Principal Investigators' Handbook

The Principal Investigator (PI) is the primary contact for the grant and is accountable for its staffing, fiscal management, compliance, and effective implementation.

Office of Sponsored Programs

Judith Eisenberg, Dean for Sponsored Research & Grants

This PI Handbook was compiled through the efforts of the Office of Sponsored Programs, including:

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Note: The terms "Grants" and "Sponsored Programs" are used interchangeably throughout this document and have the same meaning.

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Send corrections and suggestions regarding this handbook to grants@bmcc.cuny.edu.

Principal Investigators' (PI) Handbook

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(A). Who Can Serve as a PI?

A PI must have a **full-time** tax levy faculty or staff appointment at BMCC. Full-time faculty need not be tenured to serve as a PI on a grant. PIs must also be American Citizens or permanent residents. Faculty on H1B Visas cannot serve as PIs in addition to their faculty appointment.

How Many PIs Can be Named on a Grant?

There can be only one PI, but the PI can designate co-PIs.

The PI is the primary contact for the grant and is accountable for the effective implementation, staff oversight, fiscal management, and compliance of the sponsored program to governing laws and regulations.

Who Can Serve as a co-PI?

The co-PI shares in the responsibility for the effective implementation, fiscal management, and compliance of the sponsored program and may have a specific focus, *e.g.,* managing payroll, overseeing program evaluation, overseeing implementation at a specific site, or some other significant component of the sponsored program scope of work.

Other faculty participants can serve as key personnel in the grant. They will be responsible for specific roles and activities but will not manage the grant implementation.

> **Best Practice**
>
> Limit co-PIs to those who will have a substantive role and responsibility for grant management. Co-PIs are not honorary positions.

Can an Adjunct Professor Serve as a PI or co-PI?

No, but an adjunct professor can serve as key personnel.

Can a Full-Time BMCC Staff Person Serve as a PI or co-PI?

It is not common practice for BMCC to hire or pay full-time staff to work on a grant.

Can a PI be Changed Once the Grant is Awarded?

It depends on the sponsor, but most will not allow the PI to be changed because the PI's expertise was critical to the grant being awarded in the first place. If PI changes are allowed, this must be authorized by the sponsor in writing. Contact the Office of Sponsored Programs for assistance.

(B). Roles and Responsibilities

(1). Principal Investigator

The Principal Investigator (PI) is the primary contact for the grant and is accountable for its staffing, fiscal management, compliance, and effective implementation. The PI's responsibilities include:

(a.) Communication with the Sponsor – the PI is the primary liaison between BMCC and the sponsor on matters related to the implementation of the grant and reporting on grant activities and funds use.

(b.) Management of Partners – the PI is the primary contact with all partners, vendors, sub-contractors, and sub-awardees and is responsible for getting their contracts approved, managing their invoices and payment, and overseeing their effective implementation and achievement of deliverables.

(c.) Management of Grant Personnel – the PI must hire, onboard, and manage personnel, oversee their activities, and authorize their payroll. In addition, the PI must document their own level of effort on the grant.

(d.) Implementation per the Scope and Budget - The PI must implement the proposal as awarded, including performing the scope of work, achieving deliverables, and expending funds as budgeted, or work with the Office of Sponsored Programs to negotiate the modification of the scope or budget.

(e.) Compliance – the PI must implement the award and spend the budget in compliance with the terms and conditions of the sponsor, BMCC, CUNY, and the College's fiscal agent, the Research Foundation of CUNY (RFCUNY), and is further responsible for knowing these terms and conditions.

(f.) Coordination with the BMCC Office of Research – for grants that require an Institutional Review Board (IRB) process, the PI is responsible for coordinating with the BMCC Office of Research, headed by Odaelys Pollard, Ph.D.

(g.) Dissemination of Your Finding or Work Product – Especially for public grants, PIs are expected to provide public access to the work product, findings, or other results of the sponsored program.

(h.) Effective Project Close Out and Reporting – the PI must submit all final reports, reconcile all advances and purchases, terminate grant staff, ensure that BMCC equipment, work-related passwords, ID card, keys, work product, and any other property or materials belonging to BMCC are returned to the College, and ensure all funds are spent down or returned to the sponsor.

In all cases, the PI is expected to act responsibility, ethically, and professionally and to follow the [CUNY Code of Ethics](#) in their sponsored program activities.

(2). RFCUNY Roles and Responsibilities

The Research Foundation of CUNY (RFCUNY) is the College's fiscal agent**.** As such it provides contract legal review, banking services, fiscal controls, accounting, and reporting services to the College. All grant applications name the Research Foundation and the College as joint grantees in this format: "RFCUNY on behalf of BMCC."

RFCUNY does not manage grant implementation - the PI is responsible for ensuring personnel management, compliance, and effective implementation, including the achievement of grant activities, deliverables, outputs, and outcomes for the grants on which the PI is named.

RFCUNY is a private not-for-profit educational corporation with 501(c)(3) status that is legally and financially separate from CUNY. This arrangement prevents the co-mingling of tax levy and sponsored funds in accordance with federal laws governing public institutions of higher learning.

RFCUNY's roles include:

- Establishing policies, procedures and controls governing all expenditures.
- Performing all legal review and legal work on sponsored contracts.
- Assuring proper fiscal stewardship for sponsor funds.
- Employing all personnel paid on grants and contracts.
- Providing purchasing and accounts payable services for non-personnel expenditures.
- Overseeing intellectual property on behalf of University regulations pertaining to sponsored programs.
- In cooperation with the colleges, negotiating University-wide indirect costs and employee benefit rates.
- In cooperation with the colleges, ensuring compliance with federal requirements such as effort reporting, cost sharing, and service centers.
- Assistance in audit compliance and resolution as well as close-out activity.

(3). BMCC Office of Sponsored Programs Roles and Responsibilities

The federal government mandates that a central Grants Office administer the College's sponsored programs, because this work requires a professional staff with the specialized knowledge to prepare, submit, and support the implementation of federal grant funding. The BMCC Office of Sponsored Programs is the College's designated Grants Office. It is headed by the Dean for Sponsored Research and Grants, who also serves as BMCC's Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR), designated to provide institutional approval and signatures. The Dean reports to the Provost.

The BMCC Office of Sponsored Programs provides faculty and staff with support throughout the grant life-cycle, including planning, forecasting, training, identifying opportunities, writing, creating budgets and justifications, reviewing, preparing forms and attachments, submitting grants, negotiating awards, establishing accounts, supporting implementation, and assisting in close-outs. In addition, the Office of Sponsored Programs communicates with sponsors, develops partnerships, leads grant project teams for the College community, and serves as the primary liaison to the College's fiscal agent, RFCUNY.

The Office of Sponsored Programs monitors PI's grant implementation and compliance. As such, we cannot do the work of the grant for you – that is, we cannot onboard your staff, complete your timesheets, create your reports, or perform any grant management activity. It is the PI's job to manage the grant implementation and budget expenditure.

The BMCC Office of Sponsored Programs:

(a.) Is the College's liaison with RFCUNY.

(b.) Negotiates awards.

(c.) Facilitates post-award project management.

(d.) Supports grant-funded payroll and personnel matters.

(e.) Problem-solves for contractual, fiscal, and personnel matters related to grants and sponsored programs.

(f.) Assists in the modification of scope of work and budgets.

(g.) Requests contract extensions.

(h.) Provides close-out support.

(i.) Maintains a paper archive for records retention.

As a general rule, when in doubt ask the Office of Sponsored Programs.

Whom Do I Contact at the Office of Sponsored Programs for Assistance?

Table 1. Office of Sponsored Programs Contacts	
Grant Personnel Onboarding, Payroll, Leave, Summer Salary	**Onika Duke, Grants Associate** oduke@bmcc.cuny.edu **Samantha Molina, Grants Assistant** smolina@bmcc.cuny.edu
Contractual or Fiscal Matters	**Aleksandra Cataruzolo, Grants Director** Acataruzolo@bmcc.cuny.edu
Pre-Award Assistance (Grant Preparation and Submission)	**Jovanne Augustin, Grants Coordinator** jaugustin@bmcc.cuny.edu
Approvals and Authorizations	**Judith Eisenberg, Dean for Sponsored Research and Grants** JEisenberg@bmcc.cuny.edu

(4). BMCC Administration

PIs **must** have written approval from their Department Chair or Supervisor before they can submit a grant. Approvals ensure that all parties know the amount of time and effort the PI and other senior staff intend to put into implementing the grant, if awarded, and ensure agreement for any re-assigned time or summer salary requested in the grant. Finally, the Dean for Sponsored Research and Grants must authorize the submission.

BMCC's practice is to submit only proposals that have received the required chair, supervisor, Provost, and Dean for Sponsored Programs approvals.

The Office of Sponsored Programs communicates with chairs, supervisors, and the Provost to secure approvals through the **Notice of Intent to Submit** process. The PI must submit the Notice of Intent to Submit, which can be found here, as soon as they know they will be pursuing a grant. The Office of Sponsored Programs will submit grants on the PI's behalf, or authorize PIs to submit themselves, and maintain these in the Office of Sponsored Programs' electronic files.

(C). Pre-Award Resources and Support

Most of the information and tools you need to create a proposal are available online, 24/7/365 on the Office of Sponsored Program's webpage on the BMCC website.

(1). Pre-Award Resources

Visit the BMCC Office of Sponsored Programs website to find:

- **Landing Page** – a list of Pre-Award and Post-Award Services; free grant search tools and training; contact information for the Office of Sponsored Programs and the BMCC Office of Research (*e.g.,* IRB support).
- **Quick Facts** – frequently used grant documents and the codes and information most often required on grant forms (*e.g.,* DUNS number, UEI, Employer ID number).
- **Tools and Resources** – budget templates, logic model templates, calculators, access to need and demographic data, and a toolkit of document samples and templates needed to submit a grant to the National Science Foundation (NSF).
- **Training** – videos on how to find grant opportunities, how to understand grant opportunities, using the RFCUNY system, and grant writing tips.
- **PI Handbook** – electronic access to this guide and frequently used forms.
- **Intent to Submit/Conflicts** – the form you must complete to start the grant process and required Disclosure of Conflict of Interest forms.

RFCUNY also offers Pre-Award Resources, including:

Pre-Award Training and Proposal Review

Tips on Budget Preparation

(2). The Pre-Award Process

The grant lifecycle begins with you notifying the Office of Sponsored Programs via your Notice of Intent to Submit, and ends with a submitted proposal package.

The earlier in the process you contact us, the more support our office can provide.

The process is detailed in Table 2., below.

Table 2. The Pre-Award Process		
#	**Action**	**Steps**
1.	**Notice of Intent to Submit and Disclosure of Conflict of Interest Forms** for Office of Sponsored Program Review	Identify PI Identify Whether Lead Grantee or Sub Articulate Program Concept Identify Budget Amount/Years Share NOFO and Package Review Notice of Intent to Submit and get chair approval Office of Research Reviews Conflicts Form Status of Human Subjects/IRB Confirmed

2.	**PI/Team Start Meeting**	Confirm PI and Team/Exchange Cell #s
		Ensure Access to Submission Platform
		Create/Share Proposal/Workspace
		Review Concept/Cover Sheet
		  - Project Title Conforms to NOFO
		  - Location (On or Off Campus)
		  - Project/Budget Start Date
		  - Project/Budget End Date
		  - Collaborators Partners, Subcontractors (Letters)
		  - Create a Pro Forma Budget
		  - Schedule Team Meetings
		  - Office of Sponsored Programs sends checklist and provides samples, templates, and forms

3.	**Proposal Development and Management**	Draft/Review Grant Narrative Draft/Review Budget/Budget Narrative Draft/Review Forms and Attachments Draft/Review Partnership Letters Request/Review sub-awardee materials, if appropriate Check-in in Meetings (Weekly or Milestones)
4.	**Pre-Submission Package Review**	Review all Documents, Forms and Attachments Across the Package Confirm All Submission Requirements on the Checklist Input budget, ensure excel and justification align, complete budget summary form Ensure File Naming is Appropriate Request Revisions as Needed
5.	**Upload, Submit, and Verify**	PDF All Files/Review Each Uploaded File Run Systems Check Get PI's Attestation and Authorization to Submit Save/File Confirmation Emails Share/File Final PDFs, MS Word, and Excel Documents to team and in G Drive

The Pre-Award phase ends and the Post-Award phase begins with notice from the sponsor regarding the grant award.

(D). The Post-Award Process - Getting Started

(1). Review of Grant Award or Continuation Notice

Congratulations! You've been notified that you won a grant. You **must immediately** share your grant award notice, or continuation notice, and/or your grant contract with the Office of Sponsored Programs by emailing:

Acataruzolo@bmcc.cuny.edu and cc'd to: JEisenberg@bmcc.cuny.edu

The grant award notice will provide details about the grant, such as:

- Period of Performance (*e.g.,* start and end date).
- Name of the Principal Investigator and co-Principal Investigators, if possible.
- Award amount, and whether this will be provided in total or by year.
- Cost sharing requirements, if any.
- Accounting and reporting obligations.
- Performance requirements.
- Special terms and conditions, if any.
- Confirmation of sub-awardees or sub-recipients.
- Grant management platforms on which the College must register.

The award notice sets, and sometimes changes, the terms of the grant agreement with regard to dollar amount, start and end date, and other requirements.

The award notice may take the form of a letter, a contract, a summary of the terms of the contract, a sub-award, or a continuation notice. (Some sponsors of multi-year grants fund the grant year-by-year. In these cases, they often send a continuation notice that is equivalent to a grant award.)

All are treated the same for the purposes of establishing a grant account at RFCUNY, specifically:
- The sponsor or PI will forward the grant award notice to the Office of Sponsored Programs for review.
- The Office of Sponsored Programs will review the grant award notice against the proposed budget and narrative to determine whether the terms have been changed and then, either:
  - Accept the Terms – the Office of Sponsored Programs will accept the funding and conditions presented and move forward with RFCUNY legal review.
  - Negotiate the Terms – Office of Sponsored Programs will work with the PI, sponsor, and RFCUNY to negotiate the terms of the grant.
  - Decline the Contract - In the rare cases in which a grant cannot be favorably negotiated and the Office of Sponsored Programs determines that it is not in the College's best interest to accept it, the grant award may be declined.

(2). Declining a Grant Award/Declination Letter

Before a grant award is declined, the Dean for Sponsored Research and Grants must determine whether the sponsor has a process or protocol to follow in declining the grant. If not, the Dean must write, on letterhead, a declination letter specifying the grant by name and number (as identified on the award letter) and stating that the College is declining.

