

POLICY

Participant Support

Topic: Sponsored Awards Admin & Mgmt	Department: Grants	Policy No: 5.170.01	Effective Date: 12/26/14	Page No: 1 of 2
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Purpose: To assist principal investigators and staff in insuring that federal and sponsor-specific regulations regarding participant support costs are satisfied.

- Policy:**
1. Some federal agencies provide participant support for a project or activity for training programs, formal meetings, conferences or symposia. Guidelines vary with sponsors and programs and it is important to refer to the specific agency / program guidelines. Award budget justifications must be adhered to in all circumstances. (*Note: the National Science Foundation often awards grants that have participant support and NSF has the most restrictive policies governing expenditures and reporting. See [NSF Policy on Participant Support Costs](#).*)
 2. Funds provided for participant support may not be diverted to other expense categories without prior written approval of the federal agency program officer.
 3. Participant support costs are direct costs for stipends, subsistence allowances, transportation, and other related costs for participants or trainees (not employees) in connection with the training activities, conferences, and symposia.
 4. A participant is defined as an individual who is a recipient of a service or training opportunity from a training program, conference, symposia or other short-term instructional or information sharing activity funded by a sponsored award. Participants may include students, national scholars or scientists, private sector representatives, and teachers. A participant cannot be an employee.
 5. Participant support may not be paid to trainees that are being paid from other federal government sources.
 6. Participant support stipends are not intended for graduate students enrolled in a degree program at Cornell University that are housed at The Boyce Thompson Institute.
 7. When certain meals are an integral and necessary part of a conference or meeting (working meals where business is transacted), grant funds may be used for such meals if approved in the budget and budget justification by the sponsor agency. Grant funds may be used to supply a reasonable amount of coffee or soft drinks (no snacks) for conference or meeting participants during coffee breaks if the event is an all-day long event and approved in the budget and budget justification by the sponsor agency. Although local participants may participate in conference meals and coffee breaks when applicable, grant funds may not be used to provide local participants meal allowances or per diem. An agenda and attendance sheet must be furnished for the working luncheon. No funds can be used for meals or breaks for intramural meetings. No funds can be used for entertainment or social activities.

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8. For the NSF REU program, documentation of program details, including stipend allowances, housing allowances, and travel allowances, are required by the Outreach Director in a signed letter and returned with an acceptance signature by the participant. Scientist/mentor arrangements must be documented. Signed completion of the training program by the mentor and outreach director for individual participants is required prior to final stipend payment.
9. BTI Institute must ensure that the participant support funds are being spent accordingly and in compliance with the federal regulations. Sub-accounts (separate general ledger accounts) have been established to separately identify participant support costs. The following are the general ledger account numbers:
 - GL #5034: Participant Support – Stipend
 - GL #5035: Participant Support – Travel
 - GL #5036: Participant Support – Subsistence. Housing, meal allowances.
 - GL #5037: Participant Support – Other. Expenses such as supplies (material, kits, demonstration supplies, research materials) and participant support health insurance if applicable.

Sponsor-specific guidelines, along with the award letter and terms of the award from the sponsor agency, will determine if F&A is allowable on participant support funds.