



# Guidelines for Grant Project Directors

Office of Grants Administration

<http://www.bergen.edu/grants/>

January 2010

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## **Welcome to Grants Management**

Congratulations on the award of your grant. As project director, this is your opportunity to realize the vision described in your plan for this project. This will no doubt be an exciting year as you work to accomplish the goals and objectives you originally proposed. In addition, there will also be some interesting challenges to resolve along the way.

The guidelines in this booklet are provided to help increase your success and minimize any difficulties you encounter as you carry out what is now a legally binding contract. We will meet and work with you throughout your project experience, but you should also feel free to contact the Office of Grants Administration at any time with questions or concerns:

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## **1. Grants Authority and Responsibilities**

The Board of Trustees is the sole authority for accepting grant funds on behalf of Bergen Community College. The President or designee is authorized by the Board to execute necessary documents for grant projects that have been approved.

The Office of Grants Administration is the formal point of contact with funding agencies. All communications with funding agencies, including budget modifications and program reports, must be initiated or approved by the Office of Grants Administration.

Upon notification by an agency that a proposal has been accepted, the grants office will:

- Compare the notification to the proposal and, with the proposer, resolve any differences;
- Negotiate with the funding agency any budget and program modifications that may be required
- Establish and maintain a contract file;
- Prepare a draft resolution from the appropriate Vice President for presentation to the Executive Council and to the Board of Trustees.

The Project Director has primary responsibility for attaining all agreed upon goals and objectives and for ensuring overall project success. However, a full range of institutional resources are available to support your efforts.

The following chart lists some of the principal grant activities required for successful grant implementation as well as those who are responsible for carrying them out.

<b>Project Activity</b>	<b>Primary Responsibility</b>	<b>Secondary Responsibility</b>
Authorize Grant Acceptance	Board of Trustees	President
Conduct initial grant management conference	Grants Office	Project Director (PD)
Prepare college grant budget forms	Grants Office and PD	Grants Accountant
Activate and manage grant budget	Project Director w/Grants Office	Grants Accountant activates
Recruit/hire Project Personnel	Project Director	Dean/Office of Human Resources/BOT (to authorize)
Supervise project personnel	Project Director	Grants Office as needed
Purchase equipment & supplies	Purchasing/Administrative Services	Project Director (initiates)
Develop subcontracts	Grants Office	Administrative Services
Implement/attain objectives & contract agreements	Project Director & project staff	Grants Office as needed
Review/monitor monthly budget reports & spend down to \$0	Project Director (identify need for & prepares budget modification)	Grants Office (approve, submit, obtain budget modifications)
Maintain accurate activity files/reports, certify time/effort, student & other data	Project Director (Activities & Goal Attainment, Student Records, Personnel Time, Purchases)	Grants Office (contracts/reports) & Grants Accountant (for budget/expenses)
Publicize/disseminate outcomes	Project Director	Grants Office & Public Relations
Implement evaluation plan	Project Director	Grants Office
Prepare interim & final program and fiscal reports & modifications	Project Director (Prepares)	Grants Accountant & Grants Office (Approve and Submit)
Maintain project quality control	Project Director	Grants Office, Department/Division, Accountant
Track matching funds and in-kind contributions	Project Director	Grants Accountant & Grants Office verify
Institutionalize project elements and/or identify program/fiscal steps	Project Director/Dean/VP	Grants Office & Administration
Establish relationship/Cultivate funding agency	Project Director	Grants Office
Complete project on time/in budget, close out & prep for audit	Project Director	Grants Office

## 2. Know your contractual obligations

When your grant award is authorized by the Board of Trustees, it becomes a legally binding contract. The plan you developed in the proposal is the core of this contract, but additional grant requirements are also provided by the funding agency. Carefully re-read and familiarize yourself with the guidelines and requirements of your grant proposal/contract and those of the applicable funding agency. In addition, a range of federal, state, local, and institutional policies and procedures apply. You should be familiar with these as well. Attachment 1 provides resources where you can access regulations, requirements, and specific funding agency management guidance for your particular grant.

This document provides general guidance on the overall grants management process at Bergen Community College. Specific Bergen Community College policies and procedures are provided in the following:

- ***Bergen Community College Policy Manual and Administrative Guidelines, Regulations, and Procedures*** (available in the offices of deans, department heads, and directors).
- ***Bergen Community College Faculty Handbook***  
[http://www.bergen.edu/bccfa/FacultyHB\\_SP4\\_bccfa.pdf](http://www.bergen.edu/bccfa/FacultyHB_SP4_bccfa.pdf)
- ***Contract agreements between Bergen Community College Board of Trustees and the faculty and/or other bargaining units of the college*** (Available through respective association heads).

## 3. Conduct the Initial Project Start Up Conference

Formal project activities begin when we receive Board authorization. At that time, the project director and director of grants meet for the initial project conference in order to:

- Specify next-steps and timelines for project implementation and planned activities
- Review funding agency grant requirements
- Prepare college budget forms
- Review the fiscal management process
- Examine issues, policies, and procedures pertaining to equipment and supply purchases and consultant subcontracting, as appropriate
- Review staff hiring, effort reporting, and compensation procedures
- Specify record keeping and reporting requirements and timelines, and
- Address other issues and concerns as needed.

