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Post Award Management & Monitoring Best Practices
RSH208
Part of RAFT Foundations and RAFT Foundations Cohort
UF | Research

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If you use the JAWS screen reading software, please note that you will need to use the keyboard shortcut Insert + Down on each slide for JAWS to read the course content properly.

If you would like a copy of the course in PDF format, click the PDF button below.

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RSH208 Post Award Management & Monitoring Best Practices

This course covers the steps involved in successful post-award management through close out, including monitoring the award, modifying the award if necessary, budget revisions, cost sharing and using myinvestiGator.

By the end of this course, you will be able to:
- Manage the post-award life cycle using federal, sponsor and UF guidelines.
- Successfully monitor expenditures.
- Navigate budget revisions.
- Accurately capture cost sharing.
- Complete the close out process.

To pass this course, you must obtain at least 80% on the final assessment.

Pre-Requisite: PST130 Reconciliation and RSH260 Cost Principles

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Menu

Chapter 1: Award Management

Chapter 2: Award Monitoring

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Click Next to return to your previous place in the course.

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Getting Started

The University of Florida is committed to supporting efficient and compliant award management. It is a shared responsibility of the Principal Investigator (PI), department, college and core offices to ensure that the award is set up in UF systems in a manner to best support understanding of award conditions and university policies, meet sponsor expectations for deliverables and prior approvals, and meet financial controls and reporting requirements of the Sponsor.

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Award Lifecycle

Congratulations, you have an award! Now what?

Once the award has been received, reviewed and set up initiated by Sponsored Programs and the department, then C&G is notified to complete the integration into myUFL.
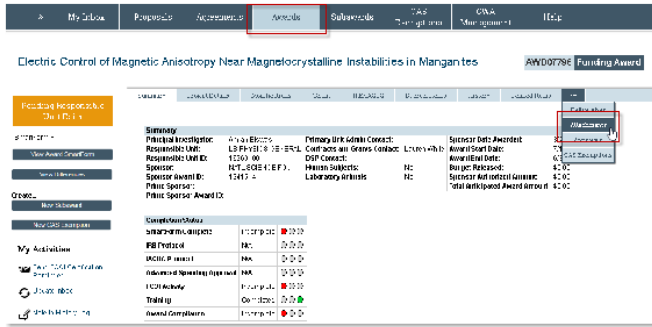
When integration is complete, the real fun begins!

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Steps to Award Management Success

It is important to get started on the correct foot. Once you receive the Notice of Award (NOA), navigate to Awards in UFIRST and click on the Attachments tab to review all pertinent documents related to the award.

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Regarding Terms & Conditions

Once you have read through the pertinent documents, make a note of any commitments/restrictions that will impact the management of the award (i.e, foreign travel restrictions, re-budgeting restrictions, publication restrictions, etc.)

NOTE: Remember, in regard to terms & conditions from the sponsor or university, the most restrictive policy applies.

Then be sure to review the Award SmartForm on the 5.3 Budget Reconciliation page as sometimes the budget is cut once awarded.
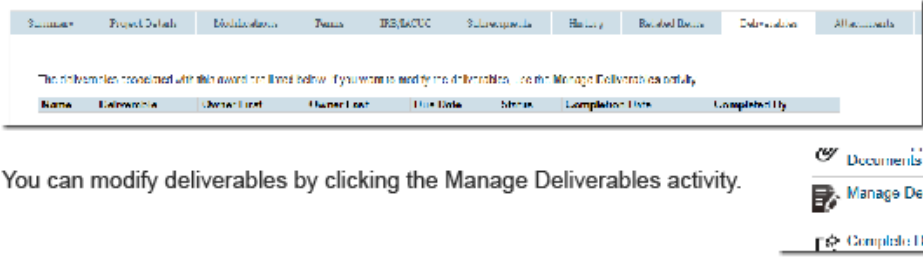
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Thoroughly review your award in UFIRST

Also, setup programmatic milestones in the Award's Deliverables module. A deliverable is any report or work product that is due to the sponsor according to the award document.

This function may also be leveraged to provide reminders to any person on the award for any purpose. Any deliverable entered will trigger notifications to the assigned responsible contact 30 days before the deliverable is due.

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Meet with Principal Investigator

As part of your meeting, be sure to discuss the following:

- Highlight important award terms and conditions and review with the PI such as: effort commitments, spending/re-budgeting, publication restrictions, reporting requirements, deadlines, etc.

