

Budget Preparation Guidelines

10/17/2023

Introduction

An important component of the submission process is the preparation of a budget worksheet and a detailed budget narrative, which links the requested funding with specific elements of the proposed project. These guidelines are provided to assist in the preparation of these components.

For specific information, click on the following:

- [Budget Worksheet](#)
- [Budget Narrative](#)
- [Glossary & Instructions](#)

If you have questions on how to prepare the budget worksheet or budget narrative that are not addressed in these guidelines, use the "Contact Us" link located in the Resources section of the online system.

It is suggested these guidelines be used as a resource when preparing the budget worksheet and budget narrative.

Budget Worksheet

Provide an amount for the following four categories on the Budget Worksheet.

- [Personnel](#)
- [Other Direct Costs](#)
- [Consultants/Contractors](#)
- [Indirect Costs](#)

See [Glossary & Instructions](#) detailed category instructions.

Budget Worksheet Sections:

Requested amount

Enter a requested amount into the appropriate field for each line on the budget worksheet. The category and budget worksheet totals will automatically calculate. If no amount is requested for a particular line, you may leave it blank.

Budget period and duration

The budget worksheet will default with one budget period with a 12-month duration. The budget period duration may be changed by selecting a different duration from the drop-down menu.

Additional budget periods

Additional budget periods may be added by selecting the "Add" link in the upper right corner of the budget worksheet. In general, multi-year awards will have a budget period for each year of the award or part thereof.

Removing budget periods

To remove a budget period, select the "Remove" link in the upper right corner of the budget worksheet.

Save budget worksheet

To save the budget worksheet, select one of the following buttons located at the bottom of the budget worksheet screen.

- Save, continue editing
- Save, return home
- Save, section finished

For additional information on saving, refer to the applicant guide.

Budget Narrative

The budget narrative should be used to describe the budget line items.

Budget narrative categories and sub-categories include:

- **Personnel**
 - Project Director, Scholar, Fellow
 - Project Staff
 - Administrative Staff
 - Other Staff
 - Fringe Benefits

- **Other Direct Costs**
 - Office Operations
 - Communications/Marketing
 - Travel
 - Meeting Expenses
 - Regranting
 - Equipment
 - Project Space
 - Other (polls and surveys, honoraria, stipends, open-access fees, and other)

- **Consultants/Contractors**

- **Indirect Costs**

See [Glossary & Instructions](#) for detailed category instructions.

Glossary & Instructions

[Budget allocation by project element](#)

[Budget narrative](#)

[Budget negotiation](#)

[Budget period](#)

[Budget worksheet](#)

[Deliverables](#)

[Full-Time Equivalent \(FTE\)](#)

[Grant Period](#)

[Indirect costs](#)

[In-kind support](#)

[Other Direct Costs *](#)

[Personnel *](#)

[Consultants/Contractors](#)

* includes sub-categories

Budget allocation by project element

The key proposal elements (activities and deliverables) should be fully described in the proposal narrative section of the application to help us understand the rough distribution of the budget into its major elements, the budget narrative should include the estimated percentage of the total budget that supports each of the major elements (should be no more than 3-5). The allocation percentages should collectively total 100% of the total requested budget. We do not expect a precise allocation; instead use your best estimate of a reasonable distribution of the proposal budget.

Budget narrative

The budget narrative is where detailed information is described for each line item. Refer to the budget narrative section for additional information.

Budget negotiation

The budget worksheet and budget narrative for projects selected to move forward will be reviewed and negotiated to ensure that they meet the goals and objectives of the proposed project and that they are consistent with Foundation policies. Therefore, during budget negotiation, you may be asked to revise the budget worksheet and budget narrative.

Budget period

A budget period is a division of the full [grant period](#) into manageable timeframes. The budget period can be the same as the grant period. However, for budgets that require funding for more than one year, the budget is usually divided into twelve-month periods. If the project warrants it, periods of other than twelve months may be requested. For example, it may be appropriate for a project to have three eight-month periods or one fifteen-month period and

one nine-month period. Occasionally, a project may be for an uneven length of time. For example, if a grant lasts 27 months, the budget may be prepared to utilize two twelve-month budget periods and one three-month budget period. The three-month budget period can be planned at the beginning or the end of the proposed grant budget. A line-item budget worksheet and budget narrative must be prepared for each period for which Foundation support is requested.

