

## Policies for the Responsible Practice of Research

These policies<sup>1</sup> apply to all people engaged in research at FNU, including staff, research students, and academic visitors to the University. College Deans are responsible for the procedures and mechanisms for the effective implementation of these policies in respect to all research in their  
5 Colleges. Vice Chancellor/URPC may seek investigation and accountability in the event of reported breach or misconduct in the practice of research.

### 1. Roles and Responsibilities

10 The Fiji National University (FNU) expects its researchers to maintain the highest standards of professional conduct and integrity. Researchers have a duty to ensure that their work maintains the good name of the University and their profession. The standards prescribed herein apply to all people engaged in research at FNU, including staff, undergraduate and postgraduate research  
15 students, and academic visitors to the University. Researchers have an obligation to maintain the highest standards of intellectual honesty in the conduct of their research, and validity and accuracy in the collection and reporting of the data. They must comply with ethical principles of integrity, respect for persons, individual privacy, justice and beneficence and life forms.

*Researchers must:*

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- a. *adopt appropriate methods for achieving the objectives of each research proposal*
  - b. *follow proper practices for safety and security*
  - c. *respect the rights of those effected by their research*
  - d. *manage conflicts of interest in terms of personal ambition and advantage, so as not to compromise good practice and scholarly considerations*

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  - e. *obtain written approval from appropriate ethics and safety committees, and other regulatory bodies where required*
  - f. *respect the animals they use in research*
  - g. *conform to the policies adopted by the University and funding agencies*
  - h. *accept the responsibility for their actions when disseminating research findings.*

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<sup>1</sup> This document has been prepared in consultation with related policies of leading research institutions particularly, Australian National University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, University of Cambridge and Duke University.

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Researchers are expected to conduct their research in a manner so as to minimize adverse effects on the wider community and the environment. Researchers would ensure self-correction of errors, through maintenance and reference to research records; presentation and discussion of research findings in seminars and symposia; publication of results in peer reviewed journals; and ensuring element of reproducibility in the observations. University encourages competition in research, but it should not distort sound research practice and scuffle creativity and innovativeness.

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While the University is ultimately responsible for fiscally compliant management of all sponsored projects, it is the Principal Investigator (PI) who bears primary responsibility for directing both the research and administration of a grant, cooperative agreement, training or public service project, contract, or other sponsored project.

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The PI is responsible for the completion, accuracy, and timeliness of all technical reports required by the sponsor. PI ensures oversight to manage the financial and other administrative functions related to the grant in a responsible manner, financial and administrative regulations and compliance with relevant policies, procedures of the University and Fiji Islands.

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Researchers who are engaging in a research practice that is not compatible with this policy must develop and document the proposed practice before adopting it. In all cases the proposed variation must be approved by the Vice-Chancellor. A researcher who considers that a research misconduct may have occurred must have regard to the University's policies and values, and act in a timely manner.

## 2. Principal Investigator Status

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It is the University policy that only those whom the University has or intends to have an on-going employment or contractual relationship may serve as Principal Investigators for projects, research or otherwise, supported by the University or external funding sources. The status of principal investigators is granted as a matter of privilege to regular rank faculty and to select senior administrative staff on renewable contract or tenured appointment. In special instances, other members of the University community may request permission to serve as Principal Investigator with an approval and endorsement from the relevant department

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head to the dean. In latter case request should include an assurance that the department will assume responsibility for the conduct of the grant should the principal investigator not remain with the University for the duration of the project.

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### 3. Student Supervision

The University shall ensure that there is a qualified supervisor<sup>2</sup> of each masters and doctoral research student at all the time and ensure effective intellectual interaction and effective oversight of the student research by the supervisors through creation of conducive work environment for the latter. In the event of an assigned supervisor leaving FNU or proceeding on long leave alternative full time supervisor are appointed.