- Review awarded budget with the PI and update internal budget allocations as needed.

- If major re-budgeting is required, work with the PI to finalize budget. You may also need sponsor approval. There can be quite a bit of lag time between proposal and award which may lead to changes in the planned spending and budget.

- Initiate payroll distributions and any new hires.

- What do they need to get started? What kinds of expenses will they incur: supplies, travel, equipment, etc.?

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Meet with Principal Investigator

As part of your meeting, be sure to discuss the following:

- Plan for any major equipment purchases. Do we need to   start the bidding process now?

- If the source of funding is federal are any CAS exemptions required for   any items the PI may need to purchase?

- Start the CAS exemption request process in UFIRST.

- If a subaward was included in the proposal, discuss the   subrecipient monitoring plan and how to ensure the work   is being completed.

- Start the process of creating a new subaward in UFIRST.

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Meet with Principal Investigator

The PI meeting is also a good time to review and discuss the status of any non-fiscal compliance areas that apply to the award.

Such as:
Export Control
IRB
IACUC
COI

These areas will need to be managed throughout the   life of the award as well.

Review RSH204 Non-Fiscal Compliance for Research Administrators formore information.

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 Manage Internal Spreadsheets

If you are using any internal spreadsheets in your area such as master project lists, projection sheets, etc. you should update those as well.

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True/False

Setting up an award in UFIRST is a shared responsibility between PIs, departments, colleges and core offices.

⦿ A) True
◯ B) False

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Multiple Choice
Where can you access all the pertinent documents related to the award in
UFIRST

    ⊙ A) Awards Attachment tab
    ○ B) Proposal Documents link
    ○ C) Awards Related Items tab
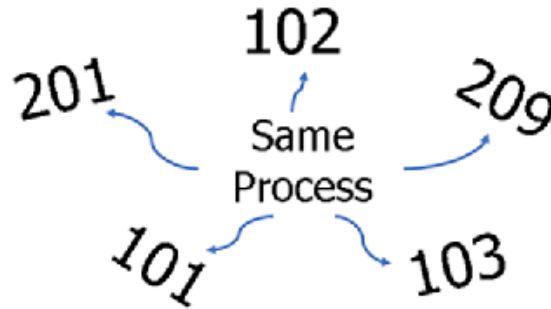   ○ D) Attach Supporting Documents activity

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Monitoring Your Award

The majority of your time will be spent monitoring your award. Monitoring is very different from reconciling.

What's the difference between reconciling and monitoring?

You learned in PST130 that reconciling is the process of comparing transactions recorded in a department's myUFL general ledger account to source documents to confirm accuracy or determine errors that require attention.
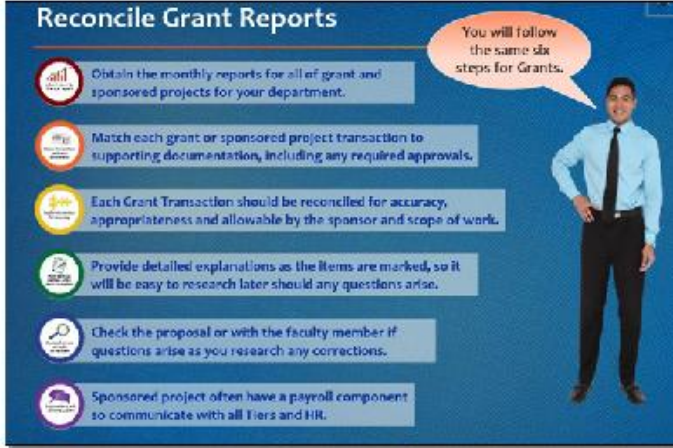
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Reconciling

PST130 prescribed six steps for reconciling grant reports.

You will follow these same six steps when reconciling 201 or 209 funds as well.

It really doesn't matter what fund is being reconciled. Reconciling grant funds is no different than any other fund – the process is the same.
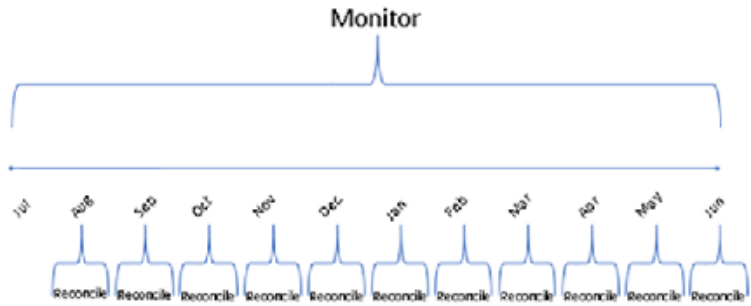
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Monitoring Your Award

However, monitoring sponsored funding involves additional steps before and after each reconciliation to assure the award is cared for successfully throughout its lifecycle.

