

## GULF RESEARCH PROGRAM

### Frequently Asked Questions About Grant Processes and Policies

This document is a resource for grant applicants and grantees of the Gulf Research Program of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. It provides answers to frequently asked questions about grant processes, from award selection to final reports, and related policies, such as reporting and data management requirements.

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(Check if an updated version of this document has been issued at <http://www.nas.edu/gulf>.)

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT GRANT PROCESSES AND POLICIES**

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**Important Version Information and Revision Notes**

Version 1.1. Question #18 about reporting requirements was updated.

**I. AWARD SELECTION AND ANNOUNCEMENT****1. How will I know if my proposal is selected for funding?**

When the evaluation of a proposal is complete, the Project Director (PD) will be notified that (1) the proposal has been selected for funding pending an executed Grant Agreement, or (2) the proposal has not been selected. These official notifications will be sent via email to the PD identified on the application. If a proposal is selected for a Grant award, the Gulf Research Program reserves the right to request additional or clarifying information for any reason deemed necessary. Awardees are free to accept or reject the Grant Agreement as offered. If the Grant Agreement is rejected by the awardee, then no funding will be awarded to the awardee's institution.

**2. If my proposal is selected, how will I receive my award agreement?**

The Gulf Research Program will transmit the Grant Award notice and/or Grant Agreement to the organization that submitted the proposal via e-mail. The Grant Award is not finalized and the National Academies is not obligated to provide any funding until a signed copy of the Grant Agreement has been received.

**3. When are the awards publically announced?**

The Gulf Research Program will publically announce Gulf Research Program grantees after all Grant Agreements have been executed. The Gulf Research Program staff will contact grantees to provide advance notice of the Grant Award announcement date.

**4. Can I discuss the new award prior to the public announcement?**

Grantees may not publically discuss their award until the Gulf Research Program makes the public Grant Award announcement.

**II. GRANT AWARD PERIODS, PAYMENTS, AND COSTS****5. What is my grant award period and when can I start incurring costs for the award?**

Upon receipt of the Grant Award notice and/or Grant Agreement, the awardee should note the effective date and the expiration date. Effective date is the date specified in the Grant Agreement on or after which expenditures may be charged to the Grant. Charging expenditures to the grant prior to the effective date is strictly prohibited. Expiration date is the date specified in the Grant Agreement after which expenditures may not be charged against the Grant except to satisfy obligations to pay allowable project costs committed on or before that date.

Once a Grant Award is made, the effective date cannot be changed. The expiration date may be changed as a result of approval of a request for a no-cost extension (*see Section III – Grant Modification Requests*). If approved by the Gulf Research Program, the National Academy of Sciences will issue an amendment to the Grant. The awardee may only request a one-time no-cost extension for up to six (6) months and that the request must be received at least forty-five (45) days prior to the expiration date of the Grant.

**6. When are grant payments made?**

Grant payments will be issued annually by the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) upon receipt of the executed Grant Agreement and the following completed forms: W-9 form, Representation and Certification form, and Vendor ACH (Automated Clearing House) Payment Enrollment form. NAS preference is to disburse payments by ACH direct deposit to the Grantee's institutional bank account in accordance with the information provided in the Vendor ACH Payment Enrollment form.

For one-year Grant Awards, the National Academies will process the full Grant payment within thirty (30) days upon receipt of the executed Grant Agreement and the completed forms noted above. For multi-year awards, the Grant will be renewed annually for a twelve (12) month period for the duration of the project upon the Gulf Research Program's determination that satisfactory progress has been made toward completion of the project and contingent on the availability of funding. In certain instances for multi-year awards, the full Grant award may be paid up front within thirty (30) days upon receipt of the executed Grant Agreement and the noted completed forms. The first year payment equivalent to the first year budgeted amount will be made within thirty (30) days upon receipt of the executed Grant Agreement and the completed forms noted above. Subsequent grant payments will be made upon receipt and review of the Grantee's annual financial and progress reports to confirm that sufficient progress on the project has been made, and that at least 75% of the first payment has been expended. If sufficient progress has not been made on the project, the Gulf Research Program may not renew the Grant. If sufficient progress has been made and less than 75% has been expended as noted on the annual financial report, then the next payment will be delayed until the Grantee sends an updated financial report that confirms that at least 75% of the first payment has been expended and that sufficient progress has been made on the project during the prior year.

