Financial Information for MAE Faculty and Principal Investigators
MAE Business Office

GENERAL INFORMATION

The MAE Business Office, located in D209, is directed by Marcia Kuonen, Business Manager.

Assistant Grant Managers are Louis Riehl and Kathy Opitz.

Other Business Office staff:
Valerie Carroll is the department VISA card system manager. She also manages keys, postage, mail, petty cash and disseminates biweekly paychecks.
Debbie manages the Purchasing systems, and proposal submission processes.
Deanna prepares reimbursement forms, and organizes seminars and workshops for the department. She will help with academic course needs.

PREPARATION OF GRANT PROPOSALS

Please – before you come to see me with a grant proposal, be sure you know or have the following:

ALLOW PLENTY OF TIME SO THAT THE 5-DAY LEAD TIME NEEDED BY Office of Research and Project Administration (ORPA) IS MET!!!!

1) Organizational Decisions

Who is the PI? Co-I(s)?
Who will participate in the project?
Who will be paid, and what is their expected effort to be?
What departments are they in?
Are any subcontractors going to participate?
What equipment will be needed?

2) Subcontracts

The PI must determine the need for subrecipient participation in the proposed scope of work that will be submitted to the sponsor.

Get the contact information of PI, and grant manager at the other institution(s).
The subcontractor PI should send a draft Statement of Work, budget and justification to Marcia Kuonen or Debbie Brown. We also need Princeton forms completed by the subcontract institution(s) which Debbie will send to them.
Indirect costs are only charged on the first $25K spent on the subaward. Since our indirect cost rate is currently 61%, that amount ($15,250) must also be included in the budget. It can either be absorbed in the primary budget or the subaward budget.
3) Cost Share Commitments (if required)
   - You should first meet with the concerned parties for an idea of what they are willing to commit, and then get it in writing
   - You then need to meet with the Chair of MAE to discuss cost sharing commitments.

4) Send Marcia and Debbie the call (request for proposals) information.

5) Title of your proposal and any quotes should be emailed to Marcia and Debbie.

6) Current and Pending information (or updates) for all key persons should be emailed to Debbie.

**BUDGET INFORMATION**

1) Foreign travel must be budgeted on your grant if you intend to travel abroad at all. If it is not budgeted in the proposal, but it’s necessary at a later date, you will need to ask the sponsor for approval before you take the trip.

   Fly America Act: All federally funded travel abroad must comply with the Fly America Act, (i.e., fly on US carriers), with these exceptions:

   **Code Share Agreement**
   The Code Share Agreement provides for compliance with the Fly America Act if the U.S. air carrier is the ticketing agent and issues a flight on a non-U.S. air carrier. **The payment for the airfare must be made to the U.S. air carrier.** If a non-U.S. air carrier is the ticketing agent, the flight is considered a non-U.S. air carrier flight and is in violation of the Fly America Act.

   **Open Skies Agreements**
   Open Skies Agreements provides that qualifying travelers, whose travel is supported by federal funds, may travel on airlines from the **European Union**, Australia, Switzerland and Japan as well as U.S. Flag Air Carriers. For the Open Skies Agreements exception to be allowed and selected in the **Fly America Waiver Checklist**, the following circumstances must be met, without exception:

   - Travel is not being reimbursed using Department of State (including all of the Department of Defense) funding; and
   - Travel is booked by an approved University Travel Agency, and travel voucher includes University Travel Agency’s certification of compliance with the Open Skies Agreement.

   When traveling in foreign cities, travelers may elect to use per diems for meals and incidentals only. Current foreign rates are available at the **U.S. Department of State Foreign Per Diem Rates by Location** site. Travel Accounting will only
accept rates documented from this site, and will not try to compare rates from other sources. The traveler must document that any foreign per diem claimed for meals and incidentals is from this site. Use the General Services Administration site at http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/21287 for domestic per diem rates.

