



**SEFS Policy on Approvals of Principal Investigator
Status**

1) Purpose

To clarify the criteria for Principal Investigator (PI) eligibility and provide a procedure for seeking eligibility on a case-by-case basis for those not automatically granted PI status. It's important to understand that obtaining PI status may not be guaranteed for all who are eligible, as it considers various factors beyond individual eligibility. As a School, we need to carefully consider our capacity to support PIs in all the necessary aspects for their success. This includes providing space, funding for proposal writing, administrative support, and other resources essential for conducting research effectively. This policy provides School level guidance based on guidelines developed for the College of the Environment.

2) Definitions

A PI is the individual responsible for the conduct of research or other activity described in a proposal for an award.

3) Eligibility for PI Status

A UW employee holding any one of the following titles is automatically eligible to serve as a PI:

- Professor
- Professor WOT
- Research Professor
- Teaching Professor
- Associate Professor
- Associate Professor WOT
- Associate Teaching Professor
- Research Associate Professor
- Assistant Professor
- Assistant Professor WOT

- Assistant Teaching Professor
- Research Assistant Professor
- Professor of Practice
- Emeritus

The following titles may also be eligible but must be considered on a case-by-case basis by the SEFS Director:

- Lecturer Competitive Recruitment (either Full-Time or Part-Time)
- Research Scientist/Engineer of Grade 9 or higher
- UW-Pacific Northwest National Laboratory Dual Appointee*

An individual in one of these positions desiring PI status must have demonstrated: 1) research productivity, 2) the ability to design and work independently on research projects, 3) the ability to manage research projects, and 4) contributions to the broader scientific community.

The individual must have at least three years of professional research experience at SEFS (i.e., not as trainee or Postdoctoral Fellow). Experience in other institutions could satisfy this condition in certain cases.

*UW-PNNL Dual Appointees are automatically eligible for PI status without limitation as described in the 2011 UW-PNNL MOU Concerning Dual Appointees, so the dual appointment itself must be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Department Chair/School Director and the Dean.

4) PI Application Procedure

Requests to be considered for PI eligibility must be submitted at least sixty (60) days in advance of any proposal submission and will be processed in a timely manner and responded to in writing by the School. The individual requesting PI status will submit the following documents to the SEFS Director's Office:

- A memo addressed to the SEFS Director requesting PI status, transmitting the applicant's CV, statement of alignment with PI qualifications, and one to three letters of support.
- A statement from the Applicant describing how the Applicant meets PI qualification, why PI status is desired, and how PI status will align with SEFS mission.
- One to three letters from another SEFS PI supporting the application for PI status. The letters should comment on the professional standing of the

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Applicant, evidence of collaborative work on successful research proposals and the desirability of awarding PI status to the Applicant.

The request for PI status will then be evaluated by the SEFS Director and the SEFS Associate Director for Research Programs. If approved, the SEFS Director and the SEFS Associate Director for Research Programs will make a recommendation to the Associate Dean of Research in the College of the Environment who will review (per College policy <https://environment.uw.edu/intranet/research/research-policies/pi-status/>)

5) Renewal of PI status

PI status will be granted for a period of five years. Renewal of PI status is based on continued research productivity, evidenced by proposal activity, publication record, scientific and outreach presentations, administrative duties, mentorship, and professional awards. At the end of each five- year period, the SEFS Director will consider whether PI status shall be renewed by evaluating the following the following criteria:

- Compliance with all UW training certifications, College and SEFS policies.
- Documented engagement in SEFS research programs, mentoring and/or working with graduate students.
- Active research program aligned with SEFS mission (successful research proposal activities, publications record, scientific and outreach presentations, and professional awards).
- One to three letters of recommendation from another SEFS PIs supporting the renewal that describe how the PI has contributed to the SEFS mission.
- Current CV.