Budget worksheet

The budget worksheet is where requested funding amounts are provided. The budget worksheet is a section within the online system and functions the same as other sections specific to saving information. Refer to the budget worksheet section for additional information.

Deliverables

Deliverables are tangible or intangible products produced because of a project. If your project engages a contractor to design a Web page, the Web page is the deliverable. If your project employs a contractor to convene a series of focus groups, and then write a final summary paper, the final summary paper is the deliverable. Other examples include facilitation of a meeting, white paper or issue brief, training manuals, strategic plans, research reports, or provision of strategic advice.

Full-Time-Equivalent (FTE)

This is the full-time equivalent of the amount of time (%) that staff spend on the project. It makes the assumption that each full-time position is at 100% for each 12-month period for the organization.

Grant period

The grant period is the total duration for the grant (e.g., 12 months, 24 months, 36 months). If a grant period is one year, typically the budget period will also be 12 months. If a grant period is greater than 12 months, usually there will be multiple budget periods.

In-kind support

In-kind support is contributed services or time, such as a percentage of an individual's time, project or meeting space, and audio-visual support, etc. For example, if a Project Director is to be partially funded by the Foundation and partly by his/her institution, the institution's commitment should be designated as in-kind and explained in the budget narrative.

Personnel

This category captures the costs of personnel assigned to work directly on the project. Costs identified under Personnel are only for project staff who are employees of the applicant organization. Costs for project staff who are not employees of the applicant organization should be included under Consultants/Contractors.

Personnel sub-categories are listed below. In the budget narrative, under each personnel sub-category, list each individual position and include a detailed description of the work to be performed, base annual salary on the projected start date of the project, and full-time equivalency (FTE) percentage of effort (e.g., .05 for 5% effort, .75 for 75% effort). If applicable,

state the cost-of-living-adjustment percentage, or any other increase(s) and the effective date of increase(s) applied to the starting base annual salaries for all budgeted personnel for each year of the project. Personnel costs should be consistent with institutional compensation policies. Increases year-over-year should be in keeping with reasonable market conditions and should be explained in the budget narrative if there is an increase of more than 5% per year for any individual.

We recommend that you insert an Excel table (sample below) in the budget narrative that provides complete salary and FTE information instead of listing the information under each position.

Personnel Category:				
Name	Title	Salary	FTE Percentage	Total
		\$ -		\$ -
		\$ -		\$ -
		\$ -		\$ -
		\$ -		\$ -
		\$ -		\$ -
Total				\$ -

You may be asked to provide an accounting of the percentage time spent on all RWJF awards in total for any individuals assigned to multiple RWJF grants.

The Personnel sub-categories are as follows:

- **Project Director, Co-Project Director, Scholar, Fellow**
Roles that provide leadership to the project.
- **Project Staff**
May include roles such as project manager, project coordinator, case manager, communications manager, senior staff, etc. – those who provide direct input to the project. This sub-category includes staff titles with roles directly related to the technical and professional aspects of the project (e.g., nurses, epidemiologists, graduate students, research associates, scientists, research analysts, statisticians, economists, etc.).
- **Administrative Staff**
Administrative support positions (e.g., administrative assistant, program assistant, etc.), general clerical help, temporary help, coders, data entry, phone bank staff (callers), etc.
- **Other Staff**
Any salary costs for other organizational personnel contributing to the project not covered under the other personnel sub-categories.
- **Fringe Benefits**
Include all federal, state, and local taxes as well as health insurance, tuition and other benefits provided to staff. Indicate the percentage used to calculate the fringe benefit costs. If your fringe benefit rate exceeds 40%, please provide support for how the rate is calculated and its components.

