



The Tamil Nadu Dr. M.G.R. Medical University

Research Policy

If we knew what it was we are doing, it would not be called research, would it?

-Albert Einstein

If you want to shine like sun, first burn like a sun.

-A.P.J. Abdul Kalam

Preamble

The Tamil Nadu Dr. M.G.R. Medical University, Chennai, is an affiliating University governed by The Tamil Nadu Dr. M.G.R. Medical University, Chennai, Act, 1987 started functioning from July 1988. The University caters academic services to the students and institutes in the state of Tamil Nadu. This is the only Medical University in Tamil Nadu capable of granting affiliation to new institutions under Government or Self-financing in Medical, Dental, Indian Medicine/Homoeopathy & Allied Health Sciences (Pharmacy, Nursing, Physiotherapy, Occupational therapy etc.) and awarding degrees under a single umbrella to maintain uniform and high standards of education. There are around 1, 05,000 candidates from 780 institutions appearing for over 500 courses with the University examination spanning throughout the year.

The undergraduate and post-graduate students, research fellows and teachers undertake various research activities as a part of curriculum and as a professional activity. With pioneering initiatives such as experimental medicine, Transfusion medicine, immunology, epidemiology etc., the University provides utmost priority to quality research in order to foster rapid development of medical science. Research in health sciences has a key role in creating a scientific temper among the stakeholders and providing solutions to health care related problems of the society.

Rapid development in implementation of newer technologies and growth in scientific knowledge impels quest to pursue innovative research in the field of medical science. Research in health sciences has a key role in creating a scientific temper among the stakeholders and provides solutions to health care related problems of the society.

The purpose of this research policy is to provide a comprehensive framework for the planning, execution, and oversight of research activities carried out at The Tamil Nadu Dr.M.G.R. Medical University, its affiliated institutions, collaborated Universities/Industries and other stakeholders. This policy aims to uphold the highest ethical, legal, and professional standards in research, thereby fostering innovation and ensuring the well-being of research participants and the broader community.

This policy applies to all faculty members, researchers, staff, students, and collaborators engaged in research activities under the auspices of our Medical University.

This “Research Policy” provides a framework for design and implementation of research and for development of infrastructure for research related activities in the University and its affiliated organizations. It aims to inculcate the culture of research and to enhance attitude of innovation, incubation, and implementation of robust research among the academic fraternity of the University.

Vision

To Pursue innovation and eminence in health care by fostering inclusive research and education contributing to implementation of economical health systems to improve and transform health care worldwide.

Mission

- To support and enhance research scientists who apply knowledge and critical thinking to improve quality of health of individuals and communities.
- To provide appropriate guidance and regulations to establish a supportive environment for excellence in research.

Values

- **Integrity:** Maintain professional, ethical, and honest practices in all research activities.
- **Originality:** Develop and maintain originality in research work and to prevent plagiarism.
- **Excellence:** Pursue the highest standards in research, teaching, and service.
- **Learning:** Continuously evaluate and improve research through the creation and use of rational approaches and innovative ideas.
- **Inclusiveness:** Respect cultural values and diversity, maintain dignity and respect for all, and build an environment as diverse as the challenges and opportunities facing health care.
- **Collaboration:** Establish relationships across disciplines and the various communities being served and incorporate multiple perspectives into research, teaching, and health care.
- **Equity:** Equal opportunity of participation to all involved and to be open to ideas of research from any one.
- **Commitment:** Commitment by all to serve the needs of the entire population, regardless of differences or circumstances, and address the barriers and disparities that hinder people's ability to lead healthy lives through research, teaching, and health care.

Aims

To promote and generate globally acceptable quality scientific evidence addressing the health problems of society through active participation of all stake holders.

1. To generate conducive atmosphere for research and improve overall research experience;
 - a. by developing strategies and plans ensuring open and clear communication,
 - b. by providing efficient research administrative services while effectively managing risks and opportunities,
 - c. by reducing administrative burden of the researcher.
2. To promote capacity building in Research;
 - a. by improving access to key information,
 - b. by providing required guidance, training, and know how,

