



Managing the GMAS Research Team

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Guidance Rationale

The purpose of this business process guidance is to outline the responsibilities of Department and Central administrators in creating and maintaining an accurate record of key individuals on sponsored projects, to help ensure compliance with University and sponsor policies. This document should be used in conjunction with the guidance below:

- [Confirm Research Team](#)
- [Edit Research Team](#)
- [Research Team Roles and Responsibilities](#)

Note: this document references terms that are specific to NIH awards. However, the guidance should be applied to all sponsored projects.

The GMAS research team records certain information for principal investigators (PIs) and other key individuals on a sponsored project (i.e., the research team members). Specifically, the research team tracks members’ adherence to the following University requirements related to the conduct of research:

- Outside activity and interest reporting
- Harvard intellectual property (IP) policies
- Sponsored effort commitments

The above requirements govern which roles/members must be added to the research team for all sponsored projects, as well as which team member updates are required throughout the project period.

Who Must Be Included on the GMAS Research Team?

All Harvard schools are required to include the following personnel categories/roles on all project research teams. Please see your school’s guidance for additional requirements:

- ❖ **Principal Investigators** (the PI will automatically default to the research team)
- ❖ **Harvard Co-PIs**



- ❖ **Harvard Senior/Key Personnel** (or the equivalent, based on the sponsor’s definition) listed on the proposal or award. For NIH awards, Key Personnel include the PD/PI(s) “and other individuals who contribute to the scientific development or execution of a project in a substantive, measurable way, whether or not they request salaries or compensation.” *Note: mentors on individual fellowships automatically default to the research team but may be marked as not Key Personnel when applicable. The same applies to mentors on institutional research training grants such as NIH T32 or NSF REU; although they must be listed as Senior Personnel in the proposal submission, they are not required on the GMAS research team.*
- ❖ **Harvard Investigators** as designated by the PI per the Public Health Service (PHS) definition, are those individuals who are “responsible for the design, conduct, or reporting of the research.” *Note: although the definition of Investigator is from PHS, projects with NSF and other sponsors who follow the PHS Financial Conflict of Interest (FCOI) policy will include the Investigator flag in GMAS.*
- ❖ **Harvard-based Faculty** participating in the project, even if not considered Key Personnel or Investigators. Note that the faculty designation in GMAS is derived from the individual’s salary object code (6010, 6020, 6030, 6040) and includes those who may not have a faculty title.

Do not include the following categories/roles on the research team:

- ❖ TBD/TBN roles
- ❖ Consultants
- ❖ Subrecipient personnel (even if key)
- ❖ Other Significant Contributors (OSC) on NIH awards who are not Harvard faculty

Note: it is no longer the expectation that all personnel paid from the award or performing research on the award should be included on the research team. If you have questions about who can be added to the research team (outside of the above categories), please reach out to your school or central sponsored programs office.

Approvals: OAIR and Participation Agreement

The PI, other Key Personnel, and those individuals on the project designated by the PI as “investigators” (per the above PHS definition) are required to:

- report to the University their outside activities and interests, and
- sign [Harvard’s Participation Agreement](#)¹

Adding these individuals to the GMAS research team enables the University to track compliance with Harvard’s outside activity and intellectual property policies and requirements.

The mechanism for reporting outside activities and interests is through Harvard’s Outside Activity and Interest Reporting ([OAIR system](#)). When an individual is added to a project’s research team with the “Investigator” box selected, they will receive an email from oair@harvard.edu with a link to the research certification for that project. The Investigator will continue to receive email notifications until they have completed the certification in OAIR. (See the [GMAS-OAIR Integration](#) job aid for details.)

By signing [Harvard’s Participation Agreement](#), these individuals confirm their compliance with the University’s “[Statement of Policy in Regard to Intellectual Property](#)” (or “IP Policy”) and other research-related guidelines.

¹ Note that departments/local managing units are responsible for ensuring that all researchers sign the Harvard participation agreement before conducting research, even if they are not designated as key/investigator on a GMAS project.



Committed Effort Tracking

PIs, Harvard faculty, and other Key Personnel are also required to meet the effort commitments made to the sponsors of their awards. We refer to this as “effort commitments” or “committed effort.” **Harvard defines committed effort** as the effort, in units of time, that Harvard has communicated to the sponsor that the team member will spend on the project, regardless of sponsor effort requirements.

The University utilizes GMAS, as the system of record for sponsored programs, to help identify whether faculty and other Key Personnel who have effort commitments on sponsored awards are:

- meeting their commitments to our sponsors
- overcommitted on sponsored projects

These individuals’ committed effort appears on their “Active and pending projects²” report in GMAS, which can be downloaded from their person profile. This report displays both their effort commitments on each sponsored award and their total active and pending committed effort. Ensuring that the effort commitments communicated to the sponsor are accurately reflected in each project and on this report is essential to meet the two compliance requirements listed above.

When Should Committed Effort on a Research Team Be Updated?

Effort commitments in GMAS should only be edited when written approval has been received from the sponsor for the change. (Ex: prior approval from NIH of senior/key personnel adjusting their effort as a result of a 25% deviation.) A change in effort expended and charged, or cost shared, does NOT change the commitment.

Note: in instances where the PI has communicated changes in effort directly to the sponsor and no written sponsor approval is required, the notification to the sponsor should be uploaded to the GMAS Edit research team request and routed for central review. (Ex: NSF progress reports are currently not reviewed or submitted by a Central reviewer. If the PI communicated a change in effort to NSF during an annual progress report, please upload the progress report as documentation of the notification of changed effort.)

Also note that for most NIH grants, prior approval for effort reductions in the upcoming budget period may be requested within the Research Performance Progress Report (RPPR). See [Roles and Responsibilities document](#) for guidance on Requesting NIH Effort Reductions via the RPPR.

When Does Committed Effort Not Apply?

There are instances in which individuals who are required to be listed on the research team (see [Who Must be on the Research Team](#)) do not have effort commitments that were communicated to the sponsor (i.e., they weren’t required to list effort on the application or they do not have effort on the sponsored award in question). **Zero (0.00) person months should be entered in the committed effort field within the GMAS research team** in these cases.

Other examples where effort commitments are not necessarily required include

- fellowships*
- training grants
- conference grants
- awards to support travel or workshops
- equipment grants

² Because the "pending" section of the Active and Pending awards report will not include projects where personnel are only intended for inclusion as Additional People with Costing, GMs should confirm with PI the existence of other pending awards on which they have been named to a non-key/senior/investigator role when confirming their own Other Support.



*Most fellowship awards do not fund research, but instead provide a stipend to offset the fellow's living expenses while they are being trained. Likewise, the mentor is not compensated from the award and typically is not required to maintain a quantified level of effort. For these fellowship awards, enter zero (0.00) person months in the committed effort field on the research team for both the fellow, entered with the role of PI, and the mentor.