Criteria for declining a sponsored program includes:

- Changes to terms and conditions that obligate the College in ways that it cannot meet, for example, an increase in cost-share.
- Changes to personnel that mean that the faculty or staff person who was named as a PI in the grant can no longer meet that obligation, *e.g.,* the PI has died or moved to another institution.
- The PI is the subject of an investigation.
- Other, relevant conditions.

Only the Dean for Sponsored Research and Grants can decline a grant award.

(3). Submitting a Contract for RFCUNY Legal Review

Once the Office of Sponsored Programs has reviewed, negotiated, and accepted the terms of the grant award or continuation, our staff will enter the contract and the grant budget into RFCUNY's Contract Manager System. Note that the Office of Sponsored Programs, not the PI, will enter this information.

The budget is a key component of the grant award. If the budget is not included in the contract documents, the PI must provide it for RFCUNY legal review. If the Notice of Grant Award provides for less money than the PI had requested, the PI must rework the budget for Office of Sponsored Programs' review before this can be forwarded to RFCUNY.

Once submitted through the Contract Manager System, the contract will be queued for RFCUNY's legal review and can be viewed and tracked by all authorized users.

Note that RFCUNY legal review can take 4-6 weeks. **Do not take action on the grant, hire personnel, or make purchases until the account is fully established and you receive the all-clear from the Office of Sponsored Programs.**

RFCUNY Legal Affairs may accept the contract, request modification to terms, or decline the contract. No sponsored program is authorized unless RFCUNY approves and signs the contract.

(4). Account Establishment

Upon completion of the legal review and the execution of the grant agreement, the Office of Sponsored Programs will help you to establish an account at RFCUNY.org and provide you with an account number.

The Office of Sponsored Programs will complete an Account Establishment Form with key award information, including:

- The sponsor (*e.g.,* funder).
- The project title.
- Project and budget period start and end date.
- The Personnel who will have access to this account, and at what level (see also PI Access to the Account (See Levels of Access, page 11).
- Award type (grant or contract).
- Purpose code. Definitions are here.
- Area of discipline (*e.g.,* Academic Discipline).
- Whether cost sharing is required. That is, must you provide matching funds?

This Account Establishment Form (AEF) must be signed by the Dean for Sponsored Research and Grants, who will submit this to RFCUNY and alert the PI when the account is set up and funded.

What is RFCUNY.Org?

All grant management functions through the life-cycle of the grant – from submission of a grant award notice to account establishment, payroll, expense payments, travel reimbursement, etc., are managed through the **RFCUNY.org** system and available here.

Training videos to help you to better use RFCUNY.org are located here.

Resources to help you manage functions are RFCUNY.org are here.

Preferred Browser

RFCUNY advises that the system works better if you access it through the Firefox browser.

(5). Your RFCUNY Account Number

Once your account is established, your project will be assigned an RFCUNY account number (*i.e.,* project # or Project Sub-Year [PRSY] #). RFCUNY uses a numbering system that will indicate whether your account is funded by a state or federal grant, CUNY, a private sponsor, or PSC-CUNY. In general,

If your account starts with **4** – it is a federal grant.

If your account starts with **5** – it is a NYS grant.

If your account starts with **6** – it is a PSC-CUNY grant.

If your account starts with **7** – the grant is either from CUNY or a private funder.

Your Account Number will also indicate whether your grant is a **subaward** from another institution, *e.g.,* #40130-**02**-01 is the second subaward in a series under another institution's primary account.

Your Account Number will also indicate the **year** in a multiple-year grant, *e.g.,* #40130-02-**01** is the first year of the grant award.

(6). PI Access to the Account

An RFCUNY account must be established before RFCUNY can provide PI access. Reach out to the Office of Sponsored Programs, which will request access on your behalf.

RFCUNY will assign each PI a unique **PI Code** as part of its fiscal monitoring and controls. Keep this three-letter code in your files for future reference and use in logging into your accounts on RFCUNY.org.

For first-time PIs, RFCUNY will send you an email with your three-letter code and temporary password. Once you log onto RFCUNY.org you will be prompted to create a password.

For PIs who are already set up in the system, RFCUNY will send an email to confirm that access has been granted.

(7). Levels of Access

There are three levels of access that can be granted on accounts in the RFCUNY.org system. The PI must make the request to the Office of Sponsored Program, who will make the request of RFCUNY and communicate that back to the PI.

- **PI** – The Office of Sponsored Programs can request PI status for designated PIs on specific accounts. PIs have the broadest access of all categories, and can perform all functions, including submitting contracts for review, purchasing, requesting payments, and managing payroll.

- **Authorized Signatory** – Similar to PI Access, the PI (or the Office of Sponsored Programs) can grant Authorized Signatory access on specific accounts to managers, supervisors and coordinators who perform compliance, programmatic work, and fiscal stewardship.

- **General Staff/Non-PI –** Grant staff with this access can then submit and approve timesheets, prepare PAFs, and/or prepare payment requests for the PI. General Staff/Non-PI cannot approve summer salaries, nor can they approve purchases. Additionally, PIs may request that grant staff access to Web Reports.

(8). Logging in for the First Time

- Go to www.rfcuny.org
- Enter your PI Code and password in the boxes on the top right of the page, and press the button that says "Log In."
- For this first time, you'll be prompted to create a new password (remember to save your PI Code and password in a safe place).
- Click on the tab for "Electronic Tools."
- Select "Web Reports."

- At the top of the page, you'll see "Select Project ID," and, over to the right, a down arrow. Click on the down arrow.
- Find your account number from the drop-down list. If you're only on one grant, you should only see one project on your list. In addition to the account number, the account should also have the PI's name and the title of the sponsored program. Select.
- Move to the next line: RF Report Directory.
  Select **"Project Budget & Expense (with Pending Entries)."**
- Move down to the gray button that reads: "Generate."
- This gives you access to view the Web Report for your grant budget, the report you will most often use. This report gives you a point-in-time view of your budget and available balance.

Other important information that you can access from the web report is:

- **Award ID –** the number the sponsor has given your award, to be referenced when communicating with the sponsor.
- **Budget Period** – the start and end date for the funds in the report. Some sponsors provide all the funding at the start of the award period and others only provide one year's funding at a time.
- **Project Administrator (PA)** – the RFCUNY employee liaison for your account.
- **Assistant (APA) –** the RFCUNY employee who assists your Project Administrator.

(9). Working with RFCUNY Program Administrators (PAs)

At the top right of the Web Report page, you'll see the RFCUNY Project Administrator (PA) and Assistant Project Administrator (APA). These are RFCUNY Grants and Contract department staff who are assigned to your account to help ensure that fiscal controls are in place, procedures are followed, and issues are resolved. PAs and APAs are assigned by type of funding, that is, certain PAs work on federal grants and have federal agency expertise while others work on CUNY grants and have expertise in implementing those grants.

PAs and APAs work as a team to oversee activity related to the award. They are responsible for establishing the account and related budgets, reviewing and approving PAFs to facilitate payroll, handling procurement documents, preparing billing and financial reports, monitoring cost share, following up on receivables, coordinating with internal/external auditors, and performing project close outs.

BMCC's Office of Sponsored Programs will be your primary liaison to RFCUNY and your PAs and APAs, but they may contact you directly (and you may contact them) as needed.

(10). Ensuring Compliance with Your Sponsor

Although most people think of grants as "other people's money," grants are, in fact, **a contract** between a sponsor and the College that obligates our actions and can have consequences for our institution and you, as PI.

Grant funds must be managed in accordance with the approved budget, sponsors' allowable expenses, RFCUNY, BMCC and CUNY's fiscal controls and, if relevant, federal Uniform Guidance and other law. The PI is responsible for knowing all relevant guidelines and managing the grant so as to be in compliance with these guidelines.

Compliance Strategies

- Be sure that you understand the law, rules, and regulations to which you must comply. For federal and state grants, those are referenced in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) to which you responded, and in the award letter and/or contract. PSC-CUNY post-award guidelines are on their website. RFCUNY guidelines and policies are included in RFCUNY.org (and can be Googled as well).

- The easiest way to demonstrate that your grant is in compliance is to create a checklist that:
  - o Lists contract deliverables and deadlines in one column (*e.g.,* reporting dates, promised outcomes).
  - o Notes how you are addressing each in a second column.
  - o Includes space for you to initial and date when each item is done.
  - o Download the Grant Compliance Checklist Template for your reference and use.
- It's also helpful for you to create a one-page checklist of what is NOT ALLOWED for program and budget activities per the grant terms and conditions, giving you a quick reference for your grant term.
- Maintain comprehensive **financial and program records** that are accurate, accessible, and auditable including expense reporting, cost-share documents and time and leave documentation for the life of the grant term. Save items that may not be in the RFCUNY.org system, such as your original proposal and budget. **Everything must be saved for seven (7) years from the grant's termination date,** in electronic or paper files that ensure the documents can be retrieved (*i.e.,* create a filing system).

(E). Managing a Sponsored Program – Budgets

(1). Reading a Web Report

Web Report > **Project Budget & Expense (with Pending Entries)**

Your RFCUNY Web Report is like your bank statement and should be checked regularly as you implement the grant. This is your resource for viewing funds spent, funds remaining, pending receipt of funds, etc. for a specific point in time. To access this Web Report:

Log-in to **RFCUNY.org > Electronic Tools > Web Reports > Select Project ID > Project Budget and Expense Report > Generate**

The Web Report features a budget with eight columns. **From left,**

The **Object Code** is an RFCUNY numbering system to code expenses, also known as a budget line. A list of Object Codes can be found here.

The **Description** is the name of the Object Code and the name of your budget line item. For example, "Project Director," "Fringe Benefits" or "Instructional Supplies."

Note that your web report will always separate Personnel Costs (*i.e.,* salaries, wages, and fringe benefits) from Other Than Personnel Costs (*e.g.,* travel, supplies, publishing, student stipends, etc.).

Encumbrance – an encumbrance is a hold on funds on a specific budget line to ensure they will be available to complete the transaction. For example, if you submit a payroll request for grant staff, that amount will appear in the encumbrance tab until it is paid – ensuring that you don't spend those funds for another purpose. Funds can be dis-encumbered if needed as well.

> **Best Practice**
>
> Funds on each budget line **can only be spent on the Object Code/Description specified** for that line.
>
> Adjusting your budget line-items requires you to request written approval for a Budget Modification. See page 15.

Month Activity – this shows your expenditure on the budget for the month.

YTD Activity – this shows your expenditure on the budget for the Year to Date.

PTD Activity - this shows your expenditure on the budget for the Period to Date.

Available Balance – this far-right column shows what funds are available **that day** to spend on the budget. Similarly, the last cell in this column shows your total available balance for the budget period. Note that pending transactions might take 24 hours to post and thus affect your balances.

Total Direct Cost – this line is green because it represents your bottom line, that is, your totals. The total in the final right column on this line, that is, the intersection of Available Balance and Total Direct Cost, is the total available for your use **that day.** Keep an eye on this total when spending down your grant, and note that pending transactions might take 24 hours to post, and thus affect your balances.

Time Elapsed/Total Spent - RFCUNY also tracks the amount of funds spent per the total funds allocated in a budget period. That will sit in a bar above the budget and will either be green – because you are on track – or red, indicating that you are underspending and risk having to return funds to the sponsor, or overspending and at risk of running out of funds. As you implement your grant, be mindful of the % of time elapsed versus the % of budget used and aim to stay on track.

(2). Using the RFCUNY Dashboard

The RF Dashboard is a managerial tool that consolidates data from HR, Payroll, and Award Management and presents it in a concise and easily understandable format. The RF Dashboard offers a high-level view to help users monitor and analyze information relevant to their projects. It is available to PIs and their designated grant staff.

This data provides a visual, easy-to-use tool to keep you on track on key tasks (payroll, status of advances and purchases, etc.) to be sure you are compliant and up-to-date with policies and procedures.

RFCUNY offers a Dashboard Training Video.

(3). Best Practices for Budget Management

Best practices for budget management are:

(a.) Spend funds only per the sponsor-approved budgets – don't add expenses or expense categories.

(b.) Know applicable guidelines and law (sponsor, federal, BMCC, CUNY, and RFCUNY) and ensure expenses are allowable before you expend them.

(c.) Maintain documentation and receipts as required by the sponsor.

(d.) Spend the budget you have – don't leave a balance to be returned to the sponsor at the end of the grant term.

(e.) Don't spend money you don't have. If the money isn't IN the account (*e.g.,* if it's expected or due any day) you cannot spend it, or promise to hire someone with it.

(f.) Do not combine or mix (*i.e.,* commingle) funding – one RFCUNY account will be established separately for each grant source and, often, for each grant year. Use program grant funds only for that program.

(g.) If you are not the PI on a grant, you cannot direct funding on that grant.

(h.) If your grant is funded year by year, you cannot use Year 1 funds for Year 2 expenses without permission, modification, or extensions – contact the Office of Sponsored Programs for assistance.

(i.) **Note that accounts that are not yet funded will not display a budget.**

> **Retain Your Excel Budget**
>
> Remember that the Web Report shows your funds **at a point in time** and may not capture all pending transactions. Always make your spending decisions in alignment with the MS Excel budget that was developed as part of your approved grant proposal (and updated, as needed). Use your Excel budget to plan expenditures, save calculations, and make notes, and check the web report to ensure that expenditures are recorded correctly.

(4). Budget Modifications

During grant implementation, you may find that you need to spend grant funds differently from what you originally planned. To request a budget modification, please provide the Office of Sponsored Programs with:

- A copy of the MS Excel budget prepared for the grant proposal.
- Your proposed modification. Please specify by line item expense code what budget lines you are taking funds FROM and what budget lines are you moving funds TO (including whether that new budget line was created to allow for a charge that was not on the original budget).
- A written justification for the change and why it is needed for the effective implementation of the grant.
- Written approval from the sponsor, if required by your grant agreement, for this change.

The Office of Sponsored Programs will review your budget modification with you and work with your RF PAs, who will make the change.

In general, budget modifications can be easily made within the Personnel category (*e.g.,* moving money from one grant position to another) or within the Other Than Personnel Category (*e.g.,* moving money from travel to supplies) but is harder to do from Personnel to OTPS. At all times, the PI must follow the sponsor's guidance for budget modifications.

Note that periodic fringe rate changes will be adjusted automatically by RFCUNY and do not require the PI to request a budget modification. Despite what you may have budgeted, fringe rates must be paid at current rates at all times.

