

Research Contributions to Consider When Making Authorship Decisions

This document was created and is maintained by the NIH Intramural Research Program Committee on Scientific Conduct and Ethics

Contributions

Authorship? (yes; no)

Comments

Design & interpretation of results

original idea, planning & input



An idea alone may not warrant authorship, unless highly original & unique

other intellectual contribution



Yes, but assuming active involvement

Supervisory role

supervision of the project



Yes, but assuming active involvement

training, education



mentoring of first author



No, unless substantive contribution made to study

Administrative & technical support

resources: money, space



Acknowledgements yes, authorship no

resources: animals, reagents



No if already published; yes, if novel

resources: patients



Maybe, depending on circumstances

Data acquisition

original experimental work



technical experimental work



No if routine; yes, if novel methods added, or specific role, e.g., statistics, imaging etc.

data analysis (assays)



Yes, unless only very basic

data analysis (statistics)



Yes, unless the contribution is only very basic

Writing & other

drafting of manuscript



Writing first draft typically merits first (or co-first) authorship

reading/ commenting on manuscript



Acknowledge substantial feedback; rarely merits co-authorship

No contributions



NIH's authorship policy requires that authors participate in drafting or substantively reviewing or revising the manuscript