



Policy Brief

Last Revision: 3/16/2026

7.30 Policy on Authorship Guidelines and Dispute Resolution

Administering Department: Research Compliance & Regulatory Affairs

Scope:

Summary

This policy sets forth the policies and procedures that should be followed regarding authorship for purposes of contribution, attribution, and responsibility on research and scholarly Publications

Applicability

This Policy applies to all areas of research and intellectual inquiry. This Policy applies to all persons performing research or scholarly work at or on behalf of Emory University (Emory), including but not limited to employees, agents, and affiliates through contract or agreement with Emory, officials, tenured and untenured faculty, teaching and support staff, researchers, research coordinators, clinical technicians, postdoctoral and other fellows, students, volunteers, agents, and contractors, subcontractors, and sub-awardees, and their employees.

Compliance with the Policy

The policy is broken down into 2 parts:

- A. 7.30.1 Authorship Guidelines
- B. 7.30.2 Authorship Dispute Resolution

7.30.1 Authorship Guidelines

A. Proactive Communication of Responsibilities and Expectations

The policy emphasizes discussing authorship expectations *at the earliest practical stage* and on an ongoing basis as roles evolve.

B. Authorship Standards

Emory University requires adherence to written authorship standards either specific to the relevant journal or a written standard that is widely regarded as acceptable in the relevant field. When no written standards exist, the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) "[Recommendations for the Conduct, Reporting, Editing, and Publication of Scholarly Work in Medical Journals](#)" (2026), are expected to be followed. To be identified as an author you must meet **all four** ICMJE criteria.



C. Lead Author

A Lead Author is designated to ensure integrity of the work and manage authorship decisions and correspondence. They are responsible for including all qualifying co-authors and obtaining their agreement.

D. Co-Authors

Co-authors must be directly involved in the planning/conception, drafting and revising, and final version approval. They must also understand each author's contributions and trust their integrity.

E. Acknowledgements

Contributors who do not meet authorship criteria but provide meaningful support should be acknowledged if they consent.

F. Unacceptable Practices

Defined in the full policy in more detail, the following are not acceptable authorship practices:

- Honorary or courtesy authorship,
- Ghost authorship,
- Coercive authorship,
- Intentional denial of deserved authorship,
- Self-plagiarism.

G. AI – Assisted Technology

Authors must disclose any generative AI use. AI tools *“should not be listed as authors”* because they cannot take responsibility for accuracy or integrity.

H. Disclosure of Funding and Other Support

All sources of support (i.e. grants, contracts, salary support, technical assistance) must be acknowledged.

I. Financial Interests

Authors must disclose relevant financial interests and comply with Emory's COI policies (Chapter 13 (Conflict of Interest and Commitment) of the [Faculty Handbook](#) and [Emory University Policy 7.7 – Financial Conflicts of Interest in Research](#)).

7.30.2 Authorship Dispute Resolution

A. Initial Resolution Steps

1. Authors first attempt to resolve disputes among themselves.
2. If unresolved, they seek mediation from department or school leadership.
3. If still unresolved, Research Compliance and Regulatory Affairs (RCRA) conducts an assessment, which may include interviews and document review to resolve the dispute with the school research dean. If misconduct concerns arise, RCRA initiates a research misconduct inquiry.

B. Authorship Dispute Committee

A committee is convened when:

- A disputing party requests it after earlier steps fail,



- Leadership believes an Unacceptable Practice may have occurred, or
- Allegations arise outside the author group (e.g., from a reviewer or journal).

The committee consists of faculty appointed by relevant schools or units. Its role is to determine whether an Unacceptable Practice occurred and recommend corrective actions.

C. Relationship to Other Policies and Procedures

If the dispute overlaps with other policy domains (e.g., IRB, COI, misconduct), it is referred to the appropriate Emory unit. The policy also prohibits retaliation against anyone participating in the dispute process in accordance with [Emory's non-retaliation policy](#).

Noncompliance with the Policy

Participation in unacceptable authorship practices and/or misuse of AI technology could result in research misconduct allegations and subsequent investigation. Failure to disclose funding or financial conflicts of interest could result in fines, delays in funding, and affect future funding opportunities.