#### **7. What are allowable costs under the grant agreement?**

Grantees must use the funds solely for the purposes described in the grant proposal attached to the Grant Agreement. Any changes or modifications to the proposal must be submitted in writing to the Gulf Research Program for review and approval prior to enactment (*see section III. Grant Modification Requests*). Expenditures of Grant funds must be conducted consistent with the cost accounting principles found in [Subpart E of OMB 2 CFR Part 200](#) (Federal requirements) as it may be revised from time to time.

#### **8. If I receive a multi-year grant, can I carry forward balances from previous years?**

For multi-year Grant awards, Grantees do not need to request carry-over approvals of funds from one year to the next. Grantees also do not need to create separate accounts for each annual budget. Approved budgets and payments cover the entire project period of performance. However, Grantees should inform the Gulf Research Program if there are significant delays in the project that may affect spending and/or completion of the project by the established expiration date that may trigger a no-cost extension request (*see section III. Grant Modification Requests*).

### **III. GRANT MODIFICATION REQUESTS**

#### **9. How should I notify the Gulf Research Program about changes in key personnel?**

Grantees must inform and receive approval from the Gulf Research Program for any key personnel changes. This request must be received at least thirty (30) days prior to the key personnel change. This request should include the new person's curriculum vitae (CV) and an explanation for this change. The Gulf Research Program will review this request and may ask for additional information to confirm that this new person has the qualifications and experience to carry out the funded project's activities and outcomes.

#### **10. Is it possible to change the project's scope?**

Only under exceptional justifications will the Gulf Research Program consider project scope changes from the original or approved proposal. Grantees should communicate with the noted Gulf Research Program Officer in the Grant Agreement as soon as possible if there are any expected delays, issues, or complications that may affect the planned scope and/or outcomes of the funded project.

#### **11. When and how can I request a budget modification?**

Grantees are expected to spend the Grant according to the proposed and awarded budget on the existing line items, though the National Academy of Sciences recognizes that there may be minor variations in spending between each

budgeted line item. Grantees are allowed to spend more or less between budgeted line items up to the lesser of 10% of the annual Grant award amount or \$10,000 per line item. For example, if the total Grant award is \$200,000 for a two-year period with \$100,000 per year, then the Grantee must request a budget modification if spending is anticipated to vary by any more than \$10,000 per line item (i.e., 10% of the annual Grant award). If, however, the annual Grant award amount is \$500,000, then the Grantee must submit a budget modification request for any spending anticipated to vary by more than \$10,000 per line item (i.e., the lesser of 10% of the annual award amount or \$10,000 per line item).

If the Grantee anticipates that spending per line item may vary by more than 10% of the annual Grant award or greater than \$10,000 per line item, then the Grantee must request a budget modification to reflect anticipated spending. No budget increase to the Grant award will be considered, but the Gulf Research Program will review budget modifications to reallocate the current Grant award across the approved existing budgeted line items. This request should include a revised budget by using the [Budget Modification template](#) and a detailed justification for this request. This request should not change the scope or original outcomes of the project. Grantees must not move forward with spending against the modified budget until the Gulf Research Program has granted approval for the budget modification request.

#### **12. When and how do I request a no-cost extension?**

If additional time beyond the performance period and the established expiration date is required to assure adequate completion of the original scope of work within the funds already made available, the awardee may apply for a one-time no-cost extension of up to six (6) months. A formal request must be submitted to the Gulf Research Program at least forty-five (45) days prior to the expiration date of the grant. The request must explain the need and justification for the extension and include an estimate of the unobligated funds remaining and a plan for their use. This one-time extension will not be approved merely for the purpose of using the unliquidated balances.