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*The University shall ensure that all research students receive training on applicable research ethics, FNU research policies, occupational health and safety issues, confidentiality and privacy, and environmental protection as early in the careers of the research students as possible, preferably at induction. The training shall include the University's mechanisms for dispute resolution. University demand integrity, professionalism, dedication and accountability on the part of research students.*

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Supervisors should promote all round professional development of research students by guiding and overseeing all stages of the research process, including identifying the research objectives and approach, obtaining ethics and other approvals, obtaining funding, conducting the research, and reporting the research outcomes. A supervisor must be satisfied that the research methods and outcomes of researchers under their supervision are appropriate and valid.

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Supervisors must ensure that research students receive appropriate credit for their work. Where the student is working in a team, the supervisor and other team members must take care not to compromise the integrity of the activities that represent the scope of the individual student's research project.

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### 4. Management of Research Data and Primary Materials

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<sup>2</sup> Full time staff having demonstrated ability in research through published work, to be decided by respective College Research Committee.

95 Researchers must retain the relevant materials and research data that represents the evidential basis to justify the outcomes of the research, as determined by law, funding agency, publisher or by convention in the discipline as well as those of potential value in further research. The materials and data retained at the end of a research project carried out under the auspices of FNU are the property of FNU unless required otherwise by the funding agency.

100 Retention of materials and data solely by the individual researcher provides little protection to researcher or the University in the event of an allegation of falsification. Therefore, data must be retained in the department or research unit in which they were generated and individual researchers should be able to hold copies for their own use. Each department or research unit must establish procedures for the retention of the evidentiary data (including electronic data) and maintain a record in a durable and appropriately referenced form. Projects involving multiple institutions should include a written agreement regarding storage of research data and primary materials within each institution. Data must be held for a reasonable period of time to allow it to be accessed by potential users. For the science and social science data that are published this shall be 5 years from the date of publication, for clinical trials for 15 years and for areas such as gene therapy research data must be retained permanently (particularly the patient records). Similarly if the work has community or heritage value, research data should be kept permanently. Save as above, for the short-term research projects, particularly those completed by the students that are for the assessment purposes only, data are retained for 12 months after the completion of the assessment.

115 The researchers need to comply with the general privacy policy in the discipline on collection, use and control of personal information i.e. regarding manner, purpose, relevance, appropriateness and accuracy of the personal information. Researchers must not use confidential information of the University, another person or a third party for their own personal advantage or that of advantage of a third party without first obtaining permission. Confidentiality must be respected when required by a University contract or policy. Data management should conform to relevant privacy protocols in regard to storage, security and access as well as limitations on their use and disclosures. Researchers must be responsible for ensuring appropriate security for any confidential material.

125 Save as above, University strongly encourages open publication of research results. The research results and methods in general should be open to scrutiny by the researchers at large through publication and presentation. The non-confidential data related to publications should also be available for discussion with other researchers.

130 Any limitation and restriction on free publication of research methods, results and discussion, to protect Intellectual Property Right (IPR), must be through written explicit agreement between the FNU, the researcher and the sponsor of the research. It is the obligation of the researcher to enquire whether formal confidentiality agreements apply. Confidentiality agreements having a commercial intent need to be approved by the appropriate College Dean. In general FNU discourages agreements which limit or prevent open access to information of potential public interest, especially for periods of time longer than 2 years.

135 If data are obtained from limited access databases, or via a contractual arrangement, the information regarding location of the original data, or database from which it was collected, must be retained by the researcher.

140 If the results from research are challenged, all relevant data and materials must be retained until the matter is resolved.

## 5. Publication and Dissemination of Research Findings

145 This section of the policy applies to all forms of dissemination, including non-refereed publications, web pages, exhibitions, films, professional and institutional repositories or other established accepted practices of the disciplines, besides the formal publication of research results in academic journals or books. University encourages open presentation and discussion of results. Researchers have a responsibility to their colleagues and the wider community to disseminate a full account of their research as broadly as possible. The account should be complete, and where applicable, should include negative findings and results contrary to the hypotheses as well. Where feasible, researchers must provide research participants with an appropriate summary of the research results. Following guidelines need to be observed in the dissemination of the research findings.



