines related to the implementation and conduct of RCR training.

Purpose

The purpose of the RCR policy and procedures is to create a framework upon which WVSU can meet federal funder guidelines. The goal of Responsible Conduct of Research training is to educate faculty, staff, and students on the ethical conduct of research in a manner that supports the integrity of the institution.

Policy Statement

Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) is critical for excellence and public trust in science. RCR is defined as the practice of scientific investigation with integrity. The foundation of RCR relies on honesty, accuracy, efficiency, and objectivity to promote a

high level of ethical standards and accountability throughout the research lifecycle. As defined by federal agencies, RCR encompasses the following aspects of research: data acquisition, management, sharing and ownership, conflicts of interest, human subjects, animal welfare, research misconduct, publication practices and responsible ownership, mentoring, peer review, and collaborative science.

All members of the WVSU community are expected to adhere to the highest ethical and professional standards as they pursue research and scholarly activities. In doing so, WVSU requires the vigilance of all members engaged in research and scholarly endeavors to comply with the legal, regulatory, and ethical requirements established by the University, regulatory agencies, funding sources and professional organizations.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Research Integrity (ORI) is the federal agency charged with the responsibility of oversight in the responsible conduct of research. ORI encourages researchers to make a special effort to understand, discuss, and teach others the responsible conduct of research. It is understood that principles can vary from discipline to discipline. For this reason, it is the intent of the RCR training plan to provide flexibility in its content and delivery methods in such a way that it addresses the specific needs, issues, and concerns of various target audiences among numerous disciplines.

Responsibilities

Principal Investigators' Responsibility for Compliance

Principal Investigators on externally-funded research projects have the primary responsibility for ensuring that any individuals supported under their grants have participated completed the required RCR training. Accordingly, Principal Investigators have the following RCR responsibilities:

- Complete required RCR training program and maintain an active RCR training certificate
- Specify and monitor completion of required RCR instruction for all individuals (students, post-doctoral fellows, research associates, etc.) associated with externally funded research according to the funder guidelines
- Provide mentorship to junior faculty, staff, and students on expectations regarding research projects through in-person RCR training and maintain documentation of such training if required.

Sponsored Programs' Responsibility for Compliance

The Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) has the responsibility to coordinate the RCR training process and provide support to Principal Investigators in fulfilling their responsibilities. Accordingly, OSP has the following RCR responsibilities:

- Assist Principal Investigators in identifying individuals who must complete RCR training according to the individuals' association with externally funded research.
- Assist Principal Investigators in understanding the different external RCR training requirements (NIH, USDA-NIFA, NSF, etc.)
- Provide technical support for any person required to complete online RCR training
- Monitor the completion of online RCR training and maintain documentation of such training

Noncompliance

Failure to comply with this policy shall constitute grounds for disciplinary action.

Disciplinary action is based upon a reasonable investigation of the noncompliance and is consistent with the severity of the violation. Disciplinary actions may include, but are not limited to, additional training/monitoring, temporary suspension of individual's participation in research, loss of privilege to apply for new grant funding, or removal of the PI from the project and the appointment of a replacement PI.

Procedures

Methods of RCR Training

Responsible Conduct of Research training can consist of the following methods of delivery. At a minimum, the online component of RCR training must be completed. Depending upon the funding source of externally sponsored research, in-person training may also be required. For specific funder guidelines, see the "Training Requirements by Funding Source & Individual Type" chart on page 5 or contact OSP.

Online training through the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI)

The CITI program is a web-based training program that is designed to cover core norms, principles, regulations, and rules governing the practice of research. Individuals must sign up for an account through the CITI website (citiprogram.org). For assistance in enrolling the CITI's Basic RCR Course, please contact OSP or refer to the training guide listed as a resource at the end of this document.

The RCR training certificate has an effective period of 3 years. At the expiration of the RCR training certificate, individuals are automatically enrolled and are required to take a refresher course to maintain compliance with WVSU's RCR policy.

Documentation for online RCR training is maintained by the Office of Sponsored Programs.

In-Person Training

In-person training is intended to complement the on-line training by providing the opportunity for interactive discussion around the components of RCR training. Thus, Principal Investigators should confirm that individuals have completed the online training component before conducting in-person training. See the "Training

Requirements by Funding Source & Individual Type” section below to determine whether or not the funder for your externally sponsored research requires in-person training. If your funder is not listed contact the Office of Sponsored Programs for additional support.

In-person training requirements can be met through participating in educational events that the PI has deemed appropriate for RCR training. These events can include regularly scheduled meetings or discussions involving the research team, classes, seminars or other interactive approaches that address RCR topics. RCR topics are outlined in the “Policy Statement” section.

If in-person training is required, an individual must complete the training requirement for each stage of their career (i.e. undergraduate, graduate, post-doctoral researcher, etc.).

