

INTRODUCTION TO THE RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH (RCR)

Education in responsible conduct is essential because unethical or compromised behaviors on the part of researchers lead the public to lose trust in the research community. When trust is lost, credibility is lost. When credibility is lost, the opportunity to improve human well-being and protect the environment is lost. When belief that science can make a difference is lost, funding for research is lost.

The America Competes Act states that any graduate student, undergraduate student or postdoctoral associate (also includes volunteers) who receives support from a federal award MUST have instruction in the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR). Support includes salary, stipends, travel funds, supplies and materials, etc.

Three federal research funding agencies require RCR training as a condition of accepting an award – the National Science Foundation (NSF), National Institutes of Health (NIH), and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (USDA-NIFA). For the Cary Institute, the two most common federal agencies that we submit proposals to are NSF and NIH, and we most commonly receive awards from NSF. Institutions receiving research funding must ensure that they have training programs in place that meet their RCR requirements.

Education and training in the responsible conduct of research (RCR) commonly cover the following eleven modules:

- Introduction to RCR
- Authorship
- Collaborative Research
- Conflicts of Interest
- Data Management
- Mentoring
- Peer Review
- Plagiarism
- Research Involving Human Subjects
- Research Misconduct
- Using Animal Subjects in Research

Within three weeks of being hired, the Cary Institute requires RCR training for anyone receiving current or potential future support (including salary, stipends, travel funds, supplies and materials, etc.) from any externally-funded award. The Cary Institute maintains a subscription to the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) Program, where users log in, affiliate themselves with the Cary Institute, and complete their training modules. The Grants Manager/Compliance Officer sends instructions for required training to new staff who will be conducting research at the Cary Institute. The Grants Office maintains records of staff who have completed their required training. Refresher training in RCR is required every 4 years.

Additional Training Available

If your project involves the use of animals, or you are serving on the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), there is more training available on the OLAW website.

(<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/olaw/tutorial/index.htm>). The Cary Institute's CITI Program subscription includes additional modules on animal care and use.

If your project involves the use of human subjects (e.g., conducting surveys) or you are serving on the Institutional Review Board (IRB), the Cary Institute offers additional training on the use of human subjects in research.

Contact

The Cary Institute's Grants Office staff monitors training of all employees. If you have any questions, please contact either Amanda Johnson (johnsona@caryinstitute.org; or dial 108) or Nicole Dwyer (dwyern@caryinstitute.org; or dial 202) or stop by the Grants Office.