

Guidelines

For UNIGE researchers involved in projects funded by US National Institute of Health (NIH)

IP, Ethics, Data, Dual-use, Conflict of Interest

V10.2019

These Guidelines apply to all projects funded by NIH.

They are not intended to be an exhaustive and legally binding document or regulation. If you have questions, please contact Research Services. Official reference documents: [NIH Central Resource for Grants and Funding Information](#); [UNIGE rectorate directives and policies](#).

Please always refer to the latest version of the guidelines available on our web site.

1. Intellectual Property

Any organization involved in a research project funded by NIH as a contractor, grantee or cooperative agreement awardee must report to NIH any inventions arising from the funded activity. Not for profit organizations (including universities) are allowed to retain ownership of the inventions made under federally funded research and contract programs.

Please refer to the NIH [Intellectual Property Policy](#)

2. Ethics and researcher conduct

The respect of ethical principles and integrity in research activities and the prevention of research misconduct are a priority for UNIGE and NIH. At the University of Geneva the reference document is the [code of ethics and professional conduct](#).

Research activities may be subject to specific authorization (i.e. research involving the human being and the animals). The reference body within UNIGE is the [Committee of Ethics and Deontology](#). However, other internal and external authorities (i.e. [Commission cantonale d'éthique de la recherche – CCER](#)) are also competent. For information on which authority to contact please refer to the UNIGE-relevant [web page](#) and to the UNIGE guidelines on **[Ethics approval, review and incident reporting obligations for projects funded by NIH and other US federal entities](#)**.

Additionally researchers who carry out research activities involving human subjects should be familiar with the provisions of the [US Office of Human Research Protections](#). Researchers who carry out research activities involving animals should be familiar with the provisions of the PHS Policy on [Human Care and Use of Laboratory Animals](#) of the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW).

3. Personal data management and data sharing

Projects involving the collection and processing of personal data at / by the University of Geneva, must comply with the provisions of the [Cantonal Data Protection Law](#).

NIH is aware that policies with respect to personal data sharing vary across countries. Investigators from foreign institutions and investigators from US institutions collecting data in other countries should

familiarize themselves with the policies governing data sharing in the countries in which they plan to work. Any specific limitation to data sharing has to be detailed in the data-sharing plan.

The above principles do not apply to anonymized data or research data generated without the involvement of human subjects. For more general information also refer to the Institutional UNIGE policy on research and data management.

If you are requesting the access to external databases containing personal data please contact Research Services.

4. Dual use, misuse and military application of research results

According to the UNIGE Charter of Ethics and Deontology, responsibility towards society is a consequence of the University's public mandate and academic freedom. Therefore, all researchers have a personal duty to take into account the possible consequences of their research on society, and to question potentially dangerous applications, throughout the duration of the project.

Similarly, the Principal Investigator is required to review UNIGE ethics standards (see also point on "Ethics" above) and to consider the following questions: 1) Is the military-industrial complex (including but not limited to government, armed forces and/or defence industry) involved in funding your research? 2) Do the results of your research have any confirmed or potential military applications or affect current standards in military ethics –e.g., global ban on weapons of mass destruction, issues of proportionality, discrimination of combatants and accountability in drone and autonomous robotics developments, incendiary or laser weapons? 3) Do any export control regulations apply to the results of your research?

If the answer to one of these questions is YES/POSSIBLY, the Principal Investigator is required to notify Research Services in writing without delay for further advice. If a preliminary review does not confirm that UNIGE ethics standards are followed, the competent ethics body will conduct a full evaluation.

[UNIGE Charter of Ethics and Deontology](#)
[Export Controls and Sanctions \(SECO\)](#)

5. Financial conflict of interest (FCOI)

Pursuant to the UNIGE Financial Conflict of Interest Policy, all Principal Investigators employed by UNIGE are required to inform UNIGE of any financial interests that could give the impression of a financial conflict of interest.

A financial conflict of interest can be defined as the presence of monetary assets, income, or sponsored travel expenses which are allocated to Investigators, their spouses, and their dependent children, and which are related to the content, design, execution and publication of results of a project.

Financial interests that are created through a contractual relationship with UNIGE as well as any compensation for teaching duties and consulting services for public or non-profit organizations do not fall under the above definition.

If the Principal Investigator identifies a financial conflict of interest that affects him/her and/or another UNIGE researcher working on the project, the Principal Investigator is required under the UNIGE Financial Conflict of Interest Policy to notify his/her hierarchical supervisor without delay. Such notification shall be made in writing with copy to Research Services (euresearch [at] unige.ch). For professors, the hierarchical supervisor is in principle the Dean. For Deans, the hierarchical supervisor is in principle the Rector. The hierarchical supervisor will determine any appropriate measures to be taken to protect the interests of the University.

[UNIGE Financial Conflict of Interest Policy](#)

Further information, contacts

[NIH Grants Policy Statement](#)

UNIGE [Research Services - Euresearch](#)