This image below tries to show how monitoring an award goes on throughout the life of the award, while reconciling is recommended monthly.

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Monitoring Your Award

Monitoring awards on a regular basis helps you manage sponsored funds and ensures that expenditures are within appropriate limits and guidelines as well as:

- Confirm the availability of project funds as needed.
- Ensure that costs are consistent with the project schedule and incurred between the period of performance of the project.
- Discover any errors in your budget, encumbrances, or expenditures,
- Avoid overspending.
- Give your Principal Investigator a high degree of confidence that the project is in compliance with the sponsor's spending terms and conditions.
- Verify that cost transfers and corrections have been made or are made in a timely manner.
- Maintain a clear audit trail for the future.

Regular monitoring ensures problems are addressed timely and before the conclusion of the award. It also ensures compliance with the university's cost transfer policy.

What To Consider When Monitoring Awards?

Each college/department establishes their own management & monitoring practices; however we will go through some of the topics you need to review for the best possible management outcomes.

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Spending and Burn Rate

Monitoring award spending begins when the award is first received and continues throughout the life of the award. Good communication and timely review of financial information by both the PI and Research Administrator will help avoid spending spikes, address potential audit questions, and facilitate close-out of the award.

It is important to monitor the burn rate of award funds and the timing of expenditures as they relate to the performance period of the award.

For example, if an award is 20% into its period of performance and 60% of the funding has been spent, this may indicate a problem and should be investigated. Similarly, a sharp increase in spending at the end of an award period is unusual and should also be investigated.

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Spending and Burn Rate

Although the PI is ultimately responsible for the award, day-to-day financial management by a Research Administrator can make a big difference in ensuring that funds are properly spent in accordance with the approved budget and research work plan.

MyinvestiGator is your "go-to" tool for assisting in the monitoring of your awards. You can easily answer questions such as:

- "Is there enough funding in the travel category to cover this TA?"
- "Who is paid on this project"
- "Has the cost share been met for this project?"

Though designed with the PI in mind, it is almost one-stop shopping for Administrators for the spending details on the award.

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Monitoring Expenditures

Every expenditure should have appropriate supporting documentation. Documentation is required to support any expense charged to a sponsored award. The support for expenditures should include:

- Clear description of what is being purchased
- Information on how the expense provides a direct benefit to the award
- Additional justification may be required for unusual expenditures
- Charges split between more than one project must be allocated on the basis of proportional benefit or other reasonable method. The methodology for the split should also be documented.

Regular monitoring should catch errors such   as missing charges that may have been posted   elsewhere or typographical errors.

Any questionable charges must be brought promptly to the PI's attention, and, if needed, corrected by an appropriate cost transfer.

Cost Transfers

A cost transfer is an after-the-fact reallocation of the cost associated with a transaction from a sponsored project to another sponsored project or source of funding.

Cost transfers should not:
- Occur more than 90 days after the date the charge was originally posted
- Contain inadequate explanations
- Be used to "spend down" funds at the end of an award
- Be used to cover cost overruns by moving expenses to another unrelated sponsored award

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CAS Exemption

A CAS Exemption may be necessary on federal projects where the PI wishes to charge items such as:

- salaries of administrative and clerical staff
- office supplies
- postage
- local telephone costs
- computers
- computer equipment <$5,000 and memberships.

As you learned in RSH260 Cost Principles, the federal government considers these to be normally charged indirectly, and not eligible to be placed on the award. Any CAS Exemption should be submitted through UFIRST.

It is never appropriate to use another account code to bypass the CAS Exemption process. For example, using 731100 Lab Supplies, instead of 732100 Office Supplies.

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Salary and Effort

Salary is the largest portion of expenditures on most awards. Special attention should be paid to processing payroll distributions to ensure they are consistent with an individuals planned assignments.

Research Administrators should meet regularly with PI's to review salary charges for accuracy.