- **Fringe Benefits Field (if applicable)**. Some budget worksheets may include a field for the percentage used to calculate fringe benefits. If that is the case for your application, and the rate varies depending upon position, show an average and explain the fringe benefits rates in the budget narrative. Enter the percent as a decimal to the nearest thousandth (e.g., .175 and .260 for 17.5% and 26%, respectively).
- **Full-Time-Equivalent (FTE) Field (if applicable)**
FTE represents the total percentage of time staff under each personnel sub-category will spend on the project. The FTE entered on the line-item budget worksheet, if applicable, should be the total FTEs for each personnel sub-category. For example, if the administrative staff sub-category is comprised of an administrative assistant at .60 FTE, and a Data Entry Clerk at .50 FTE, the total FTEs for administrative staff entered on the line item budget worksheet equals 1.10.

Other Direct Costs

These are non-personnel costs incurred by the applicant organization that can be directly tracked to the project. Consulting and other contracted expenses should be accounted for under [Consultants/Contractors](#).

Other Direct Costs may include:

- **Office Operations**
Includes supplies, printing/duplicating, telephone, postage, service/maintenance agreements, software, computer usage, and staff training directly related to the project. In the budget narrative, describe the items (supplies, printing/duplicating, telephone, etc.) being funded under this sub-category, the amount budgeted for each item and how the budget amount is calculated.
- **Communications/Marketing**
Funds needed to increase awareness and impact. Includes costs such as writing and printing of collateral material such as brochures, newsletters, press kits, manuscripts, and policy briefs; dissemination and media outreach; media and/or presentation training for staff; developing web content and other web site costs such as development and hosting of a web site. Consulting and contracted expenses should be accounted for under [Consultants/Contractors](#).
- **Travel**
Travel by project staff directly related to the project. The full travel policy is available [here](#). Travel costs also include stipends to offset meeting participant travel expenses. If travel costs are involved in a consultant/contract, they, along with other costs of the consultant/contract, should be accounted for under [Consultants/Contractors](#).

If you can identify specific destination and rates for airfare and lodging, please include actual amounts in your budget and narrative. Otherwise, please use the Foundation's travel cost estimates of up to \$1,325 for a one-night, one-day meeting where air travel is necessary. This figure includes airfare and baggage (\$650), lodging

(\$325 per night), the amount necessary for meals not supplied at the meeting (up to \$150 per day), and ground transportation (\$200). For longer trips, add up to \$325 for each extra night of lodging, and up to \$150 per day for meals when necessary.

To show your travel budget details and calculations more clearly, we recommend that you create a chart in Excel (sample below) and copy it into the travel category of the budget narrative.

Travel				
Description of travel (ex. Name of meeting, conference, etc.)	Number of Travelers	Number of days	Cost Per Trip*	Total
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
Total				\$ -

Note: If you are applying for a grant under an RWJF National Program or one that is managed by a Program Center check with the National Program Office or Center for travel costs that should be budgeted for project staff or program participant attendance at annual or other program meetings as, in some cases, such costs are covered by RWJF or the Program Office or Center.

Meeting Expenses

Project-related expenses for meetings, including meeting room rental, audiovisual equipment rental, meals/refreshments, and caregiving ([see Caregiving Guidelines for Meeting Participants](#)). List each meeting with projected dates/duration, and its cost estimates separately. Note that Foundation funds should not be used to provide giveaways at meetings other than materials related to the purposes of the meeting. The guidelines can be found [here](#).

To show your meeting budget details and calculations more clearly, we recommend that you create a chart showing the meeting cost calculations in Excel (sample below) and copy it into the meeting expense category of the budget narrative.

Enter Type of Meeting:			
Attendees	Number of Attendees	Catering: Amount per person *	Total
Program Office Staff			\$ -
RWJF			\$ -
Speaker(s)			\$ -
NAC/Consultant			\$ -
Grantees (if applicable)			\$ -
			\$ -
Subtotal Catering Costs			\$ -
Other Meeting Costs	Amount		Total
Meeting Room Rental			\$ -
Audio Visual			\$ -
			\$ -
Subtotal Other Meeting Costs			\$ -
Total			\$ -

Regranting

If regranting is a component of the project, include the amount that will be awarded to the sub-grantees in this section. Regranting occurs when an organization awards and manages the administration of grants to support charitable activities carried out by public charities that are tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code; and for which the applicant organization exercises discretion and control over the competitive selection process, payment of grant funds, and oversight of the sub-grantee. You may be asked to complete a questionnaire outlining your regranting processes and procedures as part of the budget review process.

