



**RESEARCH AND INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS CENTRE**  
**RESEARCH POLICY**

**INTRODUCTION**

The Research and Innovation Policy of SMC is a document that provides a framework for the development of a competitive, innovative, ethical and a socially responsible research culture at SMC for quantitative and qualitative improvements in sustainable research performance for continued excellence. The College is also committed to support all research activities to create and advance knowledge and to improve the quality of education through the discovery, dissemination and use of research in various disciplines in line with the vision and mission of SMC.

**OBJECTIVES**

The Research and Innovation Policy of SMC serves as a framework for stakeholders, management, and academic staff on their roles and responsibilities in the research and innovation acculturation process at the SMC. Accordingly, the objectives of this policy are to:

- (a) strengthen the performance of the institution in the areas of research, consultancy and knowledge partnerships,
- (b) enhance research collaboration between disciplines and various fields both locally and abroad,
- (c) intensify and reinforce cooperation and collaboration between universities, industries, and society.
- (d) boost efforts in generating revenue for the institution through patents as significant research contributions.

**SCOPE**

This policy covers all processes related to the implementation and management of research, research output, scholarly activities, collaborations, knowledge dissemination and consultation at SMC.

**POLICY STATEMENT**

To make SMC a leading institution of higher learning at the national and international level in research, innovation, teaching, and social service learning.



The College believes in taking a significant step to develop a culture of competitive research and innovation among faculty and students in order to enrich our academic practices and social responsibility while demonstrating adherence to recognized standards of quality assurance.

### **The Need to Conduct Research**

- (a) All faculty must conduct research and scholarly activities as well as to publish the outcome or patent their product.
- (b) All researchers must make themselves eligible to apply for research funds to finance their research.
- (c) Conducting research is essential in the career development of faculty as well as undertaking academic and administrative responsibilities.

### **5 MANAGEMENT OF RESEARCH**

- (a) SMC Management & SMC International Research Centre
- (b) SMC Research Council
- (c) Office of the Academic Deans
- (d) SMC IQAC- Internal Quality Assurance Cell
- (e) SMC Research Ethical Committee
- (f) Heads of Research Monitoring Departments
- (g) Scholar coordinators
- (h) Research mentors

#### **5.1 SMC MANAGEMENT SUPPORT**

Provide with financial, infrastructural and human resources to develop and enhance institutional research

- (a) Provide financial incentives for researchers to engage in high quality, internationally competitive sustainable research activity.
- (b) An allocation of seed money from the institution is a fundamental support provided to the faculty to enhance their research.
- (c) Initiate research mentorship concept for attracting young researchers.



## **6.0 RESEARCH FINDINGS (OUTPUT) AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

Research output and performance indicators for the research included publications, intellectual property rights, citations, research reports, research funds, supervision and consultancy services.

## **7.0 SYNERGY IN TEACHING AND RESEARCH**

To implement pedagogy which involves research influenced teaching.

## **8.0 RESEARCH ETHICS**

Faculty and students of the College who conduct research must have high ethical standards in accordance with the guidelines stipulated by the SMC Ethics Committee and the University of Madras. It is a basic assumption that researchers are committed to the highest. Standards of ethical and professional conduct in undertaking and supervising research. They have a duty to maintain the highest standards of probity in research applicable to their discipline and thus protect and enhance standards of excellence in research.

### **8.1 IPR and Plagiarism**

Recognising and responding to the ethical dimension of research is a fundamental part of the College governance. The College needs to procure a plagiarism software for plagiarism detection to avoid deceitful practices. In this connection, workshops and awareness building sessions on IPR and plagiarism will be conducted to promote and sensitise research integrity.

### **8.2 Intellectual Property Rights**

Intellectual property rights are the rights protected by specific laws that allow the owner of the Intellectual Property to exercise exclusive control over the exploitation of such rights usually associated with commercial gains.

### **8.3 RESEARCH INTEGRITY**

1. Research integrity describes the responsibilities of researchers and the research community. It involves, above all, a commitment to intellectual honesty and personal responsibility for one's actions and to a range of practices that characterize responsible research conduct. These practices include:

- a) Honesty and fairness in proposing, performing, and reporting research;
- b) Accuracy and fairness in representing contributions to research proposals and reports;



- c) Proficiency and fairness in peer review;
- d) Collegiality in scientific interactions, communications and sharing of resources;
- e) Disclosure of conflicts of interest;
- f) Protection and confidentiality of human subjects in the conduct of research;
- g) Humane care of animals in the conduct of research;
- h) Adherence to the mutual responsibilities of mentors and trainees.