### **IV. GRANT TRANSFER REQUESTS**

#### **13. What happens if the Project Director (PD) named in the Grant award moves to another institution?**

When a PD plans to transfer to another institution, that PD must inform the Gulf Research Program as soon as possible. The options for the Grant award are either to identify a replacement PD within the awarded institution (Grantee), transfer the Grant award to the new institution that the PD is transferring to, or terminate the Grant award. The Grant award is to the PD's original home institution, not the individual PD. As such, the Grantee is not required to relinquish the Grant simply because the PD is changing institutions. The decision lies with the Grantee and the Gulf Research Program. The Gulf Research Program maintains final approval for either request that the Grantee makes.

#### **14. What happens if an awarded institution (Grantee) wants to name a new Project Director (PD) for the grant?**

If the awarded project is to remain with the current Grantee, then the Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) must submit in writing a request to the Gulf Research Program for approval to replace the current PD with a new PD. This must include the new PD's name, the new PD's current curriculum vitae and a summary of the new PD's current and pending support. This request must contain the new PD's signature signifying that his/her willingness to assume leadership of this project. This request must also include a confirmation that the project will not be affected by this change in PD, that the project will be completed within the approved period of performance, and that no new funds will be required for this change. Additional funds will not be awarded to the Grantee for a change in the PD role or any other key personnel changes. This request should be made at least three (3) months before the change in the PD role is expected to start. The Gulf Research Program will review this request, and if approved, the Gulf Research Program will send a modification to the current Grant Agreement replacing the name of the PD to the new person.



**15. How do I transfer a grant agreement from one institution to another?**

A grant transfer cannot be used to circumvent or appear to circumvent the grant decision process. Transfer requests that are made between the time that an applicant submits a letter of intent and the time that a Grant Agreement is awarded (or even soon thereafter) will require exceptional justification to ensure that this request is not circumventing the grant decision process.

**16. What do I need to do to transfer the grant to another institution?**

If the current Grantee decides to transfer the Grant award to a new institution, the following steps must be taken by the original Grantee:

1. The original Grantee must request the transfer of the Grant award at least three (3) months before the Project Director is scheduled to start at the new Grantee's institution.
2. The preference is to transfer the Grant award at the beginning of a new grant year or period. Transfers that are requested near the end of a grant year will be negotiated to start at the beginning of the new grant year.
3. A transfer request of the Grant award with less than three (3) months remaining in the entire project and/or a remaining balance less than \$10,000 or 20% of the original Grant award (whichever one is lower) will require exceptional justification that there is enough work remaining to warrant the transfer.
4. The Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) of the original Grantee must submit in writing its request to relinquish the Grant award and to transfer the Grant award to the new institution. The request should include the full name of the new institution and the name and contact information of the AOR at the new institution.
5. The original Grantee will need to submit a final financial report to the Gulf Research Program within sixty (60) days after the date the Grant award will end at that institution. This report will identify the unspent remaining balance that will transfer to the new institution.
6. The original Grantee will also submit a final progress report to the Gulf Research Program within sixty (60) days after the date the Grant award will end at that institution to state the work that was completed at that institution and describe what work will be transferred to the new institution. This report should include a summary of the disposition of any data.
7. The AOR of the original Grantee will also identify any equipment purchased under this Grant award that may need to be transferred to the new institution and any Institutional Review Board protocols (human and/or animal) that are currently in place.

**17. What does the new Grantee need to do when an award is transferred from another institution?**

If the current Grantee decides to transfer the Grant award to a new institution, the following steps must be taken by the new Grantee:

1. The Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) at the new Grantee's institution will submit in writing to the National Academy of Sciences its willingness to accept this transferred Grant award and to accept the current agreement that was originally agreed upon. No changes to the terms and conditions of the agreement will be considered. This request should include the start date of the transferred Grant award and a detailed budget that equals the total remaining balance to the original end date. No new funds will be added to this Grant award to support this funded project.
2. The new Grantee must also submit in writing a confirmation that the project will continue as planned and described in the original application, that the project will be completed within the planned and approved period of performance, and that the new institution has the resources and facilities to support the successful completion of this project.

