

# Managing Conflicts: When Spouses Write Grants Together

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*Office of the Vice President for Research and Economic Development*

*May 19, 2011*

Many of ISU's outstanding researchers conduct collaborative research with their spouses or domestic partners. Iowa State is strongly supportive of such activities. However, to persons on the outside, when couples write grants together, it can be perceived as nepotism. To help manage that perception, the VPR/ED office encourages the disclosure and management of spousal and domestic partner relationships in sponsored funding.

To disclose and manage the situation, the supervisor(s) of the couple should send a letter or e-mail to Charlotte Bronson, Associate VP for Research indicating: the names of the spouses, their positions/rank at the university, the fact that they write grants together, who supervises them, who evaluates their performance, and who approves their expenditures on grants. Spouses should never be in the position of supervising, evaluating, or approving expenditures for one another.

Once this letter is on file, when the couples submit GoldSheets together, we recommend that they add a note indicating that they have a spousal relationship and that a letter disclosing and describing its management is on file in the VPR/ED office. They should NOT check the Conflict of Interest box on the GoldSheet, because that is intended for financial conflicts of interest. Note that the GoldSheet is an internal document and information in the note will not be sent to the funding agency unless the agency requires it.