2. Research integrity is vital because it creates trust, and trust is at the heart of the research process. Researchers must be able to trust each other & work, and they must also be trusted by society since they provide scientific and social expertise that may impact people & lives.

3. The institution and research workers have a responsibility to ensure the safety of all those associated with research. It is also essential that the design of projects conform to relevant ethical guidelines stipulated by the institution, the affiliated state university, the research guides and the SMC Research Ethics committee.

#### 4. Ethics Committee: Role and responsibility

A Research Ethics committee comprises a group of faculty from multi-disciplines appointed to review research proposals in order to assess formally if the research is ethical. This means the research must conform to recognised ethical standards, which includes respecting the dignity, rights, safety and well-being of the people who take part. Importantly, the committee recommends research integrity and moral responsibility to respect intellectual property rights and avoid malpractices.

### **8.4 Standards for Research and Publications**

All persons to whom these Guidelines apply must be very careful in using material from other authors and ensure that it is properly acknowledged. The deliberate copying of other people's work and the presentation of it as one's own constitutes plagiarism, which is unacceptable to the institution. Those who use material which is not produced by them have a responsibility to make its status and origins quite clear to those to whom it is presented. It is a fundamental principle of academic life that individuals can claim credit for and make material use of only those works or parts of work to which they have a legitimate claim.



## **9.0 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESEARCH AND INNOVATION POLICY**

### **STRATEGIES**

Research and innovation strategies are to:

- (a) provide and manage a conducive research environment moving towards multi- and interdisciplinary research collaborations outside the institution and among departments of the College may also be promoted.
- (b) provide and maintain infrastructure and basic and advanced facilities for research at all times.
- (c) approve the appointment of academic staff that have track records of excellent research and publications in and outside the country.
- (d) provide incentives and research facilities to academic staff to conduct research within and outside the country.
- (e) provide adequate and trained human resources to promote research activities.
- (f) encourage faculty to participate in research groups for sustainability and optimal use of resources.
- (g) identify and support the development of expertise in 'niche areas' and explore new frontiers to maintain the research strengths and interests of the country and the world. To align with global research which is increasingly being redirected towards addressing poverty, reducing inequality and tackling the effects of environment and climate change.
- (h) invite competent researchers including foreign researchers to conduct research at the college.
- (i) establish research centres as dynamic catalysts for research development and ensure faculty membership in any of the research centers.
- (j) appoint external assessors to evaluate the progress and outputs of research programmes of the College.
- (k) network with the public and industry for research and innovation purposes.
- (l) develop strategies to increase the number of articles published in high impact journals.
- (m) implement an appropriate reward system to encourage excellence in research, incubation and enterprise.

## **10. RESEARCH AND SUSTAINABILITY**

Implement policies and strategies for sustainability in research performance.





## **11. INTERNATIONALISATION OF RESEARCH**

The internationalization of research is necessary in order to strengthen the development of competitive and innovative research culture among faculty and students. The exposure and the internationalization of research are necessary for the following purposes:

- (a) To increase research excellence and innovation potential through greater access to external sources of knowledge.
- (b) To develop a global collaboration and innovation network that can promote and utilize new knowledge and technologies.
- (c) To compete for international research funds.
- (d) To expose local faculty and students to research culture in developed nations.
- (e) To attract excellent foreign students to conduct research at the College in collaboration with the University of Madras to promote interaction among multiple cultures.
- (f) The internationalisation of research will be implemented by organizing and participating in more international seminars and conferences, presenting research papers, generating project papers published in high impact journals or international papers and research through international collaboration.
- (g) encourage faculty to improve international relations such as undertaking their sabbaticals abroad.

## **12. CONSULTATION AND INDUSTRIAL NETWORK**

**Strategies in the commercialisation/consultation and industrial network aspect are to:**

- (a) commercialise research discoveries and technology developed at the College.
- (b) organize workshops/seminars/conferences that aim to expose the College faculty to aspects linked to negotiations, commercialisation, intellectual property, and technology transfer.
- (c) promote interaction with industry and professional bodies.
- (d) create strategic plans aimed at strengthening consultation services to various government departments, industry and professional bodies.
- (e) network with the public and industry for consultation and commercialisation purposes.
- (f) promote collaboration among departments/ colleges/ universities in technology transfer, digital learning, academic and training programs and related matters.
- (g) support efforts to promote research activities through consultation.
- (h) encourage the application of research findings into policies, industries and society as one of the social responsibilities of the College.



