AUTHORSHIP AGREEMENT TEMPLATE:
LIFE SCIENCES

Principal Investigator(s) (PIs): _____

Department/Unit/Institution: _____

Project title: _____

Tentative Manuscript title: _____

Brief description of the research project: aims, goals, and methods

_____
_____
_____
_____

Expected Avenues for Scholarly Dissemination (e.g., peer-reviewed journal articles, conference presentation/proceedings, poster presentations):_____

Date Initiated: _____

PURPOSE

This agreement is intended to delineate and maintain shared expectations among collaborators regarding authorship of scholarly works arising from this research project. It aligns with Purdue's commitment to research and scholarship integrity as outlined in the [Authorship of Scholarly Works Standard (S-24)](#). Authorship attribution and the responsibilities of each author and contributor should be discussed as early as possible at the beginning of a research project to ensure openness and transparency.

The agreement should be viewed as a living document that can be revisited and revised throughout the lifecycle of the research project. Contributions and roles may evolve as new team members are added, roles change, and new publication/dissemination or intellectual property (IP) patenting opportunities are identified.

RESEARCH INTEGRITY AND RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH

All authors and contributors agree to uphold the highest standards of research integrity and responsible research practices, including remaining truthful, objective, honest, and transparent throughout the lifecycle of a research project and associated publication/dissemination processes.

Each author and contributor agrees to comply with Purdue's policies on research integrity and the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training, including the [Research Misconduct Policy (III.A.2)](#) and the [Responsible Conduct of Research Standard (S-20)](#). All authors and contributors are expected to complete the appropriate RCR training as required by S-20.

AUTHORSHIP CRITERIA AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Authorship recognition requires both substantial material participation and intellectual contribution to the work. All contributors agree to follow the authorship designation guidelines of the publisher/organization to which the manuscript is submitted. In the absence of such guidelines, the guidelines set by the

International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) may be used. ICMJE recommends including authors if they meet all four of the following criteria:

- Substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work; or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work; AND
- Drafting the work or reviewing it critically for important intellectual content; AND
- Final approval of the version to be published; AND
- Agreement to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.

Other contributors who do not meet all four of the above criteria should be included in the Acknowledgments section of the publication.

PROPOSED AUTHORS AND AUTHORSHIP ORDER

The corresponding author, assisted by the whole research team, is responsible for identifying all authors and other contributors to a scholarly work/publication/presentation. The published contribution statement, when included, must accurately reflect each author's role in the publication/presentation. The research team can use the Contributor Role Taxonomy (CRediT) as a standardized and transparent resource for defining and delineating the contributions of each author.

Authorship order conventions may vary by discipline and publisher. In life sciences, those who contributed the most intellectual effort are typically listed first, with subsequent authors listed in the order of their level of contribution. Supervisors, mentors, PIs, and other senior authors may be listed last. If there is equal contribution among authors, Purdue's authorship standard (S-24) recommends listing the names alphabetically by last name.

Author Name	Institutional Affiliation	Expected Contribution	Authorship Order
			First author
			Second author
			Third author

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR

The corresponding author is responsible for serving as the point of contact between the research team and the publisher. The corresponding author represents all the listed authors on the publication and is accountable for the integrity, accuracy, and transparency of the manuscript and its submission process. Key responsibilities include ensuring the following:

- all authors have been accurately identified and included appropriately;
- all authors have provided their permission to be included as such;
- all authors have reviewed and agreed with the content of the publication and their listed contributions and have approved the final version of the publication;
- all authors are kept informed of the current status of the publication;
- there is neither gift, guest, honorary, or ghost authorship, nor undue author affiliation;

- the publication reflects original work and has not been previously submitted to another publication venue; and
- the publication/presentation provides an accurate and transparent account of the research findings, reflecting the data, methods, and analyses as conducted.

The corresponding author will follow the publisher's authorship and publication guidelines (e.g., ICMJE or relevant standards) regarding their role and responsibilities in the publication process.

Proposed corresponding author: _____

USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

Each author and contributor to the paper agrees to follow the Artificial Intelligence (AI) use policy of the publisher (e.g., ICMJE). In general, AI systems do not meet the criteria for authorship. Content that is AI-generated, including text, images, figures, and/or code, should be disclosed in the appropriate section of the publication, depending on how the content was used (e.g., AI used for analysis or figure generation should be disclosed in the methods section of the publication; AI used for writing should be disclosed in the acknowledgements section). Additional AI policies of various publishers are available on the Purdue Libraries AI resource page.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS OF NON-AUTHOR CONTRIBUTORS

Acknowledgements may be used to recognize individuals who provided important support and contributions to the work but do not meet the authorship criteria (e.g., participating solely in data collection that uses well-established methods, maintaining and calibrating scientific equipment, proofreading, etc.).