(5). Forward Funding

Sometimes a grant period begins before the funding arrives, placing PIs in the uncomfortable position of being held to grant implementation deliverables without the funds to implement the grant. In these cases, it is possible to ask the Office for Sponsored Programs to facilitate "Forward Funding," whereby the Research Foundation provides the money needed to fund the salaries, wages, and fringe benefits for the personnel to start the grant, in anticipation of receiving those funds at a later time.

Forward Funding is only possible if:

- There is a fully executed (signed by all parties) grant agreement in place.
- The sponsor has provided funding to the College in the past.
- There is an approved project budget in place.
- The Forward Funding will cover a period that is within the grant term.
- The Forward Funding will be used exclusively to cover personnel and fringe costs.

PIs who meet the bulleted criteria above can request that the Office for Sponsored Programs provide Forward Funding by providing:

- The RFCUNY accounts to be funded; if no account exists, the Office for Sponsored Programs will complete and submit an Account Establishment Form to create that account first.

- A written Justification Memo that includes the following:

  [Department or Program Name] requests forward funding for personnel services for [# of] pay periods, from [start date] to [end date], for staff in [program name], from RF Account #[add account number], which has a total annual budget of [budget]. I anticipate a delay in funding and request a total of [$total] for salary and wages and [$total]. We expect to return the funding by [date].

  Then, sign, date, and submit the Justification Memo to the Office for Sponsored Programs. The Dean will review and sign the memo.

- A budget showing RF how much money will go to each position (by title or expense code) during the Forward Funding period.

- A Forward Funding Request Form that confirms the details and is signed by the Dean for Sponsored Research and Grants **and** the College President or Designee.

  Note: Forward Funding requests are usually for a period of three (3) months, after which time RFCUNY expects to see the funds repaid.

Forward Funding requests usually take three (3) days to complete.

(6). Funding Guarantees

It is BMCC practice that PIs whose sponsored programs pay critical OTPS, *e.g.,* student stipends, meal vouchers, and/or MetroCards, and who find that their program funds have not yet arrived, can request a Funding Guarantee from the Office of Sponsored Programs.

We want to keep promises that we make to BMCC students. If BMCC students have enrolled in a program with a promise of pay or food or MetroCards, BMCC must deliver on that promise. Unlike Forward Funding, which is a loan from RFCUNY, Funding Guarantees come directly from BMCC funds.

Funding Guarantees are only possible if:

- There is a fully executed (signed by all parties) grant agreement in place.
- The sponsor has provided funding for this program to the College in the past.
- There is an approved project budget in place.
- The Funding Guarantee will cover a period that is within the grant term.
- The Funding Guarantee will be used to cover OTPS costs that are critical to the project implementation, (*e.g.,* student stipends, MetroCards).

The PI must write a request for a Funding Guarantee to the Office of Sponsored Programs that includes:

- The RFCUNY account number.
- Amount of funds requested.
- A budget indicating where those funds are to go (to what Expense Code and, if further information is needed, an explanation of why).
- Justification – why those funds are needed now, and what happens if the funds are not provided.
- Return Date – when the sponsor is expected to provide funds to reimburse the College for the Funding Guarantee.

The Office of Sponsored Programs will review the Guarantee Request and work with the PI to ensure it meets the required criteria. Once reviewed, revised (if needed) and approved, the PI must submit this to the Provost for approval. If the Provost approves, he will request the written approval of the President. **The President must approve all Funding Guarantees.** When all approvals are received, the Office of Sponsored Programs will arrange for the Funding Guarantee with RFCUNY.

(7). Tracking and Reporting Cost Sharing

Cost Sharing is the College's financial contribution to sponsored programs. Compliance with federal cost accounting standards requires that Cost Share expenses be treated in a consistent and uniform manner in proposal preparation, award negotiation and the accounting of these expenses in the financial reports to sponsors. Any Cost Sharing included in the award budget is a condition of the award **and is subject to audit.**

There are two types of Cost Sharing, that require both tracking and reporting at the close of each program year:

1. **Mandatory Cost Sharing:** Project costs that are not paid by the sponsor and are required as a condition of the award.

2. **Voluntary Committed Cost Sharing**: Costs pledged on a voluntary basis and specifically included in the award budget.

CUNY discourages Cost Sharing unless such a commitment is required by the sponsor. When there is documented evidence that a Voluntary Cost Sharing commitment is necessary to ensure the competitiveness of the CUNY proposal, approval must be obtained by CUNY's Vice Chancellor for Research at the time of the application/proposal.

You must maintain auditable records of the source and use of Cost Share and report this annually to RF using Cost Share forms. The Office of Sponsored Programs must review all Cost Share forms.

See also: RFCUNY Cost Sharing Guidance and Forms

(8). Applying Federally Negotiated Indirect Costs

(a). Indirect Rate

For federal sponsors, such as the National Science Foundation (NSF), we **must** use the federally negotiated indirect cost rate agreement of 71% calculated on a base of salary, wage, and fringe.

(b). Explaining the Indirect Rate in a Budget Justification

Use this language the first time our indirect rate is disclosed:

BMCC has a predetermined Facilities and Administrative Cost Rate agreement with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), which sets our rate at 71%. Rates are calculated on a base of direct salaries and wages including all fringe benefits. This agreement is in effect from 7/1/2019 to 6/30/2023.

If the indirect rate expires, which sometimes happens when RFCUNY is in negotiations with the federal government on our behalf, the wording should read as follows:

BMCC has a negotiated indirect cost rate of 71%, calculated on a base of direct salaries and wages including all fringe benefits. Established in an agreement with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) dated 7/1/2019 to 6/30/2023, this rate is in effect until amended.

(c). Using a Lesser Rate

We may opt to charge less on grants to (i) maximize the use of funds for the project, especially when the total grant award is small (*e.g.,* < $20,000) or (ii) to standardize indirect cost rates when we have many collaborators from many different colleges.

The standard lesser rate is 15%.

When we charge 15% we apply the cost to the entire grant budget (total direct cost) or, if the sponsor requests, the entire grant budget minus direct stipends and/or subcontracting costs over $50,000 (modified total direct costs).

(d). Using the Lowest Rate

At a minimum, we must collect 10% in indirect costs to cover the administrative fee that RFCUNY charges us.

Using Indirect as Cost Share

The value of the indirect cost not charged may be applied as cost share to the grant.

If No Indirect is Allowed

Some research grants do not allow indirect costs to be charged. In these cases, the the President or the Provost must approve pursuing the grant before it is submitted. If the the President or the Provost approves, the college can cover the cost.

(9). Sponsor Audits

Periodically, a sponsor may review grant program records and finances to determine compliance with sponsor requirements and relevant law. Sponsor audits will be coordinated by RFCUNY's Office of Internal Audit, which will respond to the sponsor's request for financial information. Programmatic information must be provided by the PI, and may include not only required outcome reporting but how you organized the grant implementation (*e.g.,* organization charts, job descriptions) and policies (*e.g.,* participant selection process, workplans, records retention, procurement policies). The PI, or your designee, must act as the Audit Lead to coordinate with RFCUNY during the audit.

See also: RFCUNY External Audit Guidance

(F). Managing a Sponsored Program - Procurement and Payables

RFCUNY's Department of Procurement and Payables supports grants management for the purchase of goods and services. As a rule, you should purchase only what is specified in your sponsor-approved budget. Additionally, it's helpful to know what you cannot purchase, and how can use RFCUNY's tools and resources to make your budgeted purchases.

(1). Unallowable Costs

The following costs cannot be charged to any grant funding in any RFCUNY account:

- Alcohol.
- Cash advances (including debit cards and gift cards[1]).
- Late fees, fines, and penalties.
- Entertainment costs (*e.g.,* show tickets).
- Personal memberships (*e.g.,* gym, professional associations). For professional associations (*e.g.,* the American Chemical Society) institutional memberships are allowable.

(2). Do Not Pay Sales Tax on Purchases Made in NYS

Remember: RFCUNY is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization and purchases made with grant funds **in New York State must not be charged sales tax**. When you place orders, name the Research Foundation of CUNY as the purchaser and give the vendor a current-year copy of RFCUNY's **sales tax form**, which you can request from the Office of Sponsored Programs.

Sometimes this is easier said than done. Here are a few strategies to use to ensure you are not charged sales tax in New York State:

- If you make the purchase without presenting the tax-exempt form, and so are charged sales tax, ask whether (and where) you can submit the tax-exempt paperwork to the vendor for reimbursement of the sales taxes.
- Call the vendor's nonprofit sales telephone line to see whether they'll take the order over the phone and not charge the sales tax.
- Sometimes in person they'll take the certificate and not charge the tax.

   For those who are issued P-Cards, note that the NYS sales tax exemption number is printed right on the purchasing card. Please point that out to the vendor. If a vendor will not grant sales tax exemption, please note the vendor's refusal on the receipt or invoice.

   RFCUNY Exception: If the vendor will not accommodate your request for a tax exemption, RFCUNY will allow up to $10 in New York sales tax to be paid (and reimbursed to you) - but anything over that amount, RFCUNY will not reimburse.

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[1] Gift cards for students are allowable with conditions. See page 30.

(3). Making Payments

There are several ways to purchase goods and services for sponsored programs in the RFCUNY system, as indicated on Table 3.

Table 3. Ways to Make Payments on Sponsored Programs			
Payment Type	Goods	Services	Description
Payment Request System	X	X	Pay a vendor (MOU) or Independent Contractor
Small Payments	X		PI makes purchase ($<4,999)
Large Payments	X		RF purchases on PI's behalf (>$5,000)
P-Cards	X	X	If authorized, PI or grant staff
Reimbursement	X		For PI goods purchased **(never for services)**

(4). Payment Request System

Most payments will be processed through the Payment Request system (see manual). This electronic system is available 24/7/365 to create, edit, save, and submit a payment request. To access the Payment Request system:

Log-in to **RFCUNY.org > Electronic Tools > Payment Request**

(5). Paying Service Providers

PIs and staff should not, under any circumstance, pay for services out of pocket. You will not be able to be reimbursed for services you personally paid that should have been paid with grant funds.

You cannot pay as independent contractors individuals who should be paid salary. RFCUNY will always question your classification of contractors vs. employees. To better understand the distinction and to be sure that you are following guidance, check RFCUNY's Policy on the Use of Independent Contractor Agreements

As a general rule, if you direct their hours worked, how they perform their work, and provide the space and supplies they need to work, this person is most likely an employee and should be hired as such.

If the individual provides the workspace, directs their own work hours and approach, and can prove they work for other clients, this person is most likely an independent contractor or vendor.

(6). Getting Approval for Outside Vendors and Contractors

If the people you want to hire on your grant are not employees, you must determine whether to execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or an Independent Contractor Agreement (ICA) with them, based on these criteria:

MOU < $4,999	ICA > $5,000
For a contract that totals less than $4,999 for 1 calendar year.	For contracts that total more than $5,000 for 1 calendar year.

You must have an executed contract (MOU or ICA) in place **before** you can hire a vendor or contractor on your grant. **You cannot reimburse individuals for third-party services** – this action is not allowable.

- PIs must then **execute agreements** with their vendor or independent contractor that clearly specify grant-funded costs and start and end dates. They must also provide:
  - **Contract** – This agreement must confirm costs, start and end dates, and contract deliverables.
  - **Scope of Work** – A detailed written work statement outlining the work to be accomplished by the contractor and why it is necessary to accomplish the work of the grant (*i.e.* "Scope of Work"). The Scope of Work must provide details to include:
    - o The tasks to be performed.
    - o The person who will perform the work.
    - o Start and end date of the work.
    - o Outcomes and deliverables to be achieved, by when (this should align to the work plan in your proposal, if one was required).
    - o The method(s) by which the work will be performed.
    - o Where the work will take place, if applicable.

A reviewer must be able to clearly see that the work detailed in the scope of work is relevant and necessary to the implementation of the grant.

  - **Budget –** for the contracted services and/or proposed payment schedule.
  - **Contractor's Resume or CV**. Must demonstrate expertise in the services to be offered that are relevant and necessary to the grant implementation. (A bio is acceptable if it demonstrates expertise.) CVs or bios must include dates for listed activities.
  - **Contractor's Client List** – demonstrating that the contractor has performed similar work for other clients within the last calendar year. This list must include:
    - o Client's Name
    - o Dates of Services
    - o Services Performed – which must clearly be relevant and necessary to the implementation of the grant.
    - o This list must be **dated and signed** by the vendor.
  - **Completed W-9** Form, which also must be dated and signed.
  - **Sole Source justification, if applicable –** If you didn't select the vendor through a competitive process, you must provide a brief statement demonstrating how the proposed contractor was selected, why the proposed contractor was chosen instead of other contractors who may have been capable of performing the work, and why competitive bidding was not used to select the lowest price as indicated in RFCUNY's ICA policy. **The written justification must come from the PI, not the vendor.** Please also provide a written justification indicating the necessity of particular personal services from the Independent Contractor. For example, if points were awarded in the proposal selection process for an external evaluator and if the evaluator hired has specific background and experience in NSF grant or in the focus of your project, please say so.
  - **Retroactive Justification, if applicable –** If documentation was provided late, you must provide written justification for why the MOU/ICA wasn't submitted earlier.
  - Completed MOU/ICA packages must be input in the RF Contract Management System for review.
  - MOUs can take about 1 week for review by the RF Payment and Procurable Department.
  - ICA can take 4-6 weeks for RF Legal review.
  - Once RF approves the MOU/ICA, it will send a DocuSign email to the contractor. Once the contractor provides an electronic signature via DocuSign, the MOU/ICA will be fully executed, and the contractor can begin work, submit invoices, and be paid.

Note that Contractors must sign each invoice they provide, either digitally or by hand.

(a). To Track the Progress of your MOU or ICA

To monitor the progress of your MOU or ICA in the RFCUNY.org system, or to amend these documents, you'll need to navigate as follows:

RFCUNY.org > Electronic Tools > Contract Manager > Select MOU or ICA > Select "View/Amend Processed."

Completed MOUs and ICAs can also be found there.

If making multiple payments under a single MOU, first, wait until RF approves the MOU. Then, pay the contractor as instructed below. The MOU is good for a year and you can later amend the MOU to add time and funds to hire the contractor again. If you exceed the $4,999 limit on the MOU in a single calendar year, the contract will need to be converted to an ICA.