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a. Results should be exposed to peer review, especially where publication of a matter of public interest or importance is involved.

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b. Research findings should not be reported in the public media before they have been reported to a research audience of experts in the field of research (through publication or peer-review). The research findings that are prone to errors should be reported in the public media only after review by one or more experts in the field of research.

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c. Research findings that entail matters of public concern and/or cause public alarm should be published with regard to that situation. Where the researchers judge that urgent publication is required, prior to peer review, the findings must be tendered first to responsible public or professional authorities and advise them of unreviewed and hence tentative status of the findings. Only where responsible authorities fail to act, reporting to the media be justified, provided unreviewed and hence tentative status of the findings is specified.

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d. Where there is private reporting of research, especially to the prospective financial supporters, that has not yet been exposed to peer-review researchers are obligated to explain the unreviewed status of the work and the peer-review mechanisms to which it will be subjected.

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e. Publication activities must take into account any restrictions relating to intellectual property or culturally sensitive data.

f. Where confidentiality requirements prevent, or delay peer review of a research report before its delivery to the sponsor, the researcher must state tentative status of the findings and that the research outcomes will not be finalized until peer review is over.

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g. Financial sponsors must not be permitted to influence the content or presentation of research results, nor should they prevent or delay the publication of research findings, except where protection such as in the form of a patent is genuinely in the process of being obtained, the work is confidential, or there are contractual limitations that have been expressly approved by the University.

h. Researchers must acknowledge the host institutions.

i. Researchers must acknowledge funding sources of the research.

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j. Publications must include information on the sources of financial and in kind support for the research and reveal actual or potential conflicts of interest. Secret sponsorships are prohibited.

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- k. Researchers must ensure that they cite other relevant work appropriately and accurately when disseminating research findings. Use of the work of other authors without attribution is unethical and may amount to research misconduct.
  - l. Researchers must take all reasonable steps to obtain permission from the copyright holder before republishing research findings.
  - 195 m. Save as in review articles, anthologies, collections, or translations into another languages repeated reporting of identical research findings in several different publications are not acceptable. An author submitting substantially similar work to more than one publisher, or who submits work similar to work already published, must disclose this at the time of submission.
  - 200 n. Deliberate inclusion of inaccurate or misleading information relating to state of publication, research funding, and awards conferred, and their shared nature; in curricula vitae, grant applications, job applications or public statements, or the failure to provide relevant information, is a form of research misconduct.

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## 6. Authorship

Authorship in a research publication reflects substantial contribution to at least one of:

- a. conception and design,
- b. collection of data
- 210 c. analysis and interpretation of data;
- d. drafting the article or revising it critically so as to contribute to the interpretation

To be named as an author, a researcher must have made a substantial scholarly contribution to the work and be able to take responsibility for at least part of the work they contributed. Following

215 activities are not of themselves criteria for inclusion of authorship:

- a. Participation solely in the acquisition of funding or data collection
- b. Holding position of authority, head of department, or personal friendship with the authors
- c. Providing a technical contribution but NO other intellectual input
- 220 d. Providing routine assistance in some aspects of the project.
- e. Providing third party materials or data, but with NO other intellectual input.

University shall ensure integrity of research and the standing of researchers. Authorship of a research output is a matter that should be discussed between researchers at an early stage in a

225 research project, and reviewed whenever there are changes in participation. There should be one corresponding author to manage communication about the work with the publisher and one or more coauthors. As a general principle, researchers must offer authorship to all people, including research students, who meet the criteria for authorship listed above. No person who is an author, consistent with this definition, must be excluded as an author without his/her permission in

230 writing. Those offered authorship must accept or decline in writing, email or fax within a reasonable time. Where a potential author has not responded in a reasonable time, the corresponding author should create and maintain a record of decisions made on behalf of the authors, to assist in any subsequent review of the circumstances of publication. Except when compelling circumstances render it impossible, all authors must approve the version to be

235 published.