- (i) work with private companies to complement their expertise to handle the needs of a multi-disciplinary project as required by the client.
- (j) to develop an innovative ecosystem within the College in order to aid the formation of partnerships and to strategically develop commercialisation that will result in the necessary competencies with regard to innovative business endeavours.

## CODE OF ETHICS IN RESEARCH

### Research Ethical Policy

**Introduction:** The Research Ethics Policy sets out the principles underpinning the ethical conduct of research and defines the process and principles for the objective and rigorous ethical review of research which falls in line with the research mission of the Stella Maris College (SMC). SMC Research Mission: As an academic community of engaged scholars, we are committed to advancing research insight and debate in sciences and Arts. As a community of scholars, we believe in transferring our academic pool of knowledge to connect with areas of industry and social service within the local and the global contexts. We also seek to enrich policy debates at the international, national and local levels in adherence to the principle of Research Ethics. The Stella Maris College is committed to support all research activities to create and advance knowledge, and to improve the quality of research through the discovery, dissemination and use of research in various disciplines. The College constantly strives to enhance research and innovation and believes that research activity should be based on honesty, originality and genuineness by adhering to the parameters of professional ethics and quality.

**1.01** This code is applicable to faculty and students who pursue research in the college. All researchers should conduct their activities with high professional and community ethical values. Besides enhancing knowledge capital, the objective of a researcher should also be to conduct research that serves the interests of humanity and environment without causing harm to anyone.

**1.02** To promote quality and standards in academic research, and to create a culture of integrity in the same, the following code of ethics has been formulated.

#### **1.03 Plagiarism:**

All researchers are expected to know the rules and regulations regarding plagiarism. Due acknowledgement and citations should be given while referring to published data. The research work should be original and the content should be validated with accepted software. While applying for research grant proposals, care should be taken to propose only original projects. The student papers submitted for academic credit should also follow the same guidelines.



#### **1.04 Ethics in Data Accountability:**

The research observations should be based on accurate data recording and reports. Accountability in data collection and interpretation is the responsibility of the researcher. Manipulation of data is considered as misconduct in research. Research data collected through projects funded by the college or by an external agency, where the college is the grantee institution, is the property of the institution and not the researcher. The granting agency provides the funding to the college who is the grantee and the college is accountable for the utilisation of funds and the submission of the report by the Principal Investigator (PI). The Principal Investigator and the Co- Investigator are responsible for the integrity of the data and submission of reports on time, to the funding agencies. After the publication of the research findings, the research data may be made available on request to co-researchers for dissemination of knowledge.

#### **1.05 Publications:**

The author of the publication should be the person / those persons who have made significant contributions to the research work through design, planning, execution and compilation of the work. In the publications, due acknowledgement should be given to centres/research abs/funding agency/any other facility that has been used for conducting the research work. Ethically, the same article should not be submitted to two different journals for publication at the same time. After due communication from the earlier journal, it can be submitted to a different journal.

#### **1.06 Intellectual Property Rights (IPR):**

Intellectual Property Protection is critical to fostering innovation. Without protection of ideas, researchers do not reap the full benefits of their inventions and this acts as an incentive to enhance research & development. If there is any possibility that a copyright or patent application might arise from the research conducted in the college, the researcher should seek permission from the institution for further action.

#### **1.07 Standards of Academic Integrity**

The College is primarily a teaching institution and is dedicated to teaching and research. The faculty are expected to conform to the highest standards of professionalism in carrying out their duties in furtherance of the College vision and mission. Every member has a duty to avoid conflicts of interest between their various responsibilities and to comply with rules of the College. The Ethical Committee should provide supervision and guidance to the team members for a transparent mode of action in the group.





### 1.08 Research Ethics for Animals

Researchers must have respect for animals and worth, regardless of their utility value, and for animals and interests as living, sentient creatures. Researchers must be respectful when choosing their topic and methods, and when disseminating their research. Researchers must provide care that is adapted to. Researchers are responsible for studying whether there are alternatives to experiments on animals. Alternative options must be prioritised if the same knowledge can be acquired without using laboratory animals.