- Are the right individuals being charged?
- Are the salaries commensurate with the effort provided?
- Have there been any significant deviations to an individual's work assignments that require an update their payroll distribution?

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Travel

Travel is another area where an in-depth review should take place.   Travel is allowable as a direct cost when such travel:

- Is necessary to fulfill the research objective of the project.
- Is reasonable and represents prudent use of the funds.
- Demonstrates a clearly defined relationship between the traveler   and their support of the project work.

The terms and conditions of the individual award should be   reviewed prior to incurring and/or submitting any travel cost   for reimbursement.

When there is a conflict between university and award   requirements the more restrictive policy applies.

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Subaward Monitoring

Subrecipient monitoring is a shared responsibility at the University of Florida, with the PI having the lead role in monitoring the programmatic and financial activities of a subrecipient. However, Research Administrators should be familiar with the subaward agreement, Sponsor requirements, and the subrecipient budget to assist PIs in their monitoring responsibilities. RAs can assist by:
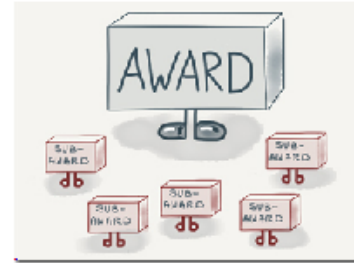
1. Reviewing subrecipient invoices to ensure invoices are within the parameters of the subaward budget and questioning expenditures if necessary.

2. Ensuring subrecipient invoices are approved by the PI and returned to C&G on a timely basis.

3. Work with C&G to request clarification from the subrecipient regarding any unusual or excessive charges invoiced by the subrecipient.

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True/False
Most of your time will be spent monitoring your award.

       ⊙ A) True
       ○ B) False

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Multiple Choice
When do you monitor your awards?

        ○ A) Only before reconciliation
        ○ B) Only after reconciliation
        ○ C) Monthly
        ⊙ D) Continuously throughout the life of the award

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What To Do When Plans Change

There are times in the life of an award when plans change.

Examples are:
- Research Assistants graduate and need to be replaced.
- A critical piece of equipment breaks and has to be repaired or the work has to be sent out to be completed.
- Your PI leaves for another institution.

Any changes requiring sponsor or institutional approval must be routed through UFIRST via a modification for Sponsored Programs to review. Sponsored Programs will assist with identifying whether sponsor approval is required or not and whether or not additional information is required to process the modification.

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What To Do When Plans Change

Examples of the types of modifications and requests that must be routed through UFIRST are:
- Financial (example: adding budget, request a temporary at-risk advance, create new projects)
- Dates (example: No Cost Extension)
- Personnel (example: add key personnel, change project manager)
- Terms and Conditions (example: change in the nature of carryover requirements)
- Compliance (example: add a new IRB or IACUC protocol)
- Early Termination (example: stop work orders)
- Project Demographics
- Award Demographics (example: change Sponsor Name, Responsible Unit)

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What To Do When Plans Change

The PI is required to report significant deviations from budget and program plans, and request prior approvals through Sponsored Programs from awarding agencies for any of the following program- or budget-related reasons:

- Change in the scope or the objective of the project or program.
- Change in the Principal Investigator.
- Disengagement for more than three months or a 25% reduction in time devoted to the project, by the approved PI.
- Requests for additional funding.
- Subaward unless in approved budget, transfers, or subcontracting out of a substantive programmatic portion of work, unless described in the application and funded in the approved award.

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Re-budgeting

If your award is a budget control level 3, the University has the authority to approve re-budgeting and allows you to freely spend between direct cost categories. In this case formal re-budgeting in UFIRST is not necessary unless you are re-budgeting between categories that accrue F&A and those that do not. While level 3 indicates sponsor flexibility in re budgeting the sponsor has really placed the onus on the institution to determine appropriateness of re-budgeting.

Budget control level 5 indicates that re-budgeting restrictions exist that may require re-budgeting approvals be obtained from the sponsor. Approval requests to the sponsor should be submitted through UFIRST prior to spending.

Significant deviations (increase or decrease) in single budget categories may be an indicator of a change in scope. You can help identify these occurrences and assist in obtaining the necessary sponsor approval to move forward with the work.

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Re-budgeting

Depending on the terms of the award the PI may be required to submit a revised budget to the sponsor, explaining the need for re-budgeting award costs. Many federal agencies have transferred the authority to approve such changes to awardee institutions.

