

## **RSENR Policy regarding eligibility for Principal Investigator Status**

Purpose: As the RSENR continues to grow its research program and the university strives to grow its research reputation, there is a need to define the criteria for eligibility for principal investigator (PI) status in the RSENR.

Background: PI status requires accountability for the leadership of the scientific or technical aspects of the project, and for compliance with the financial and administrative aspects of the award. PI's are required to meet stated programmatic objectives of projects, requirements of the granting agency, personnel management and reporting outcomes in manner appropriate to the work (e.g., peer reviewed journals, outreach materials).

Applicability: This policy is applicable to employees whose primary appointment is in the RSENR. This policy only speaks to the criteria for eligibility for PI status. Eligibility to mentor graduate students is managed by the Graduate College and requires a formal [application process](#) with a different set of criteria.

### Policy:

1. All tenured, tenure-track, Extension, and research faculty (including Research Associates) are eligible by appointment for permanent PI status without Dean review, unless otherwise restricted.
2. Other permanent, full-time faculty and staff may apply for "Limited PI Status" on a case-by-case basis, following the process described in the next section.
3. Post-doctoral employees and Research Affiliates may apply for "Limited co-PI Status" and must name and support an endorsing co-PI who is eligible for PI status by appointment (item 1 in this section). The endorsing co-PI may have de minimus support (1%) but must commit to take over the project should the employee with Limited co-PI Status leave the RSENR and UVM before the project end date.
4. Any effort expended by an employee on research in a Limited PI or Limited co-PI status, must be approved by their immediate supervisor and recorded in their annual workload. This effort will only be approved for the duration of the research award and will automatically terminate on the award's end date.
5. The eligibility requirements for other full-time faculty and staff to apply for Limited PI or co-PI Status are:
  - a. An earned Ph.D. or 6 years of demonstrated experience in the area directly related to the subject of the proposed external funding.
  - b. Record of increasing responsibility serving as Co-Investigator or collaborator on grants or contracts awarded to and carried out at UVM.
  - c. Demonstrated ability to carry out responsibilities of PI, including:
    - i. meeting stated programmatic objectives of projects
    - ii. administrative management of projects (financial and personnel management).
  - d. Evidence that the employee has a continuing appointment and support (including from the proposed effort) through the end date for the proposed effort.

6. Any employee eligible for or granted Limited PI or co-PI Status must complete training for Grant Management, research ethics and ethical scientific conduct. Where necessary, other training may be required including but not limited to IUCUC (animal welfare), IRB (human subjects), lab safety, RSEN Business Service Center training, and/or UVM Graduate School training.
7. All PI's, whether eligible by appointment or granted Limited PI or co-PI Status must understand and follow all policies and requirements of the RSEN, UVM, and the primary sponsor, and will be expected to conduct their research in a responsible and ethical manner.

Process:

1. An employee seeking Limited PI or co-PI Status for the first time should send an email to the dean of the RSEN with the following information:
  - a. A brief (paragraph) description of the role of the employee as PI on the proposed project
  - b. A summary of project management experience including management of previous projects, identification of prior project management training, and a plan for additional training if needed. Important training opportunities are offered regularly by Sponsored Programs Administration and by the RSEN among others.
  - c. The RFP solicitation for the proposed project
  - d. A brief (paragraph) endorsement from the employee's direct supervisor requesting that the employee be granted Limited PI or co-PI Status. This endorsement should document that the employee does have the experience and capability to serve as PI or co-PI on the proposed project and should explain how this appointment will benefit the employee and the RSEN.
2. A brief (2 page) CV
3. The RSEN dean will review these materials and may, at their sole discretion, forward the request to SPA for formal approval.
4. Once an employee has been approved for Limited PI or co-PI Status, they may seek approval to serve as a Limited PI or co-PI on future proposals by submitting to the dean of the RSEN all the information noted in step 1, plus a brief (paragraph) summary of the status and/or achievement of any current or previous projects the employee has managed as a Limited PI or co-PI. The dean may at their sole discretion approve continued Limited PI or co-PI status for the new project.