240 Authors must be able to show that any part of the article that is important to its main conclusions is the contribution of an author and he/she takes public responsibility for the part of the output in that author's area of expertise. There is no universally agreed criterion for order of authorship and therefore is left to the authors to decide among themselves. Authors of web-based publications must be clearly identified in the publication and must take responsibility for the publication's content - including any copyright material contained therein. Students as authors own the copyright of their thesis.

245 Courtesy demands that individuals and organizations providing facilities should also be acknowledged. Any disputes about authorship should be referred to the appropriate Dean. Disputes over authorship will normally not lead to research misconduct, other than through proven plagiarism.

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## 7. Conflicts of Interest

255 The conflicts of interest have potential to compromise judgments and decisions that should have been made impartially and thereby undermine community's trust in research. The situations where an independent observer might reasonably conclude that the professional actions of that person are unduly influenced by their own interests, conflict of interest exist.

260 Researchers have an obligation to disclose any situation in which the conflict of interest may, or may be perceived to affect any decision regarding other people, when applying for grants, and to journal editors and readers when reporting results and findings to journals or public media.

265 Researchers are required to disclose affiliation with, or financial involvement in, any organization or entity with a direct interest in the subject matter or materials of researchers, including personal or family relationships. Full range of potential interests includes direct benefits such as sponsorship of the investigation or indirect benefits such as the provision of materials or facilities or the support of individuals such as provision of travel or accommodation expenses to attend conferences.

## 270 8. Collaborative Research

University recognizes importance of collaborative research both with in FNU and outside with other international institutions. Researchers must prepare written agreements in regard to sharing intellectual property, managing research findings, managing conflicts of interest, and commercializing research outcomes, prior to starting work on collaborative research projects with  
275 outside institutions.

Researchers involved in joint research across institutions must be aware of, and comply with, all policies and written agreements affecting the project, particularly those relating to ethics approvals, the dissemination of research findings and the management of research data and  
280 primary materials - of the participating institutions. Researchers must disclose as soon as possible any actual or apparent conflicts of interest relating to any aspect of the collaborative research project.

## 285 9. Peer Review

All University supported researchers have a responsibility to participate in peer review processes leading to publication of work for the scholarly or general community interest. Peer review provides expert scrutiny of a project, and helps to maintain high standards and encourages accurate, thorough and credible research reporting.

290 University encourages impartial and independent assessment of research by others researchers working in the same or a related field. Researchers whose work is undergoing peer review must not seek to influence improperly the process or outcomes. The participants in peer review process are required to maintain fairness, confidentiality, act in the area of their expertise, do not permit  
295 personal prejudice to influence the peer review process, do not take undue advantage of knowledge obtained during the peer review process, declare all conflicts of interest and give proper consideration to research that challenges or changes accepted ways of thinking.

## 300 10. Ethics and Safety Approvals

Fiji National University is committed to the highest standards of ethics and safety in research. All researchers at FNU are expected to be familiar with the appropriate professional codes of practice in their own disciplines. The project design must incorporate relevant ethical and safety concerns.

305 The University and its researchers have a responsibility to ensure the safety of all subjects and staff associated with the research. Debate on, and criticism of, research methods and practices are parts of the research process. However, Researchers must adhere to accepted ethical principles of justice, dignity, privacy and avoidance of harm to people, environment, flora and fauna. The following principles should apply to all research carried out in the University.

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*Independence, integrity and quality:* Research are designed, reviewed and undertaken in a way that ensures academic independence, integrity and quality.

*Informed consent and respect for confidentiality:* Free and informed consent by participants is essential to good research. The confidentiality of information given by respondents, and the anonymity of subjects, must be respected. Additional ethical consideration should be given in respect of those who may be less competent or able to offer or refuse consent.

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*Ethical consideration:* Researchers proposing a procedure or project should summarize the ethical risks envisaged, and any protocols or precautions that are to be deployed to minimize them before the work is undertaken. If the proposal involves more than minimal risk, independent ethical review are considered. The same consideration are given to risks which become apparent during the program of research.

