FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY

Division of Research
University Policy

SUBJECT:	Effective Date:	Policy Number:
Principal Investigator Eligibility	December 12, 2025	10.2.8
	Supersedes: 10/3/22; 08/01/2022; 02/16/2018; 1/14/13; 1/19/12; 11/1/08 6/21/10; 8/17/10	**Page 1 of 4**
	Responsible Authorities: Vice President for Research Associate Vice President, Office of Sponsored Programs Associate Vice President, Research Integrity Office	

I. BACKGROUND

When Florida Atlantic University (FAU) submits proposals to external sponsors and accepts awards for sponsored projects, the university assumes significant financial and legal obligations. Sponsors fund projects based on the professional expertise of the Principal Investigators submitting proposals; however, the formal award is in the name of Florida Atlantic University Board of Trustees. FAU has similar responsibility pertaining to the submission of compliance protocols for all projects.

II. PURPOSE

To establish a policy that will provide guidance to all members of the university community, to include all students, faculty, and staff seeking Principal Investigator or Co-Principal Investigator status.

III. GENERAL STATEMENT

Under the general oversight and authority of FAU, the Principal Investigator is the individual who bears primary responsibility for technical compliance, completion of programmatic work, fiscal stewardship of sponsor funds, and compliance with administrative requirements of the project. Thus, the University must ensure that individuals serving in the capacity of Principal Investigator have the technical competence and administrative capabilities to manage projects. This requirement stems from the fact that while a project is based on the PI's expertise, the university, assumes significant financial and legal obligations.

IV. POLICY

The Principal Investigator Eligibility policy provides institutional requirements for who may serve as a Principal Investigator (PI) and a Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI) on all projects at Florida Atlantic University.

Individuals **employed** by FAU that hold one of the following positions may serve as Principal Investigator (PI) and Co-Principal Investigator.

Eligible PI Positions List

Faculty	Tenure-Track (Full, Associate and Assistant Professors)
Research Faculty	NON-Tenure-Track (Full, Associate and Assistant Professors)
Clinical Research Faculty	NON-Tenure-Track (Full, Associate and Assistant Professors). See Policy 10.1.3 for hiring requirements
Executive Director, Director, Associate and Assistant Director	Pillars/Institutes and other FAU units
Instructors	Instructors should hold a regular, full-time (1 FTE), appointment at FAU.
Librarians	Holding Faculty Status Equivalent to or Greater than Assistant Professor
Vice President, Senior/Executive Associate VP, Associate VP and Assistant VP	Serving in these positions at FAU in any of the service areas (Research, Student Affairs, etc.)
Principals, Assistant Principals, Directors (Assoc. and Assist.) and Professors (Assoc. and Assist.)	A.D. Henderson School and FAU High School. These proposals and awards will be under and managed by the College of Education
Senior Research Fellows	Senior position given to a postdoctoral fellow. See Policy 10.11.3 for hiring requirements

Eligible Co-PI Positions List

Individuals who **are employed by FAU** and hold one of the following positions may serve as a Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI) or Co-Investigator (Co-I) when one of the individuals listed on the "Eligible Positions List" above is named as the Principal Investigator (PI). **Individuals with these positions cannot serve as PI.**

- Adjunct Faculty
- Affiliate Faculty
- Post-Doctoral Fellows

Emeritus Faculty

Emeritus Faculty is a designation offered to senior faculty in good standing at FAU upon retirement. Emeritus Faculty are non-paid positions.

- As a courtesy, if an Emeritus Faculty was conducting funded research up to twelve (12) months prior to retirement, the Emeritus Faculty may continue to serve as PI on the

continued projects. However, an individual from the "Eligible PI Positions List" must serve as Co-PI or Co-I on the proposal.

- New proposal submissions from an Emeritus Faculty to serve as PI or Co-PI requires a request for exception. See exception request below.

Graduate Students and Post-Doctoral Fellows

Graduate students and Post-Doctoral Fellows may apply for fellowship funds with prior approval of the Department Chair and Dean, if allowable by the sponsor, and an individual listed on the "Eligible PI Positions List" provides oversight. For FAU purposes, the individual from the "Eligible PI Positions List" will serve as the PI.

Salary Support (Applies to Proposal Submissions only)

All PI's and Co-PI's named in sponsored proposals must include salary support on the proposal budget, unless exempt through FAU's Time and Effort Certification Policy (Policy Number 10.5.17) or when disallowed by the sponsor.

V. EXCEPTIONS

Exceptions to this policy should be rare but may be granted at the discretion of the Vice President for Research or the Associate Vice President for Sponsored Programs or the Associate Vice President for Research Integrity, with the approval of the college dean or unit director.

Exception requests should be in writing and approved by the college dean or unit director prior to submission to the Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP). Since approval is not guaranteed and could take some time, it is recommended that these requests be submitted at least two (2) weeks prior to proposal deadline date.

VI. DEFINITIONS

Affiliate Faculty. An individual whose knowledge, experience, and expertise make a significant contribution to the University. An affiliate faculty may or may not include compensation.

Adjunct Faculty. A non-tenured individual who has a part-time faculty appointment for a specific length of time.

Clinical Research Faculty. Clinical Research faculty are typically voluntary, non-compensated positions, with the exception that salary may be requested on proposals submitted for external funding. See Policy No. 10.1.3 for hiring requirements.

Co-Principal Investigator/Multiple PI. One of two or more Principal Investigators who share responsibility for the project. Each person is considered a Co-Principal Investigator.

Compliance Protocols and Registrations. Protocols and registrations submitted when human participants, animal subjects or biological materials are used as part of a project. The project could be externally funded, internally funded, or unfunded.

Emeritus Faculty. Emeritus is an honorary title that may be conferred to retired faculty or academic administrators who have a long-term history of meritorious service to higher education and Florida Atlantic University. -

Faculty. An individual who has a full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty appointment or who has a full-time limited-term faculty appointment.

Graduate Student. A person studying for a degree beyond the bachelor's degree.

Instructor. An individual holding a regular, full-time (1 FTE), non- tenure earning teaching faculty appointment at Florida Atlantic University.

Post-Doctoral Fellow. An individual engaged in postdoctoral research, study, or engaged in a fellowship or position for postdoctoral work.

Principal Investigator. The individual responsible for leading the research effort described in a proposal for an award. The Principal Investigator is responsible for the programmatic and administrative aspects of a project, ensuring all terms and conditions of project are met.

Research Faculty. Research faculty are not eligible for tenure. These appointments are normally 100% research. They are normally not assigned instructional responsibilities; they may teach courses appropriate to their background when it is mutually agreed upon.

Senior Research Fellows. After no more than four years of postdoctoral experience, the fellow may be promoted to a Senior Research Fellow position. See Policy No. 10.11.3 for hiring requirements.

Sponsored Projects. Sponsored projects are externally funded activities in which a formal written agreement (grant, contract, or cooperative agreement) is entered by FAU and the sponsor.

Policy Review: The PI Eligibility policy will be reviewed and updated as necessary.

POLICY APPROVAL

Initiating Authority

Signature: _____ Date: 12/12/2025

Gregg Fields, Ph.D, Vice President for Research