It is considered best practice to obtain consent from individuals acknowledged.

Contributor Name	Role in the research project	Permission received?
		☐ Yes ☐ No
		☐ Yes ☐ No
		☐ Yes ☐ No

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE

Each author must disclose any relevant financial or non-financial conflicts of interest related to this research project. Disclosures must comply with the requirements of publication to which the work is submitted, as well as Purdue University's Financial Conflicts of Interest policy and any associated COI management/mitigation plans.

Failure to disclose relevant conflicts may result in corrective action by the institution or the publisher.

DATA OWNERSHIP, ACCESS, AND DATA MANAGEMENT PLANS

All research data generated as part of this project are subject to Purdue's IP policy and applicable sponsor requirements. The PI is the steward of the data and is responsible for ensuring its proper management, storage, and sharing in compliance with institutional, sponsor, and ethical standards. Federal research sponsoring agencies may require specific Data Management Plans (DMPs) as part of the proposal submission packages.

All research team members are expected to access and use data responsibly, only for approved research and as outlined in the respective DMPs (if any), while maintaining confidentiality, respecting intellectual property, and complying with data use agreements.

Upon project completion or the departure of team members, continued access to data will be determined by institutional policy and PI discretion.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND COPYRIGHT PROTECTION

All authors agree to respect and uphold Purdue University's policies on intellectual property and copyright. Any inventions, copyrightable works, research data, tangible research property, trade secrets, and other creative works arising from this research project are subject to Purdue's intellectual property policies and may require disclosure to the university's Office of Technology Commercialization (OTC).

DISPUTE RESOLUTION

If authorship disputes arise, the individual is encouraged to resolve the issue with the lead or corresponding author within the framework used in each academic unit. If a resolution cannot be reached, the individual may report the concern in writing to Purdue's Research Integrity Officer (researchintegrity@purdue.edu). Additional information on the resolution of authorship disputes is outlined in Purdue's Standard on Authorship of Scholarly Works (S-24).

SIGNATURES

By signing below, each author certifies that they agree to the authorship expectations outlined above and confirm that they understand the requirements of Purdue's Standard on Authorship of Scholarly Works (S-24).

Author Name	Role	Signature	Date

CONTACTS

The Research Integrity Office handles allegations of research misconduct and assists in resolving authorship disputes; the Office of Research administers RCR training. Contact researchintegrity@purdue.edu if you need assistance with an authorship dispute that cannot be resolved

through mitigation within the research team, or RCRTraining@purdue.edu if you need help with, or have suggestions for improving, this authorship agreement template.

RESOURCES

- Authorship of Scholarly Works Standard (S-24): Purdue University's standard on responsible and ethical authorship practices.

- CRediT Contributor Roles Taxonomy: A standardized framework outlining various contribution types that may merit authorship. Useful for clarifying roles and resolving authorship disputes.

- Nature Portfolio journal's Authorship Recommendations: Guidance from the Nature journal about authorship criteria, responsibilities, and best practices for ethical research conduct.

- PLOS Biology journal's Authorship Recommendations: Guidance from the PLOS Biology journal about authorship criteria, responsibilities, and CRediT Taxonomy implementation.

- ICMJE Recommendations (updated April 2025): Guidelines for the conduct, reporting, editing, and publication of scholarly work in medical journals. Widely adopted by journals and followed by Purdue's Standard for Authorship and Scholarly Works.

- Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) Authorship Guidelines: This document provides guidance for editors, including strategies for handling authorship disputes both before and after publication, resources for authors, and recommendations for institutions to support and uphold authorship integrity.

- NIH General Guidelines for Authorship Contributions: A visual chart developed by the NIH IRP Committee on Scientific Conduct & Ethics, outlining common roles and when they may justify authorship.

- Preempting Discord: Prenuptial Agreements for Scientists: This resource, from The Office of Research Integrity, emphasizes the value of setting clear expectations early in scientific collaborations to prevent disputes over authorship, data access, and contributions.