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*Independent ethical review:* Researchers must comply with the requirements of the relevant ethics and safety policies of the University. Where the proposal involves more than minimal risk, an independent review by a ethics committee in the school, college or University are used for appropriate scrutiny. The primary consideration is the welfare and dignity of subjects, as well as staff. Ethical review need not be exhaustive, but it should be reasonable and proportionate. Where

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330 the research procedures require approval by the University's Ethics Committees, research must not proceed without such approval.

*Maximized benefit, minimized harm:* Research should balance the anticipated benefits against potential harms to human or animal subjects, colleagues, the environment and the wider academic community. Harm to research participants must be avoided.

*This policy should be read together with the University's Human Ethics and Animas Ethics and other research-related policies and codes, as well as research sponsors' guidelines, and relevant statutory requirements of Fiji. Normally College Research Committees act as Research Ethics and Safety Committee (RESC) for their respective colleges and the Deans are responsible for monitoring the observance of the relevant policy guidelines and compliance with the statutory legislation in their Colleges. While acting as RESC Dean can co-opt additional members to the committee from department where human and animal experimentation is involved, veterinarians, physicians, legal experts and from community as required. All research proposals involving vertebrate animals, humans, hazardous materials, recombinant DNA technology, genetically modified organisms and crops, whether funded by FNU or by external sources, must submit additional disclosure in the prescribed format and seek approval of the RESC before the start of the actual work. Committee can approve or disprove the work or may ask for suitable modification in the methodology to accommodate its concerns.*

350 All research involving human and animal subjects, recombinant DNA technology, genetically modified organisms and crops and hazardous materials are monitored through an oversight committee, i.e. University Research Ethics and Safety Committee (URESC) consisting of URPC members and members from department where human and animal experimentation are involved, 355 physicians, veterinarians, scientists, non-scientists, and community representatives.

### **10.1 Human Ethics:**

Human rights, dignity and privacy of individuals and communities must be respected in any research. Every person or community that is the subject of research must be fully informed about the nature of that research and must give their consent before it begins. An equitable principle of beneficence applies where people sharing their knowledge and should be explained of

methodologies of the benefic sharing. Additional consideration should be given in respect of those who may be less competent or able to offer or refuse consent.

365 In order to conduct research with human subjects, researchers must provide additional information with the research application. All researchers using human subjects must comply with [WMA Helsinki Declaration](#), [Nurenberg Code](#), statutory provisions of Fiji and FNU guidelines on Human Ethics, and must obtain approval for research protocols before commencement of the work.

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### **10.2 Animal Ethics:**

The basis of animal ethics is to ensure that animals are treated with respect and not subjected to any unnecessary discomfort as a result of the research. These principles for animal care and use at FNU apply to all research, educational, and testing protocols performed by FNU faculty, staff, or  
375 employees, involving vertebrate animals either at the University or other collaborating or subcontracted sites where FNU is the primary funds manager for the activity.

In the understanding, treatment and cure of major human and animal health problems research using animals continues to be a vital component. While new methods have enabled scientists and medical researchers to reduce studies involving animals, some work must continue for further  
380 advancement of knowledge. Hence animals are used in research where no alternatives are available. Any research that uses vertebrate animals (such as pigs, sheep and other mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and fish), octopus, squids, crabs, and their mature fetuses, whether funded by FNU or by outside sources, must first explain what they propose to do (using additional disclosure form) and must receive the approval of the Research Ethics and Safety Committee before  
385 it begins.

University recognizes that studies of wild animals in their natural environment as well as those to gain a knowledge and understanding of structure, physiological and pathological processes, will always require the involvement of the animals. However, the number of animals used is always minimized and that procedures, care routines and husbandry are refined and regularly reviewed to  
390 maximized welfare. In any work involving animals of protected/endangered species, the policy is to adhere to high standards of humane care and treatment of those animals. Any research involving endangered species should be aimed at reducing degree of endangerment and that the individual animal will not suffer long term harm.