Business Class travel is now allowable in the following instances, providing your grant sponsor approves it:

- Any flight segment has a scheduled in-air flying time in excess of five hours, OR
- The total scheduled in-air flight time, including connecting legs, is in excess of seven hours, OR
- A medical justification has been documented by a primary care provider.

2) Equipment (over $5K) must also be included in the proposal budget. You need to get current quotes from vendors for the proposal. It is generally understood that equipment should not be purchased from six months prior to the termination date of the project, UNLESS you obtain sponsor approval to buy it at that time. Indirect costs are not charged on equipment. See Debbie for ordering.

**Fabricated Equipment** - A unique, identifiable, and discrete item which cannot be acquired off-the-shelf, has a useful life of more than one year, and is made of material and components which cumulatively cost $5,000 or more. If you are planning to build or fabricate a piece of equipment involving several vendors, but cumulatively will cost $5K or more, you need to see the Business Office and fill out a Fabricated Equipment Request form. A new subgrant account will be set up for accumulating the costs of this equipment, including shop charges, vendor labor, shipping, installation, and operating software, that directly make up a fabricated equipment item. When the equipment is finished, another form (Fabricated Equipment Completion Verification) must be submitted regarding the completion of the fabrication.

3) General supplies, including computers, printers, office supplies and paper, toner, and other general use items, **are not appropriate for a grant**, unless you can document that 1) either they will be used expressly on this project; or 2) if you have multiple projects, the items should be logically applied as a percentage of each project. If a computer is needed to run equipment or gather data from a piece of scientific equipment, then you can easily justify purchasing it on a grant if the equipment is used solely for one project.

4) Food is not appropriate for a grant, unless a workshop where you would serve food is planned for an activity on the grant project. Then you must address it in the budget justification, and declare a budget for the workshop. Lunches for your “research group” are not appropriate for a grant, but rather, your research rebate
account (discretionary funds) would support that type of activity. Discretionary funds are “2000” accounts, such as startup accounts, gift accounts or research rebate accounts. Alcohol charges are never allowed on grant accounts. Meals with other researchers are allowable on 2000 accounts if their research benefits Princeton. In this case, please provide a list of such persons with the reimbursement request. When paying for a meal, please attach the actual itemized food receipt to the travel voucher, not the credit card receipt. If it is not written in English, please have the cashier translate it into English.

5) Tuition is charged proportionately with the graduate stipend/effort on the project. It cannot be split between another grant. In other words, you can’t charge stipend on one project and tuition on another. Another important fact to remember is that if you support a student on your startup or other 2000 account, full tuition will automatically be charged. Grants have the privilege of only paying half tuition costs, with the other half subsidized by the university, due to the provision that the grant is paying full indirect costs. Conversely grants that do not pay full indirect costs rates currently in effect, will not be granted the subsidy and will be charged full tuition rates also. Indirect costs are not charged on tuition.

6) You, as the PI, have the ultimate responsibility for management of your grant award. This is why after each semester, you are asked to certify the effort of yourself and your research staff, including graduate students, on each grant. The Business Manager reviews each grant before giving you the direction to approve and certify each person’s effort. Since some grants may have closed during the certification period, it is important that all changes and corrections have been made prior to your final effort certification, so please wait for the go ahead from the Business Manager. You also have approval authority on your subcontractors’ invoices which will automatically come to your email address for approval. Again, the Business Manager needs to review the invoice for comparing their costs to their original budget plans before you approve the invoices.

7) Any changes to the original plan of your project, whether budgetary, scope of work, pre award spending (unless noted in the award documents), or extensions, need to be approved by the sponsor of the grant. As a rule of thumb, budget categories have a 25% variance before sponsor approval is required, however, this may differ from sponsor to sponsor. The Business Manager and Assistant Grant Managers will assist you in these processes.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Costs must be allowable to be charged to a project: They must be

a) Allocable (or have specific benefit to) the project; and therefore, may not be shifted to another project just because you have exceeded your budget. If a cost benefits two or more projects in proportions that can be
determined logically, the cost should be allocated to the projects based on the proportional benefit.
b) Reasonable (it must benefit the project)
c) Consistently applied
d) Compliant with the specific sponsor requirements as set forth in the sponsor agreement
e) They should be budgeted in the proposal. If not, you need to request approval from the sponsor to do a “re budget.”

