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# AGREEMENT BETWEEN ACCEL-SPONSORED FACULTY AND THEIR MENTORS

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The ACCEL Program supports partnerships between junior investigators with senior faculty to help define short-term and long-term goals, establish individual development plans, identify resources, and engage in activities for personal growth and research success. To facilitate and clarify these partnerships, investigators and their mentors must agree to the following principles and commitments.

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## CORE PRINCIPLES OF FACULTY MENTORING

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### INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENT

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Institutions that seek to develop faculty research must be committed to maintaining the highest standards of education and to providing a program sufficient to ensure that faculty can function independently as scientific professionals. ACCEL principals at each institution should interface with the appropriate academic and faculty affairs offices to ensure that terms of appointment are appropriate to support faculty research development.

### RESEARCH CAREER DEVELOPMENT

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Faculty should develop skills in [Core Competencies in Clinical and Translational Research](#), and modified as appropriate for non-laboratory based clinical, outcomes and population health research.

- 1) Formulation of meaningful hypotheses
- 2) Design and conduct interpretable experiments
- 3) Adherence to good research and laboratory practices
- 4) Critical analysis of results
- 5) Understanding the broad significance of their research findings
- 6) Upholding the highest ethical standards in research
- 7) Oral and written communication
- 8) Grant writing and manuscript preparation
- 9) Laboratory management

### IMPORTANCE OF MENTORING IN FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

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Effective mentoring is critical for the development of clinical and translational scientists and requires that the primary mentor dedicate substantial time to ensure personal and professional development. A good mentor builds relationships that are characterized by mutual respect and understanding. Attributes of a good mentor include being approachable, available, and willing to share his/her knowledge; listening effectively; providing encouragement and constructive criticism; and offering expertise and guidance.

### FOSTER BREADTH AND FLEXIBILITY IN CAREER CHOICES

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Research faculty must have experiences of sufficient depth and breadth to ensure that they are prepared to pursue a range of research career options. Effective and regular career guidance is essential and should be provided by the mentor, their institution, and ACCEL's *Mentoring, Education, and Career Development Program*.

## COMMITMENTS OF JUNIOR FACULTY / MENTEE

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**I acknowledge that I have the primary responsibility for the development of my own research program and academic career.** I recognize that I must take a realistic look at opportunities and follow a path that matches my individual skills, values, and interests.

- 1) I will develop a mutually defined research project with my mentor that includes well-defined goals and timelines. Ideally, this project should be outlined and agreed upon prior to initiation of my ACCEL appointment.
- 2) I will perform my research activities conscientiously, maintain good research records, and catalog and maintain all tangible research materials that result from the research project.
- 3) I will respect all ethical standards when conducting my research including compliance with all institutional and federal regulations as they relate to responsible conduct in research, privacy and human subjects research, animal care and use, laboratory safety, and use of radioisotopes. I recognize that this commitment includes asking for guidance when presented with ethical or compliance uncertainties and reporting on breeches of ethical or compliance standards by me and/or others.
- 4) I will show respect for and will work collegially with my coworkers, support staff, and other individuals with whom I interact.

**I assume responsibility for the conduct and management of my research project, and I will remain committed to the project as it matures.** I recognize that assuming responsibility for the conduct of research projects is critical in establishing an independent research career.

- 1) I will seek regular feedback on my performance and participate in formal evaluations as directed by the ACCEL's *Mentoring, Education, and Career Development Program*.
- 2) I will have open and timely discussions with my mentor concerning the dissemination of research findings and the distribution of research materials to third parties.

**I recognize that research requires "lifelong learning."** To meet this obligation I must stay abreast of the latest developments in my specialized field through reading the literature, regular attendance at relevant seminar series, and attendance at scientific meetings.

- 1) I will actively seek opportunities outside my immediate research area (*e.g.* professional development seminars and workshops in oral communication, scientific writing, and teaching) to develop the full set of professional skills necessary to be successful in my chosen research discipline.
- 2) After my ACCEL appointment ends, I will remain in contact with the *Mentoring, Education, and Career Development Program*, and I will complete close-out and follow-up evaluations as requested. In accordance with my home institution's policies, I will identify and make available all original notebooks, computerized files, and tangible research materials so that other individuals may carry on related research. I will work with my mentor to assure that my research results are disseminated by publication in a timely manner.

## COMMITMENTS OF MENTORS

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**I acknowledge that career development for researchers requires the acquisition of skills and experience that promote the career of the junior investigator.** I agree to provide mentoring with the full realization that my activity does not mean that I will be recognized as a contributor to my mentee's research or as a co-author on my mentee's manuscripts.

**I will ensure that a mutually agreed upon set of expectations and goals are in place at the outset of the ACCEL-sponsored activity, and I will work with my mentee to create an Individual Development Plan.**

**I will strive to maintain a relationship with my mentee that is based on trust and mutual respect.** I acknowledge that open communication and periodic formal performance reviews, conducted as indicated by the *Mentoring, Education, and Career Development Program*, will help ensure that the expectations of both parties are understood and met.

**I will promote all ethical standards for conducting research including compliance with all institutional and federal regulations as they relate to responsible conduct in research, privacy and human subjects research, animal care and use, laboratory safety, and use of radioisotopes.** I will clearly define expectations for conduct of research in my lab and make myself available to discuss ethical concerns as they arise.

**I will ensure that my mentee has sufficient opportunity to and sufficient protected time to succeed in their proposed research and to acquire the skills necessary to become an expert in an agreed upon area of investigation.**

**I will provide my mentee with the required guidance and mentoring, and will seek the assistance of other faculty, departmental/institutional, or ACCEL resources when necessary.** Although I am expected to provide guidance and education in technical areas, I recognize that I must also educate my mentee by example and by providing access to formal opportunities/programs in complementary areas necessary for a successful career.

**I will assure that my mentee is provided a research and training environment that is suited to their individual needs.** I will advocate for my mentee and encourage a progressive increase in the recognition of their research and in their research independence as they to a fully independent career.

**I will encourage the interaction of my mentee with fellow scientists both intra- and extra-murally and encourage attendance at professional meetings to network and present research findings.**

**I will ensure that the research performed by my mentee is submitted for publication in a timely manner and that they receive appropriate recognition and credit for their effort and work.** I will assure that my mentee is recognized for their contribution to the development of any intellectual property, and I will assist them in clearly defining tangible research materials that should be made available to others according to institutional policy.

**I will ensure that my mentee's research and career path is independent of mine by the time my mentee applies for extramural funding (other than for a career development award).**

**I recognize that there are multiple career paths available to junior faculty, and I will assist them in exploring appropriate options.** To prepare my mentee for other career paths, I will direct them to resources that explore alternatives and discuss these options.

**I will commit to being a supportive colleague to my mentee beyond their time as an ACCEL-sponsored investigator and as they transition through the stages of their career.** I recognize that the role of a mentor continues after the formal training period, and to the extent possible, I will provide advice and mentoring throughout their professional research life.

*This compact serves both as a pledge and a reminder to mentors and their postdoctoral appointees that their conduct in fulfilling their commitments to one another should reflect the highest professional standards and mutual respect.*