Office of Grants and Sponsored Programs
Principal Investigator Post-Award Guide

Congratulations on your award! This overview is designed to highlight key rules and regulations for PIs of sponsored awards. The Office of Grants and Sponsored Programs (OGSP) is here to help you. Please feel free to contact us with any questions.

Principal Investigator Responsibilities

The Principal Investigator (PI) is responsible for the management and integrity of the design, conduct, and reporting of the research project and for managing, monitoring, and ensuring the integrity of any collaborative relationships. Additionally, the PI is responsible for the direction and oversight of compliance, financial, personnel, and other related aspects of the research project and for coordination with OGSP to ensure research is conducted in accordance with federal regulations and college and sponsoring agency policies and procedures.

Post-Award Services

Upon receipt of a new award, OGSP will provide you with a Notice of Award document containing the details of your award including the reporting requirements and account number. Throughout the life of your award, we will provide you with periodic budget updates and we will create any financial reports required by the sponsor. We can help you plan for major project or budget changes, and we will serve as liaison with the sponsor for approval requests. Please see the full list of services on our website under "Post-Award Services".

Policies and Procedures

Our policies and procedures are available on our website and include human subjects research, conflicts of interest, purchasing, and more. Please read the policies and contact us with any questions.

Spending Grant Funds

All sponsors require that grants be spent in accordance with their rules and regulations, and all grant funds must be spent in accordance with Olin College policies. The sponsor's regulations are usually detailed in the award letter or on their website, and they are specified in your Notice of Award document. Please feel free to reach out to OGSP post-award with any questions about spending your grant funds.

Special Considerations for PIs of Federal Awards

Prior Approvals

Federal funding agencies typically require that they be notified prior to the following events:
- Significant reduction of the Principal Investigator's level of effort (25% or more)
- Incurring expenses prior to the start date of the award (pre-award spending)
- Absence of the Principal Investigator for three or more months
- Change of Principal Investigator

Please contact OGSP if you would like to make any significant changes to your award.

Allowable/Unallowable Costs

We are required to follow the purchasing and spending rules defined by the federal government's Office of Management and Budget (OMB), individual agency regulations, and Olin College policies.These regulations and policies define what types of costs are allowed on federal grants and contracts and how they should be allocated. As a general rule, entertainment expenses (e.g. food, alcohol) are not allowed. Meeting expenses often fall under this category. Depending on the circumstances involved, any cost incurred may require additional explanation or justification before it is charged to a specific project. Purchases of $10,000 or more usually require multiple bids/price quotes and must follow our Olin College Capital Purchase guidelines. For additional details please review Olin College's Federal Purchasing Policy and Classification of Allowable and Unallowable Costs.

Fly America Act

When purchasing airline tickets with federal grant funds, compliance with the Fly America Act is required. This means that a U.S. airline must be used if an alternative agreement or exception is not in place. Airfare costs in excess of the customary standard commercial airfare (coach or equivalent) are usually not allowed on federal grants. Please contact OGSP post-award with any questions.

Participant Support Costs

Funds provided for participant support costs cannot be rebudgeted for use in other budget categories unless prior written approval has been obtained from the sponsor. If a project has unexpended participant support funds that they would like to repurpose, the PI must contact OGSP post-award to process a prior approval request with the sponsor. Such rebudgeting should be done early as possible during the life of the award.

Time and Effort Reporting

Time and effort reporting is a process mandated by the federal government to verify that direct labor charges to federally sponsored programs are reasonable and reflect actual work performed. Three times per calendar year, PIs will receive time and effort reports for their

federally funded programs. For exempt employees, an individual's work on a project will be expressed as a percentage distribution of total effort. For non-exempt employees, total hours worked on a project will be listed. The principal investigator will be asked to review all time and effort that has been direct-charged to his/her federally-sponsored projects and to certify that these percentages are reasonable and accurate.

Export Control Regulations

Export control regulations are federal laws that restrict the export of specific items, information, and software for reasons related to U.S. national security, economic and foreign policy goals. Export controls usually arise for one or more of the following reasons:

- The nature of the export has actual or potential military applications or economic protection issues
- Government concerns about the destination country, organization, or individual
- Government concerns about the declared or suspected end use or the end user of the export

If you will be conducting research abroad or with foreign nationals, you need to consider export control issues that may impact your research and travel. Additional information is available on the OGSP website.