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PAEA Research Mission Advancement Commission Statement on Research Collaboration Ethics

PAEA encourages PA scholars to engage in research that extends beyond institutional, disciplinary, and national boundaries, recognizing the value of research collaborations in producing quality data that broaden the scope of PA research as well as enhancing individual research skill sets and professional development. PA researchers are expected to undergo research ethics training as required by their Institutional Review Boards and to comply with international standards of research integrity. Scientific misconduct is damaging to both the individual scholar and the profession. The World Association of Medical Editors (WAME) defines misconduct as:

- **Falsification of data:** This ranges from fabrication to deceptive selective reporting of findings and omission of conflicting data, or willful suppression and/or distortion of data.
- **Plagiarism:** The appropriation of the language, ideas, or thoughts of another without crediting their true source, and representation of them as one's own original work.
- **Improprieties of authorship:** Improper assignment of credit, such as excluding others; misrepresentation of the same material as original in more than one publication; inclusion of individuals as authors who have not made a definite contribution to the work published; or submission of multi-authored publications without the concurrence of all authors.

- **Misappropriation of the ideas of others:** An important aspect of scholarly activity is the exchange of ideas among colleagues. Scholars can acquire novel ideas from others during the process of reviewing grant applications and manuscripts; however, improper use of such information can constitute fraud. Wholesale appropriation of such material constitutes misconduct.
- **Violation of generally accepted research practices:** Serious deviation from accepted practices in proposing or carrying out research, improper manipulation of experiments to obtain biased results, deceptive statistical or analytical manipulations, or improper reporting of results.
- **Material failure to comply with legislative and regulatory requirements affecting research:** Including but not limited to serious or substantial, repeated, willful violations of applicable local regulations and law involving the use of funds, care of animals, human subjects, investigational drugs, recombinant products, new devices, or radioactive, biologic, or chemical materials.
- **Inappropriate behavior in relation to misconduct:** This includes unfounded or knowingly false accusations of misconduct, failure to report known or suspected misconduct, or withholding or destruction of information relevant to a claim of misconduct and retaliation against persons involved in the allegation or investigation.
- **Deliberate misrepresentation** of qualifications, experience, or research accomplishments to advance the research program, to obtain external funding, or for other professional advancement.



Source: Adapted by the [World Association of Medical Editors](#) from a list in: US Department of Health and Human Services Office of Research Integrity. [Analysis of Institutional Policies for Responding to Allegations of Scientific Misconduct](#), September 29, 2000. Accessed June 6, 2017. The original source of the list is unknown.

PAEA recognizes that research collaborations can sometimes lead to specific ethical dilemmas regarding authorship and ownership of ideas. These situations often may be avoided by a written collaboration agreement at the beginning of the research project that defines the role of each participant, how authorship and credit will be handled, how the team will communicate throughout the process, and how spin-off projects will be negotiated.

Any potential conflicts of interest among the research team should also be identified at the beginning of the collaborative process. For a more in-depth discussion of these issues and a sample collaboration agreement template, see [Collaboration and Team Science: A Field Guide, from the NIH](#). For more specific information regarding how to determine authorship, see the article by Roberts referenced below and [Roles and Responsibilities from the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors](#).

PAEA grant reviews adhere to the core values of scientific integrity as defined by the NIH grant peer review process: expert assessment, transparency, impartiality, fairness, confidentiality, integrity, and efficiency. Evaluation criteria for all grants will be published on the PAEA website, and reviews will be conducted in a blinded manner. Reviewers will disclose any conflicts of interest or potential biases in the review process and will avoid misconduct, such as extensive appropriation of research ideas from a grant proposal.

References and Further Resources

- Myer H, Varpio L, Gruppen L, Sandhu G. The ethics and etiquette of research collaboration. *Academic Medicine*. 2016; 91(12):e13. doi: 10.1097/ACM.0000000000001439 - Contains a useful figure for determining when to include collaborators on "spin off" research ideas and when to add or remove a collaborator.
- Roberts LW. Addressing authorship issues prospectively: a heuristic approach. *Academic Medicine*. 2017; 92(2): pp. 143-146. doi: 10.1097/ACM.0000000000001285 - Figures 1 and 2 are useful guides for how to determine when someone is eligible for an authorship role.
- [Planning Your Research, from the BMJ](#)
- [Roles and Responsibilities, particularly relating to authors, from the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors](#)
- [NIH Policies and Procedures for Promoting Scientific Integrity](#)
- [Montreal Statement on Research Integrity in Cross-Boundary Research Collaborations](#)
- [International Council for Science: Statement, Reports, and Codes on Research Integrity Statement on promoting the integrity of science and the scientific record](#)
- [Collaboration and Team Science: A Field Guide, from the NIH](#)
- [The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity](#)