Rev. 030125

RESPONSIBLE AND ETHICAL CONDUCT OF RESEARCH (RECR)

I. Purpose and Scope

This policy promotes scientific integrity through training in the Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research (RECR) and applies to all NMC students and researchers, including postdoctoral researchers.

II. Definitions

For purposes of this policy, the RECR means the practice of scientific investigation with integrity. It involves the awareness and application of established professional norms and ethical principles in the performance of all activities related to scientific research.

III. Policy

Researchers and research institutions must conduct research in a way that is honest, trustworthy, reliable, and accountable. RECR is the ideal behavior while a researcher misconduct is the worst possible behavior by an investigator. Certain questionable research practices fall in between the ideal and the worst, but that still negatively impact the integrity of the research.

RECR requires: i) sound research design and methodology; ii) reproducibility; iii) conscientious data management; iv) appropriate authorship; v) appropriate mentorship; vi) appropriate use of funds; vii) disclosing conflicts of interest; and viii) managing conflicts of commitment. RECR also requires that researchers behave in an ethical manner, i.e., use sound ethical judgement that promotes trust, and that research is conducted with integrity, i.e., consistently doing the right thing.

Research misconduct is explicitly defined in federal regulations and this policy as plagiarism, fabrication, and falsification. Implications of research misconduct include but are not limited to: i) harm to individuals or society when patient care, government policies, social services, etc. are designed based on such research; ii) waste of funds and other resources; iii) loss of credibility and public trust in research and science; iv) reputational damage to individuals and institutions; and v) inaccurate research records that inform future research.

Questionable research practices include the following:

- p-hacking
- Excluding data
- Misusing authority
- Inadequate record keeping
- Selective transparency of hypotheses
- Conflicts of interest mismanagement (financial and/or commitment)

- HARKing (hypothesis after results are known)
- Non-compliance with reporting/or registry requirements
- Unethical authorship
- Unethical publication practices
- Noncompliance with institutional policies
- Violating privacy and/or confidentiality rules and/or agreements
- Non-compliance with sponsor-related requirements
- Excluding data
- Unethical peer review
- Misappropriation of research funds
- Delaying or impeding work of collaborators
- Non-compliance with requirements for research involving human subjects and/or animals
- Citing selectively or expanding bibliography unnecessarily

IV. Training Requirements

To promote RECR, NMC requires RECR training by all NMC students and researchers, including postdoctoral researchers, regardless of funding.

All NMC students, postdocs, and researchers must complete required modules of the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative's (CITI) online training and acknowledge reviewing related NMC policies within one weeks of joining or initiating research activities at NMC.

The required courses and policies cover the following content areas:

Collaborative Science
Research Ethics and the Role of the Scientist
Conflict of Interest and Conflict of Commitment
Authorship and Publication
Data Acquisition, Management, Sharing and Ownership
Mentor/Trainee Responsibilities
Peer Review
Publication Practices and Responsible Authorship
Research Misconduct
Undue Foreign Influence
Cybersecurity/Information Security
Research Involving Human Subjects
Research Involving Animals

Online CITI training certificates are valid for four years. NMC students and researchers, including postdoctoral researchers, are responsible for re-taking the CITI RCR training course every four years and providing certificates of completion NMC HR.

V. Related Policies and Procedures

Research Integrity Policy
Conflict of Interest and Commitment (COI) Policy
Intellectual Property Policy
Export Control
Employee Manual

VI. Contact Information

- Office of Research Administration
- Research Integrity Officer: Dr. John R. Engen, jrengen@newmexicoconsortium.org, cell: 505- 709-5077
- HR: Svenja Ellison, hr@newmexicoconsortium.org, office: (505) 412-4198, cell: 505 709 7468