3. If Review Board protocols (human and/or animal) approvals are needed, the new Grantee will need to obtain those beforehand as the prior approvals from the original Grantee will not transfer with the Grant.
4. Although the Gulf Research Program will make every effort to process the transfer of the remaining balance to the new Grantee, there may be unexpected delays. In that case, the new Grantee will have the authority for pre-award costs to cover expenses during the time it takes to transfer the Grant award to avoid interruption in the funded project.

## **V. REPORTING AND DATA MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS**

### **18. What are the reporting requirements?**

Grantees are required to submit financial and progress reports, as specified in the Grant Agreement, to inform the Gulf Research Program of the progress made on the funded project. These reports will be submitted in the Gulf Research Program's [online grant management portal](#).

Mid-year financial reports are due six (6) months after the period start date and annual financial reports are due thirty (30) days after the period end date. Final financial reports are due sixty (60) days after the expiration date of the agreement.

Annual progress reports are due thirty (30) days before the period end date and the final report narrative is due sixty (60) days after the expiration date of the agreement.

### **19. How do I submit financial and progress reports?**

Grantee reports can be submitted by the PD or by a project member added by the PD. PDs submitting their reports will login to the portal to access their submission dashboards. At the bottom of the dashboard, grant records associated with the account are listed by funding type and award year. Funded projects have a status of "Awarded" and information for that project is accessed by clicking the "Edit" button to go to a project page. On the project page, financial and progress report sections are located under "Task".

For someone other than the PD to submit a report, they must first be added to a project as a "member". A PD can add a "member" by visiting the project page, as described above, and then clicking "Add member". This takes the user to a page where contact information can be submitted for the person to be added as a member. Once this information is submitted, the user associated with the email address provided will need to login to the portal, find the relevant project in the project list, and then click "Edit" to go to the project page.

### **20. What information do I need to complete mid-year, annual, and final financial reports?**

For both the mid-year financial reports and the annual (or final) financial report, the Grantee will complete the following sections:

- "General Information"
- "Expenses in Each Category"
- "Questions" (if applicable, to provide an explanation for any deviations or other information pertaining to the above financial information)

Under "General Information", the Grantee will add the PD's name, the name of the Grantee's institution, the project title, and the reporting period for this report (6-months or a full year). The start date of the reporting period should be the start date of the funded period of performance as stated in the Grant Agreement. The end date should either be the last day of the six (6) month period for the mid-year report or the last day of the annual (or Final) report which is

stated in the Grant Agreement as the last day of the funded period of performance.

The “Expense in Each Category” section includes three columns to report financial information. The first column, “Total Approved Budget”, requires that the Grantee fill in the original proposed budget as submitted to the Gulf Research Program. However, if the Grantee has requested a budget modification between the time of submitting the proposal and completing this report, then the Grantee will use the revised and approved budget modification. Please note that the Grantee must first receive an approval from the Gulf Research Program prior to using the revised budget modification.

The next column, “Total Spent in Reporting Period”, requires that the Grantee reports the total spent per budget line in each of the listed categories for that reported period. For the mid-year financial report, only those expenses that are posted to the Grantee’s general ledger or reporting system for that reporting period are to be included in this section. Accrued or encumbered expenses should not be included in the mid-year report. The final financial report should include all expenses, including those that have been incurred during the reporting period but not yet paid.

The third and last column, “Total Spent in Entire Project to Date”, requires that the Grantee list the total sum of expenses per budget line. This column includes the total expenses per line for this reporting period and the prior reporting periods. For the first mid-year financial report, the numbers in both columns two and three should be the same. For the last financial report, the third column is the total amount spent for the entire project. In this case, the difference between the third total spent column and the first budgeted column that is less than the Grant award indicates the remaining unspent balance that will be returned back to NAS. Because no additional funds will be awarded to the Grantee, we do not expect a difference between these two columns greater than the amount awarded to the Grantee.

