

Formula Grants FAQs

As of July 15, 2009

General Information

“How long are Formula Grant projects?”

Animal Health, McIntire-Stennis, Hatch, and Hatch Multi-State projects are approved for periods not exceeding four years.

“What can I use Formula Funds on?”

PIs can use Formula funding assigned to their approved projects for necessary direct costs related to the project and as outlined in the approved budget displayed in WISDM. Approval is required for any request to purchase capital equipment, request to purchase computer/printer and non-consumable related items, and requests to exceed copy costs or research-related supplies should be sent to Angie Seitler at aseitler@cals.wisc.edu.

“What is required in the acknowledgement of USDA support in publications based upon or developed under Formula Grants?”

In every publication of material that is based upon or developed under the support of Formula grants, the following acknowledgement must appear:

“This material is based upon work support by the Cooperative State Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, under ID number (the recipient should enter the applicable project number here).”

In addition, every publication, excluding articles or papers published in scientific journals, must contain the following disclaimer:

“Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the view of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.”

“Why are some of my charges being disallowed on my Formula Grant after I have made the purchase(s)? I requested these items in my proposal.”

There are a number of reasons why a charge may be disallowed.

1. Most budgets are funded at the level of a half-time RA and a total of \$3,000-\$4,000 for student hourly, supplies, and travel.

- a. Total expenditures above this level of support for student hourly, supplies, and/or travel will be disallowed.
 - b. RA support is limited to one, 50% RA per month on a Formula grant project. A request must be submitted to Angie Seitler, WAES Assistant Director for review and approval **prior** to the deviation.
2. Awards are approved based on the proposed research of your project. Budgets are intensively reviewed and finalized at a later date. Items requested in your proposal are subject to disallowance based on the current policies and procedures for the WAES and OMB Circular A-21. Items deemed unallowable will be reduced from your finalized budget and/or we will require that the expenditure(s) be moved to an unrestricted funding source.

Budget

“What are the relevant policies regarding budget periods?”

Budget periods are based on the federal fiscal year and run from October 1 to September 30. No expenditures may be incurred before the starting date or after the termination date of the budget period. Unused funds from one budget period may not be carried forward to the next budget period. In addition, to insure prompt and appropriate closure of each fiscal year and meet the reporting requirements set forth by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the WAES has established cutoff dates for the expenditure of funds.

“What is fiscal responsibility?”

Formula funded projects are subject to the provisions of the "Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations 7 CFR Part 3015" and "OMB Circular A-21". In addition, Formula funding must be spent in accordance with the rules and regulations set forth by the University of Wisconsin and by the State of Wisconsin. Requisitions and all other forms of requests for expenditures of funds require prior approval from the WAES. This includes any form of direct billings such as photocopying, RARC services, etc. Please send all requisitions and requests for expenditures to Jennifer Pang, jpang@cals.wisc.edu or 240B Agricultural Hall.

“What is the funding relationship of research supported with McIntire-Stennis funds to research supported with other sources?”

The McIntire-Stennis programs is kept fiscally distinct from the Hatch Act and other authorizations administered by USDA because it is essential to be able to identify progress within the McIntire-Stennis program as a specific authorization. Hatch or other USDA administered funds may not be budgeted to McIntire-Stennis projects.

Costs

“Are Indirect Costs or F&A Costs allowable?”

No.

“Are Tuition Remissions allowable?”

No.

Procedure

“What is the procedure for a change in objectives?”

The PI must initiate a letter and send it to Angie Seitler at aseitler@cals.wisc.edu.

“What is the procedure for a change in PI?”

The PI must initiate a letter and send it to Angie Seitler at aseitler@cals.wisc.edu. This letter must be signed by the PI and the department chair.

“What is the procedure for cost transfers and salary cost transfers?”

Cost Transfers and Salary Cost Transfers for Formula Funded projects will be scrutinized in the same manner as are transfers from other funding sources. Proper justification will be required on all transfers and late transfers (beyond 90-days) will require page 2 of the form. Please see the CALS Research Division webpage on “Transfers” for more information, the Salary Cost Transfer form, and the Non-Salary Cost Transfer form. The “Salary Cost Transfers Involving Sponsored Projects” section in Best Practices should be of assistance as well. Salary Cost transfers require a PI signature and a revised Paydata form if applicable.

Rebudget

“How do I rebudget between and within categories?”

Beginning with FY 2009 (10/1/08), the WAES is requesting written justification from the PI for all requests to rebudget between categories. Approvals of rebudget requests will be sent to the PI, Administrator, and Financial Specialist. Please contact Jennifer Pang at jpang@cals.wisc.edu or (608) 890-2249 if you have any questions.

PIs may rebudget within the student hourly labor, supply, and travel budget categories (accounting for differences in fringe benefit rates within current budget). Rebudgeting requests must be made in writing with justification and must be approved prior to expending the funds. Requests for rebudgeting should be sent to Jennifer Pang at jpang@cals.wisc.edu.

“How do I rebudget unused RA salary?”

Unused RA salary savings and associated fringe benefits will be pulled back to the Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station's (WAES) administrative control on a quarterly basis. Exceptions must be made in writing to Angie Seitler at aseitler@cals.wisc.edu with justification by the principal investigator. Expenditures may not be made until approved by the WAES. Requests to rebudget the RA salary to supplies, student hourly, and/or travel will only be granted for 2 months of a year's time. The associated fringe benefits will be pulled back to the WAES and will not be rebudgeted to another category when moving RA salary.

Travel

“What type of travel is allowable on Formula Grant projects?”

Travel on Formula Grant projects is allowed for data collection/research only.

“Are conferences/meetings allowable travel costs on Formula Grant projects?”

Typically these charges are not allowed on Formula Grant projects. Travel for conferences/meetings are allowable costs for Multi-State travel for approved WI representatives. These types of travel require review and written approval PRIOR to travel.

“Is there funding available for Multi-State Travel to Annual meetings?”

The WAES will provide funding for travel to approved Multi-State research meetings for one appointed WI representative only. Requests for a substitute member to attend the multistate research meetings should be sent IN ADVANCE of the meeting to Angie Seitler at aseitler@cals.wisc.edu.

“What kind of documentation is required for travel charges on Formula Grant projects?”

Travel charges require documentation indicating: (1) Traveler name, (2) Travel dates, (3) Destination, (4) Purpose of travel, and (5) mileage (if vehicle is used). Copies of receipts, UW/WI state/Ag Research Station fleet vehicle reservation forms must be attached for charges made with Purchasing Cards, Payment to Individual Report, Direct Payment and/or Travel Expense Reports for reimbursement requests.

“What support documents are needed for Fleet vehicle travel on Formula Grant projects?”

Required copies of the fleet reservation and/or AG CAR FLEET – AUTHORIZATION AND REPORT FORM can be found from the following links: UW & WI state Fleet vehicle and Ag Research Station vehicles. Department fleet vehicles used for travel should provide a departmental log, especially travel charges directly for Formula 142 Fund projects, with required information noted for travel documentation.