Following over-riding considerations apply to research involving animals:

- 395 a. Research on animals is conducted only when it will contribute to the advancement of knowledge that is likely to lead to improvement of the health and welfare of animals or human beings, or provide a better understanding of the animals themselves.
- b. Studies aiming at advancement of knowledge involving animals must give due consideration to the welfare of the animals, avoidance of unnecessary duplication and minimizing the number of animals employed. University supports development of in vitro methods in place of live animal use where possible. This principle applies to use of animals in teaching also, wherein audio-visual technology should part substitute the repeat animal use.
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- c. Transport, housing and care of animals should be undertaken by dedicated and trained staff under professional supervision in a manner designed to ensure the wellbeing of the animal and maintenance of hygienic surrounding.
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- d. Personnel who supervise or undertake activities involving animals should be trained to carry out their duties in a responsible and humane manner. Veterinary experts may be consulted in regard to procedures as well as care and attendance.

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### **10.3 Use of Hazardous Materials:**

All work involving the use of hazardous materials must comply with local regulations regarding the shipment, handling, and disposal of such materials. Hazardous materials include extraneous, infectious, radioactive, carcinogenic, teratogenic, mutagenic, corrosive, and flammable materials.

415 Use of biological materials, extraneous organisms and DNA technology may require the review and approval of the Biosafety Department of Fiji Islands. Principal investigators (PIs) who use hazardous materials and will generate chemical and/or radioactive wastes must assure proper management and disposal of such wastes.

420 PIs should prepare a list of all hazardous chemicals used in the research and necessary Emergency Preparedness to handle any risk arising there from, before starting the work. Chemical that are highly toxic, carcinogenic, or may affect human reproduction, investigators are required to prepare a written standard operating procedure that specifically identifies the methods of use as well as required protective measures.

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**10.4 Use of Select Biological Agents:**

The transfer, receipt, and storage of select biological agents must be handled safely, securely, and in compliance with the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Plant Health Inspection Services of Fiji Government. Each principal investigator is held responsible for assuring that they register all possession, transfer, and receipt of Select Agents. They are also responsible for assuring that their laboratories fully comply with all prescribed safety policies and procedures.

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All research involving recombinant DNA and viral vectors must be registered with the University and approved by the appropriate Biosafety Committee. Experiments involving transfer of rDNA or viral vectors into human subjects and associated clinical procedure in a clinical trial must be reviewed and approved by the Biosafety Committee and the Ministry of Health, Govt. of Fiji Islands. If the rDNA and viral vector work are to be conducted in animals, a Standard Operating Procedure for safe handling of animals must also be submitted for Biosafety Committee review and approval.

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The PI must prepare a drawing of the laboratory in which the Select Agent is used. The drawing shall clearly indicate locations of biosafety cabinet, storage refrigerator/freezer, air supplies and exhausts, emergency eyewashes and showers, and autoclave. The PI must develop a detailed standard operating procedure for each Select Agent used in the laboratory, in regard to:

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- a. means of limiting access to the lab,
- b. means of securing the agent and the laboratory,
- c. equipment and ventilation controls to protect workers from exposure,
- d. post-exposure procedures,
- e. waste handling and disposal,
- f. spill and decontamination procedures, and
- g. recordkeeping methods.

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**10.5 Radiation Safety:**

Radioactive materials, X-ray units and lasers are a potential safety hazard in the laboratory and require prior authorization. PI's are directly responsible for the safe use of radiation sources and those having training and experience commensurate with the types and amounts of radioactive

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materials intend to be used, must seek prior approval by the appropriate Radiation Safety Committee.

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## 11. Commercialization and IPR

Commercialization of any research should be undertaken in accordance with the Fiji National University policy on Intellectual Property. University has in place a policy and guideline on the management of intellectual property.

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## 12. Misconduct in Research

Research Misconduct include, but are not limited to, fabrication, falsification, misrepresentation, misappropriation or theft of ideas in proposing or performing research; reviewing research proposals, or in reporting research results.

