



Grant Writing

Developing a Scope of Work & Budget

Questions & Answers

Q: When should an agency look into securing a higher negotiated indirect rate beyond the 10%?

A: Here are some resources to clarify indirect cost rate agreement and the negotiation process:

- [Guidance for Negotiating an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement with NEH](#)
- US Health & Human Services – [Indirect Cost Negotiations](#)
- US Department of Education - [Guidance for Establishing an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement or Cost Allocation Plan](#)
- 34 CFR 75.560 (b)
- [FAR 15.404-1\(b\)](#)
- US Dept of Energy – Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations- [Indirect Cost Rate Agreement and Rate Proposal Guidance](#)
- US Department of Labor –
 - [Guide for Indirect Cost Determinations](#) (Feb 2023)
 - [Indirect Cost FAQ's](#)

Q: Is \$5,000 the max per month for office supplies?

A: No, this amount was an example for the presentation. There is no limit for office supplies. Include the amount you need and justify why it is needed.

Q: If you put \$25,000.00 in your budget for equipment and now the equipment is no longer needed do you have to use it

A: No, you do not have to purchase equipment that is no longer needed. If this is a federal grant, you will need to communicate with the Grant Management Specialist listed in the grant award agreement and complete a budget revision for their review and approval.

Q: You mention that incentive could be added under supplies but is there a guideline of what could be approved?

A: Gift cards, gift items, giveaways, and prizes may be used in limited circumstances to meet the programmatic goals. All costs of the incentive program must meet Federal Cost Principles (i.e., costs are reasonable, allowable, allocable and necessary to meet program objectives). The program must adhere to all Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for grant awards found at 45 CFR 75 and other applicable federal laws and regulations.

State, local, and tribal policies, procedures, and requirements may be more restrictive than applicable federal laws, regulations and policies, and these state and local restrictions must be adhered to.



Consideration should be given to the purpose of the incentive, how it will be effectively and appropriately implemented.

Q: I have a question about allocating admin staff to a government grant. We are required to show service numbers and admin staff do not provide direct services to our clients but are essential to our organization's functioning, so we typically just put general service numbers (for the scope of work). Do you think this is a good strategy?

A: Please contact your grant Project Officer or Grant Management Specialist to discuss whether you can include expenses for your administrative staff in the grant. It might be that these staff are already included in your indirect rate if you have one. If that is the case, then you cannot include them in your direct costs.

Q: For travel, we follow the GSA but some events are hosted at locations where the GSA cost is not honored, and staying elsewhere would actually cost more due to transportation costs to and from the event hotel or it will just be a hardship. How do you include a situation like that in the justification.

A: Please see the section below from CFR Title 41, Subtitle F, Chapter 301, Subchapter B, Part 301-11, Subpart D for when you would request reimbursement for Actual Expense rather than the GSA per diem lodging rate:

Subpart D—Actual Expense

§ 301-11.300 When is actual expense reimbursement warranted?

When:

(a) Lodging and/or meals are procured at a prearranged place such as a hotel where a meeting, conference or training session is held;

Q: Are there standard questions funders always ask on every grant application (e.g.) What problem/issue/community needs are you addressing?" Etc.

A: There are “common” questions that funders ask in grant applications. This training on OFA’s website reviews those common questions and how to answer them: [July 2023 Training - Introduction to Grant Writing: Developing Your Common Grant Application](#)

Q: I thought it was a 10% category wise, not by line item? Over/under line item for equipment

A: Great catch and question! Non-federal entities are allowed to move funds between direct cost categories, or within cost categories, if they are not creating a new budget category, or completely “zeroing” out a category. Simply put, Non-federal entities are allowed to re-budget without written approval of the grant officer if they are moving less than 10% of the entire award (for the entire life of the award) to another direct cost category.