Travelers have 60 days after return from travel to request reimbursement for travel. Reimbursements made after 60 days will be considered income and subject to income tax. In addition, travelers must justify why they delayed the request for reimbursement. You may request a travel advance, based on estimated travel needs. Please see the Business Office for assistance.

Cell phones for business: You can purchase a cell phone through Office of Information Technology, which will manage your monthly charges made to your research rebate or other 2000 project/grant account. You can transfer an existing cell phone through OIT as well.

**LEARNED SOCIETY TRAVEL SUPPORT**: You may use up to $1850 per year travel support from the Dean of the Faculty, for up to 3 days of travel costs. Please see the DOF web site for eligibility and reimbursement details. Basically, you must be a speaker, be the chair of a session, be invited to discuss at a session, or be involved as an officer, in order for the travel to be supported by Learned Society. The date of the talk (or your participation) must be within the fiscal year that you apply for. In other words, if you begin your travel on 6/29, and your talk is 6/30, then you can charge the travel to the current fiscal year. If you begin your travel on 6/29, and your talk is on 7/1, then the travel support must be in the “new” fiscal year. Travel in May and June will be accepted up to 60 days following the end of the travel.

**Fraud, Ethical Business Practice, Conflicts of Interest**

MAE trusts that you will not charge items for your own personal use on your grants, OR on your 2000 accounts, including memberships to the Princeton fitness center, gifts for persons in your employ (with the exception of retirement gifts), meals or travel costs for anyone not doing work that benefits Princeton University. MAE follows University policies, including conflict of interest, which can be found online on the Human Resources site, “Right, Rules and Responsibilities.” If in doubt, please don’t hesitate to ask someone in the Business Center or the Department Manager, Ms. Maureen Hickey, before you buy!
DEPARTMENT VISA CARD AND MARKETPLACE

VISA CARD POLICY (Use of MAE’s Departmental VISA card)

• You must preapprove all purchases made by your grad students and staff.
• When you pick up the card from Valerie in the Business Office, she will give you an MAE Visa Credit Card form to complete at the time of pick up. You also will need to sign the card out on the department log book.
• Card must be returned to Valerie immediately after the purchase is made. You will not be allowed to keep it overnight.
• Once purchase is complete and within the following week, a receipt/invoice must be submitted to Valerie.
• Meals: requires list of attendees, and purpose of meeting. Receipt must show actual items ordered, and it must be in English.
• Transaction limit is $2500. You may not split the purchase just to avoid the limit.
• The card is mainly used for travel reservations and meeting registrations, and supplies up to $2500 that cannot be purchased via the Marketplace system.

MARKETPLACE

Marketplace is a purchasing system with certain vendors who have an agreement with Princeton University to provide consistent quality service at a discounted price. You must have access to use it. See Marcia/Maureen for an access form.

Marketplace Vendors:
    Office Max (you can’t use federal grants for this)
    DHL
    UPS
    Dell
    Apple
    CDWG
    ThermoFisher Scientific
    Grainger
    Newark In One
    Sigma-Aldrich
    University Travel Portal (you can also access the Fly America rules here) and also the university-approved travel agents for help in booking your flights, especially with the Fly America rules.

SALES TAX

If you plan to purchase something directly, please ask Valerie for a Princeton Tax Exempt form to take with you to the store. Most local vendors will accept this form, and will not charge sales tax.

PETTY CASH

MAE has a petty cash for purchases $25 and under for immediate reimbursement from Valerie. You must bring her the receipt in order to get reimbursed.