(7). Paying a Vendor or Contractor

If a vendor with a fully executed MOU or ICA issues you an invoice you can pay it through RFCUNY's Payment Request system.

RFCUNY.org > Electronic Tools > Payment Request > Make a Contract Manager Payment Request

- This will open a screen that will show you all of your fully executed MOUs and ICAs.
- Select the contract number of the vendor or independent contractor you seek to pay.
- A payment request should open, and your payee's information will prepopulate.
- You'll then have to input things like payment date, amount, and invoice number/payment reference (if there is no invoice number, please create one). After doing so, select next.
- Once you get to supporting documentation, you will just need to upload the signed invoice and then submit.
- Invoices should be addressed to:

> Research Foundation CUNY
> 230 West 41st Street, 7th Floor
> New York, NY 10036
> Ref: [PI NAME], [RFCUNY PRSY#]

(8). Purchasing Goods

Goods are defined as non-personnel costs, including materials, supplies, equipment (where equipment is defined as items with unit prices in excess of $5,000 – so, not laptops or printers), advertising, event space, publishing, etc.

To start, remember:

- You can only make purchases if funding is in place to do so – that means that your purchase will be made against an existing line in your budget, and that line must have adequate funding before you can make a purchase.
- Failure to follow procurement (*i.e.,* purchasing) rules means that the PI can be personally held responsible for the payment.
- As the amount of the purchase increases, so does the oversight.

(a). For the Purchase of Goods costing $4,999 (in total) or less:

The PI must have:

- A signed, dated vendor invoice specifying what goods are to be purchased (*i.e.*, description, model #), in what quantity, and at what price.
- A completed small order form (RF-201), signed by the PI. Pages 2-6 of the RF-201 spell out the applicable terms and conditions.
- Supplemental documentation, which could include a description of the informal procurement method used to determine the selected vendor, a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) or catalog description, or other description of the item to be purchased.
- Submit this as a regular payment through the RFCUNY Payment Request System:
  Electronic tools > Payment Request > Create Regular Payment Request

Although PIs can place orders for goods costing $4,999 or less, RFCUNY must approve purchases of goods that cost over $5,000 and will purchase these items on the PI's behalf.

(b). For Purchase of Goods costing between $5,000 and $10,000 – including Federal or Federal Pass-through Sponsored Programs:

- Bidding is not required but pricing must be reasonable.
- Vendors must supply a written, dated quote.
- The PI must complete a Purchase Requisition (RF-208).
- The PI must provide supporting documentation if required, including MSDS sheets, Equipment Screening Certificates for equipment (defined as units costing $5,000 or more), or Sole Vendor justification if applicable.
- The PI must sign to certify the purchase.
- If the goods are being purchased with funds from more than one account, each PI must sign to certify the purchase.
- Completed forms must be emailed with all supporting documentation to RFCUNY's Purchase Order email: PO@rfcuny.org
- RFCUNY will review and process.

It is important that a PI not submit an RF-208 form directly to a vendor. RFCUNY will generate the purchase order document and email the document and quote to the vendor for processing.

(c). For the Purchase of Goods costing between $10,000.01 and $250,000 including Federal or Federal Pass-through Sponsored Programs (Small Purchases):

- PI must get written quotes from at least two (2) qualified sources.
- The PI must complete a Purchase Requisition (RF-208).
- The PI must provide supporting documentation if required, including MSDS sheets, Equipment Screening Certificates for equipment (defined as units costing $5,000 or more), or Sole Vendor justification if applicable.
- The PI must sign to certify the purchase.
- If the goods are being purchased with funds from more than one account, each PI must sign to certify the purchase.
- Completed forms must be emailed with all supporting documentation to: PO@rfcuny.org
- RFCUNY will review and process the purchase.

If orders exceed $250,000, contact the Office for Sponsored Programs.

At this level, **a cost analysis** must be provided, that is, a PI must conduct sufficient market research to determine if the price is reasonable. This includes requesting quotes from vendors (three or more) or performing web searches for pricing, and including the quotes and/or web search results in the package emailed to PO@rfcuny.org.

(d). Non-competitive (*i.e.* Single Source) proposals on Federal or Federal Pass-Through Sponsored Projects (Above $10,000)

A single-source purchase is one in which the PI has not solicited competitive bids, or competitive bids were not available and is considered an exception to the usual procurement process. As such, this type of transaction is allowable only if any of the following occurs:

- The item is available only from a single source;

- It was an emergency purchase that will not permit a delay resulting from publicizing a competitive solicitation;

- The Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity expressly authorizes noncompetitive proposals in response to a written request from the non-Federal entity; or

- After solicitation of a number of sources, competition is determined inadequate.

PIs will need to justify the use of a single source using one or more of the bullet points above and writing a narrative **justification** using the RF Sole Source Justification Form.

It is good practice to demonstrate, if possible, that the cost of the purchase is in line with the market and not elevated because it is a Sole Source purchase.

Note that all material, supplies and equipment, including but not limited to laptops, tablets and phones, that are purchased with grant funds are the property of BMCC and are not the personal property of grant-funded staff or participants. Further, every laptop and electronic device purchased with grant funds must be tagged by BMCC's property manager for tracking in the CUNYFirst system and returned to BMCC at the end of the project.

(9). Reimbursing Yourself for Purchases of Goods

You may use your personal credit cards to purchase goods (at a cost of less than $4,999) and then get reimbursed.

To do so, go into the RFCUNY.org payment request system:

REFCUNY.org > electronic tools > payment request

Create a Regular Payment Request.

Enter yourself as the vendor.

Submit with receipts.

PIs and staff should not, under any circumstance, pay for services out of pocket.

(10). Paying for Travel

Travel, if essential to the project and included in the project budget, can be paid by the sponsored program. In general,

(a.) **Air Travel:** Those traveling by air must use domestic air carriers, even if traveling abroad, per the Fly America Act. You must also save both your purchase information (*e.g.,* website record of your payment) and your boarding passes as proof that you took the flight. Tickets are to be purchased in economy class only; no upgrades to business or first-class are allowed, although you can pay baggage fees and for seat selection in economy. Please note that there currently is a ban on travel to North Carolina and Mississippi

(b.) **Car Rental:** If you rent a car for travel you must provide written justification for doing so and must keep all related receipts. Gas/mileage is not reimbursable for rented cars.

(c.) **Conferences:** If attending a conference, you must provide a copy of the conference program and/or agenda as proof that you attended the conference.

(d.) **Incidental Costs**: These are costs for which you cannot get a receipt, such as tips to porters or housekeeping. These can be charged up to the limits on the US General Services Administration (GSA) Per Diem Rates for your destination and month of travel.

(e.) **Meals:** … are complicated. If it's a business meal where you are entertaining others for business purposes, you must provide a detailed restaurant receipt and proof of payment, along with a list of attendees and a statement of business purpose for the expenditure. If it's a personal meal, please save your receipts. There are some cases in which you won't need them, but it's better to have them and not need them than to need them and not have them. Finally, **alcohol is not an allowable charge** and should not be included in the receipts you present for your travel.

(f.) You can travel up to 24 hours in advance of the conference with grant funds, but not earlier. Similarly, you can leave the day after the conference ends using grant funds, but not later. If you arrive earlier, leave later, or travel other than home from the conference, you must do so with your own funds.

There are three ways to pay for travel.

(a). Travel Advance

You can request an **advance** for travel with the following conditions:

- Advanced funds cannot exceed **80% of the amount awarded** for the respective budget category.
- Advanced funds must be requested with a budget that details the costs and equals the amount being requested.
- Advanced funds must be accounted for with appropriate receipts.
- The PI must submit an E-Payment Travel Advance Request Form **at least 15 business days prior** to the travel taking place. Submit the form via RFCUNY's electronic Payment Request System. This form must include:
  - o Detailed justification for the travel with an itinerary, proposed travel dates, and estimated costs.
  - o The PI's signature.

Travel advances must be reconciled **within 5 days after the completion of the trip**. To reconcile a travel advance:

- Create and submit a reimbursement request using RFCUNY's electronic Payment Request System (Log-in to **RFCUNY.org > Electronic Tools > Payment Request**)
- Attach a copy of the E-Payment Travel Advance Request Form.
- Attach a completed Travel Expense Voucher Form (RF-041).
- Copies of the receipts (and boarding pass, if appropriate).

- If the travel is for a conference, also include confirmation of your registration and a copy of the conference program or agenda.
- And all other required supporting documentation.

Advanced funds are College funds, not your personal funds, and must not be used for personal or household expenses. If your trip cost less than the amount advanced, **you must return the balance** by check to:

Finance Department
Research Foundation for the City University of New York
230 West 41st Street, 7th Floor, New York, NY 10036

Add a memo identifying the grant title and PRSY#.

For assistance with travel advances or reconciling travel advances, you can contact RFCUNY at epayhelp@rfcuny.org or 212-417-8480.

(b). Travel Reimbursement

Alternately, you can charge travel to your personal credit card and be reimbursed for your airfare, conference registration, ground transportation, lodgings, meals and incidentals by completing:

E-Payment Travel Expense Voucher Form

Log-in to **RFCUNY.org > Electronic Tools > Payment Request**

- Provide receipts for your airfare purchase and a copy of your boarding pass as proof that you flew.
- If you're using your own car for travel, you can be reimbursed for the mileage; a link to current mileage rates is on the form.
- If you're attending a conference, you'll need confirmation of your registration payment and a copy of the conference program or agenda as your proof of attendance.
- For lodging, meals and incidentals please use GSA Per Diem rates for your destination to determine rates for lodging, meals and incidentals. If the travel is international, please use the US Department of State Per Diem Rates.
- While you don't have to save receipts for your meals if you use GSA rates, it's good practice to have and submit those receipts.

Instructions for submitting travel reimbursements are also here.

While the Office of Sponsored Programs doesn't need to approve your travel, be sure that your supervisor is aware and, if appropriate, the Provost is informed.

(c). Purchasing Card (P-Card)

If your sponsored program has a linked P-Card, you may use that for travel costs. See page 35 for further information about the use of P-Cards. **Please note that P-Cards cannot be issued for NYS-funded programs or PSC-CUNY funded programs.**

(11). Purchasing Food for Grant Events

These are the procedures that PIs and your **authorized** grant staff must follow:

1. Before you purchase food for a grant-funded meeting or event, be sure that food is **an allowable charge** on your grant (often it is not!).

2. **Identify the grant and the expense code** from which the order is to be charged and confirm that there is funding on this line to pay for the order.

3. The person placing the order must be the **PI or authorized personnel** only. If the person placing the order is not authorized to do so, they must forward the request through the PI.

4. You can only order for a future event. You cannot "back date" an order or place an order after your grant terminates.

5. Write up a specific order – not just "pizzas" or "$1,000 in pizzas." Use this format:

ORDER FORMAT:

- **Date:**
- **Event's Name:**
- **Amount of People:**
- **Events Time:**
- **Delivery Time for Set up (allow 15-30 minutes):**
- **Room Number:**
- **Contact person:**
- **Contact person cell phone number:**

 ORDER: Please provide your order (selection, quantity from the most current menu) in the space below.

6. When writing up the order, please reference the MBJ menu for selections. Email your order to Danna Lora at dannambj@bmcc.cuny.edu to confirm the prices, which are subject to change.

7. Once you have the updated prices, email the order to Onika Duke at the Office of Sponsored Programs at oduke@bmcc.cuny.edu. We will review the account to ensure that funds are available, then forward the approved order to MBJ.

8. **Place your order one week in advance of your event**. If your program events are scheduled, we expect your food orders to be as well.

9. After the order is placed, MBJ will reach out to the Office of Sponsored Programs for final approval. After we approve, the invoice is sent to the PI to initiate payment through RFCUNY's Payment Request System.

10. When paying MBJ invoices in RF's Payment Request System, look for **MBJ Foods – Downtown.**

11. Payments are due within 30 days.

12. If you have questions, MBJ can be reached at 212-587-3300 or at mbjfoodservice@bmcc.cuny.edu.

(a). Purchasing Food Vouchers

Instead of placing a meal order, you can place an order for vouchers that can be redeemed for individual meals at the campus cafeteria. To place an order for meal vouchers, please use this format:

Order from Account: XXXXX-XXXX		
Meal Value	Amount	Subtotal
$11.00	50	$550.00
$9.00	20	$180.00
$5.00	19	$95.00
	Total:	$825.00

Vouchers usually range from $5 (snacks) to $15 (meals) but depend, of course, on your budget.

(12). Ordering MetroCards

Before you start, check that ordering MetroCards is an allowable expense for your sponsored program and, if so, that you have a budget line for this purpose in your account (*e.g.,* Object/Expense Code: 6932. Travel – MetroCards) as well as sufficient funds for your order.

If so, your first step is to **Establish your MTA Account.** (If you've already done this, skip to Step 4, below).

Step 1 – To Establish a Non-Resale Account with the MTA, complete the **MTA Application Package** Page 2, Part 1, Sections "About Your Business" and "Business Hours." Leave the other sections blank.

Step 2 – On the MTA Application Package Page 5, Contract Part 2, write your department name and then sign and date at the bottom of the page. Leave everything else blank.

Step 3 – Email the completed, signed package to Angela Ramsey at MetroCard Sales Operations at Angela.Ramsey@nyct.com

Full contact information for reference is:

Angela Ramsey
Associate Staff Analyst
MetroCard Sales Operations
2 Broadway – C10.75
New York, NY 10004
646–252-6700 (office)
646-252-6709 (fax)

Please also save the last page of the MTA Application Package, the **Rate Sheet.** Use that as your "menu" when ordering in the future.

Step 4 – Once the application is approved, you will receive **an MTA customer number.** Save this - you will use this as a reference number on future orders through the Payment Request System.

(a). Place a Metro Card Order through the Payment Request System

Once you have an MTA customer number you will place your orders through the RF Payment Request System.

(b). For all Orders

Complete a **Metro Card Order Form** and upload this with your entry in the Payment Request System. Please be sure that you use the form with the correct year/fares. If you don't have one, ask the Office of Sponsored Programs for a copy.

(c). For Orders Valued at < $4,999

- Log-in to **RFCUNY.org > Electronic Tools > Payment Request > Create Regular Payment Request**.
- Then, **Select Payee > Search for Payee > NYC Transit MetroCard**.
- There are duplicate selections for NYC Transit MetroCard. Select any one of them.
- Enter your MTA customer number as your Invoice Number/Payment Reference.
- Enter your Invoice/Payment Reference Date.
- Enter your Payment Amount.
- Select "next."
- On the next screen, enter the RFCUNY Account # for the project you will charge.
- Skip "recovery code."

