

Annual FIR update in the AIRS

**Office of Research Integrity and Ethics
Conflict of Interest in Research Program**



Key Definitions

- **Activity and Interest Reporting System ([RAMS-AIRS](#))**
 - The secure management system for reporting interests
- **COI Investigator**
 - A designation determined by the PI that describes any individual who is responsible for the design, conduct, or reporting of research (regardless of their title, role, or position)
- **Financial Interest Report (FIR)**
 - The SmartForm in the AIRS that contains reported interests

Annual FIR Update

- The AIRS opens for the annual FIR update on May 10th of each year.
 - Proposal submissions, protocol approvals, and award dispersals will not move forward until the update has been completed by all COI Investigators.
- On May 10th, the AIRS will send an email to each active reporter once the system is ready for the annual update submission.
 - The following week, the AIRS will start sending email reminder notifications to those who have not yet completed the annual update.
 - NOTE: Emails from the AIRS go to the individual's @vcu.edu email account (i.e. jdoe@vcu.edu), which cannot be changed. It is recommended that emails from this account be forwarded to a favored one if that is preferred.
- If you received an annual update email from AIRS@vcu.edu, it is because your FIR account is active in the AIRS. If you think this reporting no longer applies to you, email AIRS@vcu.edu to request inactivation.

Reporting Financial Interests

- No changes to make to your FIR?
 - Click *Submit My Annual Disclosure Report* under My Activities.
- Changes to make?
 - Click *Edit Financial Interest Report* under My Financial Interest Report Forms and click the *Add, Update, or Delete* buttons to update your FIR.
- NOTE: If you last completed COI training 3 or more years ago, you will first be directed to a short training module whether or not you have changes to make to your FIR.

Reporting Financial Interests

When to report?

- Annually (beginning May 10th)
- Within 30 days of acquiring:
 - A new interest or an additional interest in a previously reported entity
 - New IP that has been disclosed to VCU Innovation Gateway
 - New research relatedness with any reported interest

What to report?

- Each COI Investigator reports financial and non-financial interests held by themselves and any member of their immediate family in the AIRS.
 - NOTE: *Immediate family* means the investigator's spouse and any person who resides in the same household and is a dependent of the investigator.
- Include interests for the last 12 months from the date of the report and their research relatedness, if any, to all proposed or ongoing research

Note: COI Investigators external to VCU who are deferring to VCU's COI in Research policy must report financial interests, as described herein, except *they are to only include interests that are directly related to their work for VCU.*

Submitting your FIR

- To submit your FIR, **check the box** before clicking the **Finish** button.

End of SmartForm

Check the box below and click *Finish* on the toolbar to affirm agreement and fully submit your FIR.

I have accurately completed my Financial Interest Report (FIR) as required by VCU policy. I understand that I must update my FIR within 30 days upon acquiring or discovering:

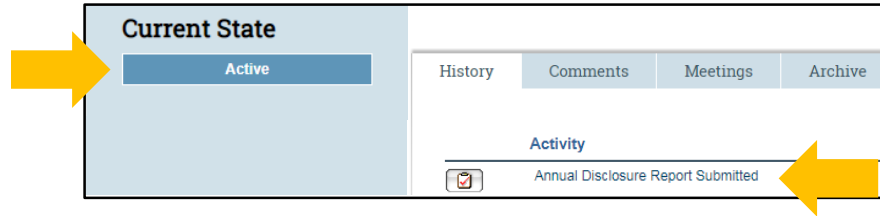
- a new interest in an entity not previously reported
- an additional interest in a previously reported entity
- new intellectual property that has been disclosed to VCU Innovation Gateway
- new research relatedness with any reported interest

Save Exit Hide/Show Errors Print Jump To Finish

- Alternatively, you can click *Submit My Annual Disclosure Report* under My Activities on your FIR workspace.
 - This option will change to *Finished Updating My Financial Interest Report* if you update your FIR after the annual update is submitted.

Successful FIR Completion



- Once you have successfully submitted your FIR, the Current State converts to *Active* and the annual update submission will be recorded on the History tab, which can be verified on your FIR workspace.
 - NOTE: The Current State will convert to *Open for Edits* if you open your FIR for editing after the annual update has been submitted, which has no implications on your annual update status.



- If you have not successfully submitted your annual update, you will continue to receive annual update email notifications.


COI Training

- The Public Health Service (PHS) [Promoting Objectivity in Research](#) regulations and VCU [COI in Research](#) policy require COI training for all COI Investigators at least every 4 years. Investigators currently within the 3-4 year time frame will be directed to complete the short training module preceding their annual update.
- Successful training completion will be documented on the FIR workspace.

History	Comments	Meetings	Archive
Activity			
	Financial Interest Report Updated		
	COI Training Completed 		

FAQ

- **Why am I getting annual update emails from the AIRS?**
Your FIR account is active in the AIRS and you have not successfully submitted your FIR update. To request inactivation, email AIRS@vcu.edu.
- **Why didn't my FIR submit?**
Follow the numbered instructions in red on your FIR workspace if your FIR was not submitted successfully.
- **Why am I getting an error message?**
It is likely due to a missing field. Review the error message at the top of the window and make any necessary corrections. You can also click *Hide/Show Errors* along the top or bottom toolbar, *Jump To* the section in question, and resolve any errors found.

Error/Warning Messages		
Message	Field Name	Jump To
 This is a required field; therefore, you must provide the required information.	Financial - Salary	Financial Interests



Resources

- [AIRS Guidance and Training](#) – includes the AIRS How-to Guide and related videos

Questions? Visit the [COI in Research](#) website or contact the COI in Research Program at AIRS@vcu.edu.