



Guidelines on Authorship for Scientific Publications Resulting from KFAS Funded Research

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Introduction

This document provides important information on authorship guidelines, the responsibility and accountability for published work from KFAS fully or partially funded research projects. These guidelines are intended to ensure that contributors who have made substantive intellectual contributions to the research project are credited according to the policies defined in the KFAS Code for the Research Conduct (KFAS CRC) and the KFAS Intellectual Property Policy (KFAS IP Policy), removing much of the ambiguity and subjectivity surrounding authorship decisions in relation to KFAS funded research.

The guidelines were prepared in line with best practices and international standards in relation to authorship as defined by institutions, such as the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), the National Science Foundation (NSF), the National Institute of Health (NIH), and the Australian Research Council, as well as the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE). The authorship guidelines from academic and research institutions were also considered, along with requirements that are highlighted in scientific journals, such as Nature Research.²

As a preamble to the '*Guidelines for Authorship*' presented below, the following should be understood/considered:

- Principal investigators (PI), or Project Leaders (PL)³, when submitting a research proposal, are responsible for identifying all research personnel needed for the successful completion of the proposed research. These individuals will constitute the Research Team, and the PI or PL are asked to clearly identify the role of each team member, as well as their intellectual contribution to the research project. In addition, all research personnel listed in the research proposal must formally agree to be a part of the project, in their designated role, prior to the submission of the grant application.
 - a. The roles of an individual must follow KFAS's definitions for research personnel, as shown in Table I and defined in the KFAS Research Grant Manual.
 - b. For some institutions, individuals may be assigned roles in the research project,

¹ These guidelines are not intended for research reports mandated by the researchers' home institutions (although may be used based on the discretion of the institution).

² This document was reviewed by the Research Funding Council, in which the feedback received was reviewed and amendments were made accordingly. The final document was reviewed and approved by KFAS management.

³ Terminology based on the organizational structure at the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR).

independent of their official working title. While in some other institutions, individuals may be assigned roles in accordance with the description of their official working title. In any case, authorships and intellectual property rights are assigned based on the individual's role and intellectual contribution on the proposed project according to the working practices followed by their respective institutions.

- All research personnel part of the Research Team should be listed under the manpower section of the KFAS research proposal template, with a designated full-time equivalency (FTE)⁴ and corresponding manpower budget, if relevant. Changes in the research team (addition or removal) during the execution of the project need to be communicated officially with KFAS before submitting the final report.
- All personnel that are not intellectually contributing, but rather providing a contracted service for a fee, are considered as Service Providers, and should be included under the operational costs (OPEX) associated with the research proposal. Service providers are individuals or institutions that provide professional, expert advice and/or services related to sponsored projects, without being heavily involved in the design or execution of the project. This could also involve editorial support in finalizing research outputs, such as publications.
- For the collaborative projects, the research grant agreement between the local and international teams should clearly state the role of the Research Team, as well as any services that will be used in the completion of the project, as noted above. The role of these Service Providers, if applicable, should also be clearly defined.

Guidelines for Authorship

1. As per the KFAS CRC (Code of Research Conduct) and KFAS IP (Intellectual Property) Policy, authors on any form of research outputs (e.g., scientific publications, book chapters, oral or poster presentations) are all those, and only those, who have:
 - a. Made substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work; or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work; AND
 - b. Drafted the work or revised it critically for important intellectual content; AND
 - c. Final approval of the version of the manuscript that is submitted to the journal for review and consideration, as well as the final version to be published once the manuscript is accepted.

⁴ Full-time equivalent, or FTE, measures the total amount of full-time employees working at any one organization

2. Eligibility for authorship **is** based on those that are listed as part of the Research Team, as noted above. However, whether an individual(s) from the Research Team should be part of a particular research output, will rely on the decision and judgement of the PI or PL.
3. A student working on the topic of the project is accepted to be an author if they fulfill the 'a' to 'c' criteria noted above (see clause #1).
4. In case the Principal Investigator added an author on a project productivity (manuscript, oral or poster presentation etc.) who is not part of the Research Team, KFAS has the right to ask for justification and for the role of this author on the published work. If violation to "*Guidelines for Authorships*" is identified, this will have implications on future grant decisions for proposal submitted by the Principal Investigator.
5. All authors on a research output (e.g., publication, conference poster, etc.) must agree to be an author, which includes being held accountable for all aspects of the research findings, especially in relation to the accuracy or integrity of the research presented. It is the PI's or PL's role and responsibility to ensure that each author has agreed to be a part of a research output prior to formal submission (i.e., prior to submission to the journal or conference).
6. All others that have contributed to the research should be acknowledged appropriately.
7. **Service Providers**, based on the definition above, are not eligible for authorship on research manuscripts. Their contribution can be acknowledged in the research output, stating the exact nature of the support received, if the PI or PL feels that it is justified. If support has been provided on the completion of a publication, this should be recognized under the acknowledgment section.
8. A consultant is part of the research team and is eligible for authorship only if they have a major contribution to the work and fulfills the 'a' to 'c' criteria noted above (clause #1). Otherwise, their contribution can be acknowledged by stating the details of their contribution, if the PI or PL feels that it is justified.
9. The order of authors listed in scientific articles should be addressed according to the guidelines followed by the research institution, in line with responsible research code of conduct, as outlined in KFAS CRC (Code of Research Conduct) and KFAS IP (Intellectual Property) Policy, and the guidelines defined by the journal. This applies not only to the Research Team, but also to external collaborators.
 - a. KFAS expects that the author listed as the "corresponding author" is the researcher that takes responsibility and accountability for the content of the manuscript, as well as the person in charge for communicating with the journal