An outline of the requirements for re-budgeting and other prior approvals for these federal sponsors can be found in this Research Terms and Conditions Prior Approvals Matrix.

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Budget Modifications

When initiating a re-budgeting action in UFIRST for core office review you will be asked the following questions:

- Why are the funds needed in the category to which the funds are being transferred?
- Why are the funds available in the category from which the funds are being transferred?
- Has there been a change in scope of the project?

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Re-budgeting Process

Example: You've budgeted $5000 for travel, but the cost of the trip is $7500. You've purchased a piece of equipment at a significant cost savings, which you now want to use
on travel.

When re-budgeting from direct cost categories that are exempt or excluded from Facilities & Administration (F&A) costs to categories not exempt from F&A costs, the amount being re-budgeted is reduced proportionately by the associated F&A cost of the non-exempt category.

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Re-budgeting Scenarios

Re-budget from a category not subject to F&A cost recovery to a category which is subject to F&A cost recovery. For example, PI wants to increase her material & supplies budget by $5,000 and will re-budget from funds available in her tuition budget.

Question: What amount should be re-budgeted from the tuition category?

Answer: $7,625 must be re-budgeted from tuition to cover $5,000 of supplies expense as well as the additional amount of indirects ($2,625) associated with the material & supplies expenditures.
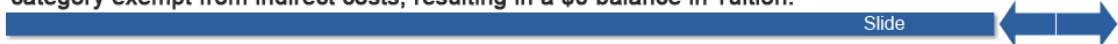
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Re-budgeting Scenarios

Re-budgeting a specified amount from a category which is subject to indirect cost recovery to a category which is not subject to indirect cost recovery. For example, PI is overspent in tuition. You need to correct the negative balance in myinvestiGator because it is throwing off your projections.

Question: How much funding in direct costs must be moved to correct the negative balance? F&A costs?

Answer: $3,137.44 in direct costs from Foreign Travel. An additional $1,709.90 from indirect costs for his tuition overage by re-budgeting from an expense category subject to indirect costs to an expense category exempt from indirect costs, resulting in a $0 balance in Tuition.

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True/False

The PI is required to obtain sponsor approval for deviations from budget and program plans, such as change in scope, change in PI, disengagement of 3 months or more, or request for additional funding.

⊙ A) True
○ B) False

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QUICK REVIEW

Any changes requiring sponsor or institutional approval must be:

- A) Submitted directly to the sponsor
- B) Routed through myUFL as an adjustment
- ● C) Routed through UFIRST as a modification
- D) All of the above
- E) None of the above

Submit

Multiple Choice

Any changes requiring sponsor or institutional approval must be:

○ A) Submitted directly to the sponsor
○ B) Routed through myUFL as an adjustment
⊙ C) Routed through UFIRST as a modification
○ D) All of the above
○ E) None of the above

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Cost Sharing

Cost Sharing or matching may be required on some awards. This means the University must make a contribution towards the total costs of a project.

The share of such costs may come from several sources:
- A portion of the faculty member's project time and related fringes for which no support funds are being requested.
- A portion of the Facilities and Administrative (F&A) costs may be contributed (special Campus approval is required).
- Resources contributed by the unit (i.e. characterization time in one of the auxiliaries).
- Third party contributions (i.e. salary dollars/effortfor persons at the company or use of their labs/equipment).

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Types of Cost Sharing

Mandatory	Voluntary Committed	Voluntary Uncommitted
- Required by the Sponsor as part of receiving the award - Costs are documented in the proposed budget or budget justification - Explicitly referenced in the award documents once funded	- Not required by the Sponsor and cannot be used as an evaluation factor - Costs are pledged on a voluntary basis in the proposed budget or budget justification	- Contributions made after the award is received - Not required by the Sponsor - Not documented in proposed budget or budget justification - Not referenced in the award document

	- If proposal is awarded, cost share is now mandatory	
Tracked and reported	Tracked and not normally reported	Not tracked or reported

It's UF's policy that only mandatory cost sharing be offered to Sponsors. If your award includes cost shating, you must monitor and document those costs throughout the life of the project as part of the management process.

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Cost Sharing

To see if your award has a cost sharing commitment you can look in UFIRST at the cost share budget for the most detail or you can look in myinvestiGator.

