AECOM encourages its faculty to engage in a broad range of scientific research projects. Research may involve human subjects, animals, the use of radioactive and other potentially hazardous materials including infectious agents, patients and records at affiliated and non-affiliated institutions, and access to national and international data bases.

These activities, whether funded by outside agencies and organizations (governmental and private, commercial and not-for-profit) or internal sources, are closely regulated by rules that have been imposed by federal and local governments and AECOM itself. Clearly, all applications must be in conformity with the policies of the agency from which funding is being requested. Equally important are those regulations concerned with ethical performance, protection of human subjects, proper use of experimental animals, and conflict of interest in research.

The details of these regulations are too complex to be encompassed within this handbook. Therefore, you are referred to the following for guidance and specific instructions.

A principal investigator on a grant application must be a member of the faculty at AECOM holding the rank of Instructor, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, or Professor. All applications must be approved by the Dean's office before submission to a granting agency or private entity. To obtain such approval, the application will have to have been reviewed and approved by the Department Chairperson and the various departments or committees concerned with chemical and biological hazards, human subjects, animal use, College facilities, and relations with industry and finance. Such review and approval will indicate to the Dean that appropriate space and facilities are available to perform the proposed research and that the application conforms to governmental and College regulations. A printed form, the Internal Face Sheet (GA Form 6741) will be provided by Grant Accounting (room 1108, Belfer, ext. 3711) or your departmental administrator. This Face Sheet will guide you in the approval process and must accompany the submitted application. It lists the AECOM departments, such as the Animal Institute, Committee on Clinical Investigations, Environmental Health and Safety, and Facilities Management, that must approve the application if their services or approval are required to carry out the proposed research and a time schedule that should be followed. It also provides specific instructions for inter-institutional applications, including research to be performed at affiliated hospitals.

Department administrators are familiar with this process and will assist the investigator with the preparation of a grant application.
BUDGETS

All applications for funding from outside sources must be approved by the Office of Grant Accounting, room 1108, Belfer, ext. 3711. The application budget should be prepared carefully and provide for sufficient funds to cover the costs incurred in the purchase and care of the animals to be used in the project, engineering services that will be required for renovations and other institutional expenses. Special care should be taken to make certain that the percentage of an investigator’s time and salary that is to be charged to the project is consistent with the percentage of effort allotted to that project.

HUMAN SUBJECTS

All research involving human subjects conducted at an AECOM facility or funded through AECOM sources must be approved by the Committee on Clinical Investigations (CCI). All research involving human subjects conducted at any one of AECOM’s other affiliated institutions must be approved by the appropriate Institutional Review Board (IRB) having jurisdiction over the particular patient population, i.e., Montefiore Medical Center, Bronx Lebanon Hospital, Long Island Jewish Hospital, Bronx Psychiatric Center, etc.

The AECOM CCI reviews research conducted at the Jacobi Medical Center. The Weiler Hospital, as a Division of Montefiore Medical Center, is under the jurisdiction of the Montefiore Medical Center Institutional Review Board (IRB); however, in the case of research conducted at Weiler under an Einstein grant, by faculty on the AECOM payroll, the protocol may be submitted to the AECOM CCI. This also applies to tissue obtained at Weiler and analyzed at AECOM. Blood or tissue obtained for research at AECOM from individuals at other institutions requires approval by the IRB at that institution and the AECOM CCI.

Use of an investigational drug or device for patient care must also be approved by the CCI or the appropriate IRB, as well as emergency/compassionate use of such drug or device.

Indemnification language and/or terms of contracts for clinical trials funded by pharmaceutical companies must also be approved by the University’s counsel. This process is coordinated by the CCI office.

Review by the CCI is very thorough, and applications coming before the full Committee must be submitted at least 12 working days prior to the meeting. Detailed information and applications for CCI approval with complete instructions are available from the CCI office at room 1002, Belfer, ext. 2237.
The care and use of animals is governed by the NIH Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, as well as other Federal, State, and City regulations. To ensure that research at AECOM conforms to these regulations, the Institute for Animal Studies and the Animal Institute Care and Use Committee (AICUC) provides investigators with a detailed Guide for Review and Approval of Animal Use. By following the instructions in this Guide, the Principal Investigator will be able to meet these requirements and obtain approval from the AICUC for research that uses animals. The Guide and detailed information can be obtained from the Institute for Animal Studies, room 1005, Ullmann, ext. 3571.

Review by the AICUC is very thorough and covers every aspect of newly designed protocols related to animals, including experimental design and appropriate number of animals. Consequently, such protocols must be submitted for review at least 30 days prior to submission of an application.

The Environmental Health and Safety Department (EH&S), is responsible for maintaining a safe work environment at the College. EH&S must approve all research applications that utilize hazardous materials (e.g., chemicals, biohazards, and radionuclides). The activities of EH&S are carefully supervised by four faculty committees. These are the Institutional Biohazards Committee, Chemical Hazards Committee, Non-Human Use Radiation Safety Committee and the Human Use Radiation Safety Committee. The EH&S department and the faculty safety committees insure that activities involving hazardous materials are conducted safely and in conformance with Federal, State, and City regulations. For further information, including specific regulations and dates of workshops concerned with safety, contact EH&S in room 800, Forchheimer, ext. 4150.

All research projects that will require laboratory and office renovations or structural changes must be approved by the Department Chairman and by Facilities Management, room C03 Golding, ext. 2805, prior to submission. As it is not possible to make such alterations on short notice, advance planning and budgeting are essential.

Laboratory research funded by private industry must be approved by the Office of Industrial Liaison (OIL), room 302, Belfer. All agreements with industry must be negotiated by OIL and approved by the Dean. As research sponsored by industry incurs the same overhead costs as research funded by the National Institutes of Health, privately funded research budgets must bear the same overhead rates as specified in the Department of Health and Human Services agreement with AECOM. Exceptions may be made for small
projects with limited budgets. The College’s regulations in this regard (Administrative Policy No. 4.4) may be obtained from Grant Accounting or the departmental administrator. Faculty members are required to review such projects with the Director of OIL prior to any substantive discussion with an industrial firm. Clinical trials funded by pharmaceutical companies must be approved by the CCI and university counsel according to the principles described in the section on “Human Subjects.”

To ensure that research at AECOM will not be influenced by a relationship between the College or the investigator and a commercial enterprise, AECOM has adopted a Conflict of Interest Policy that requires disclosure to the Dean by the faculty of all such relationships. This policy can be found on page III-59.

All faculty members, trainees, students and staff are subject to the College's Policy on Patents and Licensing Agreements. Faculty members and trainees receive a copy of this Policy and are required to sign an agreement accepting its provisions. The Policy, which was written to conform to NIH regulations, mandates that all inventions that are related to work at the College must be disclosed to the Patent Committee and assigned to AECOM. If the Dean decides to patent and/or license the invention, two-thirds of the net income from such inventions are returned to the inventor in the form of both direct remuneration and research support. A copy of the Patent Policy can be found on page III-46. For additional information, consult the Patent Committee, room 302, Belfer, ext. 3357.