

Participant Support Costs

Participant support is often provided for awards made primarily for organized training, meetings, conferences or symposia with a specific written agenda. Participant support costs cannot be used for any other purpose and thus cannot be rebudgeted into other areas without sponsor approval. The purpose of these funds is to support the costs of individual participants in accordance with the stated goals of the award.

I. Who is a Participant?

The term “participant” can at times be the source of some confusion. A participant, in the context of a sponsored award, is an external person who is invited to participate in and benefit from the activity or training defined in the award. There are several key points to remember regarding participant support:

- RPI employees, collaborators or associates **cannot** be participants and as such **cannot** have costs reimbursed through participant support funds.
- Any person already paid or supported through **any** other federal funds (including Fed employees) during the project period are also not eligible to be classified as participants.
- Participants are not required to provide any deliverables.
- The costs related to collaborator gatherings do not qualify.

In very limited instances, RPI students are included on the participant support line of the budget as required by the sponsoring agency. For example, the stipends for a student participating in the [Research Experience for Undergraduates \(REU\)](#) program at NSF are budgeted on the participant support line. Although NSF requires that the stipend be included on this line, since they are RPI students, they are not considered participants. NSF REUs are generally set up as sub funds to existing awards and the costs for are charged to student account codes 282 or 282S.

For more information on REUs please see the [Research Experience for Undergraduates \(REU\)](#) Tip or the NSF Program guidelines. If you have any questions on a specific circumstance, please contact RA&F.

II. What types of cost are covered by participant support?

Cost that **can** be covered for a participant:

- Stipend
- Travel

- Subsistence allowance
- Registration and other fees

Costs that **cannot** be covered:

- Honoraria
- Human subjects payments
- Conference support costs such as facility rental, media equipment rentals, etc.
- Sub awards
- Payments to employers related to costs for providing services
- Alcohol (as always!)
- Costs that cannot be specifically identified to a participant

Please note: A PIs travel and other costs not directly related to the participants should not be budgeted as participant support. These costs should be budgeted for separately and are subject to the prevailing F&A rate.

III. Fund/Account Information

The standard prevailing Facilities and Administration rate (F&A) is generally not allowed on participant support costs. The following account codes should be used to properly identify and account for participant support costs.

- 091 – General Participant Support
- 117 – Participant Domestic Travel
- 127 – Participant Foreign Travel

If you have any questions regarding the use of these funds please feel free to contact anyone in RA&F for clarification and guidance.