Equipment

Purchased or leased equipment, including but not limited to desktop or laptop computers or printers. Provide a description of each item of equipment and the unit and total cost, list personnel who will use the equipment and provide justification for why equipment is needed for the project. Please note we may support only a portion of the equipment cost if the project staff is not full-time.

A quote is not needed, but you should have supporting documentation if further clarification is requested.

The Foundation generally does not support the purchase of cell phones, tablets, or similar devices. However, if the scope of the project depends on such equipment, a portion of these costs can be requested in the budget. The reason why it is needed should be explained in the budget narrative.

Project Space

Space costs required because of this project may include the prorated costs of the occupied space or the actual costs of the additional space requirements. Provide the basis used to calculate the amount requested (e.g., \$500 per month per FTE X 1.5 FTE X 12 months = \$9,000).

Other

Includes any other direct cost not previously covered under another sub-category that will be incurred to support the project (e.g., polls and surveys, honoraria, stipends, purchase of data, mailing lists, manuscripts, and publications; subscriptions to periodicals, magazines, journals, newsletters, article processing/open-access costs, etc.). This line item is not intended to be used for the engagement of consultants or contractors which should be reported under Consultants/Contractors.

Include costs associated with conducting **polls or surveys**. These include fielding and administrative costs, design, and development of survey instruments, mailing of questionnaires, expenses related to telephone surveys (e.g., toll calls, 800 lines, additional temporary phone lines), printing and dissemination of findings. Consulting and contracted expenses should be accounted for under [Consultants/Contractors](#).

If applicable to the project, include costs associated with publishing peer-reviewed publications in open-access journals or in subscription-based journals (i.e., **article processing/open-access costs**) so that individuals or organizations without a subscription can access the article immediately upon its publication. The cost per article allowed by the Foundation will be up to \$5,000. The total budget for this line item cannot exceed \$20,000. Please indicate the number of articles, amount per article and the total amount budgeted. Example: 3 articles x \$1,000 = \$3,000, and 2 articles x \$5,000 = \$10,000, total budgeted \$13,000.

Stipends: Stipends are flat rate payments made when necessary to encourage participation in focus groups, interviews, surveys, or similar activities. Stipend payments may also be used to overcome a barrier to an individual's participation such as lost wages or caregiving expenses.

A stipend payment is often made for participation in:

- Focus groups
- Interviews
- Surveys

Or to overcome barriers to participation, including:

- Caregiving expenses
- Lost wages

Recipients of stipends should be informed that payments may be taxable income to them or may negatively impact eligibility for public benefits some individuals may receive (e.g., Supplemental Security Income, SNAP, Medicaid, and subsidized housing). The Foundation, its grantees and contractors should not provide tax advice to recipients but should be prepared to honor requests for payment flexibility to minimize the impact on their public benefits. For additional context, see [this resource](#) created by the Camden Coalition.

Guidelines and Process:

Participation Stipends: The amount of a stipend payment should be determined based on the type of service the participant is expected to provide. For example, if an individual is asked to take a survey or participate in a phone interview or a focus group, a flat-rate stipend in the range of \$25 to \$200 per hour, or per event if less than an hour, may be offered to encourage participation. The stipend amount should be determined after considering the time commitment and complexity of the survey, interview or focus group. The amount of the stipend should be the same for all participants irrespective of their title or experience. RWJF grantees and contractors should apply their organization’s experience, policies, and practices for such payments.

Caregiving Stipends: In order to fully participate in events such as in person or virtual conferences and focus groups, participants may need support for caregiving responsibilities of people in their lives that are dependent on their care (e.g., childcare, eldercare). In such cases, a stipend of up to \$15 per hour to the participant, per dependent is permitted for participants that need to arrange alternative care for dependents during a meeting following these [Caregiving Guidelines for Meeting Participants](#).

