CEBS Policy for Co-Principal Investigator Status

Contributors to externally-funded projects who are categorized as Co-Principal Investigators (Co-PIs) have substantial authority and responsibility over the project, including developing the initial project goals, scientific direction, and fiscal decision-making. The PI (Principal Investigator) and Co-PI are responsible for direct communication about the funded project to the funder and are responsible for the completing the annual reports to the funder.

Contributors to the project who have responsibility for a specific role, but are not responsible for the overall project (e.g., ensuring that milestones are completed on time) are categorized as key personnel, not as Co-PIs. Example key personnel roles include providing training for project participants, conducting program evaluation for the project, or facilitating collaboration with outside agencies. Key personnel have limited influence in the overall implementation of the project.

The PI and the Co-PI typically develop the project together and divide up tasks throughout the project timeline among themselves, while key personnel are responsible for specific tasks that are limited in scope and occur at specific times during the project. Contributors who join the project after the project plan has been developed are typically not categorized as Co-PIs.