

**NEW PROJECT:  
International Research Collaborations**

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**PROJECT BACKGROUND:** Member interest in the issue of global research agreements became accentuated after the June 2008 GUIRR meeting (“New Partnerships on a Global Platform”) and its focus on the growing complexity of international relationships. The notion of ‘government’ no longer necessarily means a federal agency; instead, it can be the World Bank or the United Nations, government associations, the State Department, or a state government. The same is true for universities – the partner engaging in collaborative activity may be a university department, a faculty member, an educational association, or some other entity. So too is the case with industry, which may now be globalized or local, large and established or a small start-up venture. A teleconference on July 15, 2008 confirmed interest in further examining what presently constitutes a sound research agreement in any given sector and also identifying the current barriers and work-arounds to their formation. A newly formed GUIRR working group has concluded that, while there is clearly no “one-size-fits-all” master agreement, identification of the elements of international research agreements would provide valuable guidance to the research community *writ large*.

**SUMMARY STATUS:** The working group convened its first meeting on August 28, 2008 at the National Academy’s Keck Center to chart its goals, direction, and intended outcome(s). The group has since held two additional group teleconferences, one on November 20, 2008 and another on January 28, 2009, with an active informational exchange underway between calls.

The goals of the working group – now calling itself the “I-Group” – are well described in an article published in the December 2008/January 2009 issue of *NCURA Magazine* (see attached). Articles detailing the plans and intentions of this group have appeared in other publications as well, including the DHHS *Office of Research Integrity Newsletter* (December 2008) and the Air Force Research Laboratory *International Notes* newsletter (December 29, 2008).

The group is currently exploring the feasibility of hosting a workshop in 2009, followed by the preparation of a primer on how agreements are constructed amid myriad challenges and tensions and across cultures. The scope of the project is as follows:

- Host a workshop on the issues during calendar year 2009 (in discussion).
- Develop a primer on the challenges and tensions in international research collaboration based upon key questions so as to help bring government, university, and industry sectors into some kind of alignment by forging a common understanding and language.
- Potentially develop, in conjunction with the primer, a companion publication highlighting solutions-based case studies (a *Living Studies* type publication).
- Potentially develop, as an accompaniment to the primer, an interactive Web presence that incorporates a Wikipedia for open online dialogue and experiential exchange.
- Engage up-front and distribute the primer, upon completion, to key stakeholders.