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- a. Fabrication of data: A researcher shall not make up data where none has been obtained.
- b. Falsification of data: A researcher shall not falsify data, including manipulate research materials, equipment, or processes or change records.
- 475 c. Misrepresentation: A researcher or reviewer shall not with intent to deceive, or in reckless disregard for the truth,
  - i. state or present a material or significant falsehood; or
  - ii. omit a fact so that what is stated or presented as a whole states or presents a material or significant falsehood.
- 480 d. Misappropriation: A researcher or reviewer shall not intentionally or recklessly
  - i. indulge in plagiarism, i.e. present the documented words or ideas of another person, processes, results or words as his or her own without giving appropriate credit. Plagiarism includes reproducing by copying, paraphrasing or summarizing, without acknowledgement and with the intention to deceive, any work of another person as a researcher's or
  - 485 reviewer's own work, with or without the knowledge or consent of that other person;
  - ii. make use of any information in breach of any duty of confidentiality associated with the review of any manuscript or grant application;

- iii. intentionally omit reference to the relevant published work of others for the purpose of inferring personal discovery of new information.
- 490 e. Misleading ascription of authorship: A researcher or reviewer shall not intentionally or recklessly ascribe authorship misleadingly, including attributing work to others who have not in fact contributed to the research, listing of authors without their permission, and failing to acknowledge appropriately work primarily produced by a research student or associate.
- 495 f. Interference: A researcher or reviewer shall not intentionally and without authorization take or sequester or materially damage any research-related property of another, including without limitation the apparatus, reagents, biological materials, writings, data, hardware, software, or any other substance or device used or produced in the conduct of research.
- 500 g. Departures from approved protocols accepted by a specific discipline or from protocols for research involving humans, animals or gene technology etc. and other practices that seriously deviate those commonly accepted within the research community for proposing, conducting or reporting research.
- 505 h. Obstruction of investigations of research misconduct: A researcher shall not intentionally withhold or destroy evidence in violation of a duty to disclose or preserve; falsifying evidence; encouraging, soliciting or giving false testimony; and attempting to intimidate or retaliate against witnesses, potential witnesses, or potential leads to witnesses or evidence before, during, or after the commencement of any formal or informal proceeding.

**Misconduct does not include honest errors or honest differences in interpretation or judgments of data.** Free scientific inquiry naturally includes proposing hypotheses that may ultimately prove false, offering interpretations of data that conflict with other interpretations, and making observations and analyses that may prove to be in error.

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## **13. Procedures for dealing with allegations of misconduct in research**

515 Academic misconduct is behavior that may lead to a variety of disciplinary actions, including, in severe cases, expulsion of a student, dismissal of an employee, or termination of tenure. Very often misconduct in research arises in an environment where in supervision at each relevant level is not reasonably exercised. Someone believing in good faith that an act of academic

520 misconduct is taking or has taken place should in most circumstances present his or her concerns to the supervisor of the person whose work is in question. Supervisors who become aware of situations of possible academic misconduct, either by their own observations or because of reports from others, have a responsibility to report them to the Chair, University Research & Publications Committee or to the Vice Chancellor.

525 The inquiries and investigations and any subsequent proceedings should be conducted promptly and with care and sensitivity and all relevant facts to determine if misconduct has occurred are formally examined and evaluated. All members are expected to cooperate with the proceedings of inquiries and investigations. Those involved should, to the maximum extent possible, protect the privacy of those who in good faith report apparent academic misconduct and of those who are the  
530 alleged offenders, and should take steps to preserve the confidentiality of the investigation and information pertaining to it to the maximum extent possible. However, legal requirements, including legal process, may require disclosure in certain cases.

535 Reprisal at any time against the person bringing the allegation is an act of misconduct subject to disciplinary action. Those conducting the inquiry or investigation should, to the extent reasonably feasible, have the expertise to carry out a thorough and authoritative evaluation of the relevant information and have no real or apparent conflicts of interest bearing on the case.

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