

# PARTICIPANT SUPPORT GUIDANCE

Office of Research Administration (ORA)

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## What are Participant Support Costs?

Participant support means direct costs for items such as stipends or subsistence allowances, travel allowances, and registration fees paid to or on behalf of participants or trainees (but not employees) in connection with conferences, or training projects. Costs are used to support individuals who are receiving a training or learning opportunity as part of a workshop, conference, seminar, or other short-term instructional or information sharing activity funded by a sponsored award.

The participant attends the training opportunity but does not perform work or provide deliverables or services in return.

## When to include Participant Support Costs

Participant support costs are typically incurred for projects that include an education or outreach component. These costs include projects for Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU), hosting students, teachers, and/or veterans, or holding an educational workshop.

REU programs allow undergraduate students to participate and be paid in research during the summer under the guidance of a Mines faculty member; the affiliated costs of hosting the students (stipend, housing, subsistence, travel) are allowed as participant support costs.

## Allowable Participant Support Costs

Allowable Participant Support Costs can include:

- Catering for a participant workshop or conference
- Fees – such as lab usage, registration, and/or passport or visa fees for foreign participants
- Travel expenses such as airfare, housing/lodging, and per diem (local participants are not entitled to these reimbursements)
- Stipends – *not* salaries
- Supplies for the participants use (i.e. training materials or laboratory supplies)

## Unallowable Participant Support Costs

- Any expense involving Mines employees (regardless of whether they are faculty or students )
- Honoraria paid to a guest speaker or lecturer
- Facility rental or media equipment rental
- Incentive payments to an individual who agrees to participate as a human subject in a research project
- Travel for project PI or staff
- Travel for collaborators to discuss the project

## Budgeting Restrictions

Participant Support costs are:

- Budgeted as a separate category
- Costs are required to be itemized (not a lump sum)
- Excluded from the Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC) base when calculating Indirect Costs (IDC)
- Listed separately in the budget justification

Funds that are unspent cannot be rebudgeted for use in other categories without the Sponsor's prior written approval.

## Participant Support Monitoring

At award set-up, Participant Support Costs are set up as a separate fund underneath the main grant award.

Participant support funding can **only** be used for participant support costs unless prior approval is granted. If prior approval is received, a **re-budget between funds is necessary**.

## Paying Participant Stipends

Participants are **not** paid through payroll as they are not Mines employees. Participants can be paid via the Participant Agreement and Payment Request Form.

### Participant Agreement and Payment Request Form

- Participant attends Mines OR is a non-Mines student
- Individual is participating in a workshop, conference, symposium, etc.
- The Controller's Office issues a check made payable to the Participant
- Complete a W-9 for tax reporting purposes

*Please note:* Undergraduate students participating in the "Mines Undergraduate Research Program" are currently being paid as hourly undergraduate employees and should be paid on the [Undergraduate Student Employment Authorization Form](#).

## Common Scenarios

### 1. Budgeting Graduate Research Assistants (GRA) to receive participant support stipend

GRAs do not qualify to receive participant support stipend as they are a Mines employee. Any expenses involving Mines employees cannot be counted as participant support.

The GRA can coordinate the workshop but cannot be paid using funds allocated to participant support costs. GRA expenses can be budgeted and charged as a direct cost item on the main fund.

### 2. Paying speakers to present at a workshop

Honoraria expenses to pay for speakers presenting at a workshop are not allowable as participant support costs but can be budgeted and charged as a direct cost item on the main fund.

### 3. Budgeting for an NSF REU

An NSF REU Supplement supports undergraduates who are often housed on campus over the summer. Mines' faculty oversee the students during the project dates and work with them on research activities. Stipend, housing, and meals for these undergraduates are allowable participant support costs and should follow NSF guidelines.