- Re-enter the amount.
- Select "next."
- On the next page you can enter an e-check memo (*e.g.,* MetroCards for Project XXX).
- You can (but don't have to) enter a budget justification in the comment box.
- Select "next" and submit.

RFCUNY will process the order. Once the MTA receives the payment the order will be processed and shipped to the address on file that is associated with the customer number.

(d). For Metro Card Orders over $5,000

The same process applies, but you must complete a Purchase Requisition Form (RF-208) and submit that as an additional attachment in the Payment Request System.

(e). Purchase Order

RFCUNY will generate a Purchase Order (PO) on your behalf and submit that to the MTA as part of processing your order. The PO is intended for RFCUNY's internal records, and you should keep a copy with your records as well.

(f). One More Step

If you received an MTA contact through your MTA application process, please also email the MTA Order Form and the RFCUNY PO to your MTA contact and reference the order you just submitted through the Payment Request System.

(g). Metro Card Coding on Your Web Report

If allowable, Metro Card expenses will appear on your web report under the code:

6932 MetroCards

Once you order MetroCards, these will appear on your web report under the code:

8251 – Advance – MetroCards

They will remain coded as "advance – MetroCards" until you have completed your distribution logs.

(h). Receipt of MetroCards

MetroCards are usually shipped within 3-5 days. Orders will be shipped to the address indicated on your MTA Application Package.

(i). Distributing MetroCards

You must record the type of card you gave to what student, when, and for what purpose. For this reason, when you distribute the MetroCards you must have the students complete and sign a distribution log containing these details, their name and a space for them to sign. If you don't have a copy of a distribution log to use, contact the Office of Sponsored Programs for a copy.

Once complete, distribution logs should be emailed to your RFCUNY PA and APA so that they can reconcile your account. If the account balances, that is, if the total advanced equals the total distributed, your PA and APA will reconcile it and remove the "advance" code from your web report.

(j). Returning MetroCards

If you must return MetroCards, your PA and APA will help you to do so.

(13). Buying Amazon Gift Cards, Including E-Cards

To place orders for Amazon Gift Cards via Amazon Incentives, go to Amazon's Incentive page. It will ask you to create an account if you don't have an existing Amazon account. If you have an existing Amazon account, sign in with you log-in info. **Please use your BMCC email address.**

There are two ways to order Amazon Gift Cards. None involve using credit cards, which will incur additional fees.

(a). Place a Direct Order

This method is best when you know exactly who and/or how many students you want to distribute the cards to, in what amount, and in what specific timeframe. In this method, you cannot get a refund if someone doesn't use their gift card. The steps are:

Step 1: Select your incentive type (Gift Codes, Email Code, Physical Cards, or Greeting Cards). Most order types are either Gift Codes or Email Codes.

Step 2: Next indicate the quantity and denomination of order.

Step 3: Enter the associated PO # if applicable. This is only for reference. Amazon does not accept purchase orders.

Step 4: Click the **Proceed to Checkout** button at the bottom of the page.

Step 5: Next, on the Select a Payment Method screen, select "Send a payment to Amazon by wire transfer or direct deposit". Do **not** select **Pay with a Credit Card**.

Step 6: Click the Continue button. Review your order and then click the **Place Your Order** button.

If all is correct, Amazon will email an invoice for payment. Submit the invoice to the RF for processing and payment using the Payment Request system. Once Amazon receives and applies the payment to your account, if you ordered Gift Codes, Amazon will send you an Excel spreadsheet with all the e-gift codes and student emails. You will have to email a code to each student.

If you selected Email Code, the recipients will be emailed automatically with instructions on how to access the e-card.

Amazon processes orders on a first-in, first-out basis.

(b). Amazon Pro-Forma Invoice

Alternately, You can generate a pro-forma invoice and submit it to the RF for processing and payment to pre-fund your account for the order. This method works best when you have an only estimate of the number of students you'd like to incentivize. You can pre-fund the purchase for a specific dollar value and then place orders as needed through the grant period. In this way you won't overbuy and can return unused funds, if any.

Submit the pro-forma invoice through the Payment Request system.

Log-in to **RFCUNY.org > Electronic Tools > Payment Request > Regular Payment Request** and follow the prompts to submit the invoice.

Once the account is funded, you can follow the steps below to place orders against the pre-funded balance:

Step 1: Select your incentive type (Gift Codes, Email Code, Physical Cards, or Greeting Cards). Most order types are either Gift Codes or Email Codes.

Step 2: Next, indicate the quantity and denomination of order.

Step 3: Enter the associated PO # if applicable. This is only for reference. Amazon does not accept purchase orders.

Step 4: Click the **Proceed to Checkout** button at the bottom of the page.

Step 5: Next, on the **Select a Payment** Method.

Step 6: Click the Continue button. Review your order and then click the **Place Your Order** button.

Amazon processes order on a first in first out basis.

If you ordered Gift Codes, Amazon will send you an Excel spreadsheet with all the e-gift codes and student emails. You will have to email a code to each student.

If you selected Email Code, the recipients will be emailed automatically with instructions on how to access the e-card.

(14). Purchasing Gift Cards through Tremendous

Through a partnership between RFCUNY and Tremendous (a/k/a GiftRocket) PIs can purchase and send over 1,000 digital gift cards from companies including Starbucks, AMC Theaters, Applebee's, Best Buy, CVS, Foot Locker and more.

This process starts by you generating an invoice to pre-fund your account.

1. Here is a link to a recorded training session for you to reference as you›re getting started.
2. Here is how to generate an Invoice to prefund your Account Balance. After the invoice has been submitted to the RF, Tremendous will update your account balance as soon as the payment is received (typically takes ~3-5 business days for funds to arrive).

Once you generate an invoice, submit it to the RF via the Payment Request system to facilitate payment. Please follow the directions below.

Log-in to **RFCUNY.org > Electronic Tools > Payment Request > Regular Payment Request**

Create the Payment Request for Tremendous. Search for Tremendous and select vendor id (109947-0, GiftRocket Inc. dba Tremendous Inc).

In the **Invoice Number** field, enter the invoice number.

Enter the invoice date in the **Invoice Date** field.

Enter the payment amount in the **Payment Amount** field.

Enter the same number from step 6 in the **Original Invoice Amount** and Click the **Next** button to advance to the **Charges** page.

Select the account number (XXXXX-XX XX) from the **Project Picklist** drop down box. Select the associated **Object/Expense Code** (8250)

In the Amount Box, enter the invoice amount entered in Step 6. Click the **Update** button. At the bottom of the page, "The Amount Left to Distribute" should be $0.00.

Click the **Next** button to advance to the **Other Info** page. Click the **Next** button again. You will receive the **Save Confirmation** Prompt. Click the Yes button.

On the **Attachments** page, attach the supporting documents (invoice) to the payment request.

Click the **Submit** button. Click the associated **Check** button to agree to our terms and click the **Submit** button again.

(15). Paying Stipends

Stipends are considered Other Than Personnel Services (OTPS) costs – not Personnel costs - and do not incur fringe benefits.

Faculty and full-time staff cannot be paid stipends using grant funds held at RFCUNY. (Faculty can only be compensated with summer salary).

Students can be paid stipends – but it must be clear that these payments are appropriately classified as stipends and not wages, as is demonstrated in Table 4., below.

Table 4. This Payment is Appropriately Classified as a Stipend if:
The student is enrolled (FT or PT) in a degree program.
Participation benefits the student, not the program.
Students are not assigned hours and days for their participation.
Students are not only participating to be paid.
Students are not required to produce work product as a result of their participation.

If a student is required to attend for a set number of hours each week, or a pre-determined number of hours, or complete an assignment or activity for pay, they must be paid wages. Stipends are intended as an incentive only – no work product can be required of students who receive stipends.

In the case of federal grants, there are additional restrictions on stipends:

- Stipends cannot be paid on NIH research grants.
- Stipends can only be paid on federal research grants if students are receiving training or professional development.
- On National Science Foundation grants, stipends can only be paid in support of participants or trainees at conferences, meetings, symposia, training activities and workshops. In these cases, the budget justification should include a description of the training activity and the agency must agree to the funding of participant support costs.

Stipends Are Incentives for Participation

Students can be paid individually or as a group – if they are all US Citizens. If there are foreign nationals to be paid you can create one group for US Citizens and another for foreign nationals; there are different forms to complete for each.

To pay student stipends you must create:

- **An Award Letter.** Each student must receive a Stipend Award Letter on BMCC letterhead, addressed to each student. The letter must indicate the purpose of the payment, the payment amount, and the schedule for the one-time payment. Each student will receive a copy and you will submit a copy with your payment request.
- **Data Collection Form (RF-701).** Either the student completes and signs a Data Collection Form or you complete this on behalf of a group (of US Citizens only) by checking the checkbox on Question #1. Question #2 must be completed. Do not answer Question #3. If submitting as a group leave questions 4-6 blank. The remaining questions must be answered.
- **Form RF-702.** Complete Form RF-702 for foreign students, for each applicable student, or for the group if all the students in the group are foreign.
- **ACH Form.** Each student who wants a direct deposit must complete an ACH Direct Deposit Payment Form. Otherwise, they will receive a check.

- **Spreadsheet.** If you are submitting for a group, complete the **Stipend Pay Sheet** with the students' name, address, social security number and amount to be paid.

The Office of Sponsored Programs can provide you with these forms.

Because these documents will contain sensitive personal information, you will not be able to email completed forms. Instead, reach out to your PA and APA, who will provide you with a Dropbox link to submit this information.

Your PA and APA can also provide you with confirmation that payments were made, if you need to show that to a sponsor.

Paying Stipends through the Bursar

When paying a lot of students (> 50) very small stipends (<$75) it is possible to pay them through the Bursar's Office. Payment can be either a posting to the student's CUNYFirst Account toward their next-semester tuition, or as a check sent directly to the student (if not currently registered in classes), or applied to their tuition.

Contact the Bursar's Office for the process.

The Bursar will require you to reimburse their office from your grant. To do so, the PI must provide the Office of Sponsored Programs:

- A memo that details the stipend payment amounts and recipients.
- A copy of the paperwork processed by the Bursar.
- The Program Title and PRSY/Account # (there must be a line-item for stipends in the budget)
- Documentation that the Bursar made the payments.

(16). Paying Honorarium

An honorarium is a one-time payment that is often less than **$650.** This payment is issued to external participants and cannot be issued to CUNY or RF (grant-funded) employees.

As a CUNY employee, you may not receive an honorarium from another campus. Faculty can only be paid via summer salary.

To pay an honorarium:

- Complete an Honorarium Data Collection Form. Note that there are different requirements for US Citizens and foreign nationals. For citizens, RF will report the income on a 1099 at the end of the tax year. For foreign nationals, RF will apply a 30% withholding and report the payment as taxable to the IRS on Form 1043-5.
- Submit the individual's w9.
- Submit a copy of the Thank You letter to the recipient of the Honorarium that announces the payment.
- Submit all the documentation through RF's Payment Request System.

Much like a stipend, an honorarium is a thank you for participation or sharing their time, expertise, or perspective. Honorarium cannot be paid for services (that would require an MOU) and it cannot be paid in lieu of wage or salary.

(17). Common Expenses and Required Documentation

When implementing grants and working successfully with RFCUNY, documentation is key. Note that required documentation needed is the same for RFCUNY's Payment Request System as for the P-Card system. The list in Table 5, below, is illustrative, not exhaustive.

Table 5. Common Expenses and Required RFCUNY Documentation		
#	Expense	Documentation Required
1	Vendor Invoices	Invoice with Detailed Description of Purchase, **signed and dated by the Vendor.** Note that only invoices will be accepted – not order confirmations, purchase orders, packing slips, shipping acknowledgement, or other order-related communications. Have the vendor sign and submit a w9. Do not pay NYS sales tax (>$10).
2	Airline/Train Tickets	Receipt or invoice with itinerary and amount. Boarding pass or conference badge as proof of travel. Conference agenda, if applicable, indicating the purpose of the travel.
3	Per Diem and/or Business Meals	Must abide by GSA (or US DOS if international) Per Diem Rates for meals. Agenda and list of attendees or sign-in sheet for business meals. A statement verifying that alcohol was not purchased.
4.	Conference Registration	Receipt verifying cost and payment methods. Proof of attendance – boarding pass, conference badge, conference agenda – submitted upon return.
5	Hotels	Completed guest folio (*i.e.* bill) with nightly room rates listed. Must align with per diem rates unless the conference is held at the hotel and there were no rooms available at the per diem rate. Provide a conference agenda indicating the purpose of your travel.

(G). Using a Purchasing Card

The PI may receive a Purchasing Card (P-Card) to facilitate expenses on grant accounts. In general,

- P-Cards must be linked to the PI's project(s) in RFCUNY.org.
- The use of P-Cards must be allowed by the sponsor or by RFCUNY for that sponsor.
- P-Cards are usually authorized for between $1,500 and $5,000.
- The PI may authorize other grant staff to have P-Cards if purchasing is relevant to their duties. **Only BMCC employees may be approved for a P-Card;** *i.e.,* part-timers hired under the grants cannot be assigned a P-Card.

(a). How Can I Get a P-Card?

To apply for a P-Cards, logon to:
RFCUNY.org > Electronic Tools > PCard Request

Once processed and approved, P-Cards will be mailed to the address you provide in 1-4 weeks. Note: P-Cards are issued by JP Morgan and arrive in an unmarked envelope that may be confused with junk mail. Open the envelope and look closely at the card: It will say RFCUNY and provide a Tax ID number on the top left, and have the JP Morgan logo and the word "Purchasing" on the top right.

(b). Restrictions on P-Card Expenses

As with any grant purchases, purchases made with P-Cards must be:

- o Allowable.
- o Made for the purposes of the grant.
- o < $5,000 on any single item.
- o Backed up by documentation.

If P-Cards are used for unallowable expenses, the PI will be asked to personally reimburse expended funds and will have the use of the card revoked.

Check out these RFCUNY resources for using your P-Card for Sponsored Projects.

(c). Reconcile your P-Card purchases monthly.

- o Sign in to RFCUNY.org.
- o Hover over Electronic Tools.
- o Select P-Card Reconciliation System.
- o You'll be connected with the SAP Concur System.

P-Card Reconciliation procedures are here.

