BALL STATE UNIVERSITY.
Sponsored Projects Administration

Definitions of Personnel on Sponsored Programs

This document is intended to clarify the roles of the Principal Investigator (PI), co-Investigator(s) (co-PI), and Key Personnel.

Roles

Principal Investigator (PI) – A Principal Investigator is the primary individual responsible for the preparation, conduct, and administration of a research grant, cooperative agreement, training or public service project, contract, or other sponsored project in compliance with applicable laws and regulations and institutional policy governing the conduct of sponsored projects. Students, postdoctoral appointees, adjunct or visiting faculty who are not University employees, and temporary employees, may serve as co-PIs as sponsor/program guidelines encourage or permit. In such cases an eligible PI must be assigned to supervise the co-PI's role within the project. The PI is eligible to receive incentive funds and appropriate indirect cost recovery, in coordination with the External Proposal Submission Policy and those policies related to incentive programs.

Co-Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator (Co-PI/Co-I) – Co-PIs are key personnel who have responsibilities similar to that of a PI on sponsored projects. While the PI has ultimate responsibility for the objectives of a sponsored project, the Co-PI is also obligated to ensure the project is conducted in compliance with applicable laws and regulations and institutional policy governing the conduct of sponsored projects. The Co-PI is also eligible to receive incentive funds and appropriate indirect cost recovery, in coordination with the External Proposal Submission Policy and those policies related to incentive programs.

Centers Assistance – When a University recognized Center, Knowledge Unit, or Knowledge Group provides a service on a sponsored program that does not reach the level of a PI or Co-PI, they are still eligible for incentive funds and indirect cost recovery. Examples of services provided include program evaluation or logistics. Only one individual from the Center should be listed on the internal approval form, usually the individual committing the most effort, although additional individuals can assist the project and/or be represented in the budget.

Key Personnel – Ball State faculty, staff, and students may be involved in projects as key personnel without the same level of responsibility of a PI or Co-PI/Co-I. These personnel are not directly responsible for the outcomes, objectives or deliverables of the project and normally do not share in the return of indirect cost or incentive programs, unless specified at the time of proposal submission. Key personnel may participate in the program activities, may dedicate time and effort, and may have a role in publication authorship. A Faculty Participant may also be referred to as a Faculty Investigator or be referred to as a Faculty Investigator or Senior Personnel. Key Personnel cost-sharing or requesting effort on a proposal will be required to sign-off on the proposal, along with their approval structure.

Eligibility

BSU regular tenured faculty, tenure-track faculty, non-tenure-track faculty members (including emeritus faculty) and regular professional personnel are eligible to serve as Principal Investigators (PIs) on sponsored projects. Other University employees may serve as PIs if properly qualified and with the approval of their department chair and college dean or equivalents (e.g., director or vice president). The BSU Authorizing Officials will confirm the eligibility of a PI prior to the submission of any proposal. Students, postdoctoral appointees, adjunct or visiting faculty who are not University employees, and temporary employees, may serve as co-PIs as sponsor/program guidelines encourage or permit. In such cases an eligible PI must be assigned to supervise the co-PI's role within the project.