

Institute/Center Collaborations involving Animal Activities Performed inside NIH Core Facilities or Special Procedure Laboratories

This Guideline delineates the lines of accountability between an investigator and a collaborating core facility or special procedure laboratory. It is the goal of this Guideline to facilitate collaborations by:

1. establishing lines of accountability for collaborations which permit an investigator's animal to move to a core facility or special procedure laboratory for a procedure without having to transfer ownership of the animal;
2. ensuring that all animal procedures on an Animal Study Proposal (ASP) are approved by the responsible Animal Care and Use Committee (ACUC);
3. ensuring consistent NIH ACUC review by ensuring that changes to ACUC approved animal procedures are not required of the collaborating core facility or special procedure laboratory to conduct the collaboration; and
4. ensuring that essential information on the nature of the collaboration, procedures to be conducted, etc. are present in an investigator's ASP prior to beginning a collaboration.

When animal studies performed by one Institute/Center's (IC) Principal Investigator (PI) include animal procedures conducted during collaboration with a core facility or special procedure laboratory in the manner stated on an approved ASP or Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the facility, the PI's ASP must include the following:

1. The name and affiliation (IC and Lab/Branch/Section/Unit) of the collaborating core facility or special procedure laboratory;
2. The number and title of the collaborating core facility's or special procedure laboratory's ASP or SOP which states the manner in which procedures will be conducted;
3. A list of the procedures to be conducted in the manner stated on the collaborating facility's or laboratory's approved ASP or SOP;
4. The animal procedure location(s);
5. Any special post-procedural care required by the animals; and
6. The appropriate USDA column listing.

Once the PI's ASP has been approved by their ACUC, a copy of the approved ASP should be submitted to the ACUC of the collaborating IC (see Figure 1). It is the collaborating IC ACUC's responsibility to review the PI's approved ASP to ensure that the required information is present prior to the conduct of any animal procedures. The review process can be conducted by an agent of the collaborating IC's ACUC and does not constitute a second approval of the PI's ASP.

The PI's ACUC may request a copy of the collaborating IC's approved ASP or SOP which further delineates the procedures to be conducted, but the PI's ACUC may not make changes to the collaborating IC's approved ASP or SOP. Only the ACUC responsible for the core facility or special procedure laboratory can approve changes in ASPs or SOPs which govern those locations. In exceptional cases where the PI's ACUC believes that changes should be made to a collaborating ASP or SOP, the PI's ACUC can make a recommendation to be considered by the collaborating IC's ACUC. Alternatively, the PI's ACUC can choose not to approve the collaboration. The USDA tracking of the animals is the responsibility of the PI's ACUC and not that of the collaborating IC.

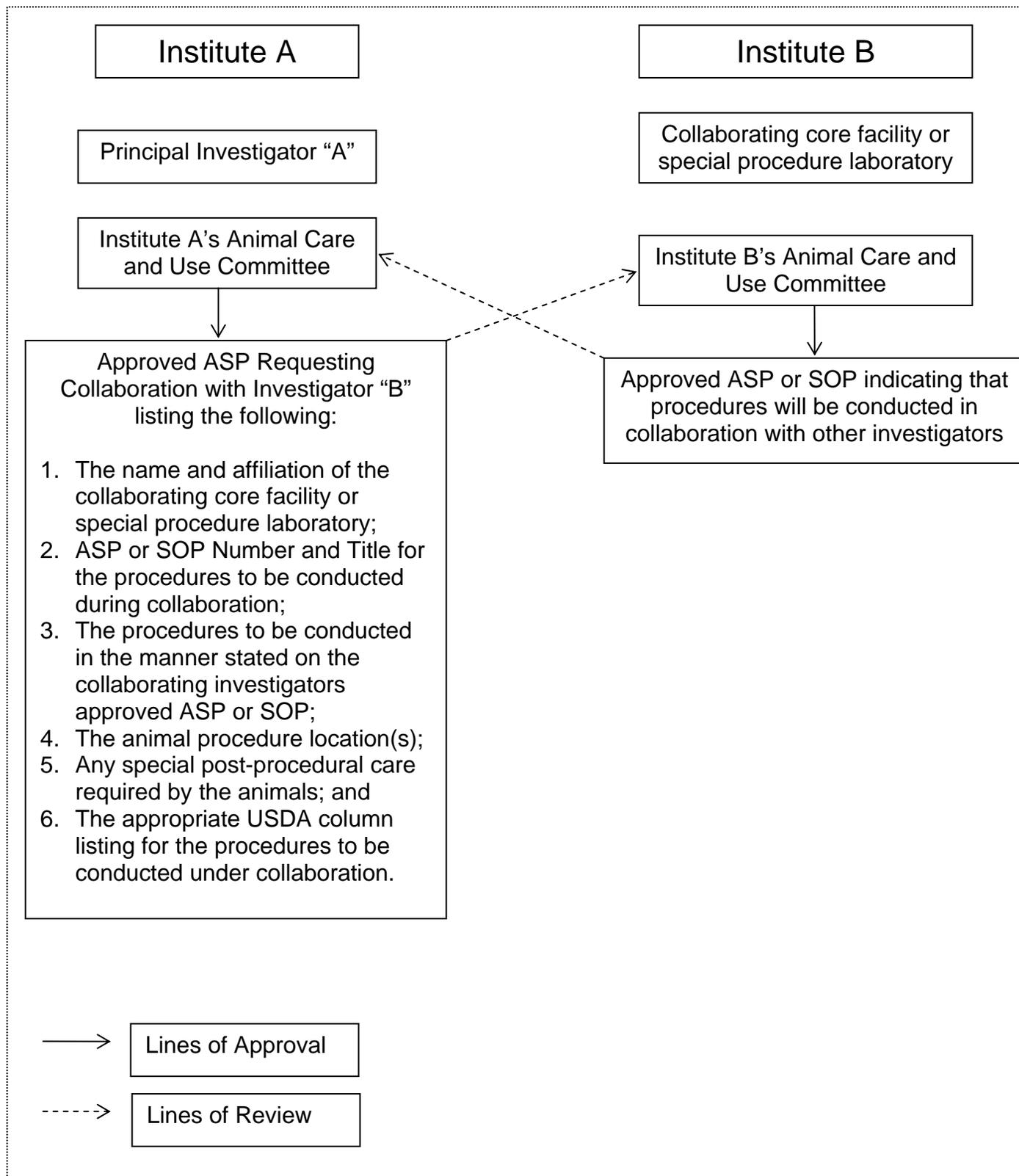
It is important to ensure that ICs responsible for providing services for an approved ASP understand what resources they are expected to provide and what animal activities are proposed for conduct at locations within their program. Therefore, any collaboration must have the concurrence of both party's Animal Program Directors (APD) prior to the conduct of animal procedures by a core facility or special procedure laboratory.

An alternative to the process outlined above would be transfer of animal ownership to the collaborating IC's investigator. This process is detailed elsewhere (<http://oacu.od.nih.gov/ARAC/FinalTRANSFER1103.doc>). Animal transfers must be coordinated through each IC's APD.

Approved - 2/14/96, Reapproved - 5/8/96

Revised - 1/13/99, 3/27/02, 3/10/04, 4/12/06

Figure 1 – Flow Chart of Review Process*



* The ACUC coordinators will facilitate the exchange of the ASPs and/or SOP between the ACUCs, but the PI is responsible to ensure the process has been completed.