Additionally, it is the Principal Investigator’s responsibility to maintain documentation of such in-person RCR training if required. At a minimum, the documentation must include the topic(s) of discussion, length of the training, and a roster of attendees.

Deadline for Training Completion

Online Training Deadline

The online training requirement described below in the “Training Requirements by Funding Source & Individual Type” section, must be successfully completed within 90 days of first being appointed to a research project. However, the online training requirement must be completed before an individual graduates or otherwise leaves the University, even if that imposes a shorter deadline.

In-person Training Deadline

The in-person RCR training requirements described in the “Training Requirements by Funding Source & Individual Type” section below must be completed within the first year of the appointment to the research project or before the individual graduates or otherwise leaves the University, even if that imposes a shorter deadline.

Training Requirements by Funding Source & Individual Type

Please see the chart below to determine the type of RCR training required for individuals associated with your research project based on the funding source and participating role individuals. If a funding source, individual type, or combination of the two is not listed below, please contact OSP to determine RCR training requirements.

Funding Source	Individuals	Training Requirements & Responsibilities
Department of Education	Principal Investigators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Complete/maintain an active RCR training certificate throughout the duration of the project through online RCR training ◦ Ensure that training requirements for individuals below are met ◦ Strongly encouraged to provide discussion-based RCR training opportunities for students
	Co-Principal Investigators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Complete/maintain an active RCR training certificate throughout the duration of the project through online RCR training
	Students (all) Other Research Staff	
Section 1444 or 1445 funds of USDA	Principal Investigators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Complete/maintain an active RCR training certificate throughout the duration of the project through online RCR training ◦ Ensure that training requirements for individuals below are met ◦ Strongly encouraged to provide discussion-based RCR training opportunities for students
	Faculty (other than PI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Complete/maintain an active RCR training certificate throughout the duration of the project through online RCR training
	Students (all) Other Research Staff	
USDA National Institute of Food & Agriculture (NIFA)	Principal Investigators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Complete/maintain an active RCR training certificate throughout the duration of the project through online RCR training ◦ Ensure that training requirements for individuals below are met ◦ Strongly encouraged to provide discussion-based RCR training opportunities for students
	Co-Principal Investigators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Complete/maintain an active RCR training certificate throughout the duration of the project through online RCR training
	Other Research Staff Students (all)	
National Science Foundation (NSF)	Principal Investigators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Complete/maintain an active RCR training certificate throughout the duration of the project through online RCR training ◦ Ensure that training requirements for individuals below are met ◦ Strongly encouraged to provide discussion-based RCR training opportunities for students

National Science Foundation (NSF) Continued	Co-Principal Investigators	Complete/maintain an active RCR training certificate throughout the duration of the project through online RCR training
	Other Research Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Complete/maintain an active RCR training certificate throughout the duration of the project through online RCR training ◦ Complete/maintain an active RCR training certificate throughout the duration of the project through online RCR training ◦ Ensure that training requirements for individuals below are met ◦ Document in-person RCR trainings for individuals below
Undergraduate Students		
Graduate Students		
Post-Doctoral Researchers		
Principal Investigators		
National Institute of Health (NIH)	Co-Principal Investigators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Complete/maintain an active RCR training certificate throughout the duration of the project through online RCR training
	Other Research Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Complete/maintain an active RCR training certificate throughout the duration of the project through online RCR training ◦ Complete/maintain an active RCR training certificate throughout the duration of the project through online RCR training ◦ Complete eight (8) hour of in-person discussion-based RCR instruction.
	Undergraduate Students	
	Graduate Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Complete/maintain an active RCR training certificate throughout the duration of the project through online RCR training ◦ Complete eight (8) hour of in-person discussion-based RCR instruction.
	Post-Doctoral Researchers	

RCR Resources:

- NIH RCR Requirements: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-10-019.html>
- NSF RCR Requirements: <https://nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/rcr.jsp>
- U.S. Department of Defense: <https://www.defense.gov/Resources/>
- U.S. Department of Energy: <https://science.energy.gov/grants/policy-and-guidance/research-misconduct/>
- USDA NIFA RCR Requirements: <https://nifa.usda.gov/responsible-and-ethical-conduct-research>
- CITI Program: <http://www.citiprogram.org>
- CITI Program Training Guide: <http://www.wvstateu.edu/Research/Guidelines-and-Procedures.aspx>
- U.S. DHHS Office of Research Integrity –

- Introduction to the Responsible Conduct of Research: <https://ori.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/rcrintro.pdf>
- “The Lab: Avoiding Research Misconduct” simulation: <https://ori.hhs.gov/thelab>
- RCR Casebook: <https://ori.hhs.gov/rcr-casebook-stories-about-researchers-worth-discussing>
- RCR Video Case Studies: <https://ori.hhs.gov/videos/case-study>

