

PROMOTION OF APPLIED RESEARCH OUTCOMES - UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE GUIDELINES

PREAMBLE

There is considerable value in academics making contributions to public debates, endorsing research outcomes and, where appropriate, commercialising research. However, responsible research conduct requires an appreciation by academics of the need to take care in their public statements, especially where consumers or investors may rely and act on their comments. Not only is this good practice, but such an understanding helps our researchers avoid opening themselves and the University to certain liabilities.

The purpose of these Guidelines is to inform and support researchers when discussing their research.

SCOPE

Are you intending to make or contribute to a statement, or representation, or claim about potential applications of research outcomes, particularly in relation to a product or service that the University has either developed, or licensed, or is distributing to another business, where such a statement is ultimately intended for consumers or the general public? This includes:

- advertisements or statements in any media (print, radio, television, social media and online);
- on product packaging or promotional material, including material published directly by the University or by a third party in consultation with, or in reliance upon information from, the University; and
- any statement or claims about the performance or potential outcomes from the application of research results or about a product or service made orally by any person representing the University.

RESPONSIBILITIES

If within scope, the lead researcher must confirm prior to the release of any information to another business or to the public that the following conditions have been met:

- ✓ The proposed statement is true, accurate and able to be substantiated or, if speculative, is otherwise clearly and appropriately qualified.
- ✓ There are no restrictions or limitations under relevant funding or other related agreements, including ethics, publication or confidentiality provisions, that restrict or require compliance processes or other conditions to be met upon the public dissemination of information.
- ✓ The intended statement does not place at risk the intellectual property rights of the University, researchers, students, research sponsors or other collaborating partners.
- ✓ That you can readily identify the support/substantiation for the statement and that others will be able to do so readily in the future, if required.

- ✓ A record of the basis, support or substantiation for the statement is retained consistent with the University Research Data and Primary Materials Policy.
- ✓ The statement is not likely to create a false or misleading impression.
- ✓ Any qualifying statements are sufficiently clear and obvious and not hidden in fine print.
- ✓ If the statement makes a representation about future performance, based on past performance, have the assumptions been made sufficiently clear?
- ✓ Consider if the same information is true, accurate and able to be substantiated in every country or region where the product or service might be offered, consumed or used, or if the statements are country or region-specific. If so, confirm whether the information/statements needs to be changed or adapted for a particular country or region/s, and whether that is sufficiently clear on the face of the statement.

If the statement relates to future performance of a product or service, the lead researcher must:

- ✓ Implement a regular review to ensure the statement remains current or is updated as required if new information or data becomes available.
- ✓ Consider appropriate timing and intervals for such review and schedule reminders. For example, annually, after results of a harvest have become available in the case of an agricultural product.
- ✓ Consider the person best placed to have responsibility for this ongoing review - usually the lead researcher within the University in the first instance, or such other individual or department as determined in consultation with the Head of School.
- ✓ If the information to be released is potentially controversial, sensitive or likely to attract significant media attention, formal approval from the relevant Head of School and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) is required in advance of the public release of information.

Who else at the University ought to be consulted before a statement or representation is released?

- ✓ Ensure that those within the University responsible for the product's (a) development and (b) commercialisation have been consulted prior to publication or release of the statement.
- ✓ If the statement is issued to be in conjunction with the use of the University's name and/or logo, the University Marketing and Communications team must be consulted for approval.
- ✓ If unsure, seek guidance from Research Services, Adelaide Enterprise or Legal & Risk.

SUMMARY

When presenting information about products or services to customers, be sure to:

- ✓ give current, correct and, where applicable, country and region-specific information
- ✓ use simple language
- ✓ check that the overall impression is accurate
- ✓ note important limitations or exemptions

- ✓ back up claims with facts and documented evidence where appropriate
- ✓ correct any misunderstandings
- ✓ be prepared to substantiate
- ✓ seek relevant review/approval from within or external to the University prior to publication
- ✓ update published information when necessary to ensure it continues to meet all criteria above
- ✓ where the information to be released is potentially controversial or likely to attract significant media attention, formal approval from the relevant Head of School and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) is required in advance of the public release of information.

Do not:

- ✗ guess the facts
- ✗ omit relevant information or fail to acknowledge core contributors, partners or funding agencies where this is required
- ✗ make ambiguous or contradictory statements or use unnecessary jargon
- ✗ make promises or exaggerated claims you cannot keep, or make predictions without reasonable basis
- ✗ offer goods or services without a reasonable basis for believing you can deliver them.

RESOURCES

[The Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#) (Section 4)

Relevant Research Funding Agreement/s or Contract/s

[The Research Data and Primary Materials Policy](#)

[The University Authorship Policy](#)

The Competition and Consumer Act (2011)

The Fair Trading Act 1987 (SA)

Further information on relevant legislation can be obtained from the [South Australian Legislation website](#).

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Authorised by the Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor & Vice-President (Research), July 2017.