



UMBC POLICY ON PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR ELIGIBILITY

UMBC Policy # IV-2.00.03

I. POLICY STATEMENT

This Policy establishes the eligibility criteria for Principal Investigators (PIs) and Co-Investigators (CIs) at UMBC.

II. PURPOSE FOR POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that PIs and CIs possess the qualifications, ability and facilities necessary to carry out externally sponsored projects and activities.

III. APPLICABILITY AND IMPACT STATEMENT

Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) is the only UMBC office that can submit proposals and negotiate the conditions of an award for a sponsored project. An externally funded award is made to UMBC as result of a proposal submitted by the university, in which a PI and possibly CIs are identified. A proposal and any subsequent extramural award commit and obligate UMBC in many ways. Principal investigator responsibility carries with it a level of risk to UMBC and requires individuals with the expertise and resources necessary to carry out the requirements of their awards. It is therefore incumbent on the university to ensure that PIs and CIs are capable of carrying out sponsored projects and activities as proposed.

This policy applies to anyone serving as a PI or CI on an externally funded project at UMBC. It also includes any groups such as student groups wishing to submit proposals to an external entity.

IV. CONTACTS

Any questions about PI eligibility should first be directed to a department, center or college administrative office. If you have specific questions, call the following offices:

Subject	Contact	Telephone	Email
Policy Clarification	Director of the Office of Sponsored Programs	410-455-3140	ospa@umbc.edu

V. UNIVERSITY POLICY

The essential criteria for eligibility to serve as a PI & CI include the possession of the necessary academic or professional qualifications and the ability to carry out a sponsored project or activity, including the facilities, in full compliance with all applicable federal, state and local regulations.

In order to submit a proposal for external funding, an employee must have been granted PI status*. Principal Investigator status is automatically granted to faculty members who:

1. have an appointment at 50% of full time or greater in an academic department, school, center, or institute and;
2. have one of the following Ranks as defined in USM policy, and :
 1. II-1.00.II.C.1 (Faculty with Duties Primarily in Instruction, Research & Service)
 - a. Professor
 - b. Associate Professor,
 - c. Assistant Professor.
 2. II-1.00.II.C.2 (Faculty with Duties Primarily in Research)
 - a. Research Professor, Senior Research Scientist, Engineer, & Scholar)
 - b. Research Associate (Professor, Scientist, Engineer, & Scholar),
 - c. Research Assistant (Professor, Scientist, Engineer, & Scholar),
 - d. Senior Staff Scientist,
 - e. Associate Staff Scientist
 - f. Assistant Staff Scientist
3. Have the physical resources necessary to complete an award, and;
4. Maintain compliance with UMBC, USM, State and sponsor rules and regulations applicable to extramural awards for which they are the PI or CI.

Post-Doctoral Research Associates are eligible to serve as PIs if approved by their research mentor and their departmental chair or center director.

University employees not eligible to serve as a PI or CI by virtue of the above four items must be approved as defined in the policy before submitting a proposal. Once approved as a PI someone is automatically granted CI status as well.

* Note: UMBC's institutional compliance committees [e.g., Institutional Review Board (IRB), Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC)], separately review and determine a PI's appropriate expertise to conduct specific research during the protocol proposal submission process. Sponsored Award PI Eligibility covered by this policy is not a factor used by institutional compliance committees to assess research expertise nor is it considered if protocol activities are internally funded.

VI. DEFINITIONS

Principal Investigator (PI)	A PI has primary institutional responsibility for providing scientific, technical, intellectual and scholarly leadership, and administrative and financial management of an external award. He/she may also be known as a Project Director or Project Administrator.
Co-Investigator (CI)	A CI shares responsibility with the PI for the scientific, technical, intellectual, and scholarly conduct, and administrative and financial management of an external award. There may be multiple CIs on an award.
Proposal	A proposal is a document submitted by UMBC to an external entity for resources necessary to carry out a project that commits the university to provide personnel, space, equipment, etc.
Award	An award is an external commitment of resources to support a project or activity, which utilizes UMBC resources and for which some return in the form of research, data, reports, or findings is expected.

VII. APPROVAL AND PROCEDURES

The Vice President for Research is responsible for creation, modification and oversight of a procedure for approval of PI and CI status.

Those who currently have PI status as of the date of this policy will maintain PI status. In order for anyone to maintain PI status, they must continue to meet the eligibility requirements defined in Section V. above.

Those who do not meet the criteria noted under Section V. above for PI or CI eligibility must submit a request for eligibility as a PI or CI in accordance with the procedures associated with this policy. In such cases, the final decision will be made by the Vice President for Research, who will consult with the relevant academic dean, department chair, center director or other applicable reporting-line administrator in making this decision.

The procedures associated with this policy are available at the following link: [PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR ELIGIBILITY PROCEDURES](#)

VIII. DOCUMENTATION

As required in the procedures associated with this policy.

IX. RESTRICTIONS AND EXCLUSIONS:

As noted above.

X. RELATED ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

- II-1.00 [UNIVERSITY SYSTEM POLICY ON APPOINTMENT, RANK, AND TENURE OF FACULTY](#)
- IV-2.00 [POLICY ON SOLICITATION AND ACCEPTANCE OF SPONSORED PROJECTS](#)
- IV-2.00.02 [UMBC POLICY ON SPONSORED PROJECTS AND GIFTS](#)

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