Guide to Using a P-Card

P-Card Reconciler Procedures

How to Create a P-Card Report

P-Card FAQs

(1). Purchasing Through Amazon Business

PIs with P-Cards (only!) can make purchases through RFCUNY's centralized Amazon Business. Details are here. To request an account, send an email from your BMCC email account to: AmazonBusiness@rfcuny.org.

Please request to be registered under RFCUNY's Amazon Business account (not under any BMCC account), so that they will not charge you NYS sales tax.

During the set-up, Amazon asks whether this account is for RFCUNY purchases only or whether the account will be used for both RFCUNY and personal purchases. Choose "the account is for RFCUNY purchases only."

Also note:

- PIs must use a bmcc.cuny.edu email account for all orders and requests.
- Orders cannot exceed $4,999.

Orders must be shipped to a BMCC address; orders sent to a home or personal address are prohibited.

- Shipping is 2-day Prime.
- Account is subject to audit, and so purchases must be limited to business-specific categories approved for university-wide purchase including:

  1. Books
  2. Office supplies
  3. Classroom, school, art supplies, and materials
  4. Scientific equipment and lab supplies
  5. Musical instruments
  6. Animal supplies, equipment, and food

Additional Resources Include:

Amazon Business First Time Set-Up Guide

Amazon Business Purchasing and Reconciliation Guide

> **Ordering Electronic Devices**
>
> If you're trying to order electronic devices (*e.g.,* tablets, phones), Amazon will issue you a warning that this is not allowed or that your organization is restricted. If this happens, email your RFCUNY project # and rationale for the purchase to Paul_Cole@rfcuny.org for approval.

(H). Managing Subawards

Organizations that award BMCC and BMCC faculty a portion of their overall grant are considered sponsors, and the organization that awarded grant funds to them is considered the Primary Sponsor. The institutional sponsor will oversee the entire grant, serve as the primary liaison to the sponsor, and coordinate and submit the reporting. You, as the institutional sponsor's sub-awardee, will manage your portion of the grant and support the institutional sponsor.

When BMCC partners with a college or organization to complete the work of the grant, and allocates grant funding to that organization, that organization is a sub awardee or a subrecipient.

(1). What is a Subaward?

A subaward is a payment that passes through the grantee to a third-party entity to carry out part of the grant award (for federal and state grants). The third party, or sub-awardee, will complete a significant portion of the grant work and their faculty may be designated as Co-PI.

If you are the prime contractor/lead grantee, you are responsible for the overall implementation of the grant, as well as ensuring that your sub-awardee performs the duties and achieves the outcomes for which they are getting funded. You are also responsible for ensuring they are compliant and effective in managing their grant funds, that their invoices are accurate, and that they are paid on time. Their accounts will be held separately from yours in RFCUNY.org

(2). Subaward Resources

RFCUNY provides resources for planning and monitoring subawards, including:

Subaward Preparation Roles & Responsibilities

How to Tell the Difference Between A Sub-Awardee and a Sub-Recipient

PI Checklist for Subrecipient Monitoring

Understanding and Amending a Subaward

(I). Closing Out an Award

About six months before a grant ends, the PI and Office of Sponsored Programs should review the status of the grant implementation and expenditures to determine whether all the work proposed has been delivered, all funds have been expended as budgeted, and what final actions must be taken, including:

- Reconciling all outstanding advances.
- Reconciling all outstanding expenses (e-payment and P-Card).
- Purchasing all materials and supplies and cancelling items that are on back order and not due in by the project end date.
- Certifying effort.
- Preparing final Cost Share form, if applicable.
- Releasing unnecessary encumbrances.
- Ensuring that grant-funded employees have the appropriate termination date on their PAF. (PAF terminations should be submitted after the final pay period payroll expense has been posted to the PRSY account.)
- Making plans to collect employee ID cards and electronic devices.
- Whether and how money will need to be returned to the sponsor.

The Office of Sponsored Programs and the PI will create a plan to take to complete the grant per its terms and conditions and ensure the account can be closed.

(1). No-Cost Extension

If it is determined that more time is needed to complete the grant implementation and deliverables, the PI can ask the sponsor for a no-cost extension. Although requests may not be made just to spend remaining funds, you may expend remaining funds during the no-cost extension period.

As the name suggests, the PI will get more time, but not more funds. Sponsors must approve no-cost extensions in writing, and the Office of Sponsored Programs will help you to extend the end date of your account at RFCUNY.org.

(2). Final Reporting

Sponsors almost always require a final report on how funds were expended and what impact was achieved. Report due dates are stated in the grant award letter and/or contract. Table 6, below, provides general guidance on reporting.

Table 6. Typical Due Dates for Final Reports	
Federal Grants	• Final reports are generally submitted within 120 days after the project end date.
	• Some Sponsors may require an earlier submission date.
NYS Grants	• Generally, 60 days after the project end date.
	• For NYS Education Department grants, 90 days after the project end date.
	• Federal pass-through NYS Education Department Grants are generally due 30 days after the project end date.
NYC Grants	• Generally, reports are due 60 days after the project end date.
	• Some reports are due in July.
Private Grants	• If no deadline is given, RFCUNY will generally submit reports within 120 days after the project end date.

PIs partner with RFCUNY on completing reports. Depending on the sponsor, sometimes RF completes the report without the PI's participation. Sometimes RF completes the financial section and the PI reports on progress, outcomes, and impact. Sometimes the PI is responsible for the entire report. Roles and responsibilities should be established at the start of the grant.

If a sponsored project includes a subaward, the PI is responsible for obtaining the final report from the sub awardee and retaining a copy.

(3). Expenses Paid after Project End Date

Notwithstanding any sponsor-imposed limits, it is acceptable to process some payments for costs that were incurred prior to the project end date but paid after that date. Such expenses should be posted to your grant account at RFCUNY prior to the submission of the final financial report to the Sponsor. Payment requests should be submitted 30 days prior to the due date of the Final Financial Report.

Examples of common expenses after the project end date include:

- Payroll expenses
- Service center charges
- Subaward/Independent Contractor final payments

(4). Closing the Account

At or about the project end date, the Office of Sponsored Programs will review the grant account in RFCUNY and confirm that there are no outstanding items and that there is nothing left to be charged to the grant (*i.e.,* a zero balance). At that point, the Office of Sponsored Programs will ask RFCUNY to close the account and remove it from the drop-down menu.

(J). In Case of a Federal Shutdown

It is the role of Congress to pass budgets to fund government operations, including federal grant implementation. When Congress fails to come to an agreement on budget bills (*i.e.,* appropriations) and doesn't authorize a continuing resolution to fund the government until a budget can be passed, the federal government will shut down.

The Office of Sponsored Programs and RFCUNY closely follow federal shutdown news and will provide communications to PIs on what actions should be taken before and during a shutdown. In general, the approach is to conserve cash and restrict expenditures to only what is essential, as follows:

(A). All Programs with Direct Funding from Federal Agencies that are shutdown:

1. Payment of personnel costs will be limited to **existing** employees.
2. **No new employees** will be placed on RF's payroll.
3. New and existing Graduate Research Assistants (GRA's) will continue to be processed and paid.
4. Payments of all OTPS expenses (to vendors, consultants, sub-recipients, etc.) and **purchasing cards will be suspended** (and charges will be denied), **except** the following.

     a. Existing and new stipends will be paid.

     b. Expenses associated with safety.

     c. Expenses associated with animal care or other emergency circumstances.

(B). For Federal pass-through subcontracts, State, City and Private Programs:

1. If a new contract **has not** been fully executed there will be no Forward Funding.
2. Fully executed contracts and MOUs will be funded via Forward Funding or College Guarantee on a case-by-case basis.

(C). All Discretionary Accounts (9th ledger accounts, those account numbers start with 9xxxx-xx-xx):

Expenses on these accounts will be limited to essential needs only.

To avoid potential disruption to your grant activities, consider whether you can take any of the following actions:

- Complete onboarding employees no later than [the shutdown date]. If there is a shutdown we will not be able to bring anyone new onboard.

- Review your non-personnel expenses. If there is a shutdown, all non-personnel lines will be frozen and not available for your use.

- If you are preparing a grant proposal submission or report, please do all you can to get those in by the shutdown date. Submission and reporting platforms may not be staffed.

RFCUNY offers updates and guidance in the event of a shutdown on its website.

(K). Personnel Management

Those hired to work on BMCC grants become employees of RFCUNY. As PI it is your job to hire, onboard, manage, pay, and terminate employees in accordance with all applicable RFCUNY policies and procedures, employment laws, and sponsor requirements.

The Office of Sponsored Programs assists and facilitates this process for the 300+ employees who work on BMCC's grants.

(1). Who Can Be Hired on a Grant?

Only those who will perform the work of the grant can be hired onto the grant. People cannot be paid with grant funds to do work that is not part of the grant implementation.

When we speak of "hiring" we mean paying individuals a wage or salary from grant funds. There are other kinds of payment that are not wages or salary and are more fully detailed elsewhere in this manual, including:

Stipends – page 32

Honorarium – page 33

Please note that there are restrictions on paying 12-month, full-time BMCC staff or 9-month faculty with grant funds. These professionals:

- Cannot be hired as consultants on grants.
- Cannot be paid wages or salary with grant funds.
- Cannot be paid honorarium on grants.
- Cannot be paid stipends with grant funding.

Faculty can only be paid summer salary with grant funds (see page XX), or be released from teaching a course, *e.g.,* re-assigned time (see page xx). Faculty on Academic and Travia Leave may also be paid on grant funds with the proper authorization.

Wherever possible, consider hiring part-time grant-funded staff from among BMCC students.

(2). RFUNY Job Descriptions

Please use the job description and salary guideline information linked below to help you plan your staffing during pre-award budget development, and in creating your Personnel Vacancy Notices (PVN) for recruitment.

List of Job Descriptions for Project Employees.

Project Employee Titles and Suggested Salary Guidelines

You may also reach out to RFCUNY's Human Resources office at HRESManagement@rfcuny.org for assistance in setting appropriate salary levels.

(3). Hiring Full-Time Staff on a Grant

Staff hired onto a grant will become employees of RFCUNY.

You may only hire staff on a grant if there is available funding and a funding line for them to fill. **In no circumstance can someone be told to start work before they are onboarded into the RF Onboard** system and fully approved by RFCUNY.

> **RFCUNY Job Classification**
> - Full-Time Employees scheduled to work at least 70 hours per pay period.
> - Part-Time A Employees work more than 38 but less than 70 hours per pay period.
> - Part-Time B Employees work 38 hours or less per pay period.

If you are hiring for a full-time position, you must post the position on RFCUNY's PVN system (RFCUNY Careers), convene a hiring committee, and conduct interviews. All applicants must apply online through RFCUNY's PVN system.

(a). Equal Employment Opportunity

Note that Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)/Affirmative Action guidelines must be followed during the recruitment process. RFCUNY affirmative action policy can be found here.

(b). Posting a Job on RFCUNY's Personnel Vacancy Notice (PVN) System

A PVN must be created for each full-time position to be filled. A PVN is a job posting that contains essential information about a posted position.

Posting a Position on RFCUNY's PVN System:

Log-on to **RFCUNY.org > Electronic Tools > Personnel Vacancy Notice (PVN) > Select Job Posting > Create Job**

Follow the prompts to complete the Job Information requested, including, but not limited to:

- A Job Title, Code, and Description
- Start and End Date
- Hourly/Salary Wage
- Hours per Week
- Weeks per Year

When completing the PVN you'll need to provide a General Description, describe Other Duties, outline Core Competencies and Qualifications, and identify key words. You will be prompted to complete all required fields.

The PVN must state that the position is grant-funded through the end date of the grant – please be sure that you're not promising employment after grant funding terminates.

(c). Posting the PVN

The PVN will first be submitted to RFCUNY's Human Resources Department (Jessica_Wong@rfcuny.org) for screening and approval. Once approved, RFCUNY will post it on RFCUNY Careers. Save a copy in your grant files to document that the position was posted.

If you have questions on this process, contact Jessica_Wong@rfcuny.org.

> **Where Does Your PVN Get Posted?**
>
> RFCUNY.org's Career Page.
>
> BMCC Job Opportunities > Research Foundation
>
> Jobs posted to the RFCUNY Career Page are additionally shared with Indeed.com and Monster.com. You may also share the RFCUNY PVN link on your social media and in your professional networks – but you must follow directions under **(d). Dissemination, below.**

(d). Dissemination

If you seek to share the posting through social media or other job posting sites, your description must state the following: **An AA/EO/ADA Employer,** and, **To apply, please use this link** <provide url to job posting>.

(e). Tracking Applicants

To track applicants and view resumes,

Log-on to **RFCUNY.org > Electronic Tools > Personnel Vacancy Notice (PVN) > Select Job Posting > Applicant Tracking**

Find your processed PVN and, in the second column under **Applications Received,** click on the link below that states the number of applications.

This will take you to an Applicant's List that provides the first name, last name, email, date submitted for all applicants. From this screen,

Log-on to **RFCUNY.org > Electronic Tools > Personnel Vacancy Notice (PVN) > Select Job Posting > Applicant Tracking > Processed PVNs > Applicant's List**

To manage your applicants, click **PVN ID** to view PVN and then applicants. You can download, read, review, and select people to interview.

You can also select **View Details** to see the full application, add a score to rank your applicants, or indicate whether an applicant is interviewed.

You can indicate whether the candidate is rejected or hired. Once you select **Hired** this closes the PVN and sends rejection emails to all the other candidates.

(f). Create a Hiring Committee

In addition to the PI, other grant staff or faculty can participate in the interview process. Committees can be small, *e.g.,* three people. One person should be the leader – the person who will open the interview, greet the candidate, lead the questioning, and forward the best candidates to the PI, who will serve as the hiring manager and will make the hiring decision.

(g). Create a List of Questions for Each Candidate

Create a list of 8-12 questions that will help you determine whether your applicant is qualified for the job. Writing interview questions is more art than science; for example, review what Queens College, CUNY, uses as interview questions. All candidates should be asked the same set of questions for the position being inter-viewed for. In other words, don't change the questions for different candidates for the same position.

CUNY shares a list of questions you cannot ask your candidates. You must abide by legal and civil rights frameworks in creating your questions. If you have any questions while making your list of questions, contact the Office of Human Resources at RFCUNY at HRESManagement@rfcuny.org.

BMCC's HR Department provides a guide to appropriate and inappropriate questions that may also be helpful to you. See Table 7., below.

