

International Collaboration Principles

The University of Sydney exists for the benefit of Australia and the wider world, so that the brightest researchers and the most promising students - whatever their social or cultural background - can thrive and realise their full potential.

The University welcomes students, staff and visitors from around the world, and strongly encourages and supports members of its community to pursue and participate in international collaborations whether in Australia or overseas - as fundamental to its purpose and mission.

When deciding whether to pursue, negotiate, commence, or continue activities with a foreign entity or individual, the University, its decision-makers, staff and students apply the following principles and processes:

Principle 1 Consistency with the University's object, values, ethical standards and reputation

The purpose and conduct of the activity, or proposed activity, must be consistent with the University's:

1. **Object and functions** as defined by [Section 6 of the University of Sydney Act 1989](#), especially *'the promotion, within the limits of the University's resources, of scholarship, research, free inquiry, the interaction of research and teaching, and academic excellence'*.
2. **Core values** of [trust, accountability, excellence](#) - embodied in our [Staff and Affiliates Code of Conduct 2021](#) and the [Student Charter 2020](#).
3. **Pursuit of education and research excellence** as expressed in the strategic aspirations of our [2023 Annual Report](#). *'Our student-focused education is transformational' and 'our research is excellent, tackles the greatest challenges and contributes to the common good.'*
4. **Commitment to upholding the principles of freedom of speech and academic freedom** for members of the University community as defined in our [Charter of Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom 2020](#).
5. **Commitment to conducting all research, whether in Australia or overseas, to the highest possible ethical standards**, including in accordance with the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018](#), the [National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research \(2007\) – Updated 2018](#), the University's [Research Code of Conduct 2023](#) and [Research Data Management Policy 2014](#), and the [Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes](#). We will always seek to ensure that our research activities comply with the requirements of relevant Australian and foreign laws, although we acknowledge that Australian values, laws and codes may not align with frameworks and principles in some countries.
6. **Prohibition on staff and affiliates knowingly accepting funding, gifts or sponsorship directly or indirectly from tobacco and e-cigarette companies** and rigorous adherence to the requirements of the [Smoke-Free Environment Policy 2019](#), [Gift Acceptance Policy 2013](#), [Sponsorship Policy 2018](#) and [External Interests Policy 2010](#).

If the activity is **inconsistent** with any one of these six points, it must not be continued or pursued in the form underway or proposed.

If the activity is **consistent** with these six points (or is made so by adjusting the activity's purpose, scope and conduct) it may proceed, subject to meeting the requirements of Principles 2 and 3 below.

Principle 2 Compliance with relevant laws and consideration of relevant government guidelines

1. The activity must be lawful, conducted transparently and comply with all relevant Australian regulations and sanctions including the [Customs Act 1901](#), [Autonomous Sanctions Act 2011](#), the [Defence Trade Controls Act 2012](#), the [Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme Act 2018](#), the [National Security Legislation Amendment \(Espionage and Foreign Interference\) Act 2018](#), the [Modern Slavery Act 2018](#), the [Australia's Foreign Relations \(State and Territory Arrangements\) Act 2020](#), [Safeguarding Australia's Military Secrets \(SAMS\) Act 2023](#) and the [Australia's Foreign Relations \(State and Territory Arrangements\) Rules 2020](#).¹
2. Where relevant, the activity and any related activities must also be undertaken consistently with all applicable Australian Government guidelines and departmental policies, including the [Guidelines to Counter Foreign Interference in Australian Universities](#).²

If a decision-maker, member of staff, affiliate or student, after completing initial due diligence checks, is uncertain about the legality of an international collaboration activity, or proposed activity, they should seek advice from the Office of General Counsel (OGC), before proceeding further.³

Depending on the nature of the activity under consideration, the OGC or relevant University portfolio may seek advice from relevant Australian Government agencies including the Department of Defence, the Department of Home Affairs, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and the Attorney General's Department. OGC may also seek further advice and refer matters to the relevant University portfolios (including the Deputy Vice-Chancellors Education and Research, and the Vice Presidents External Engagement and Advancement).

For a research or research-related activity the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research may refer the activity to the University's *Research Risk Advisory Committee* for risk assessment and advice.

Principle 3 Consistency with relevant University policies

Once a decision-maker, staff member or student is satisfied that the activity is lawful and that appropriate consideration has been given to relevant government guidelines, the activity may proceed as long as it is conducted (or finalised in the case of proposed activities) in accordance with the principles and requirements of all other relevant University rules and policies. These include the University instruments mentioned in Principle 1, the following policies, and any subordinate policies and procedures, and those that supersede or amend them:

[Cyber Security Policy 2019](#)
[Learning and Teaching Policy 2019](#)
[Intellectual Property Policy 2016](#)
[Affiliates Policy 2015](#)
[Recruitment and Appointment Policy 2021](#)
[Reporting Wrongdoing Policy 2012](#)
[Research Agreements Policy 2011](#)
[University of Sydney \(Higher Degree by Research\) Rule 2011](#)
[Delegations of Authority Rule 2024](#)

¹ Other relevant laws, regulations and sanctions include but are not limited to: [Charter of the United Nations Act 1945](#); [Migration Act 1958](#); [Defence Trade Controls Act 2012](#); [Privacy Act 1988](#); [Biosecurity Act 2015](#); [Security of Critical Infrastructure Act 2018](#); [Security Legislation Amendment \(Critical Infrastructure\) Act 2021](#); [Weapons of Mass Destruction \(Protection of Proliferation\) Act 1995](#); [Public Interest Disclosure Act 2013](#); [Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012](#); the Australian Government's [Consolidated List of all persons and entities who are subject to targeted financial sanctions under Australian sanctions law](#); [Defence and Strategic Goods List 2021 \(DSGL\)](#); Australia's [List of Critical Technologies in the National Interest](#); and [Safeguarding Australia's Military Secrets \(SAMS\) Act 2023](#).

² See for example the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's [Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment Policy](#).

³ [The Office of General Counsel](#). The Office of Global and Research Engagement (via ip.admin@sydney.edu.au) can also be contacted for advice regarding different types and aspects of international collaboration activity. For guidance on research due diligence checks the Research Risk and Security Office may be contacted (via researchrisk.security@sydney.edu.au). For any non-research international agreements matters, such as education, student mobility and general partnerships, the Sydney Future Students [international agreements team](#) should be consulted on the appropriate process to follow in accordance with the University's [Delegations of Authority](#) Rule.