

Regulations for Conflict of Interests in Research*

As authorized by the Senate in its meeting on 29.4.2012

1. Introduction

Technion Researchers will conduct their research in a manner that will ensure that independent, professional and impartial judgment will not be biased by extraneous considerations. To this end, Technion Researchers must disclose any interest that has or is likely to appear as having the ability to bias the research or to inappropriately influence the decisions related to conducting the research.

The Technion will establish a committee for conflict of interests in research in order to prevent, control and resolve conflicts of interest, as they occur, and to consult in situations in which situations of conflicts of interest in research may develop (“The Committee for Conflict of Interests in Research”).

“Research” - Research that is conducted in the Technion and/or on behalf of the Technion and/or is coordinated by the Technion.

“Technion Researchers” in these regulations ,including in all its chapters, are the Technion’s Academic Staff members, employees of the Technion Institute and the Technion R&D Foundation (TRDF), the pensioners, guests and students of the Technion (all degrees) – engaged in the planning of research and/or the submitting of research proposals for funding, and/or the management or reporting of the research, and/or the conduct of the research, as well as any person who takes part in the research.

It is clarified that commercial companies that retain the Technion’s laboratory services are not subject to these regulations.

In these regulations, masculine form will also include the feminine form and vice versa, and singular form will also mean plural form and vice versa.

It is clarified that these regulations are supplemental to provisions of the laws of the State of Israel, the Technion's Constitution and Bylaws, and the Academic Regulations and Procedures of the Technion’s Senate.

* Note: These regulations stand alone and are also mentioned in the Code for Responsible Conduct of Research of the Technion (Section 3.2)

2. What is considered Conflict of Interests in Research?

- 2.1 A conflict of interest in research exists when there is a concern that an extraneous consideration will bias the independent and professional judgment required in research. The test of the existence of a conflict of interests is an objective one, i.e., it is sufficient that based on the objective data and derived from considerations that are based on life experience and common sense, a situation may arise in which there is a concern of conflict of interests. The researcher's personal feeling regarding the degree of influence of the extraneous considerations is irrelevant.
- 2.2 An extraneous consideration may be of any kind - personal, professional, monetary, commercial. It may be espoused by the Technion Researchers themselves, their close relatives, close friends, sponsors or any other person or institution.

Typical, however not exhaustive, situations, in which conflicts of interests may arise in research are:

- When Technion Researchers (or their close relatives, their close friends, their students or any other person or institution to which they are affiliated) are linked to the sponsor of the research, in such a way that will enable them to benefit from a direct or indirect monetary profit from the research, beyond the addition to the salary for the research as customary at the Technion.
- When the sponsor or Technion Researchers (or their close relatives, close friends or students) or any other institution to which the Technion Researchers have an affiliation or interest, are interested in or are likely to benefit from the postponement of the publication, from the partial or misleading publication or from not-publishing the research results.
- A situation where a person involved in the research has a personal interest, that is likely to be influenced by the execution of the research or by its results. "Personal Interest" - includes a personal interest of his relative or an interest of an institution managed by the researcher or his relative, friends, responsible employees, or an interest of an institution in which any of the above have a stake in its

share capital, a right to receive dividends, a right to appoint a manager or a right to vote. For the removal of doubt, it is hereby clarified that minor holdings in corporations whose shares are publicly traded on the stock exchange, directly or indirectly, as part of securities and/or mutual or pension funds, as is customary with most ordinary people, will not be considered a personal interest.

3. Duties

- 3.1 The Technion Researchers will conduct their research impartially and without bias and will exercise their professional judgment independently and without extraneous considerations that may influence any aspects of planning and conducting the research and reporting its results.
- 3.2 The Technion Researchers will report any suspicion of a conflict of interest to the Committee for Conflict of Interests in Research immediately upon its occurrence or discovery – whether upon the date of submitting the proposal for registration of the research or in the course of the research.
- 3.3 The research proposal registration form (the Executive Vice President for Research Form) will include the confirmation of the person submitting the request as to his knowledge that the Code for Responsible Conduct of Research and the Regulations for Conflict of Interest in Research apply to the research.

4. Consultation

The Technion Researchers are entitled to consult with the Committee for Conflict of Interests in Research in order to examine whether their situation constitutes a situation in which there is a suspicion of conflict of interests and how to avoid or manage this situation.