Salary cost share is typically captured through the Effort System in myUFL. Other forms of cost share (expense or third-party) require the submission of the Manual Cost Sharing Entry form that can be found here - http://research.ufl.edu/cg/forms.html

Remember, it's very important that you monitor cost share regularly. If you wait until the end of the award, you may realize that you cannot meet the cost share requirements.

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Monitoring Cost Share

To view the details of a cost sharing commitment in UFIRST navigate to the Cost Share Summary tab within the proposal. This provides details on the proposed plan for meeting cost sharing.

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Monitoring Cost Share

One of the simplest places to monitor cost share is within myinvestiGator.

In myinvestiGator, click on Cost Share Required link to view cost share budget details. Choose theCost Share Met link to view cost share transaction details.
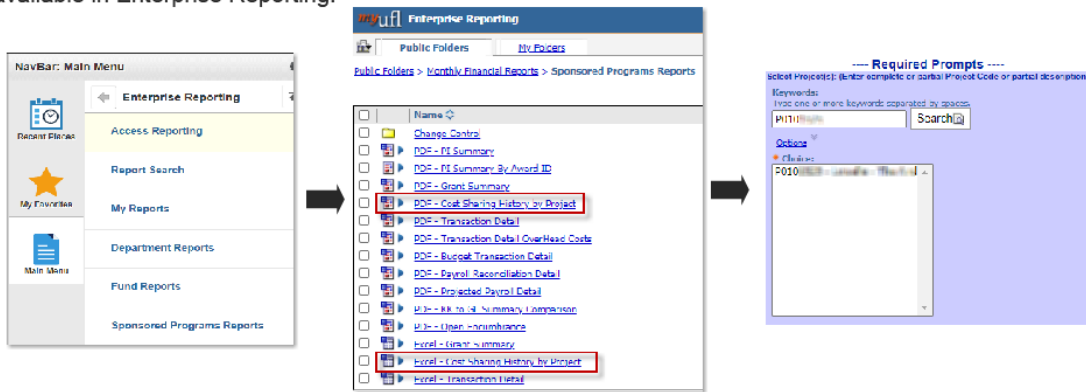
In this example, you can see nearly $180,000 of cost share was required by the sponsor, and just over $140,000 has been met so far in the project.

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Monitoring Cost Share

You can also monitor cost sharing in myUFL by utilizing the Cost Sharing History by Project reports available in Enterprise Reporting.

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Multiple Choice

UF's policy is that only _____ cost sharing is accepted.

- ⊙ A) Mandatory
- ○ B) Voluntary Committed
- ○ C) Voluntary Uncommitted
- ○ D) All of the above

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Multiple Choice
You can see if an award has cost sharing commitments in (choose as many as are correct)

        ⊙ A) myUFL
        ⊙ B) UFIRST
        ⊙ C) myinvestiGator
        ○ D) UFOLIO

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End of Award Life and Close Out

Closeout starts the day you begin to think about your proposal.

Effective research administration over the life of the award will aid in the smooth closeout of the award.

Manage the project closely throughout the award, not just during the last 90 days. Since most sponsors require final financial reports 90 days from the award end date, it is very important to have made any financial corrections in as timely a manner as possible.

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End of Award Life and Close Out

You are encouraged to pay special attention during the last 3 – 6 months of an award. Talk to your PI about the approaching deadline and determine if a No-Cost Extension (NCE) is needed.

Review the overall award, including:
•	Will work be completed by the end of the period of performance?
•	Any corrections needed?
•	Any additional travel planned?
•	Are there large dollar amount or volume of expenditures expected?
•	Can open encumbrances be closed?
•	Do you have a plan for moving personnel?
•	Have all commitments been met? Effort, Cost Share?

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30 Days Before Close Out

•   Review the items on the previous slide again.

•   Review open encumbrances.

•   Ensure all outstanding invoices are being paid and processed by Accounts Payable.

•   Prepare the paperwork to move personnel to new funds.

•   Ensure all cost sharing has been met.

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Fiscal Closeout

The fiscal closeout of a project is a shared responsibility that   involves the PI, the department research administration/fiscal staff   and Contracts and Grants Accounting.

The fiscal closeout involves the following:
•   Review expenditures to ensure all are reasonable, allocable, and allowable costs made in support of the performance of the project.
•   Close encumbrances.
•   Move salary distributions.
•   Verify that subcontractor's final invoices have been received and paid.
•   Account for all cost sharing.
•   Remove any unallowable costs, including over expenditures.

