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 complete the Temporary PI Status Request form.

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 NU, 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. As defined at Northeastern, the 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 institutional and sponsor policies.

There are, however, cases where post doctoral employees, similar level employees, or visiting scholars, 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. The College can determine the appropriate effectiveness of this approval, i.e. per proposal, a specific length of time, or until rescinded through a request from the College.

To request temporary Principal Investigator status, complete this request form, obtain approval from College Dean, 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 Temporary PI Status:
Department/Division:
Current Appointment Title: % Time:
Is this person receiving any salary from NU? yes_____ no_____
If not, from where is this person drawing salary?
Title Requested: Principal Investigator _____ Co-Principal Investigator _____ % Time: _____
Agency:
Project title(s):
Project Period(s): From To

Approval Requested For:
_____This proposal only _____Specific Length of Time (6 months, 1 year, etc.) _____Indefinitely
Please indicate time period Until Rescinded

Provide a brief explanation for requesting PI Status (attach CV/Bio-Sketch):

Anyone requesting status as a Temporary Principal Investigator or Co-Principal Investigator must also agree to the following terms:

The undersigned certifies that they are aware of and are in compliance with the University’s Drug-Free Workplace Policy.

The undersigned certifies that they are aware of and are in compliance with the University’s Conflict of Commitment and Interest policy and have completed all required disclosures, or will do so as soon as possible.

The undersigned certifies that they are aware of and are in compliance with the University’s Export Control Policy and have successfully completed all required tutorials and trainings, or will do so as soon as possible.

The undersigned certifies that they are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by any Federal department or agency.

RAF Filing Instructions: proposal file and “Q” Drive → DSPA → PRE AWARD → Temporary PI Status Requests

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TEMPORARY PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR STATUS REQUEST

The undersigned certifies that they are not individually delinquent on any debt (other than to the IRS or Social Security Administration) owed to the U.S. Government.

The undersigned certifies that, to the best of their knowledge, no funds from any source have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to influence or attempt to influence an award of any sponsored contract or grant.

The undersigned certifies that they are aware of and are in compliance the University’s policy and procedures for dealing with and reporting possible misconduct in science.

The undersigned certifies that they will comply with all applicable University and external sponsor policies, rules, and regulations during the term of any award made as a result of this proposal.

I certify that I have, or will as soon as possible, fill out the above compliance documents listed above:

___________________________________
Signature of Candidate / Date

In the case you are drawing salary from another institution other than Northeastern, you agree that if the proposal is funded, and you are hired here, you will resign from your home institution and agree to all applicable Northeastern University employment policies and procedures.

If you decide not to accept a position here, the University has the option of either naming a replacement PI or returning the award to the sponsor.

___________________________________
Signature of Candidate / Date

APPROVALS:

___________________________________
Signature of Dean of College/School / Date

___________________________________
Signature of Vice Provost of Research or Designee / Date

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