

## Information for Research Associates

The title of research associate is a title offered to provide a formal scholarly affiliation with the Institution.

Research associates are not employees of the Smithsonian. The terms of appointment are governed by the appointment letter, which should set forth the terms and conditions of the relationship. In certain circumstances, however, research associates may provide a service to the Institution similar to that which would be provided by an employee, in which case certain legal protections may apply.

## Standards of Conduct for Research Associates

It is the responsibility of research associates to conduct themselves in compliance with the general principles and specific provisions of these standards. If there is any doubt as to whether their activities or planned activities are in compliance, the research associate should immediately seek the advice of his or her host.

Failure to comply with the following standards is cause for revoking the research associate appointment.

Research associates must not

- misrepresent their relationship to the Institution, particularly in any way representing themselves as employees of the Smithsonian
- for the purpose of furthering a private interest, directly or indirectly make use of, or permit others to make use of, information obtained through their Smithsonian appointment that is or would be unavailable to external scholars or the general public
- use official Smithsonian letterhead and similar materials, mailing privileges, or equipment, or supplies for anything not related to official Smithsonian business
- obtain official Smithsonian Institution business cards that use the title of research associate. Under unusual circumstances, research associates who have a special affiliation with the Institution may request permission to obtain and use business cards from the unit director. Certain restrictions may be applied to their use.
- reproduce copyrighted material in the absence of specific approval to do so from the owner of the copyright

Research associates must

- follow prevailing standards for conducting research in the discipline, such as those for collecting and import permits and using live animals or human subjects
- adhere to the rules set by the Smithsonian Institution Libraries and unit libraries

Receipt, expenditure and commitment of funds, such as grants or contracts to the Institution or grants from within the Institution, must be approved and financially administered by a

Smithsonian employee, and the appropriate unit must accept fund management. This financial oversight includes ensuring the filing of final reports and adherence to all rules and regulations pertaining to the specific grant.

Individuals with access to collections should be aware of the issues addressed in the respective unit's collections management policy and Smithsonian Directive 600, *Collections Management*. Access to and use of collections must be approved in advance by the appropriate unit staff member in accordance with established policy and procedures. Research associates working directly with Smithsonian collections must disclose any personal activity that may create or seem to create conflicts of interest, such as collecting or dealing in similar objects, materials, or specimens.

Office of Fellowships  
Smithsonian Institution  
Washington, DC  
6/01

*The Smithsonian Institution was established in 1846 with funds bequeathed to the United States by James Smithson. The Institution is as an independent trust instrumentality of the United States holding some 140 million artifacts and specimens in its trust for "the increase and diffusion of knowledge". The Institution is also a center for research dedicated to public education, national service, and scholarship in the arts, sciences, and history.*