In accordance with the National Science Foundation’s (NSF) implementation of Section 7009 of the America Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education, and Science (COMPETES) Act, California State University, Northridge (CSUN*) has developed this plan to provide appropriate training and oversight in the responsible conduct of research (RCR) to undergraduate students, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers participating in NSF-sponsored projects. California State University, Northridge affirms the NSF position that, “The responsible and ethical conduct of research (RCR) is critical for excellence, as well as public trust, in science and engineering. Consequently, education in RCR is considered essential in the preparation of future scientists and engineers.”

**Training Requirement for Students and Postdoctoral Researchers**
All undergraduate students, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers supported by NSF funding on a part-time or full-time basis are required to complete RCR training. Training must be completed no more than 90 days after a student or postdoctoral researcher is hired to work on the project, and at least every four years thereafter for the duration of the project.

**Effective Date**
The RCR requirement applies to all awarded projects proposed after January 4, 2010.

**Institutional Responsibilities**
- The institution (CSUN) is required to have a plan in place to provide appropriate training and oversight in RCR.
- The institution must designate one or more persons to oversee compliance with RCR requirements. The Office of Research and Sponsored Projects (ORSP), under the direction of the Associate Vice President, Research and Graduate Studies, oversees compliance for CSUN.
- The institution is required to verify that undergraduate students, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers supported by NSF have received RCR training.

**Investigator Responsibilities**
- At the proposal stage, an investigator will indicate on the CSUN Grant Data Form the anticipated number of students or postdocs that will work on the project if awarded.
- Upon award, the investigator will provide the names and email addresses of all students and postdocs who will work on the project to the ORSP – The ORSP will provide instructions for completing the training directly to the students or postdocs. The ORSP

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*“California State University, Northridge” and “CSUN” includes The University Corporation, which is the legal awardee of NSF funding and receives and administers grants and contracts on behalf of the university.*

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will also periodically check university payroll records for students or postdocs newly added to NSF project accounts.

- If the ORSP notifies an investigator that a student or postdoc has not completed RCR training within 90 days of starting work on the project, the investigator will ensure that the student or postdoc has completed the training before allowing the student to continue to work on the project.

How to Complete the Training
California State University, Northridge has arranged online delivery of RCR training through the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) website.† If not already registered on the CITI website, a student or postdoc must create a new account and select “California State University, Northridge” as their “Participating Institution”. Once registered, a student or postdoc can add the most applicable RCR course to their queue and then complete the course. Available RCR courses include the following:

- Biomedical Responsible Conduct of Research
- Social and Behavioral Responsible Conduct of Research
- Physical Science Responsible Conduct of Research
- Humanities Responsible Conduct of Research
- Responsible Conduct of Research for Engineers
- Responsible Conduct of Research Administrators

The Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative provides confirmation of successful completion of the course directly to the ORSP. The training is valid for four years, after which time a student or postdoc must retake the course if still actively working on an NSP-funded project. The ORSP will provide reminders to students and postdocs to retake the training prior to its expiration.

Non-Compliance
If students or postdocs have not taken RCR training within 90 days of being hired to work on the project, the ORSP will notify the investigator. Thereafter, the investigator will not allow a student or postdoc to work on the project until receiving confirmation of the student’s or postdoc’s successful completion of the training. If an investigator allows a student or postdoc who has not completed the training to continue to work on the project, the investigator’s ability to process expenditures may be delayed or suspended.

Resources

‡ Online RCR training through CITI Program - [https://www.citiprogram.org/](https://www.citiprogram.org/)