

Research Policies

Company-Sponsored Research (SC-350)

Scope

This policy applies to all HHMI laboratories, including laboratories and shared research facilities at Janelia Farm Research Campus (“Janelia”).

Policy

In General

HHMI laboratories may not accept any industry funding provided under terms that would specify the projects for which the funds must be used, give the funder special access to the laboratory’s research results, or give the funder rights in intellectual property that may be developed in the laboratory, all of which are considered forms of company-sponsored research.

As background for this policy, HHMI’s philosophy is to support outstanding scientists for extended periods, not specific projects with limited time horizons. The nature and extent of HHMI support frees HHMI researchers to pursue basic biomedical research along directions determined by their own scientific judgment. HHMI believes that this freedom is a critical part of its research ethos and could be undermined by the pressures inherent in commercial sponsorship or restricted by the strings that are necessarily attached to such sponsorship. The prohibition on commercial funding is not based on a belief that such arrangements would necessarily compromise the autonomy of HHMI laboratories; rather, it is intended to simplify the issue by eliminating the possibility of such an effect.

HHMI review and approval is required for all proposals under which a company would provide direct or indirect financial support for research in HHMI laboratories to make sure that the proposals are consistent with this policy. The HHMI review and approval requirement covers arrangements such as gifts from companies as well as proposals from companies to provide discounts on purchases of equipment, services, or supplies in exchange for rights in the results of HHMI research.

In addition, as explained in the policy on research collaborations, if an Investigator is contemplating a significant collaboration with an academic colleague for which the collaborator is or may be supported by industry funding, the Investigator should discuss the situation with the HHMI attorney or the scientific officer responsible for the site. At Janelia, a laboratory head contemplating such a collaboration should discuss the situation with the Chief Operating Officer or the Director of Administration and Finance, who should in turn consult with the HHMI attorney responsible for Janelia.

Investigators should direct proposals and any questions relating to company-sponsored research to the HHMI attorney or scientific officer responsible for their site. Janelia Group Leaders, Fellows, and directors or managers of shared resource facilities should direct such proposals and questions to Janelia’s Chief Operating Officer or Director of Administration and Finance, or to the HHMI attorney responsible for Janelia.

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