5. Documentation

The declarations awaiting consideration, requests to consult with the Committee and documentation regarding the work of the Committee for Conflict of Interests in Research will be filed with the Technion R&D Foundation Ltd. and any authority authorized to handle matters related to conflicts of interest and

breaches of regulations at the Technion will be authorized to read these declarations and requests.

6. Committee for Conflict of Interests in Research

6.1 The Composition of the Committee

A Committee will be established that will be comprised of seven members: the Executive Vice President for Research or someone appointed by him who will serve as the Committee's chairman, the Executive Vice President for Academic affairs, four full time professors and/or Emeritus professors who represent the various fields of research in the Technion and a public figure, such as a retired judge. Committee members will be appointed by the Senate's Steering Committee, upon the recommendation of the Executive Vice President for Research with the approval of the Academic Assembly members having a right to vote. The term of office will be for a period of up to 3 years and may be extended for an additional 3-year period. No additional appointment to the Committee will be allowed after two consecutive terms, unless a cooling period of one year has passed from the date of the completion of the aforementioned term.

6.2 The Committee's Activity

In any case brought before the Committee for Conflict of Interests in Research, either by the Research Authority of the Technion R&D Foundation Ltd., or through the disclosure of Technion Researchers or through any other means, the Committee will decide how to proceed.

6.3 The Committee's authorities; Work Procedures and Decisions

6.3.1 The Committee is entitled to make decisions as follows:

- That the situation does not require any management.
- That the Technion Researchers must disclose a conflict of interest to designated people or institutions.
- That the research program must be changed in a manner that will prevent conflict of interests or that will enable its management.
- That a person/institution must be appointed to independently supervise the research's planning, management or reporting.

- That the Technion Researchers must exclude themselves from a financial matter at the institution sponsoring the research or an institution that has a non-academic interest in the research results.
- That the Technion Researchers must break ties with a person or institution with regard to which there is a suspicion of conflict of interests.
- That Technion Researchers must be disqualified from participating in the research, completely or partially.
- That any other step must be taken, which appears appropriate, in order to avoid conflict of interests in the research or its management.

6.3.2 When deciding whether a suspicion exists of conflict of interests in a research, the Committee is not bound by any formal rules. However, before reaching a decision, it must hear the position of the Technion Researchers involved as to the situation in question and the suitable measures for managing the research, if they so desire. In special cases, Technion Researchers will be authorized to present the testimony of others, in writing or orally, to the Committee.

6.3.3 When deciding whether a suspicion exists of conflict of interests in a research which requires management and regarding the appropriate measures for its management, and in cases in which the rules do not determine other explicit arrangements, the Committee will be guided by customary standards at academic institutions in Israel and abroad.

6.3.4 All deliberations of the Committee, including those in which the Technion Researchers took part, and excluding clarifications and preliminary exchange of opinions, will be made face-to-face, if possible, and not in writing or via e-mail. However, the Technion Researchers are entitled to also submit their position in writing if they so desire. A protocol of the Committee's deliberations will be prepared.

- 6.3.5 The information that the Technion Researchers submit to the Committee for Conflict of Interests in Research will be kept confidential, if it does not conflict with the laws of the country or with other regulations of the Technion.
- 6.3.6 The information, which will be available to the Committee for Conflict of Interests in Research, will include the details of the business agreements discussed and/or signed by the Research Authority/Technion R&D Foundation Ltd. All the Committee's decision will be submitted in writing. The decisions and documentation of the Committee's discussions and the decision making procedure will be available to the Committee members and the researcher in question, upon their request.
- 6.3.7 When reaching a decision whether there is a suspicion of a conflict of interests in the research which requires management and what steps are appropriate for its management, the Committee is entitled to make temporary decisions as it sees fit, such as the suspension of the researcher from involvement in the research, disclosing the situation to the research sponsor, freezing the research funds, etc. - until the final decision is reached. This authority will not be executed without giving the researcher the opportunity to be heard, and no step will be taken that will harm the progress of the study or the relationship between the researcher and the sponsor more than necessary.
- 6.3.8 Rehearing regarding the decisions of the Committee will be conducted before the committee, with the addition of two Academic Staff members to be appointed as follows: one to be appointed by the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and the second by the Chairman of the Academic Staff Members Organization.

7. Discipline

A breach of Section 3 of these regulations and an action contrary to the decision of the Committee for Conflict of Interests in Research, constitute a disciplinary offence. This Section adds to the disciplinary offenses listed in the various disciplinary Bylaws that apply to Technion Researchers.

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