December 18, 2009

Dear Colleague,

As you may know, the National Science Foundation has established a new training requirement in the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) for students and postdocs supported on NSF sponsored projects. We are writing to fill you in on plans for meeting the new requirements, which take effect in early January. This requirement will affect you only if you submit and receive a new project or a competitive renewal on or after January 4 and plan to support students or postdocs on that project.

**Who is affected?**
All undergrads, graduate students and postdocs who are funded by NSF projects submitted (and subsequently awarded) **on or after January 4, 2010**, including competitive renewals. This requirement does not apply retroactively to students and postdocs funded on projects submitted before January 4, 2010.

**What is required?**
The above undergraduates, graduate students and postdocs must receive RCR training. The University is required to have a plan to provide such training and all NSF applications filed on or after January 4 will include a certification to this effect. Finally, the University is obligated to verify that individuals have received the required training. While the University will not be required to submit evidence of training in progress reports, appropriate verification must be available upon audit.

There are several RCR training options available to you, including an on-line course available at [https://www.rascal.columbia.edu/login/tc0094/](https://www.rascal.columbia.edu/login/tc0094/), and established Columbia courses and departmental offerings. More information on RCR training options is available [here](https://www.rascal.columbia.edu/login/tc0094/). Typical topics covered include data management and data sharing, authorship, research misconduct, conflict of interest, and other similar issues.

**What does the PI need to do?**
PIs will be responsible for assuring that all postdocs, graduate students and undergrads supported by NSF projects submitted (and subsequently awarded or competitively renewed) on or after Jan. 4, 2010 complete RCR training. In general, training should be completed within three months of when the individual begins work on the project. Where individuals are working on NSF projects for a short time, such as the summer, training must be completed before the individual’s work on the project ends.

Our office will coordinate the collection and maintenance of compliance information, including identification of affected individuals, collection of training completion data, and reporting to PIs and DAs.

Information about the new requirements can be found on the [Research Compliance and Training](https://www.rascal.columbia.edu/login/tc0094/) website. For questions, please contact Joel Roselin at [research-compliance@columbia.edu](mailto:research-compliance@columbia.edu).

Sincerely,
Naomi Schrag
Associate Vice President for Research Compliance