

The US National Science Foundation & Training in the Responsible & Ethical Conduct of Research

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SEC 7009 of the America COMPETES Act: Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR)

- “The Director shall require that each institution that applies for financial assistance from the Foundation for science and engineering research or education describe in its grant proposal a plan to provide appropriate training and oversight in the responsible and ethical conduct of research to undergraduate students, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers participating in the proposed research project.”



NSF Implementation



- Funded workshop entitled "*Ethics Education: What's Been Learned? What Should be Done?*" held by the National Academies of Science & Engineering in August 2008.
- Solicited feedback from the research community on NSF's proposed implementation in February 2009.
- Announced final implementation plan on August 20, 2009.
- The RCR training requirement applies to new proposals submitted, or due, on or after January 4, 2010, to conduct research.

Institutional Requirements



- RCR training is considered an institutional requirement. While training plans are not required to be included in proposals submitted, institutions are advised that they are subject to review upon request.
- NSF requires a certification, at the time of proposal submission, that the institution has a plan to provide appropriate training and oversight in the responsible and ethical conduct of research to undergraduates, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers who will be supported by NSF to conduct research.

Institutional Requirements (Cont'd)

- As part of its RCR implementation, institutions must:
 - Designate one or more institutional officials to oversee compliance for RCR;
 - Develop a plan to provide appropriate training and oversight in the responsible and ethical conduct of research to undergraduates, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers who will be supported by NSF to conduct research.
 - Determine the content requirements of its RCR training program, and the frequency with which such training determining must occur.
 - Verify that undergraduate students, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers **supported by** NSF to conduct research have received RCR training.

Challenges/Opportunities



- Wide range of disciplines supported by NSF – and the range of training tools currently available
- Obtaining institutional buy-in: going beyond “checking the box”
- Training the next generation of researchers