

# Creating a Research Agenda

Creating a research agenda is a fundamental step in the academic journey, particularly for faculty engaging in sponsored research. A well-defined research agenda not only guides your scholarly pursuits but also aligns them with institutional goals and funding opportunities. This document aims to provide a structured approach to developing a comprehensive research agenda.

## Defining a Long-Term Research Agenda

A long-term research agenda consists of planned program evaluations and research tools that work toward addressing specific research goals.

Similar to a strategic plan, a research agenda typically spans several years and should be tailored to the unique context of your program.

It is a dynamic tool that evolves based on new evidence and shifts in program direction.

## Understanding Institutional Priorities

Familiarize yourself with the mission, vision, and strategic priorities of your institution. These may include areas of emphasis, interdisciplinary collaborations, or societal challenges targeted for research.

Identify research themes or focus areas that resonate with your expertise and interests while aligning with institutional goals.

## Assessing Personal Interests and Expertise

Reflect on your research interests, expertise, and passion. What are the areas you find intellectually stimulating and potentially impactful?

Evaluate your past research projects, publications, and collaborations. Identify recurring themes or emerging interests that can shape your research agenda.

Consider interdisciplinary perspectives and potential collaborations to broaden the scope of your research agenda.

## Setting Long-Term Goals

Define your overarching research objectives and long-term goals. What do you aspire to achieve in your academic career?

Break down your goals into specific research topics or projects. Prioritize them based on feasibility, significance, and alignment with institutional priorities.

Establish measurable milestones and timelines to track progress towards your research goals.

## Identifying Funding Opportunities

Stay informed about funding agencies, grant programs, and funding cycles relevant to your research interests. Explore both internal and external funding sources.

Tailor your research agenda to align with the funding priorities of potential sponsors. Highlight how your proposed research addresses their objectives and contributes to knowledge advancement.

## Developing a Strategic Plan

Develop a strategic plan outlining the key components of your research agenda, including research questions, methodologies, anticipated outcomes, and dissemination strategies.

Consider the potential impact of your research on academia, industry, policy, and society. Identify stakeholders who may benefit from or contribute to your research efforts.

Incorporate mechanisms for knowledge transfer, such as collaborative partnerships, technology transfer, or community engagement, into your research agenda.

## Seeking Feedback and Iteration

Share your draft research agenda with colleagues, mentors, and research advisors for feedback and suggestions. Consider diverse perspectives to refine and strengthen your research plan.

Continuously iterate on your research agenda in response to emerging trends, feedback from stakeholders, and changing funding landscapes.

## Ensuring Ethical Considerations

Prioritize ethical conduct and integrity in all aspects of your research agenda, including data collection, analysis, and dissemination.

Familiarize yourself with ethical guidelines, institutional policies, and regulatory requirements governing research conduct in your field.

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Developing a research agenda is an ongoing and iterative process that requires careful consideration, strategic planning, and adaptability. By following the guidelines outlined in this document, college faculty participating in sponsored research training programs can create a robust research agenda that aligns with institutional priorities, fosters scholarly growth, and contributes to the advancement of knowledge.