Lost Wages: In most cases, participants at events or conferences are not compensated solely for their attendance as there is an implied benefit from the conference itself. However, stipends for participation in conferences should be considered, following the guidelines in the above paragraph on participation stipends, if there is a need to encourage participation or for participants who would lose wages because of time away from their employment.

Honoraria: Fees or honoraria paid to individuals for specific services provided based on an agreed per-diem rate. Some examples are proposal review, technical assistance, speaking engagements, and service on an advisory committee or board. Fees and honoraria may be budgeted using the Foundation standard honoraria rate of \$1,500 /day (\$750 per half-day, and \$200 per hour). Honoraria should be calculated in half-day (3 or more hours and up to 6 hours) or full-day (6 or more hours) increments. The per hour rate of \$200 per hour should be used for engagements of less than 3 hours.

Consultants/Contractors

Use this section to show the budget for agreements you expect to enter with a third party to perform a defined scope of work for a specified time on an assignment with a defined deliverable(s). Consultants/Contractors includes engagements of an individual or an organization on, or in a particular topic or field. Consultants and contractors are typically compensated based on fully loaded (i.e., base pay, fringe, overhead) hourly or daily rates and other direct costs. The budget narrative should describe the services to be performed and the rates and hours used to determine the budgeted amount.

Create one Consultant/Contract Budget and Fact Chart, using the sample below, for each consultant or contract that is part of your budget and include it in the budget narrative. Enter “TBD” when information is not yet known.

Consultant/Contract Budget and Fact Chart Sample

Consultant/ Contractor Name	
Scope of Work	
Deliverables	
Total Cost	\$
Cost Calculation	Attach a copy of the contract budget or provide written details of the cost calculation here.

In the Cost Calculation field, provide a line-item budget detailing the total consultant or contract cost including rates and hours for personnel.

The Foundation acknowledges you may not have complete information for each consultant/contract at the budget development stage. However, we would like to understand what is expected to be accomplished by each contract, and the estimated costs. In the cost calculation section, please provide the calculations used to derive the requested budget. For consultants/contractors greater than \$250,000 or ones that have a complicated budget structure, provide a copy of the contractor budget worksheet. If the specifics of the contract are not available during budget development, please provide an explanation of how you derived the requested budget in the cost calculation section of the fact chart. You should provide an updated chart to include missing information prior to execution of the consultant/contract once the consultant/contractors are identified and the terms outlined.

While we understand the grant term may change, grant funds may only be expended against any contract in your budget within the final approved grant period. If Foundation funds are the anticipated sole source of support for the project funded by your award, the contract start date should not be earlier than the start date of your award, and the end date should not be later than the end date of the award. Other funds must be used to pay for any contractual costs that begin earlier than the anticipated start date or end later than the anticipated end date of the project.

The terms and conditions of any contracts into which you enter should be consistent with the terms and conditions of the Foundation's grant agreement (GA) with you, which, if your project is approved, will be the legal document governing your award from the Foundation (sample LOAs can be found by selecting the links below, but please note the actual GA may be different). The Foundation will not be a party to your contracts. You retain full responsibility for your contracts, which includes overseeing the work and deliverables and reporting the expenses associated with the contract to the Foundation. We recommend that you consider including the right to audit provisions and record retention expectations when negotiating contracts.

- [Organizations that are Public Charities, Exempt Operating Foundations, and Governmental Entities](#)
- [Private Foundation Other than Operating Foundations](#)
- [Private Operating Foundations](#)
- [Organizations Not Exempt Under Internal Revenue Code Section 501\(c\)\(3\)](#)
- [Grants for Individuals](#)

Indirect costs

Indirect costs are general overhead and administration expenses that support the entire operations of a grantee that would be incurred regardless of whether the grant is funded. While these costs may not be directly attributable to a project or program, they are real and necessary to operate as an organization. Examples include executive oversight, accounting, grants management, legal expenses, utilities, and facility maintenance. [Please follow the policy.](#)