## **21. What information do I need to complete annual and final reports?**

For the narrative progress and final reports, the Grantee will complete the following sections:

- “General Information”
- “Education and Training,
- “Results and Accomplishments”
- “Data Management”
- “Information Products”

Each section provides information to the Gulf Research Program on the outcomes of the funded project. This final report shall address the original objectives of the project as identified in the grant proposal, describe any changes in the objectives, and describe the final project accomplishments. The Gulf Research Program will make the final grant report available to the public, which may include posting on the web.

## **22. How do I return unspent funds?**

If the Grantee has not spent all awarded funds upon completion of the project, the Grantee must then return the unspent funds by check, made out to “The National Academy of Sciences”, and mailed to the following address:

Attn: Senior Financial and Administrative Officer  
Gulf Research Program  
The National Academy of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine  
500 5th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20001



**23. What are the requirements for data management?**

Implementation of the data management plan will be monitored through the annual and final report process. Annual project reports required for all multi-year Grant awards must include an account of ongoing data management and the accessibility (e.g., sharing) of research information products (e.g., digital object identifiers [DOIs] or accession numbers for digital information; citations of relevant publications, conference proceedings, and conference presentations; and other types of dissemination). In addition, the report must articulate any current or foreseeable changes to the original plan. Continued funding for subsequent years of multi-year projects will be contingent upon acceptable performance, which includes adherence to the data management plan.

Final project reports, which are required for all Grant awards, must describe the implementation of the data management plan and the current or future locations of all data and information products (DOI, URL, etc.). They must also clearly describe any changes from the original plan. At a minimum, the final report should include descriptions of the following:

- Data, datasets, and information products produced during the Grant award period.
- Metadata (that describe the project and that describe the data and other information products) produced during the Grant award period.
- Data, other information products, and associated metadata that will be maintained or curated after the Grant expires.
- Dissemination activities (e.g., publication of results and data, presentation of results and data).
- The curation facility or facilities (e.g., digital repository) where project data and other information products have been deposited or are being curated for long-term management and accessibility.
- Verification that the data and other information products are, or at least will be, widely discoverable and accessible (e.g., DOIs for data and other information products).
- In addition to evaluating the final report descriptions, the Gulf Research Program may review any digital products curated in digital repositories or otherwise curated to ensure that they are properly preserved, documented, and accessible.

**24. Should I notify the Gulf Research Program about resulting publications or follow-up work after the grant ends?**

Within one year after the termination of the Grant, the Grantee shall notify the Gulf Research Program about any publications resulting from or follow-up work to the grant activity and, where applicable, where data generated with grant funding were deposited or archived.

**VI. OTHER GRANT POLICIES AND REQUIREMENTS****25. What are the grant terms and conditions?**

Below are links to sample agreements for Gulf Research Program grants.

- [CLICK HERE](#) to view a sample grant agreement if the applicant is a public institution.
- [CLICK HERE](#) to view a sample agreement if the applicant is a private institution.

Please note that the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine will only consider making any edits or revisions to its grant agreement under exceptional circumstances.

**26. What are the audit requirements and how long should I retain financial or other records related to the grant agreement?**

Grantees shall retain all financial records and other pertinent evidence pertaining to costs incurred and reimbursed

hereunder for a period of three (3) years after the termination date. Grantee agrees to give the National Academy of Sciences or its authorized representative's access to these records and other pertinent books, documents, papers, or other records in order to conduct audits. Grant closeout does not alter these requirements.

## **27. What is the Gulf Research Program's policy on scientific integrity?**

A fundamental purpose of the Gulf Research Program is to facilitate the advancement of knowledge and the application of science to address challenges relevant to the program's mission. All activities of the Gulf Research Program will be conducted to meet the highest standards of scientific integrity. All grantees have a responsibility to use the funds wisely. To continue the emphasis on scientific integrity throughout the award period, the Gulf Research Program will ask all researchers, trainees, and fellows to comply with professional standards as defined by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine report [\*On Being A Scientist: A Guide to Responsible Conduct in Research\*](#).

