
RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH POLICY

Responsible Conduct of Research Policy

Procedure Sections

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Reason for Policy

This policy addresses the Federal government's requirement that research institutions conduct responsible conduct of research training.

Who Should Know This Procedure

- Principal Investigators
- Administrative Staff
- Winter Conference/Summer Workshop Organizers
- Proposal Committee
- Officers
- Trustees
- General Members
- Other: _____

Contacts

Subject	Contact
Responsible Conduct of Research	Principal Investigators Officers



Applicable ACP Policies

- None
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Responsible Conduct of Research Policy at ACP

Physicists conduct 95% of their research at their home institutions, so ACP hosts only 5% of the average physicist's stay. Due to the limited summer time (an average of 2.4 weeks) available and the duplication of effort, ACP does not conduct responsible conduct of research training. In the winter ACP holds conferences which relay the latest research. In the summer ACP holds workshops which are similar to conferences. A very small percentage of the 1000+ annual physicist visitors are graduate students, perhaps 1% to 2%. ACP does host postdocs who have been training in RCR at their home institutions.

Due to the nature of Aspen's summer workshops, discussions arise about ethics in science. At a workshop at the Aspen Center for Physics in Colorado in May 2014, astronomers were invited to discuss realistic situations involving the ethical ambiguities that our community faces every day: plagiarism, sexual harassment, hostile work environments, bullying, cultural clashes, unconscious biases and simple misunderstandings. Participants who had been sceptical about claims of harassment, hostility or plagiarism — including many senior male astronomers — admitted that the exercise was eye-opening and had forced them to think differently about their own interactions, especially with members of under-represented groups, including women and ethnic minorities. This exercise then went to a blog. This is not an uncommon feature of Aspen due to the collegial and relaxed atmosphere promulgated by the Center.

Roles & Responsibilities

General Members: Responsible for reporting or addressing any ethical or irresponsible activity at the Center and correcting it.



Appendix: Applicable Federal Regulations & Criteria

Per the NSF AAG Chapter IV.3.

Background

The responsible and ethical conduct of research (RCR) is critical for excellence, as well as public trust, in science and engineering. Consequently, education in RCR is considered essential in the preparation of future scientists and engineers. Section 7009 of the America Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education, and Science (COMPETES) Act (42 U.S.C. 1862o-1 requires that “each institution that applies for financial assistance from the Foundation for science and engineering research or education describe in its grant proposal a plan to provide appropriate training and oversight in the responsible and ethical conduct of research to undergraduate students, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers participating in the proposed research project.”

The language specified below provides NSF’s implementation of Section 7009.

Institutional Responsibilities

- a. An institution must have a plan in place 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 to conduct research. As noted in GPG Chapter II.C.1.e, institutional certification to this effect is required for each proposal.
- b. While training plans are not required to be included in proposals submitted to NSF, institutions are advised that they are subject to review, upon request.
- c. An institution must designate one or more persons to oversee compliance with the RCR training requirement.
- d. Institutions are responsible for verifying that undergraduate students, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers supported by NSF to conduct research have received training in the responsible and ethical conduct of research.