during the manuscript submission and finalization process, and peer-review phase. It is important to note that the corresponding author will also be responsible for providing information or data requested from the journal after the manuscript has been published.

- b. KFAS encourages that authors work collaboratively, cooperatively and with transparency when deciding the order of authorship.
10. **Gift authorship** is defined as when an author(s) is added to a publication but has not contributed intellectually and significantly to the development of the manuscript or research project. The following situations are examples for gift authorship that may be considered by some researchers:
- i) a researcher adds the name of their supervisor to the manuscript,
 - ii) a junior researcher may add the name of a more well-known senior researcher(s) in the field of research, to potentially increase chances of publication acceptance.
 - iii) adding authors to maintain good working relationships with peers and/or supervisors, as well as repayment for favors.

Irrespective of the reasons, gift authorship is an unethical research practice and unacceptable for professional and honest academic publications. Furthermore, service providers, or those that provide a standard technical service, should not be subject to “gift” co-authorship. KFAS strongly discourages gift authorship practices, and if such practices should occur, there will be serious consequences and implications against the PI or PL and research institution, including termination of ongoing projects, as well suspension of any future funding requests.

11. Should any authorship disputes or issues arise, the institution of the PI or PL should be involved in resolving the issue, as long as the guidelines and policies defined by KFAS CRC (Code of Research Conduct) and KFAS IP policy are adhered to.
12. KFAS encourages collaborating research institutions and researchers to engage in discussions on authorship and publications early in the development of collaborative research proposals and defined as a part of the collaborative research agreement signed between institutions, while adhering to the policies defined by KFAS CRC (Code of Research Conduct) and KFAS IP.

Table 1. Roles of Research Team Members (as per KFAS Research Grant Manual)

Term	Definition
Principal Investigator (PI) or Project Leader (PL)	The primary researcher who is leading and in charge of the research project. They are also responsible for carrying out part or all the technical investigation and analysis of the research project, ensuring its success, as well as complying with the financial and administrative policies and regulations associated with the grant.
Co-Investigator(s) (Co-Is)	Researcher who assists the principal investigator in the scientific development or conducting/executing the project. Their responsibilities include developing research design, methodology, and strategy, as well as collecting and verifying data, and analyzing and interpreting data.
Collaborator(s)	Researchers and their respective institutions that are part of the research team, contributing to the development of the research idea, execution of the research findings, and the analysis/interpretation of results and data, including writing the manuscript.
Consultant(s)	Individuals or institutions that provide professional, expert advice and/or services related to sponsored projects for a fee in specific areas, without being heavily involved in the design or execution of the project. This could also involve editorial support in finalizing research outputs, such as publications. Consultant is part of the research team.
Post-Doctoral Research Associate (PhD holders)	Recent doctoral graduates (less than 3 years) that will assist the PI in the implementation of a part or parts of the research project.
Research Assistant (BSc Holders)	Researchers that provide support to the Research Associates by performing specific, specialized tasks.
Research Associate (MSc Holders)	Researchers that will be performing specific technical duties as defined in the research project.
Research Team	Researchers who assist the Principal Investigator in successfully completing the proposed tasks specified in the proposals. These individuals are an essential component to the successful development and completion of the project, contributing intellectually.
Research Technician (Diploma or as per local institute titles)	Researchers that provide support to Research Assistants (or others) in completing the specialized tasks, and other supportive lab duties.
Researcher (MSc, PhD or as per local institute titles)	Researchers who will support the Senior Researcher and the PI in the implementation of a major part of the research project.
Senior Researcher (PhD holders or as per local institute titles)	Researcher who will support the PI in leading the implementation of a major part of the research project through their seniority and experience on the research topic. They may also have a supervisory role in managing some of the research personnel working on the completion of a part of the project.
Service Provider(s)	Specialists or entities (including private companies and institutions) that provide a service(s) for fee to assist in the implementation of the research project. Their contribution should be accounted for within the operational expenses of the research budget.