

May 2023

Updated NSF Responsible Conduct of Research Plan

Since January 4, 2010, institutions applying for NSF research grants have been required to have in place a plan for ensuring that students (undergraduate/graduate) and postdoctoral scholars supported by resulting awards receive education in the responsible and ethical conduct of research. UCLA's plan for providing this instruction includes a required foundation course that is delivered on-line. Principal Investigators are encouraged to supplement this core course through discussion, reading, and other mentoring activities.

The course used by UCLA to meet the NSF RCR requirements was developed by a faculty committee charged with designing a basic curriculum to be used by students and postdoctoral scholars across disciplines. The course focuses on ethical issues associated with research. The content is based on the third edition of the National Academy of Sciences, "On Being a Scientist." Topics covered include advising and mentoring; treatment of data; mistakes and negligence; research misconduct; suspected violations of professional standards; protection of human participants and animal subjects in research; laboratory safety; sharing of research results; authorship and the allocation of credit; intellectual property; competing interests, commitments and values; and the researcher in society. Illustrative scenarios and quizzes are incorporated into the course. A section is also included with references to regulations and to UCLA resources, policies, procedures, and their interpretation.

All students (undergraduate and graduate) and postdoctoral scholars, who are supported by NSF research grants and subawards are required to take the course. They can access the course on the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) site at <https://www.citiprogram.org> using their UCLA single sign-on. Individuals who complete the course while supported on one NSF grant or subaward will not have to retake the course if they move to another NSF grant or subaward while at UCLA. Individuals who may have previously completed an RCR course at another academic institution will be expected to complete the UCLA course.

NSF currently requires that postdoctoral scholars and students supported on NSF grants receive RCR education. Principal Investigators and all other senior personnel (i.e., faculty and other academic appointees) supported on new NSF grants that result from proposals submitted on or after July 31, 2023, will also be required to complete RCR training. While NSF Principal Investigators, other academic appointees and staff employees supported by NSF funds are not required to complete the course, they are encouraged to do so.

The UCLA NSF RCR course is posted on the [Collaborative City Institution Training Initiative \(CITI\)](#) site, and is accessible to the campus community using their UCLA single sign-on. Further instructions on how to create/link a CITI account and access the training can be found under "How Do I Access the CITI NSF Training?" on the [RPC website](#). Although PIs are not yet required to complete the training, I encourage you and other senior personnel supported on your NSF grants to take the course if you haven't done so already.

When NSF research support is accepted by the campus, the Principal Investigator will be notified of the NSF RCR course requirements through the Award Snapshot.

UCLA's Vice Chancellor for Research and Creative Activities is responsible for overseeing compliance with the NSF RCR training requirement.