

PI Status at the University of California

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What is a Principal Investigator (PI)?

*At UC Davis, the individual responsible for the design, scientific conduct, administrative conduct and reporting of a research, training or public service project **supported by extramural funding** is known as the principal investigator (PI) and sometimes as the project director. The PI must personally participate in the project to a significant degree. A person who is not actually making a significant contribution to the subject project or research may not be designated as a PI.*

Who can be a PI at UC Davis?

- To be eligible to hold the designation of PI on a project, the faculty member must work at least 50 percent of full time in any combination of the following six appointments:
 - Members of the Academic Senate, including emeriti
 - Appointees in the Agronomist series, including emeriti
 - Appointee in the Adjunct Professor series at 50 percent or more of full time
 - Appointee in the Clinical Professor series at 50 percent or more of full time
 - Appointee in the Professional Researcher series at 50 percent or more of full time
 - Appointee in the Cooperative Extension Specialist series at 50 percent or more of full time
 - A combination of any of the above appointments that total 50 percent or more of full time
- UL, as a member of the Academic Senate, has ex officio PI status

What are the PI's Responsibilities?

- The scientific integrity and management of the project.
- The financial management of project funds, including recovery of full indirect costs. Full cost recovery is necessary to support the University's physical and administrative capacity to perform extramural projects.
- Adherence to all University policies.
- Adherence to externally-imposed sponsor terms and conditions including reporting and record keeping requirements contained in the award document. The award document is the funding agency's official obligation of funds for a project.

Who can be a PI at UC Davis?

- “With the approval of the vice chancellor for research, UC Davis does allow some exceptions to the PI eligibility policy. Exceptions must be endorsed by the individual’s department chair and the appropriate dean or vice chancellor.”
- Exception requests via the [PI Eligibility Request form](#) are approved by the department head (UL) and the Office of Research.
- Library expectation for exception requests are
 - Leadership role in the project’s design, funding and execution.
 - Credible project plan and budget.
 - PI [training](#) from SPO.
- Project Director is more general, if not official PI
- Project proposals submitted to SPO require approval by the unit head (Dean or similar). UL approves for the library. This provides a check that proposals for extramural funding were properly prepared, reviewed and approved by the unit.

CAVEAT: this is an informal and unofficial presentation based on the UL's best understanding. Any statements should be confirmed with the Office of Research or IRB

How is PI status related to IRB?

- IRB
 - Is not connected to PI status or extramural funding
 - Is only for human subjects research
 - Will review proposals for non-sponsored research (i.e. not going through SPO)
 - Is unnecessary for projects involving humans that are for Quality Assessment, Quality Improvement, Evidence-based Practice, or Program Improvements, since those are not defined as “research” and are for local use only, non-extensible to others.
 - BUT they like to review proposals to confirm that they do not require review.
 - Publishing is a clue to the nature of the project but a QI project can publish results