

Collaborative Research Policy

Policy

All staff of Education for Health have a duty to the public, to themselves and funders to conduct research in the most conscientious and responsible manner possible. Education for Health expects all those engaged in research, to observe and promote these principles irrespective of their sources of funding or their area of research. The aim is to set standards that enhance research quality, integrity, compliance and that safeguard the public. Education for Health's research policy in 2014 is to collaborate with others and not to lead on research projects. We will actively establish collaborative working relationships with academic, commercial and other research partners.

1 Objective

The objective of the Collaborative Research Policy is to establish a framework to support the conduct of collaborative research projects involving Education for Health and at least one external party.

2 Scope

All staff who are involved in the conduct of collaborative research associated with Education for Health.

3 Policy Provisions

3.1 Collaborative Agreements

Where Education for Health is involved in any collaborative research project, collaborating researchers must consider and make arrangements to manage the following issues prior to the commencement of the research project:

- financial management;
- intellectual property;
- authorship and publication;
- consultancies;
- secondments;
- ethics approval; and
- ownership of equipment, research data and primary materials.

Agreement to participate in any collaborative research should be agreed by the Chief Executive to ensure it fits in with the Charity's Vision and Mission. A collaborative research agreement may take various forms, including a legal contract, an exchange of letters, a research management plan signed by all parties, or management plans signed by appropriate representatives from all parties. The collaborative research agreement with any staff must be signed and agreed by the Chief Executive on behalf of Education for Health.

A collaborative research agreement in the form of a formalised contract or application is required where the collaborative research project involves the transfer of funds, the transfer or use of Intellectual Property (IP) and/or is in accordance with funding body requirements.

The collaborative research agreement should be in writing and must provide relevant details relating to financial management, IP, confidentiality and copyright issues, sharing commercial returns, responsibility for ethics and safety clearances, and reporting to appropriate agencies.

3.2 Management of Research Data

Collaborating institutions must each identify a person to be involved in the management of research data, primary materials and other items to be retained at the end of the research project. Each collaborating institution will normally be responsible for the management of research data and primary materials within their institution.

The arrangement for shared access to research materials and data must be negotiated prior to the commencement of the research project and must be included in the collaborative research agreement.

3.3 Data Protection

Personal data are data relating to a living individual who can be identified by that information (or from that and other information in the possession of the data user) including any expression of opinion about the individual and any indication of the intentions of the data user/controller in respect of that individual. Any work involving processing, storing or recording personal data must meet the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

3.4 Intellectual Property

Management of IP, including Copyright, must be consistent with Education for Health Policy.

3.5 Ethics Approval

Ethics approval and safety clearances must be obtained prior to the commencement of the collaborative research project in accordance with current research guidance.

3.6 Confidentiality

Researchers involved in collaborative research projects must comply with confidentiality requirements in accordance with relevant legislation, agreements, research ethics requirements, and other relevant professional standards.

The nature and scope of confidentiality requirements must be agreed upon by the collaborating researchers and included in the collaborative research agreement.

3.7 Sharing Commercial Returns

Where it is anticipated that the collaborative research project will result in commercial returns, the collaborative research agreement must detail how those returns will be distributed.

3.8 Conflicts of Interest

Any Education for Health staff involved in collaborative research projects must disclose and manage any actual or apparent conflicts of interest relating to any aspect of the collaborative research project.

4. Obligations

Researchers shall comply with all applicable laws and statutes relevant to the conduct of research including, but not limited to, the Human Rights Act 1998, the Data Protection Act 1998, the Mental Capacity Act 2005, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. Researchers are also required to conform to relevant guidance, directives and codes from organisations hosting and/or funding the research and from professional bodies in the field of the research.

5. Principles of Research Conduct

Researchers must adhere to the principles of research conduct outlined below:

5.1 Honesty: Researchers should be honest in respect of their own actions and intentions when undertaking research and in their responses and intentions towards the research of others. This applies to the whole range of research-related activities including experimental design, generating and analysing data, ensuring the accuracy of data, publishing results, storing research results, acknowledging the direct and indirect contribution of colleagues and collaborators and the refereeing and editing process. Anyone listed as an author on a paper must be familiar with the contents of the paper and able to identify his/her contribution to it. Principal authorship and other publication credit should accurately reflect the relative scientific or professional contribution of the individuals involved.

Researchers are expected to understand and apply the following:

- Plagiarism, deception or the fabrication or falsification of results will be treated as a serious disciplinary offence in accordance with Education for Health's Staff Handbook
- Researchers must not engage in, nor conceal, misconduct and are expected to report cases of suspected misconduct in a responsible and professional manner

Staff undertaking research must determine the retention requirements for any data and records on a project by project basis, taking account of:

- The legal and regulatory framework for particular types of research
- The collaboration requirement
- The terms and conditions imposed by external research sponsors and funders
- The commercial, political, cultural or ethical sensitivity of particular types of research

5.2 Integrity: Integrity is about undertaking properly regulated research. Staff involved in research must comply with all legal and ethical requirements relevant to their field of study. They are expected to declare and resolve appropriately any real or potential conflicts of interest either of a financial or professional nature. The Charity is concerned with protecting the rights, dignity, health, safety and privacy of research subjects, and the integrity of the environment. It is also concerned with protecting the health, safety, rights and academic freedom of researchers and the reputation of the Charity.

5.3 Co-operation: Whilst recognising the need for Researchers to protect their own research interests and those of any funding body, we encourage staff involved in research to be as open as possible in discussing their work and exchanging ideas with other members of the Charity. Once results have been published, we expect to make available relevant data and materials to others, always provided that this is consistent with the Data Protection Act 1998. Results can only be released in line with any ethics approval and consent which cover the data and materials, and any related intellectual property rights and confidentiality obligations.

5.4 Accountability: Staff should recognise that in and through their work they are ultimately accountable to the general public and should act accordingly. They should ensure that any research undertaken complies with any agreements, terms and conditions relating to the project, allows for proper governance and transparency and is undertaken with financial probity. They must follow the requirements and guidance of any professional bodies in their field of research.