## **VII. FUNDING ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND PRESS INQUIRIES**

### **28. How should I credit the Gulf Research Program?**

Grantees must acknowledge their project's financial support from the Gulf Research Program within all associated communications and outreach efforts. This includes publications, press releases, media interactions, signs, presentations, electronic publications, audio or video materials, or other types of communications and outreach activities. Acknowledgement should occur, as appropriate, through use of the Gulf Research Program's logo and/or inclusion of language attributing support from the Gulf Research Program of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine.

Different communications vehicles and mediums allow and are appropriate for different lengths and degrees of funding acknowledgement. Except in the specific cases indicated below, grantees are allowed to exercise judgement in how to appropriately comply with this requirement given the parameters of the communications vehicle and medium and the purpose of and audience for the communication. At a minimum, though, the funding source for all projects to acknowledge is "*Gulf Research Program of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine*" using either the logo and/or attribution language.

Specifically pertaining to research funded by the Gulf Research Program, grantee journal publications or other official publications, reports, or documents about the research funded must include attribution and disclaimer language along the lines of the following:

- **Attribution:** "Research reported in this [publication] was supported by the Gulf Research Program of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine under the Grant Agreement number [specific grant number(s) in this format: 20000xxxx]."
- **Disclaimer:** "The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the Gulf Research Program or the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine."

### **29. How do I get the Gulf Research Program logo?**

Email [gulfgrants@nas.edu](mailto:gulfgrants@nas.edu) and include any format specifications.

### **30. Where should I direct reporters who have questions about the Gulf Research Program or the National Academies?**

Please direct questions about the Gulf Research Program or the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and

Medicine to the National Academies' Office of News and Public Information at 202-334-2138 or [news@nas.edu](mailto:news@nas.edu).

## **VIII. OTHER QUESTIONS**

### **31. What should I do if I have other questions not addressed in this document?**

- Send other questions about Gulf Research Program grants to [gulfgrants@nas.edu](mailto:gulfgrants@nas.edu).
- Send general questions about the Gulf Research Program to [gulfprogram@nas.edu](mailto:gulfprogram@nas.edu).
- Send questions about Gulf Research Program fellowships to [gulffellowships@nas.edu](mailto:gulffellowships@nas.edu).

## **IX. URLS FOR IMPORTANT HYPERLINKS**

Below are web addresses that will take you to the destination of important hyperlinks present in this document if you are viewing it in hard copy. Enter the URLs into a browser exactly as they appear, including letter case.

- Federal cost accounting principles in Subpart E of OMB 2 CFR Part 200: <http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?node=2:1.1.2.2.1.5&rgn=div6>
- Budget modification template:  
[http://www.nationalacademies.org/cs/groups/gulfsite/documents/webpage/gulf\\_178124.xlsx](http://www.nationalacademies.org/cs/groups/gulfsite/documents/webpage/gulf_178124.xlsx)
- Gulf Research Program's online grants management portal: <https://gulfresearchprogram.fluidreview.com>
- Sample grant agreement—public institution:  
[http://www.nationalacademies.org/cs/groups/gulfsite/documents/webpage/gulf\\_177910.pdf](http://www.nationalacademies.org/cs/groups/gulfsite/documents/webpage/gulf_177910.pdf)
- Sample grant agreement—private institution:  
[http://www.nationalacademies.org/cs/groups/gulfsite/documents/webpage/gulf\\_177911.pdf](http://www.nationalacademies.org/cs/groups/gulfsite/documents/webpage/gulf_177911.pdf)
- *On Being A Scientist: A Guide to Responsible Conduct in Research*: <https://www.nap.edu/catalog/12192/on-being-a-scientist-a-guide-to-responsible-conduct-in>