



**Science & Technology
Development Fund**



**Ministry of Higher
Education
and Scientific Research**

Code of Ethics for PIs Submitting Proposals

2016

1. Purpose and Scope

This code establishes the principles of ethics and rules of conduct for principal investigators (PIs) of the submitted proposals. The rules of conduct outlined in this code cannot by themselves describe all the courses of action to be avoided or pursued. PIs submitting proposals must avoid any activities or associations which are, or might justifiably appear to be, in violation of the public interest.

2. Rules of Conduct of PIs of the Submitted Proposals

It is expected that the research teams, funded by STDF, be characterized by a high level of ethical behavior. This entails adhering to the high standards of integrity including the domains of bioethical, bio-safety and animal protection considerations. The following regulations are to be adopted, whenever needed, based on the field or topic of the proposed research:

a. General Considerations

- PIs submitting proposals should perform their duties in accordance with the highest ethical and legal standards and to the best of their abilities.
- PIs submitting proposals must be characterized by honesty and integrity in all aspects of their work.
- PIs submitting proposals must show respect for the common law, basing their behavior on a genuine belief that their conduct, decisions and actions must be in the public interest.
- The proposed research work must include an original idea, research approach or method, and should not be mainly based on the ideas or work of others. Any relation between the proposed work and the work of others must be clearly acknowledged and referenced. Also, any relation between the proposed work and previous research work by the PI must be clearly indicated and referenced.
- The proposed research work (in its submitted form, or in any other form bearing significant similarities to its submitted form) must not have been previously conducted by the PI or by others. Also, the proposed research work must not have been previously funded by STDF or any other funding agency. In all cases, the general rules of STDF regarding multiple submissions apply to all research project proposals that are submitted to STDF.
- In conducting the activities of research projects, the PIs work as independent persons. They are deemed to work in a personal capacity and, in performing the work, don't represent any organization. Thus, they are personally accountable for their actions, and will be held responsible (legally and otherwise) for any ethical misconduct.
- PIs submitting proposals must obtain special permits from the relevant governmental authorities for conducting activities including, but not limited to, surveys, data collection near the country's international borders, sending genetic and biological resources outside the country, collaborating with foreign researchers, or dealing with historic objects.

- PIs submitting proposals must acknowledge the intellectual property rights of other (existing) patents when developing their own patents.

b. Project Team Considerations

- The research work proposed by the PIs should encourage the efforts of younger colleagues in the team, and should allow them the full opportunity to actively and effectively participate in the project activities.
- PIs submitting proposals should list the names of the team members in a descending order, according to their expected contribution in the proposed project, and not according to seniority.
- The research team should not include persons who will not actively participate in the project activities (if the proposal is accepted for funding), even if the names of these persons appear to strengthen the team.
- The CV's of the PI and other members of the research team (which are submitted with the project proposal) must not include exaggerated or false information, even if some team members are young with little experience.
- PIs submitting proposals should not add junior team members just to do the physical/manual work. Persons doing such work can be added as assistants, not as research team members.
- If a project proposal is accepted for funding, none of the proposed project activities should be carried out by colleagues who are not named in the proposal.

c. Project Subject Considerations

- Submitted proposals must not be built on work previously done, even if it was done by the project's PI or any of its team members.
- Submitted proposals must not address a subject that has been previously addressed by the PI, regardless of the differences between the titles of the proposed and previous research projects.
- PIs submitting proposals must not repeat research work that has been previously done in other countries, unless full justification is given of the need to repeat the proposed work locally. This must be clearly declared in the proposal.
- PIs submitting proposals to STDF for funding must not simultaneously seek funding from other sources for the same project.
- If a PI had previously submitted a proposal to another agency for funding, and the proposal was denied, the PI should not seek funding of the same project from STDF.

d. Content Considerations

- PIs submitting proposals should not base the proposal on commercial objectives, or hide those behind the declared objectives.

- When PIs submitting proposals declare that their proposal addresses the latest developments in their field of research this should be a true statement.
- When PIs submitting proposals declare that their proposal addresses a new subject that has not been addressed by other research work in Egypt or elsewhere, this should be a true statement supported by references.

e. Clarity Considerations

- PIs submitting proposals should not write ambiguous statements in the proposal in order to hide uncertainties or points that they are not sure of.
- Submitted proposals should not include statements that overstate the expected results of the project.

f. References Considerations

- PIs submitting proposals should report every reference clearly and correctly.
- PIs submitting proposals should not refer to any work of others without giving the reference.
- PIs submitting proposals should not write references that they have not read, with the sole purpose of increasing the list of references.
- PIs submitting proposals should not refer to references that they or other member(s) of their team did not read, and that are only quoted by author(s) of references that they have read.

g. Results Considerations

- PIs submitting proposals should not exaggerate the expected results of the project just to demonstrate the superiority of the project.
- PIs submitting proposals should declare the true expected outputs of the project and should not state untrue ones.

h. Funding Considerations

- PIs submitting proposals should not submit a proposal of a project that they have already applied through other funding source(s) locally or internationally, unless they clearly declare that they are asking for co-funding from STDF.
- PIs Submitting Proposals should declare clearly if they have any other funding sources (or matching fund) for the same project.

i. Time and Cost Considerations

- PIs submitting proposals should not overestimate the time required to complete the project.
- PIs submitting proposals should not overestimate the budget of the project just for the sake of maximizing financial gains.

j. Facilities Considerations

- PIs submitting proposals should not mention that they will use any apparatus/equipment in laboratories unless they are 100% sure that such apparatus/equipment exists, 100% sure it is in working condition, and 100% sure that such apparatus/equipment will be available for their use during the implementation of the project activities.
- PIs submitting proposals should not mention any steps or tasks in the proposal that they will not implement (because of lack of facilities or any other reason) if the project is awarded.

k. Bioethical Considerations

- PIs submitting proposals should present ethical clearance forms approved from the relevant ethical committee or institutional review board (IRB).
- PIs submitting proposals with bio-safety aspects, such as those dealing with genetically modified organisms (GMOs), must strictly adhere to the national bio-safety policies, which may require obtaining special permits and clearances from the relevant authorities.
- PIs submitting proposals should refrain from unnecessarily exposing animals to pain, distress or fatality during scientific experimentation.

3. Breach of Code of Ethics

In case of a breach of the ethics and/or rules of conduct set out in this code, the suspected PIs submitting proposals may be temporarily banned from dealing with STDF. The final action will be determined by the Board of Directors of STDF.