Table 7. Guide to Interviewing Questions		
Subject	**May Ask**	**May Not Ask**
Name	Current legal name.	Whether person worked under a different name; questions that would divulge ancestry or marital status.
Sex	Nothing.	May not comment on person's sex unless it is a bona fide occupational qualification (BFOQ). This is highly unlikely in most circumstances, except maybe in film, theatre, etc.
Age	Are you over the age of 18? (Proof of age, for insurance purposes, can be required after the person is hired.)	Age; when applicant graduated from high school, etc.
Address	Place and length of address.	How long have you lived in the United States? What foreign addresses have you had?
Birthplace	Nothing.	Any inquiry into place of birth, or that or par-ents, spouse, grandparents, or other relatives.

Subject	May Ask	May Not Ask
Citizenship	If not a U.S. citizen, do you have the right to permanently remain in the U.S.?	Whether applicant, parents, or spouse, are native born U.S. Citizens; or of what country applicant is a citizen?
Marital Status	Nothing.	Whether applicant is married, single, divorced, engaged, widowed, or living with someone.
Sexual Preference	Nothing.	Whether applicant is homosexual, heterosexual, or any other question pertaining to sexual tendencies or preferences.
Lifestyle	Nothing.	Anything involving applicant's natural and preferred way of living.
Family	Nothing.	Any question concerning family size, family planning, children's ages, plans for childcare, or spousal income or employment.
Religion	Nothing.	About religious denomination, affiliation, church or synagogue, religious holidays observed; whether applicant regularly attends a house of worship.
Pregnancy	Nothing.	About the applicant's plans for having children; about medical history concerning pregnancy and health related matters.
Military Status	About job-related experience gained in the military.	About branch of service; type of discharge.
Housing	How applicant can be reached if there is no telephone at home.	Whether applicant owns or rents an apartment or house.
Education	About educational institutions attended; training.	About religious or racial affiliations of school attended: about educational experience that is not necessary for the job to be performed.
Organizations	About professional organizations.	About all organizations that applicant belongs to; organizations that indicate race, color, religion, sex marital status, national origin, transgender, veteran or military status, or disability of applicant.
Finances	Nothing.	About credit ratings, garnishment, debts, to whom debts are owed.
Arrest Record	Nothing.	About arrests, or time spent in jail. Arrests without convictions do not indicate guilt.
Convictions	About convictions, but only if job related (*e.g.,* inquiries about embezzlement convictions if position requires financial responsibilities) and only if asked of all applicants.	General questions about whether applicant has ever been convicted.
Employment Status	About gaps in employment.	State that current unemployed applicants should not apply or that unemployed applicants will not be considered.
Gender Identity	Nothing.	What gender an applicant identifies with.

(h). Select a Qualified Candidate

The Hiring Committee must select 1-3 qualified candidates for interview by the PI, who selects the candidate who meets the requirements listed in the PVN, and whom you believe will best perform the tasks required in the sponsored program.

The PI may notify the selected candidate verbally to confirm that the candidate wants the job. If so, the next step is to send an offer letter to the candidate.

(i). Send an Offer Letter

Before employees are offered or accept full-time employment, they must be informed that:

- Their salaries are grant-funded as long as funding remains available.
- They are RFCUNY employees and subject to RFCUNY's employment rules, policies, and benefits
- Employees working at BMCC or BMCC worksites must also abide by the College's and worksite rules and policies.

RFCUNY has an offer letter template that you should use. Please scroll down to the bottom of the page to access the offer letter template.

(4). Template Offer Letter for Full-Time Employees

Date
New Hire Full Name
Via Email to [email address]

Ref: Grant Title and RFCUNY Project #

I am pleased to offer you an appointment as **[Job Title]** in the office of **[office name]** at Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC), pending completion of your onboarding packet and verifications. Your start date is [**start date].**This position is funded in the amount of **[total salary or wage?]** by the above-referenced grant and will run until **[end date].** Continued employment may be extended based on funding availability and satisfactory job performance.

Your duties and responsibilities are outlined in the job description, and will be further clarified by **[PI? Who?],** who will supervise your work.

As your position is funded by monies administered by the Research Foundation of the City University of New York (RFCUNY), you will be employed by RFCUNY, subject to its personnel policies, and eligible for RFCUNY benefits. RFCUNY employees are also expected to comply with BMCC rules and policies while working on our campus.

To accept this offer please sign and return this letter to me by **[date]** either electronically to **[email]** or in-person at our orientation meeting, which is scheduled **[date and time]** at **[location].** Congratulations, and welcome to the team.

Sincerely,   Employee Name:

_____   Signature_____

PI/Supervisor Name

PI/Supervisor Title

(5). Hiring PT Staff on a Grant

To hire a part-time (PT) employee on a grant you'll need to create a PVN, which is a job posting that will appear on the RFCUNY Career Page. When hiring a Part-Time B (PTB) employee, you are not required to post the PVN or assemble a search committee, although you are welcome to do so. When hiring a Part-Time A (PTA) employee, RFCUNY requires that you both post the PVN and conduct a search.

PTB employees are limited to 19 hours a week or 38 hours per pay period. Note that these are fewer hours than allowed under tax levy. There are three position types:

1. **Regular:** Regular employees have a predefined work schedule and a predefined appointment period (usually more than 90 days). Employees in regular positions may or may not be eligible for annual leave.

2. **Temporary:** Temporary employees are employed on a full-time or part-time basis for one job only or for a set duration of no more than 19 weeks in any 12-month period, have no substantial expectancy of continued employment, and have been notified of this fact.

   Covered temporary employees earn annual leave and, for accrual purposes, will be handled like Regular employees. ***Uncovered temporary employees are not eligible for annual leave***.

3. **On Call:** On Call employees are employed on a part-time basis (no more than 38 hours per pay period) and work sporadically, with no established pattern of regular continuing employment. They do not have a fixed schedule, are not required to be at or near the work site, can refuse an assignment when offered and are only paid for hours actually worked.

   Covered on-call employees earn annual leave and, for accrual purposes, will be handled like Regular employees. ***Uncovered on-call employees are not eligible for annual leave.***

To hire PT grant staff, you'll need:

- A Job Title, Code, and Description
- Start and End Date
- Hourly Wage
- Hours per Week
- Weeks per Year

PT staff hired onto a grant will become employees of RFCUNY.

(6). Hiring an Adjunct on a Grant

Adjuncts can be hired on RFCUNY payroll, with some considerations. If adjuncts currently work for BMCC or any CUNY college teaching a credit-bearing course or courses, they can be hired on RFCUNY funds if:

- They are paid only for non-credit course instruction.
- Their duties paid for with RFCUNY funds do not include teaching (*e.g.,* non-teaching adjuncts).
- AND their duties and work schedule are distinct from their BMCC/CUNY positions.

If this is his/her/their first time hired on a grant, you must onboard that person as a new employee.

As with other PT employees, to hire you will need to know:

- A Job Title, Code, and Job Description
- Start and End Date
- Hourly Wage
- Hours per Week
- Weeks per Year

It is recommended that PT employees are given an offer letter. BMCC's Office of Sponsored Programs asks that you have the employee and the PI sign the PAF that is submitted as part of the onboarding packet. For onboarding details, see

(7). Hiring an International Student on a Grant

International students holding F1/J1 visas are permitted to work on campus up to a maximum of 19 hours per week, while school is in session and full-time (35 hours per week) during the summer and winter immersions. To be hired by RFCUNY, the F-1 student must be in possession of the following:

- Social Security Number
- Valid Passport
- Valid Form I-20
- Valid Form I-9
- F1-On Campus Verification letter - Provided by the Office of International Students, once a completed F-1 On-Campus Employment Verification form is submitted. Please click here to access the form https://bmccprodstroac.blob.core.windows.net/uploads/ported/international/upload/isso_f1_employment%20trial.pdf.

Note that F1/J1 students are charged a lower fringe rate (2.0%). They also are subject to MTA tax.

In addition, the PI will still need:

- A Job Title, Code, and Job Description
- Start and End date
- Hourly Wage
- Hours per Week
- Weeks per Year

Note that DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) students can only be hired if they present Employment Authorization Documents (EAD).

(8). Hiring a Grad Student

Grad students may be hired as Graduate Research Assistants (GRAs) onto grants with the following conditions:

- They must be hired as PT employees, to enable them to attend classes.
- Or, you can pay their tuition with grant funds. However, you cannot pay both wages and tuition.
- PT employees will be charged at the appropriate PT fringe rate plus the required MTA tax.
- Although there is a CUNY program that provides healthcare fees for graduate students who teach, graduate research assistants on grants cannot be budgeted for stipends for health care.

In short, GRAs are paid as part-time employees.

(9). Hiring Faculty on a Grant

Faculty cannot be paid wages or salary with grant funds. Faculty can **only** be paid summer salary, which is paid out only in the summer months as supplemental income in their CUNY paychecks.

Summer Salary

Summer salary is additional compensation paid through grant funds for eligible full-time CUNY instructional staff with the following titles:

- Professor
- Associate Professor
- Assistant Professor

- Lecturer
- Lecturer (Doctoral Schedule)
- Instructor
- Instructor II
- Einstein Professor
- Distinguished Professor
- Distinguished Lecturer
- Substitute Assistant, Associate or Professor
- Law School Assistant, Associate or Professor
- Medical (Basic or Clinical) Assistant, Associate or Professor

CUNY instructional staff in the following series are not eligible to participate in the program:

- Executive Compensation Plan Series
- Administrative Designated titles (REM) series
- HEO series
- CLT series
- Adjunct series
- Non-teaching Adjunct series

Faculty on Academic or Travia Leave may be paid on a grant with authorization.

Work performed for summer salary must take place during CUNY's summer semester (June 1 – August 24).

Calculating Summer Salary

- The maximum allowance is calculated based upon the full-time academic year annual salary:

- Annual Salary/9 = Monthly Allowable Summer Salary Base

- Salary for participation in scholarly research shall not exceed three-ninths of the faculty member's academic year annual salary.

- Sponsors may limit the summer salary period. Note that NSF grants allow only two-ninths for summer salary, even in cases where scholarly research is conducted. Training grants allow two- and one-half ninths for summer salary.

Summer Salary System

To receive summer salary compensation, faculty and/or grants officers must create and submit an appointment and payment authorization in RFCUNY's Summer Salary system. Once the summer period has fully passed, a PI must certify the submitted effort of those with summer salary activity on their account.

Creating an Appointment

An appointment may be created and approved by a PI or authorized signatory (AS) on the account. If a PI/AS creates an appointment, the Office of Sponsored Programs must approve the request before RFCUNY provides final approval. Upon full approval, the appointment amount is encumbered on the grant account. The appointment is entered as a one-time lump sum amount per employee per account.

Completing Payment Authorization

- After RFCUNY has approved an appointment, a PI or the Office of Sponsored Programs must return to the Summer Salary system to complete payment authorization.

- Divide the encumbrance total over six Pay Periods covering the entire summer period (June 1-15, 16-30, July 1-15, 16-31 and August 1-15, 16-24).

- As the time periods open, these "saved" amounts must be approved by the Office of Sponsored Programs.

- RFCUNY will forward the details of the fully approved payment authorizations to the University payroll. CUNY's payroll office is responsible for approving and executing the payment.

See further information here.

Re-Assigned Time

- Faculty may be released or reassigned from teaching hours to work on grant projects with **prior approval from their chair and the Provost.**

- Released time is calculated at $2,000 per credit hour, so that release from a 3-credit class will be calculated on your grant budget as $6,000.

- Re-assigned time on a grant budget cannot be used to compensate faculty who are, instead, released from teaching for the credit hours agreed upon.

- Released time has its own fringe rate, which can be checked on the Budget Cheat Sheet included on the Office of Sponsored Programs website.

(10). Starting the Hiring Process

Remember, no one can begin working on a grant before they are fully approved and onboarded by RFCUNY.

Additionally, you cannot hire someone until your RFCUNY account is set up and fully funded.

(a). Onboarding

Once you have identified a person to be hired, request a secure Dropbox link and new hire form from Onika Duke, Grants Associate (ODuke@bmcc.cuny.edu). This form will request the new hire's full name, date of birth, and last 4 digits of the SSN. This information will allow us to determine the proper method of onboarding depending on whether the employee had been on RFCUNY's payroll and had a break-in-service. With that information we can determine which of three categories under which a person can onboarded:

Category 1: Employee is Completely New to RF/New Hire

If the employee has never worked with the RF, the PI must first complete an onboarding packet via RF CUNY's Onboarding System:

Log-in to **RFCUNY.org >Electronic Tools > RF Onboard**

Click on the Create button.

Select "GO (Grants Officer)" and then "Start from Scratch."

The Onboarding Application is comprised of 5 sections. Complete all required fields in each section, then click on the **Save & Continue** button to move to the next. Note that project number is your PRSY Account # in the RFCUNY system. You'll have to provide the **Job Title** and **Job Code** as indicated earlier. When you complete this page, select **Save & Continue**.

RFCUNY's Onboarding Training Video can be accessed here.

The Employee Onboarding System Training Manual is here.

(b). Verifying Employee Eligibility: I-9 and E-Verify

RFCUNY must approve all new hires. Employee eligibility to work will be verified through the completion of

Form I-9, which will be sent to the E-Verify system of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and Social Security Administration.

The employee must complete Form I-9, Section 1 on or before the employee's first day of employment. Section 2 of Form I-9 must be completed within three business days of the employee's first day of employment, and requires the employee to present original, acceptable, and unexpired documents that confirm their identity and employment authorization. If the new hire is not authorized to work in the U.S., you will not be able to hire them onto your grant.

RFCUNY Training on Verifying Employment Eligibility: I-9 and E-Verify is here.

(c). Complete the New Hire Packet

The PI must complete the PI portion of the onboarding packet for the Office of Sponsored Program to review. Once approved, the Office of Sponsored Programs will send notification to the employee. In addition to Form I-9, newly hired employees must complete a group of forms and review a selected number of policies included in the New Hire Packet. The New Hire Packet includes:

- The Application for Employment
- Personnel Action Form (PAF)
- Job Duties & Qualifications
- Personal Data
- EEO Voluntary Identification
- IRS Form W-4
- IT-2104 Employees Withholding Allowance Certificate

(d). Submitting the New Hire Packet

The Office of Sponsored Programs will review and submit the completed New Hire packet in the RF Onboard System, triggering a series of three emails to the new employee.

The first two will come from RFCUNY containing links to the paperwork that the employee must complete.

The third will come from the Office of Sponsored Programs (Onika Duke or Samantha Molina) requesting a meeting to review Form I-9 documentation and confirm the employee's identity.