- c. by improving researcher productivity.
- 3. To improve the quality of Research;
 - a. by providing necessary infrastructure for research training and activity related work,
 - b. by providing guidelines for conduct and publication of research,
 - c. Publications in peer reviewed journals as a part requirement of course curriculum.
- 4. To integrate research and education;
 - a. by implementing dynamic curricula which will automatically include extraordinary research contributions,
 - b. by including subject like research methodology, innovation, design thinking etc., in the syllabus at appropriate levels,
 - c. by allotting credits for research activities such as paper presentation, published research papers in peer reviewed journals as a part requirement of course curriculum.
- 5. To prioritise areas of research;
 - a. by assessing the health care needs of the society,
 - b. by assessing the strength of respective medical systems.
- 6. To identify and adopt good research practices
- 7. To develop ideal Research Infrastructure& facilities as follows;
 - a. Central Research Facility,
 - b. Central Research Laboratory,Animal House, Medicinal plants garden, Museum etc.,
 - c. Media laboratory/Business Lab/e-resource Studio,
 - d. Research/Statistical Databases/Health Informatics centre,
 - e. Central research library,
 - f. Research referral and guidance centre,
 - g. Biomedical engineering laboratory,
 - h. Clinical trial facility for all Systems in the University Hospital,
 - i. Research Training centre for providing training in all modalities related to research such as Research methodology, design thinking, innovation, medical statistics, Scientific writing, designing a research proposal, legal aspects of research, ethics in research and research grant writing etc.,
- 8. Achievement of Operational excellence in Research;

- a. by streamlining research processes,
 - b. by developing effective relationships with process partners and campus research community,
 - c. by Identifying and adopting best research practices,
 - d. by promoting a culture of continuous process improvement in research work,
 - e. by motivating the teachers, faculty and students for research activities,
 - f. by embracing a culture of transparency and accountability,
 - g. by establishing transparent, merit-based decision-making systems for the allocation of financial and other supports for research,
 - h. by developing a system of strategically analysing risk and benefits of any proposal, policy or system.
9. To encourage inter/multi disciplinary research between different systems;
- a. by removing barriers in collaboration,
 - b. by encouraging inter/multi and intra disciplinary interactions and knowledge sharing.
10. Development of research ecosystem for attracting talented researchers from diverse fields;
- a. by cultivating an environment that stimulates challenges, develops skills, knowledge and competencies through continuous learning,
 - b. by encouraging staff engagement and participation in research activities at all levels,
 - c. by ensuring development of career paths for promoting upward mobility in organisation,
 - d. by developing competitive work culture,
 - e. by encouraging strategic initiatives, strategic research directions and policies that will have national and international impact,
 - f. by translating research outcomes into applicable measures for public benefit,
 - g. by promoting and enhancing cost effective research initiatives,
 - h. by promoting cutting edge technologies,
 - i. by procuring external research funds.
11. To Motivate the students, teachers and practitioners to undertake and develop research activities

- a. by rewarding the best thesis / dissertations at PG and PhD levels,
 - b. by rewarding best publications at periodic intervals,
 - c. by rewarding best innovative ideas,
 - d. by recognising outstanding contribution in research.
12. To collaborate with research organisations& institutions of high repute having mutual interests at National and International levels.

Organizational structure:

An organizational structure for monitoring various research activities in the University will be established. It will comprise of Central Research Board, University Research Steering Committee and other sub-committees viz., Committee on Research methodology & training, Institutional Ethics committee, Committee on Publication guidelines, Research collaboration and networking committee, Research Grants Committee, Research Conference & Competition Committee, Research Data Management Committee, Faculty wise Project Evaluation committee.

Operative guidelines for Research Activities in the University:

The university research activities are broadly categorized as Intra-mural Research, Extra-mural Research, Training in Research, Research Publications, Reward & recognition of research contributions, Translation of Research outcomes into applicable measures for Public benefits, Capacity building of stakeholders, Identification of thrust areas for research, Intellectual property Rights support, Post-doctoral research.

This research policy includes following clauses to cover broadly almost all aspects of research activities under the regulatory research framework of The Tamil Nadu Dr. M.G.R. Medical University, Guindy, Chennai;

1. Research Ethics and Integrity

1.1 Human and Animal Research

The University is committed to the ethical conduct of research involving human subjects or animals. All such research shall receive approval from appropriate boards according to the research study undertaken.

1.2 Informed Consent

Researchers shall obtain informed consent from all research participants. Informed consent shall include a clear explanation of the research purpose, risks, benefits, and the right to withdraw from the study without consequences.

2. Research Funding

2.1 Grant Applications

Researchers seeking external funding for their projects shall adhere to guidelines for grant applications. They shall notify the University of Submitted Proposals.

2.2 Financial Management

The research project budgets must be prepared and managed according to the University's financial policies. Researchers shall maintain accurate records for the financial transactions and expenditures incurred.