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Fiscal Reports/Invoices

Fiscal reports/invoices are prepared by Contracts and Grants Accounting, after the PI and unit administrators are given the opportunity to review and make any needed corrections to ensure all expenditures are accurately recorded.

The final fiscal reports are generally due to the sponsor 60-120 days after the expiration date of the award.

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On-Time Reporting

Know your sponsor!

Federal: Due most no later than 120 days
Non-Federal: Due date varies, but normally due earlier than Federal Sponsors

Reports generally due at closeout include:
•   Final Technical Report (PI)
•   Final Financial Report (C&G)
•   Final Invention Report (UF Innovate)
•   Final Property Report (Asset Management)

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Delinquent Reports

It is important that reports are submitted on time as some agencies will not release new funds to a PI, or even to the UF, until all final reports have been submitted.

For non-responsive PIs, C&G/DSP may actively engage Chairs and Deans to ensure reports are submitted in response to delinquent notices.

Reports not submitted within one year after the end of the period of performance of a federal award constitute material failure to comply with the terms and conditions of the award.   Federal agencies MUST report the delinquency in the OMB-designated integrity and performance system (currently FAPIIS) and may pursue other enforcement actions. Reference 2 CFR 200.344.

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Records Retention

Expenditure allowability rules unique to sponsored projects can result in requirements for documentation beyond what is generated for financial transactions on non-sponsored accounts.

For example, CAS Exemptions require written justification to deviate from direct vs. indirect charging norms; and documentation of personnel charges should include PI authorization through effort reporting.

Any documentation generated to meet the additional requirements unique to sponsored projects should be retained with, and for the time period applicable to, the standard transaction records.

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Records Retention

The University is also subject to state of Florida general schedule of records retention GS1-SL, Item #422 which requires **retention of all related grant files for 5 years after completion of the grant cycle or project**, whichever is applicable.

It is also important to note that individual Sponsors can deviate from these norms and specify retention periods unique to a sponsor, program, award or record type.

The strictest of retention policies is applicable.

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QUICK REVIEW

Final financial reports are generally due to the sponsor _____ days from the award end date.

- ○ A) 0-30
- ○ B) 30-60
- ● C) 60-120
- ○ D) No formal due date

You must click anything again before continuing.

Submit

Multiple Choice

Most Sponsors require final financial reports _____ days from the award end date.

- ○ A) 0 - 30
- ○ B) 30 - 60
- ⊙ C) 60 - 120
- ○ D) No formal due date

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True/False

It's important that reports are submitted on time to avoid the potential of new funds being withheld by the Sponsor.

⊙ A) True
○ B) False

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Reporting Fraud

If you are not sure if fraud is happening, talk to someone in Finance & Accounting, a trusted advisor, a supervisor, or someone you trust.

To report potential legal, policy, or ethical conduct violations or concerns:

Anonymous Compliance Hotline: 1-877-556-5356
https://app.mycompliancereport.com/report.aspx?cid=uofl

University of Florida Compliance Hotline
https://compliance.ufl.edu/uf-compliance-hotline-2/
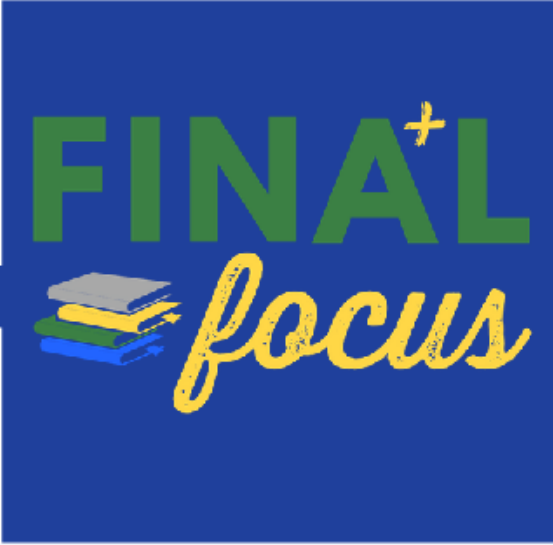
UF Controller's Office: 352-392-1321

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FINAL ASSESMENT
Congratulations, you've completed the course content.

When you are ready, click the Next button to complete the final assessment.

Reminder: 80% or higher must be obtained to successfully pass the course.