In response, the employee must review and electronically sign forms where indicated.

If the staff person or adjunct you seek to hire on RFCUNY is also currently working on tax levy at the College, he/she/they will need to submit a **Dual Employment Letter** with their onboarding application.

Written on department letterhead, the Dual Employment Letter must state the roles and responsibilities of each position and provide the hours to be worked in each position. A statement indicating that the jobs are distinct and that there is no overlap in time or tasks is required. If the tasks are not distinct and occur at the same time, the person cannot be hired.

This requirement doesn't apply if the person has more than one RFCUNY job. If a person is working on a grant and then takes a job on tax levy, the Dual Employment Letter must be submitted at that time.

Letters are emailed to ODuke@bmcc.cuny.edu and uploaded as part of the new hire packet in the onboarding system.

Category 2: Reinstatement. If the person has worked with the RF and has not had a 120-day break-in-service:

(a). Personnel Action Form

In this case, the first step is to create an "Addition" **Personnel Action Form (PAF or e-PAF).**

To create an e-PAF,

Log-on to **RFCUNY > Electronic Tools > Personnel Action Form/Calculator**

Use the calculator on the top right of the screen to work out your base pay, fringe, hours per week and weeks per PAF. This will make it easier for you to fill out the PAF. To assist you, RFCUNY has made a training video and a user manual.

For full-time staff, a job offer letter must be reviewed and signed by both the PI and the employee. For part-time staff, BMCC requires that the PAF must be signed by both the PI and the employee. Employee signatures represent acceptance.

The Office of Sponsored Programs encourages PIs to hire new grant employees for 90 days, and to ensure that the employee is a good fit for the grant program during that time. Additional 90-day or longer PAFs can be issues thereafter.

(b). Complete the Packet

Log-in to **RFCUNY.org > Electronic Tools > E-PAF > Employee Wage Title Designator > Job Duties and Qualification Form > Resources > Find Forms and Documents**

Category 3: Rehire. If the person being hired has a 120 day (or more) break in service, the employee and PI must jointly complete a rehire package to reactive that employee's record in RFCUNY's HR database.

Further information on Recruiting and Rehiring Employees is here.

(a). Employee Welcome Letter

Once onboarding has been processed, and the RF has reviewed and approved the hiring packet, the employee will be sent a Welcome email with relevant employment information – such as employee's ID number, benefits orientation information, mandatory online training, timesheet submission and setting up direct deposit.

(b). Employee Access

Your employee may need access to email, computers, software, a telephone, and office keys to perform their job, and it is your job as PI to ensure they have the necessary resources and credentials for access. See Table 8, below, and follow the checklist.

Table 8. New Employee Access	
For Access to:	**The PI should do this:**
BMCC Identification Card	Email Samantha Molina in the Office of Sponsored Programs (SMolina@bmcc.cuny.edu) and request the BMCC ID Form. Complete and return the form to Ms. Molina, who will create a memo that the employee can take to the Service Desk, located at the main campus, 199 Chambers Street, Room S-141 (in the basement).
	The ID card should provide access to office doors that the employee is authorized to access.
Email Address	Make a request here:
Telephone	https://servicedesk.bmcc.cuny.edu/TDClient/33/Portal/Requests/ServiceDet?ID=253
Room Access (w ID card)	• Click on "Request Service"
	• Fill out the information requested
	• Add requests you may have for the new employee in the "Description" box section (Employee needs phone, room access, email, etc.)
	• To submit your request Click "Done."
	• Your ticket has been created and a staff member from the service desk will be able to assist.
Keys	To request keys make a request here:
	https://servicedesk.bmcc.cuny.edu/TDClient/33/Portal/Requests/ServiceDet?ID=253
	Click on Request Service
	Fill out the Information Requested
	Request access to keys and provide the specific room numbers.
	Submit your request by clicking, Done.
	The service desk will refer you to the campus locksmith.
Copier/Printer	Request access from Reprographics at: reprographics@bmcc.cuny.edu

RFCUNY employees should automatically have access to CUNYFirst, which is the platform on which most Microsoft Office, Adobe, and other software accounts run. The employee will receive an email from BMCC Human Resources with instructions on how to claim a CUNYFirst account. Email is sent to the email address provided on the employee's RF onboarding application. If not, employees should alert the PI, who should contact the Office of Sponsored Programs.

(11). Management and Oversight of Employees Paid through a Grant

- Employees paid through grant funds are considered RFCUNY employees and receive their payroll and benefits through RFCUNY.
- PIs hire, onboard, supervise, and oversee all sponsored project staff paid through grant funds.
- PIs must ensure that employees are informed of (i). the start and end date of their employment, (ii). that their employment is grant-supported, and (iii). their roles, responsibilities, and hours to be worked.
- PIs must ensure that employees enter accurate timesheets into the RFCUNY's Time & Leave system on time and then approve, in a timely manner, the accuracy of those timesheets.
- Ensure that staff behave in a professional manner.
- Oversee staff to ensure that they provide the services included in the awarded grant proposal in a timely, ethical, professional, and cost-effective manner.
- PIs are to evaluate staff annually to provide feedback for their professional development, personal improvement, and career advancement.

Payroll and Submitting Timesheets

(a). Payroll Calendar

The RF utilizes an electronic timekeeping system and generates payroll for project employees biweekly in accordance with a published payroll calendar. The calendar is also available in the RFCUNY Time & Leave system.

Additionally, every pay period, the Office of Sponsored Programs sends an email to all PIs reminding them of the deadline to approve and submit their employees timesheets.

(b). Time & Leave System

The Time & Leave System is where all employees must create and submit their timesheets, and PIs must review and approve those timesheets every bi-weekly pay period with their user access credentials (RFCUNY PI Code and password). The time and Leave System keeps a track of time worked and charged, and all accrual balances.

To access the Time and Leave system,

Log-on to **RFCUNY.org > Electronic Tools > Time and Leave (Payroll Administration)**

Each employee (or grant timekeeper, if any) inputs timesheets for the project(s) worked on for each pay period. As discussed above, each project is assigned a unique identifier. **If an employee works on multiple projects, a separate timesheet must be created for each project.**

Employees must submit his or her own timesheets for the PI to approve.

The RFCUNY Time & Leave system has fiscal controls that do not allow a timesheet to be paid if the amount exceeds the funds set aside for that position, or if there aren't enough funds in the budget.

Instructions on how to use RFCUNY's Time and Leave system are here.

(c). Annual Leave

Annual leave is paid time off granted to RFCUNY eligible employees for the purpose of vacation, personal business, and family illness or other family emergencies, religious holidays, days of special observance, etc. All RFCUNY employees are eligible to accrue annual leave with the exception of:

- Part-Time Instructors- Employees working on a Part-Time basis under the titles: RFCUNY Grants Sponsored Instructor or RFCUNY Grants Sponsored Teacher.

- On Call, Temporary, Seasonal, and Graduate Research Assistants (GRAs).

Annual leave is calculated and applied by RFCUNY's Policy 506-I (Time Off and Leave Benefits).

Employees **must** take all accrued annual leave prior to their appointment end date unless other arrangements are made for its use or payment. The maximum amount of annual leave an employee is permitted to carry over into the new calendar year is 175 hours, and only on the project on which the annual leave was accrued. Annual leave cannot be carried over from one grant to another.

Best practices are that the PI will meet with the employee within 30 days of the employee's appointment or re-appointment start date to schedule the employee's annual leave during the appointment or re-appointment period All annual leave must be approved in advance and in writing by an employee's PI.

(d). Evaluating RFCUNY Employees

RFCUNY strongly encourages supervisors to conduct performance evaluations at least annually. These evaluations are an important management tool that provide actionable feedback to employees to assist in identifying skills and competencies that they can improve. This information allows under-performing staff the opportunity to identify skills gaps and improve their performance, while high-performing employees can define and pursue new challenges in their roles. During an evaluation employees also have the opportunity to ask questions, discuss concerns, and raise ideas with supervisory staff.

The supervisor should complete the form and allow the employee to review and respond. A meeting should be held to review and discuss the assessment, and both parties should sign. A copy of the signed assessment should be given to the employee, placed in the employee's and manager's file, and copied to Sacheen McWatt at RFCUNY at sacheen_mcwatt@rfcuny.org.

RF provides performance evaluation templates based on employee classification as either exempt (including managerial and supervisory positions) or non-exempt (including non-supervisory employees). For assistance, contact RFCUNY's Office of Labor and Employment Relations at Labor&EmploymentRelations@rfcuny.org.

(e). Termination

When an appointment ends, and the employee is not being reappointed, the PI must submit a final termination PAF via the **e-PAF System** after the employee's last timesheet has been processed (*e.g.,* the paperwork doesn't turn into a final PAF, that must be completed and submitted by the PI). When the "Termination" PAF has been submitted, RF will calculate any outstanding annual leave balance that may be due to the employee and generate a payout.

To submit a "Termination" e-PAF;

Log-in to **RFCUNY.org > Electronic Tools > Personnel Action Form/Calculator**

Then,

1. Choose or type the current Project Number
2. Click on the **Termination** PAF option.

3. Choose the employee you wish to terminate by clicking on their name.

4. The next screen displays the PAF information and asks the user to select one of two alternative methods to terminate an appointment line. Select the **PAF Remaining Encumbrance** option, then click **Next**.

5. Complete the following fields on the PAF:

    1. **Effective Date:**

    2. **Termination Reason: End of Appointment**

    3. **Annual Leave Payout: Yes**

6. Click **Preview** at the bottom of the page. Once **Preview** is clicked, the next screen will display the amounts to be disencumbered and recovered back into the grant.

7. Click **Approve** to submit the PAF.

There are two ways to terminate an employee:

Terminate as of Remaining Encumbrance – In this case all of the unused funds will be returned to the account.

Alternately, a PI can create an **as of Future Date –** termination PAF for employees scheduled to resign from a position prior to their appointment end date. Doing so allows for a partial disencumbrance of funds allocated to the appointment. The funds needed to cover payroll for the duration of the appointment will remain encumbered. **The amount no longer needed will be returned to the grant, enabling the PI to hire a replacement.** At the appointment end date, a termination PAF must be submitted for the first employee.

(12). Justification Letter

RFCUNY require a justification letter for an exception to regular processes. For example, if you submit a Employee Wage Title Designator (Wage Letter) signed after the employee's appointment start date, you must to provide a justification letter explaining what happened and why. Justifications of one paragraph are fine.

A video explaining how to make PAF modifications and terminations is here.

The PAF user manual is here.

Managing Effort on NSF Grants

As part of their grant monitoring for National Science Foundation grants, RFCUNY checks to see that you have spent 75% or more of the effort you have budgeted on the grant by the last year of the grant. It works this way: RF adds the reassigned time plus the summer salary budgeted and then multiples by 75% to determine the PI's minimum effort. There is flexibility between the two categories, *e.g.,* an award may overspend on reassigned time and underspend on summer salary but still meet the 75% requirement because both categories are considered effort (although the differences in the fringe rates may cause other budget issues and must not be done without planning).

(13). Managing Your Levels of Effort

"Effort," in grant terms, are the PI's summer salary and/or re-assigned time. Just as you are required to spend your budget in accordance with your proposed budget, you are expected to expend your effort on the grant in accordance with what you proposed. The sponsor awarded your grant based upon your time commitment, among other criteria, and it is critical that you charge effort as proposed. For example, if you proposed three credits of re-assigned time each semester plus summer salary in each year of the grant, best practice is for you to charge exactly what you proposed.

Failure to charge effort as indicated in your budget can be interpreted by the sponsor as a change in scope, and can become a budget management issue. All changes in scope, including any significant changes in the level of PI effort, must be approved in writing by the sponsor.

If there was no reduction in effort, but the effort was just not recorded, RFCUNY requires the Grants Office to submit a Staff Effort Notice (SEN) to document the unrecovered effort on the project. This is proof that the effort was performed, but not expended.

If the effort was not expended per the budget, not addressed by a SEN, or not approved by the sponsor, the college could be asked to return the money to the sponsor.

(a). What Level of Effort Should a PI Dedicate to a Grant?

There must be alignment between the PI's role in the project as described in the grant narrative and the budget narrative. Federal sponsors prefer to see year-round PI involvement, which would translate to including both re-assigned time during the academic year (usually three credits per semester) and summer salary in the grant budget. Once awarded, best practice is to provide the level of effort that won you the grant award.

(b). What Is the Minimum Effort Policy?

At least one Senior Personnel must devote at least 1% effort in each budget period over the term of the award.

In NSF grants, PIs and Senior Personnel must charge at least 75% of the effort they have budgeted to remain in compliance with agency regulations.

(c). Limits on Effort

Note that a PI's effort may not exceed 100% across multiple active federally funded awards. Additionally, NSF requires that PIs allocate no more than two person-months of time (22.22% of salary).

(d). Processing Staff Effort

RCUNY Guidelines are here.

Policy 549

Processing Staff Effort

Glossary of Acronyms

A&A	Attestation and Authorization Form, which PIs sign to confirm the information presented is accurate and to authorize submission.
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
AEF	Account Establishment Form
AOR	Authorized Organizational Representative
APA	Assistant Project Administrator
CAGE	A unique identifying number required on certain grants forms
CV	Curriculum Vitae; resume
DUNS	A unique identifying number required on certain grants forms
EIN	Employer ID Number required on certain grants forms
EO	Equal Opportunity
GO	Grants Officer, *i.e.,* Office of Sponsored Programs
GRA	Graduate Research Assistant
HHS	Health and Human Services
ICA	Independent Contractor Agreement
IDC	Indirect Cost, a budget category
IRB	Institutional Research Board
MOU	Memoranda of Understanding; an agreement
MTA	Metropolitan Transportation Authority
MSDS	Material Safety Data Sheet
NOFO	Notice of Funding Opportunity,
NSF	National Science Foundation
OTPS	Other Than Personnel Services
PAF	Personnel Action Form
PI	Principal Investigator
PA	Project Administrator
PO	Purchase Order
PRSY	Project Sub-Year; the heading of RFCUNY.org accounts
PS	Personnel Services, a budget category
PTD	Period to Date
RFCUNY	Research Foundation of CUNY, our fiscal agent
SAM	System of Award Management, platform for management of federal grants
SFS	Statewide Financial System of NY, platform for submission and management of state grants
SSN	Social Security Number
TIN	Tax ID Number
UEI	Unique Entity Identifier, required on certain grants forms
WR	Web Report
YTD	Year To Date

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