

PI Article: Keeping Research Teams RCR Compliant

As a Principal Investigator (PI), you play a critical role in helping Georgia Tech maintain compliance with our Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) requirements. As defined by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), RCR “promotes the aims of scientific inquiry, fosters a research environment that enables scientists to work together toward common goals, and promotes public confidence in scientific knowledge and progress for the public good.”

One of the most common compliance challenges occurs when personnel are moved onto sponsored projects or funding sources that carry RCR requirements, such as National Science Foundation (NSF)-funded projects. A student, postdoctoral scholar, or staff member who previously had no RCR obligation will suddenly be subjected to training requirements because of a funding change, where the completion deadlines are calculated from the first charge dates. Because funding sources, appointments, and student roles can change over time, your awareness and oversight are essential to ensuring that individuals complete required training when obligations to do so are triggered.

Also, the requirement does not disappear if the individual later moves off the project, changes positions, leaves the institution, or is approaching graduation. In many cases, training must still be completed before degree completion or other applicable deadlines. Late cost transfers, retroactive funding changes, or delayed identification of qualifying appointments can create particularly challenging situations.

As a PI, you can help by:

- **Understanding when RCR requirements apply** and being aware of which members of your research team may be subject to training obligations.
- **Considering RCR implications before moving personnel onto funded projects** or changing funding sources. Even routine personnel actions can trigger RCR requirements and associated completion deadlines.
- **Encouraging timely completion of required training** and helping ensure team members understand their responsibilities and deadlines.

By staying aware of RCR implications during personnel and funding changes, PIs help avoid compliance gaps, reduce administrative complications, and support the integrity of Georgia Tech's research enterprise.

Listed below are some helpful links at Georgia Tech:

- <https://rcr.gatech.edu/>
- <https://rcr.gatech.edu/compliance-applicability>
- <https://rcr.gatech.edu/status>

If you have any questions on the contents of this article, please contact Josh Rosenberg at josh.rosenberg@business.gatech.edu. Many thanks to Issam Taleb for suggesting and contributing the content for this article!