



## Policy

Policy Name	<b><i>Integrity and Responsibility in the Conduct of Applied Research &amp; Scholarly Activity</i></b>		
Policy #	RI 2.0	Category	Research & Innovation
Policy Owner	Vice President Academic	Effective Date	May 1, 2020
Policy Lead	Associate Vice President, Polytechnic Education and Student Success Managing Director, Research and Innovation	Review Date	May 1, 2023
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### 1.0 Policy Statement

As a polytechnic, NAIT purposefully differentiates between 2 kinds of inquiry: 1) applied research done by industry-focused researchers, and 2) scholarly activity done by academic staff. Both kinds of inquiry are important at NAIT, and both are required to be conducted with integrity and responsibility.

As a polytechnic within Alberta, NAIT has a mandate to conduct applied research. At NAIT, applied research is done in the service of industry, in partnership with industry, by researchers who do not have teaching responsibilities.

As an institution of higher learning, NAIT also values the scholarly activity of academic teaching staff. At NAIT, scholarly activity supports educational excellence through enabling academic teaching staff to maintain currency and a level of expertise in their field of practice, and within the field of teaching and learning.

For the purposes of this policy, the term “researcher” applies to any NAIT staff member who participates in applied research or scholarly activity, whether or not they hold a formal research or academic teaching position.

It is within this context that NAIT attends to integrity and responsibility in both applied research and scholarly activity.

While this policy is not a policy on academic freedom per se, NAIT recognizes that the concept of academic freedom provides important context related to the conduct of applied research and scholarly activity. Academic freedom offers researchers the opportunity and protection for reflective thought and open dialogue, both of which are crucial to the vitality of the Institute and to the advancement of knowledge. This freedom is balanced by the requirements of professional integrity and responsibility in the pursuit of knowledge, in the conduct of applied research, in the advancement of opinion and challenge to prevailing thought, and to the exercise of applied research and scholarly activity. Academic freedom is further balanced by an acknowledgement that applied research and scholarly activity are undertaken with a view to the mandate and mission of the Institute.

The Institute shall strive to create a positive research environment to maximize the quality and benefits of research. Researchers shall strive to follow best research practices in the search for and in the dissemination of knowledge.

It is understood that applied research and scholarly activity can lead to controversial conclusions. It is also understood that debate may arise over matters such as research design and interpretation of findings. In rare cases, applied research and scholarly activity may include unintentional error. It is expected that any controversy related to these situations will be dealt with in the context of fairness and honesty, and that wherever possible, resolutions will be achieved within the context of natural justice

## **2.0 Scope**

This policy applies to those engaged in applied research and scholarly activity.

NAIT's approach to responsible conduct of applied research and scholarly activity is aligned with the PRCR's Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR Framework). The RCR Framework applies to all research conducted under the auspices of any institution that is eligible to receive and administer research funds from any of the three federal Agencies (the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada). Eligible institutions are those that have entered into the Agreement on the Administration of Agency Grants and Awards by Research Institutions with the Agencies.

An eligible institution is responsible for the responsible conduct of research undertaken by its faculty, staff or students, regardless of where the research is conducted. This means that the RCR Framework applies to Agency and non-Agency-funded research, as well as non-funded research, that takes place under the auspices of the eligible institution and its affiliates. Typically, eligible institutions include Canadian universities, polytechnics, colleges and affiliated hospitals.

## **3.0 Definitions**

Term	Definition
Academic Freedom	Academic freedom includes freedom of inquiry; the right to disseminate the results of that inquiry; freedom to challenge conventional thought; freedom to express one's opinion about the institution, its administration or the system in which one works; and freedom from institutional censorship. (TCPS2 – 2018)
Applied Research at NAIT	Research that is done in the service of industry, that is driven by industry, where the research is supported by industry resources, where industry holds the intellectual property, and where the results of the work have the potential to make an immediate and identifiable impact.
Panel on Responsible Conduct of Research (PRCR)	Created by Canada's three federal research agencies, CIHR, NSERC and SSHRC, the Panel on Responsible Conduct of Research (PRCR) is part of a collaborative objective to ensure a coherent and uniform approach for promoting responsible conduct of research and for addressing allegations of breaches of Tri-Agency Policies, consistent with the Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible

	Conduct of Research (RCR Framework).
Research	An undertaking intended to extend knowledge through a disciplined inquiry or systematic investigation. (TCPS2 – 2018)
Researcher	Includes anyone at NAIT who engages in applied research or scholarly activity, whether or not they are in a formal research or academic teaching role.
Scholarly Activity at NAIT	Any activity that involves the intentional investigation, integration and dissemination of knowledge that is subject to polytechnic peer review. Scholarly activity intends to inform professional practice, contribute to the state of practice within a field, and/or impact the broader external environment. At NAIT, scholarly activity supports educational excellence through enabling academic teaching staff to maintain currency and a level of expertise in their field of practice, and within the field of teaching and learning.
Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR Framework)	A national framework that sets out the responsibilities and corresponding policies for researchers, institutions, and the Agencies, that together help support and promote a positive research environment.
Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS)	A joint policy of Canada's three federal research agencies – the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), or "the Agencies" That expresses the Agencies' continuing commitment to the people of Canada to promote the ethical conduct of research involving humans.

#### 4.0 Guiding Principles

NAIT requires that all applied research and scholarly activity be conducted with integrity and responsibility. This includes acting in accordance with the highest standards of rigorous assessment of methodology, ethical conduct, evaluation of data and results, and peer review of conclusions regardless of how they may be disseminated. The responsibility to conduct applied research and scholarly activity within these parameters lies with the individual researcher.

Researchers are expected to conduct research in accordance with relevant NAIT policies, as well as the *Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research* (2016), and to uphold the following responsibilities:

- (a) *Accurate Referencing*: Referencing all published and unpublished work, including theories, concepts, data, source material, methodologies, findings, graphs and images.
- (b) *Acknowledgement*: Acknowledging appropriately all those and only those who have contributed to the research, including funders and sponsors.
- (c) *Authorship*: Including as authors, with their consent, all those and only those who have made a substantial contribution to, and who accept responsibility for, the contents of the publication or document. The substantial contribution may be conceptual or material.
- (d) *Conflict of Interest Management*: Appropriately identifying and addressing any real, potential, or perceived conflict of interest.

- (e) *Record Keeping:* Keeping complete and accurate records of data, methodologies and findings, including graphs and images, in accordance with the applicable funding agreement, institutional policies, laws, regulations, and professional or disciplinary standards in a manner that will allow verification or replication of the work by others.
- (f) *Rigour:* Scholarly and scientific rigour in proposing and performing research; in recording, analyzing, and interpreting data; and in reporting and publishing data and findings.

In addition, researchers are obligated to their professions and to the Institute in their personal and professional conduct. They must avoid creating the impression that they speak on behalf of the Institute or of a professional association unless expressly delegated such responsibility. Researchers are responsible to exercise their civic rights within the parameters of the law and understand that others have the same civic rights and freedoms to which they must be sensitive and respectful.

## 5.0 Other Related Documents:

### GE2.0 Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy

#### ***Document History***

<i>Date</i>	<i>Action/ Change</i>
February 19, 2020	Approved by Executive Committee