



Cairnmillar  
INSTITUTE

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# Research Partnerships Policy

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<b>Policy name</b>	Research Partnership Policy
<b>Policy number</b>	TLP011
<b>Date approved</b>	18 February 2015
<b>Approving body</b>	The Cairnmillar Institute Council
<b>Responsible officer</b>	The Head of School
<b>Implementation officer</b>	The Research Coordinator
<b>Next review date</b>	June 2017
<b>Linked policies</b>	Third Party Arrangements Policy
<b>Linked forms</b>	

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## Purpose of this policy

The Cairnmillar Institute (the Institute) conducts research activities with a third party, at various times. These research activities may include, inter alia, the collection of data, the analysis of data, the construction of grant applications or reports, and the supervision of students. This policy is designed to:

- Optimise the quality and productivity of these research activities
- Align these research activities with our legal, ethical, and professional responsibilities
- Ensure students receive the support they need to develop their research skills
- Prevent complications, such as unresolved disputes.

This policy is intended to maximise the benefits, and minimise the challenges, associated with research partnerships. These research partnerships can offer many benefits including the capacity to

- Broaden the scope of knowledge, skills, and perspectives that are applied to the research, enhancing the arguments, design, methodology, technology, and communication
- Extend the networks and stakeholders that the Institute can reach
- Improve the track record or credibility of research teams, increasing the likelihood that funding applications are successful.

## Scope

This policy applies to a range of research partnerships, including

- Joint activities on a specific project only, such as a student project
- Joint activities on a program of projects
- A more enduring strategic alliance, beyond a specific program of projects
- A more informal network, intended to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and resources

The research partner may be:

- Another provider of services in psychology, counselling, or psychotherapy.
- A provider of services unrelated to psychology, counselling, or psychotherapy. In these instances, the research partnership may be multidisciplinary, in which each member applies their discipline to the research, interdisciplinary, in which the disciplines are integrated to generate a synthesized approach, or trans-disciplinary, in which the members generate a framework that transcends each discipline

## Considerations before establishing a partnership

Before establishing a research partnership, to assess whether the research partner is suitable, the Institute may consider a variety of criteria such as whether or not:

- The research partner offers complementary capabilities or resources
- The research partner is regarded as reputable, as assessed by relevant testimonials, references or recommendations
- A conflict of interest may arise from this research partnership
- The research partner is financially viable enough to sustain the research activities during the planned time.

## Establishing the objectives of a partnership

Before any agreement, such as a memorandum of understanding, is finalized, the objectives of each partnership need to be determined. In particular, the Institute and the research partner or partners must jointly discuss and agree on:

- The desired benefits of working in a partnership rather than alone
- The aims and objectives of the research projects
- The research approaches and methods that may be utilized to achieve these aims and objectives.

The Institute must ensure that all partners feel their preferences are accommodated proportionately, ultimately to foster a sense of shared ownership and mutual trust. Other stakeholders could be consulted at this stage to contribute to this discussion.

Furthermore, during these discussions, the Institute and the research partner or partners prioritize their goals, such as:

- The goal to publish and disseminate scholarly research
- The goal to enhance the capabilities of their organization, such as a new commercial product
- The goal to improve society.

These goals often conflict with each other. For example, to enhance the capabilities of their organization, partners may not want to publish and disseminate the research. Consequently, the goals of each research partner needs to be established and discrepancies reconciled.

Once these goals are clarified, the Institute and the research partner or partners generate an agreement on how to distribute the benefits of their research activities fairly. This agreement, for example, may center on:

- Identifying avenues of publication and communication that fulfil the needs of each partner, proportionate to their investment into the research activities
- Clarifying how authorship is decided
- Establishing rules around intellectual property rights, especially around confidentiality statements, patents, copyrights, and trademarks.
- Determining how to distribute any commercial benefits of the research.

## Establishing the accountabilities of a partnership

Before any agreement is finalized, the procedures that must be utilized to monitor these partnerships need to be established. The Institute and the research partner or partners must jointly discuss their research accountabilities — that is, the outcomes they need to reach to satisfy shareholders or other key stakeholders. Once the accountabilities are clarified, the discussion centers on:

- The research activities, or responsibilities, that need to be fulfilled to achieve these accountabilities
- The distinct competencies or capacities of each partner
- Which responsibilities each partner must assume — optimally utilizing their competencies and capacities.

Next, procedures that need to be initiated to evaluate and report on the progress of these responsibilities are discussed. This discussion could revolve around:

- How often must progress be reviewed
- Which stakeholders must be consulted to evaluate progress
- How to respond to any shortfalls—as well as resolve any disputes about the research activities or agreements — that unfold.

## Discussing the communication and application of research

The final matter that needs to be addressed, before finalizing agreements, revolves around the communication and application of research. While discussing communication protocols, several matters are then considered

- Which channels of communication best align to the goals and accountabilities of each partner
- Which stakeholders are the targets of this communication, ranging from shareholders to the broader public
- What incentives could be offered to encourage the research partners to share information effectively with each other
- How to improve cohesion and coordination of the research partners

Finally, many research projects are followed by a period of application or implementation of the findings. For example, reports may need to be constructed or training may need to be offered. Agreement on who conducts these activities is required.

## Signing and fulfilling the agreements

Memoranda of understanding, or similar agreements:

- May be negotiated by a senior member of staff with permission from the Head of School or with the permission of the Executive Director of the Institute.
- Must be reviewed by the Head of School or the Executive Director
- Must be signed by the Executive Director
- Must be tabled at the Academic Board.

The Institute is required to:

- Register all third party arrangements
- Retain all the agreements over a period of 7 years after their termination.