

Policy on Project Director/Principal Investigator Eligibility
June, 2009

Project Directors and/or Principal Investigators (PD/PIs) on sponsored programs (grants or contracts) have important financial, administrative, and supervisory responsibilities to the University. It is necessary that those who fill these roles have appropriate training, support, and oversight.

The policy of Northeastern University is that only full-time faculty members and designated administrative research positions may routinely serve as Principal Investigators on sponsored programs. Full-time faculty members and research scientists who are eligible to serve as Principal Investigators include only those with titles of:

- Professor
- Research Professor
- Associate Professor
- Associate Research Professor
- Assistant Professor
- Assistant Research Professor

In addition to the above, certain agencies may allow pre-doctoral students and/or post-doctoral research associates to serve as the Principal Investigator of fellowship awards (i.e. Individual National Research Service Awards from NIH). For these applications, graduate students and post-doctoral research associates should work with their graduate advisor and/or faculty mentor to obtain approval from the department chair and appropriate college dean.

Exceptions to this policy may be made with the prior approval of the Vice Provost for Research, who will designate an appropriate structure for administrative support and oversight for any non-faculty Principal Investigators. Requests for exceptions may only be referred to the Vice Provost for Research by the Dean of the College in which an award will be housed.

Further, Northeastern University has traditionally engaged in non-research sponsored projects, which provide benefits to the University and to the community (locally, regionally, nationally, and/or internationally). These projects are typically overseen by Project Directors (generally defined as non-faculty, full-time University employees). For those projects which have long been established at Northeastern University, the current Project Directors are considered to have senior administrative University approval to continue to serve as the Project Director. For new projects, or projects with newly named Project Directors, the Project Director will need approval from their department/unit, college/division, as well as approval from the Vice Provost for Research.

TEMPORARY PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR STATUS REQUEST

The privilege to act as a Principal Investigator (PI) or a Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI) on an externally-funded project is automatically conferred upon all Northeastern faculty members as outlined in the PI Eligibility Policy. There are however cases, where post doctoral employees, or similar level, should be allowed to have and manage independent projects. In such cases we have set up a policy to request temporary Principal Investigator status on a case by case basis.

To request temporary Principal Investigator status, complete this request form and submit it to your single point of contact at the Office of Research Administration and Finance (RAF). This approval should be sought as soon as possible and before a proposal is submitted to RAF since it needs the formal sign off from the Dean of your College/School signifying their support of this candidate to act independently.

Name of Candidate for PI Status:

Department/Division:

Current Appointment:

% Time:

Title Requested:

Principal Investigator

Co-Principal Investigator

% Time:

Agency:

Project title(s):

Project Period (s): ~~AD~~ [{ ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~]

Provide a brief explanation for requesting PI Status (CV attached):

APPROVALS:

Signature of Candidate

Signature of Dean of College/School

Signature of Vice Provost of Research

Principal Investigator Responsibility. A Principal Investigator or Project Director leads a project or program and accepts overall responsibility for its direction, the financial oversight of the award, and compliance with the terms and conditions of the award and relevant Northeastern and sponsor policies.

Withdrawal of PI status. An individual's status as PI may be withdrawn for just cause. Such a decision may be appealed to the Vice Provost of Research.