3. Intellectual Property

3.1 Ownership

The University recognizes the importance of intellectual property generated from research. University policies will govern ownership and rights regarding patents, copyrights, and other forms of intellectual property arising from the research undertaken.

3.2 Technology Transfer and Commercialization

The Office of Technology Transfer will oversee the Procedures for technology transfer, patenting, and commercialization of research outputs. Researchers are encouraged to collaborate with the Office of Technology Transfer when applicable.

4. Collaboration and Authorship

4.1 Collaboration Agreements

Collaborative research agreements shall be documented and adhere to established principles. There shall be a clear outline in collaboration agreements about the data sharing and intellectual property considerations.

4.2 Formal Agreements

The written collaboration agreement shall formalize all research collaborations, whether national or international. These agreements should specify the roles, responsibilities, data sharing, intellectual property, dispute resolution, and authorship guidelines.

4.3 Authorship

Authorship attribution in publications shall be based on substantial contributions to the research. The researcher shall follow the guidelines for determining the corresponding author and authorship order.

5. Data Management

5.1 Data Collection and Handling

The researcher shall collect, store and handle research data with utmost care, integrity, accuracy and security.

5.2 Data Security & Privacy

Data security is of paramount importance. Sensitive and confidential data shall be protected in accordance with data security and privacy laws in force. The stakeholders of research shall adhere to data protection regulations, such as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), where applicable.

6. Conflict of Interest

6.1 Disclosure

All faculty members, researchers, and relevant personnel shall disclose conflicts of interest that could reasonably affect their research activities.

All collaborators shall disclose any conflicts of interest that may affect their research activities within the collaboration.

6.2 Management

The measures to mitigate or manage disclosed conflicts of interest would evaluate and initiate appropriate action.

7. Research Misconduct

7.1 Allegations and Reporting

The policy outlines the process for reporting allegations of research misconduct, including issues such as fraud, plagiarism, fabrication, falsification, and other unethical behaviour.

7.2 Investigation

The established procedures will investigate the allegations of research misconduct by independent investigative committee as and when required.

7.3 Sanctions

Consequences for research misconduct may include disciplinary actions, funding revocation, and, in severe cases, legal actions.

8. Publication Policies

8.1 Journal Selection

Researchers shall choose reputable and ethical peer-reviewed journals for publishing research findings and should avoid predatory publishing practices.

8.2 Transparency

The researchers shall report their research findings with due care and transparency, including potential conflicts of interest. Accurate and honest reporting is essential.

9. Research Review Boards

9.1 Institutional Ethics Committee [IEC], Institutional Review Board (IRB) and Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)

The roles and responsibilities of IEC, IRB and IACUC are well defined. These boards are responsible for overseeing and approving research involving human subjects and animals.

10. Laws and Regulations

10.1 Local and International Laws

Collaborative research shall adhere to local and international laws and regulations relevant to the research activities, including data protection and ethical guidelines.

11. Monitoring and Evaluation

11.1 Oversight

The University will establish mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating research activities to ensure compliance with this policy and applicable regulations.

12. Education and Training

12.1 Training Programs

The University will provide ongoing training programs on research ethics, responsible conduct, and compliance with relevant regulations to educate and empower researchers, faculty, and students.

12.2 Cross-Cultural and Ethical Training

Collaborators shall undergo training on cross-cultural competence, research ethics, and relevant latest international regulations to ensure effective collaboration.

13. Communication

13.1 Accessibility

The research policy is readily accessible to all members of the University community via the University website and other relevant communication channels.

13.2 Effective Communication Strategies

Effective communication strategies shall be employed to facilitate cross-border and cross-institutional collaboration, including language policies

13.3 Communication Strategy

The University will maintain open and transparent communication with all stakeholders of research regarding the research policy, its updates, and any changes to research regulations.

15. Review and Update

15.1 Regular Review

This policy is subject to the periodic reviews to ensure that it remains current and responsive to changing regulations and emerging challenges.

16. Approval Process

16.1 Principles of Collaboration

16.2 Openness and Transparency

All research collaborations shall be open, transparent, and built on trust and mutual respect among collaborators.

16.3 Equal Partnership

Collaborators from all participating institutions are considered equal partners, and their contributions should be recognized and valued.

16.4 Shared Goals

Collaborative projects shall have clearly defined, shared research goals, objectives, and timelines.

17. Enforcement and Sanctions

17.1 Consequences for Violations

Violations of this policy will result in disciplinary actions, which may include warnings, suspensions, funding revocation, or legal actions, depending on the severity of the violation.

The details provided in this version of research policy will be updated periodically as when required by following due procedures.