### 1.09 Research Ethics involving Human beings

Research ethics govern the standards of conduct for scientific researchers. It is important to adhere to ethical principles in order to protect the dignity, rights and welfare of research participants. As such, all research involving human beings should be reviewed by an ethics committee to ensure that the appropriate ethical standards are being upheld. Discussion of the ethical principles of beneficence, justice and autonomy are central to ethical review.

### 2.01 Procedures and Guidelines:

The procedures instituted in pursuit of this policy are intended:

- to facilitate, not inhibit, research;
- to promote a culture within the College whereby researchers conscientiously reflect on the ethical implications of their research

3.01 The Stella Maris College has created the Office of Research Integrity (ORI) as the organizational entity responsible for the implementation of these guidelines

.3.02 Develop materials for training on research integrity, ethical behaviour, and good research practices. This training will provide the substantive knowledge, skills, and competencies for a researcher with regard to research integrity and ethics.

3.03 **The Office of Research Integrity (ORI)** promotes the following values in the conduct and management of research.

3.04 **Ethics:** Research is conducted in an ethical manner ensuring dignity, rights, safety, and privacy within the researcher ecosystem.

3.05 **Rigour:** Research ensures high quality design, reliable data, the appropriate use of methods, rigorous and careful analysis, and transparent reporting and interpretation of the results.



**3.06 Relevance:** In the endeavour of expanding the knowledge-base and understanding the environment and ecosystem, research advances the short-and long-term goals of science and society.

**3.07 Transparency:** Honesty is promoted through transparency in developing, undertaking, reviewing, reporting, and communicating research in a fair, comprehensive, and unbiased fashion.

**3.08 Respect:** The process of research is aligned with the norms and traditions of society and its cultural heritage, with respect for colleagues, research participants, and the environment.

**3.09 Impartiality:** Objectivity and lack of bias are the core principles of research. Researchers should avoid conflicts of interest in setting research priorities, establishing research collaborations, choosing research questions, and interpreting and assessing the implications of the research results.

**3.10 Independence:** Research functions must be insulated from both the appearance and the reality of undue influence of funders or other non- researchers with a stake in the outcome of the research. To promote objectivity, researchers should be allowed independence in the design, conduct, analysis, interpretation, and dissemination of the research and research findings.

**3.11 Accountability:** Research will comply with both the spirit and the letter of relevant rules and procedures such as regulations governing professional standards.

The ORI will publish and make readily accessible such rules, roles, and procedures that will ensure that instances of alleged misconduct or malfeasance are rare. If and when they occur, they are effectively and promptly addressed in a fair and timely fashion with sensitivity towards the rights of all concerned. Integrity in research implies that these values permeate every aspect and are upheld by all involved in the research enterprise.

#### **4.0 Basic principles of Ethical Research are:**

**4.0 1 Autonomy:** The participant must normally be as aware as possible of what the research is for and be free to take part in it without coercion or penalty for not taking part, and also free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without a threat of any adverse effect.

**4.02 Beneficence:** is a concept in research ethics which states that researchers should have the welfare of the research participant as a goal. The research must be worthwhile in itself and have beneficial value and impact on society.

**4.03 Non-maleficence:** Any possible harm must be avoided or at least mitigated by robust precautions.




**4.04 Confidentiality:** Personal data must remain unknown to all but the research team (unless the participant agrees otherwise or in cases where there is an overriding public interest or where participants wish their voices to be heard and identified).

**4.05 Integrity :** The researcher must be open about any actual or potential conflicts of interest, and conduct their research in a way that meets recognised standards of research

**5.0 A Research Ethical Committee** is a group of people appointed to review research proposals to assess formally if the research is ethical. This means the research must conform to recognised ethical standards, which includes respecting the dignity, rights, safety and well-being of the people who take part.

- The Ethical Committee is responsible for the ethical evaluation of research projects.
- All researchers must respect and welcome the contribution of the Ethical committee.
- The Ethical committee is responsible to raise awareness with regards to malpractices in research promoting and recommending Research Integrity in all endeavours.
- Find strategic and effective ways to curb plagiarism.
- Educate and inform researchers on the importance of Intellectual Property Rights.



**Dr. Renuka Rajaratnam**  
**Dean, Research & International Partnerships Centre**  
**Stella Maris College (Autonomous),**  
**Chennai-600086.**