

## **Guidance for Principal Investigators at Florida Gulf Coast University**

This guidance document addresses who is eligible to be a Principal Investigator (PI) at Florida Gulf Coast University (the “University” or “FGCU”) and the roles and responsibilities of being a PI.

“Principal Investigator” means the individual responsible for the scientific, technical, or programmatic aspects of the proposal, as well as resource allocation, financial stewardship, and overall administrative conduct of a sponsored project within the terms and conditions of the award and abiding by University Policies, procedures and guidelines.

### **A. Eligibility**

1. Eligibility by Appointment: In order to serve as a Principal Investigator for a sponsored research project or for an Institutional Review Board (IRB), Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), or the Institutional Safety Committee (ISC) protocol at the University, an individual must hold one of the following types of appointments: (1) a continuing multi-year faculty appointment, (2) a fixed multi-year faculty appointment, or (3) an administrative faculty or executive appointment. A prospective member of the faculty may submit a proposal for funding if he or she has received and signed an offer of employment from the university but may serve as a Principal Investigator only if he or she meets the requirements above when the project is funded.
2. Eligibility by exception: An individual who is not eligible by the above criteria may serve with written approval of his or her Dean or Director. This individual requesting the exception must satisfy the general standards of research competence appropriate to the above professional ranks and they must meet the eligibility and regulatory requirements of the proposed sponsor if extramural funding is requested. The request for exception is in the best interest of the University and is important to achievement of the research and/or educational goals of the unit. Space and facilities are assured by the unit Dean or Director without detriment to the teaching or research responsibilities of the University. Finally, the Dean or Director of the unit assumes responsibility for the execution of the project for financial and technical oversight of the project.
3. Students and courtesy faculty are generally not allowed to serve as Principal Investigators.

### **B. Role and Responsibilities**

1. General: A Principal Investigator is an individual designated by the University as having authority and responsibility for the proper conduct of the specified research under their direction, including the appropriate use of funds and compliance with administrative requirements such as the submission of progress reports to the funding agency. If the University designates multiple PIs for a project, they share the authority and responsibility for leading and directing the research or program, intellectually and logistically. Neither the funding agency nor the University attributes any difference in stature to faculty members who serve as a PI on research with multiple PI's.

2. Contact PI: If the University designates multiple PIs for a project, it designates one of the multiple PIs as the Contact PI. A Contact PI is the person to whom agency program officials direct all communications related to scientific/programmatic, technical, and budgetary aspects of the project.
3. Project Administration: A PI has a number of specific responsibilities relating to the administration of the project. The specific responsibilities of a PI include compliance with FGCU regulations, policies, and procedures, as well as guidelines issued by the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) relating to research compliance including but not limited to Export Control, and Foreign Influence compliance, as well as guidance issued by the IRB, IACUC, the ISC, and Environmental Health & Safety (EH&S).
4. Level of Effort: A PI is responsible for ensuring that each faculty member and staff identified in the project proposal contributes some level of effort, paid or unpaid by the extramural sponsor, and are responsible for proper reporting of the time and effort for each project.

**C. Compliance**

1. The Associate Vice President for Research and Sponsored Programs oversees research compliance. The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs has administrative responsibility for all externally-sponsored projects at FGCU. The Assistant Director for Research Compliance & Research Integrity Officer has administrative responsibility for coordinating with the IRB all projects involving human subjects and IACUC for projects involving vertebrate animals.
2. Environmental Health & Safety has administrative responsibility for the Institutional Safety Committee and projects reviewed by this committee.