#### **4. Start Your Grant Project Book**

The Grants Office provides you with a Project Book at our initial project conference. The book will contain copies of: the RFP, Board of Trustees actions, your original proposal and contract, and your approved budget. The book will become a valuable tool for you to document project activities and products (including goal/objective attainment, purchase requests, vouchers, brochures, student records, meeting minutes, schedules, calendars, and more). These will be especially useful as you prepare interim and final reports. They will also ensure that you are prepared for any audits that may be required. Supporting materials should be kept at least three years after the final grant report is accepted by the funding agency.

#### **5. Set Up Your Project Budget**

**Establish/Activate Your Budget:** At our initial grants project conference, we will also review your funding agency approved budget and establish a Bergen Community College budget. Since the funding agency budget systems vary considerably from the college's Datatel system, some interpretation is needed to complete our Grant Budget Sheets. We will work with you to ensure consistency in matching your funding agency's to the College's budget codes. We will also need to complete a separate budget sheet for each source of funding (e.g., grant funds, partner contributions, college cost-sharing/match). After these are completed and you obtain the required signatures, bring them to the Grants Accountant who will assign the grant an account number in the general ledger and activate the grant so you can begin disbursing funds.

**Monitor your budget expenditure process:** As you make purchases and conduct your grant business, it is essential that you monitor progress and adhere to the guidelines. The Grants Office will provide you with a monthly budget report to help you with the monitoring process. You can also check on your own via DATATEL ("Colleague"), the College's administrative software system, and more frequently access expenditures and encumbrances to determine if the grant's financial requirements are being met. In addition:

- Keep your expenditures in line with the approved budget. While you do have some flexibility for moving money from one approved line to another approved line, deviations of more than 10% are not allowed without expressed permission from the funding agency.
- All communications with the funding agency, especially those relating to budget issues, must be initiated by the Grants Office or the Grants Accountant. If you have budget concerns or questions, be sure to bring them to the Grants Office.
- Review your contract periodically to ensure appropriate spending. If you do see a need to make budgetary adjustments, talk to the Grants Office immediately. There are times when budget modifications are required, but we will need to seek approval first from the grant sponsor.

- Some project budget changes require administrative as well as Board of Trustee approval. In such a case, budget modification requests must be submitted no later than mid-way through the project year in order to be approved in time for project use. Otherwise, we run the risk of having to return unexpended funds at the conclusion of the funding cycle.
- Stick to your timelines. It is generally a good idea to have half your budget expended or encumbered six months after the grant start date for a twelve-month grant project.

**Budget Modification:** Most funding agencies recognize that project success sometimes requires budget flexibility. You need to check your specific requirements, but most allow up to 10% of the budget to be moved from one or more “approved” lines to other “approved” lines, if needed. In addition, there are times when actual costs (computer purchases, for example) are lower than originally proposed. With close monitoring, a project director can identify where project funds might be more effectively deployed. If such is the case for you, and the amount is greater than 10%, work with the Grants Office to develop a Budget Modification Request. Most agencies require these to be submitted no later than 90 days before the end of the grant funding period. Budget modifications may also require Board of Trustee approval, so you may need to prepare materials four or five months in advance of the project end date.

***If budget modifications are not submitted on time, or not approved, you will have to return any unspent funds.***

## **6. Secure your project personnel**

Now that your budget is activated you can authorize, hire, and pay project personnel. Staffing and compensation specifications are usually specified in the grant proposal and approved by the Executive Council and Board of Trustees. It is essential, therefore to abide by the approved staffing and compensation plan. In the event you do have questions, be sure to work with the Grants Office to charge salaries or fringe benefits to the grant.

All project staffing and compensation must be consistent with appropriate Bergen Community College hiring practices and employment contracts as well as with all applicable state and federal regulations (see attachment 1).

There are several types of project personnel: college faculty and staff, non-college temporary staff hired full or part time to carry out specified project responsibilities, and non-college consultants and professional services providers.

**College faculty and staff** are often released from ongoing responsibilities for a specified period of time to conduct project activities.



- All faculty and staff compensation are governed by respective employment contracts.
- A “Project Personnel Authorization Form” is required. Be sure to complete and get signatures on this early to avoid any disruption in pay.
- Faculty members generally receive release-time from instruction to work on grant funded projects. Compensation may be directly covered by the grant, but is usually in the form of continuing pay, with adjunct faculty replacement costs charged to the grant.
- College staff on grants generally can work “overtime,” as governed by their BCC contract and the grant regulations. Compensation is in the form of overtime pay at their contracted rate.
- Compensation is through the Payroll Department whether grant funding covers actual or replacement costs.
- 
- Time records are required of **all** project staff. Full-time faculty may submit a schedule to document project effort each semester. Staff submit an “Attendance Report” listing hours worked on the project, usually on a monthly basis.
- For Federally Funded Grants and Projects. Institutions of Higher Education are expected to comply with Cost Principles in OMB Circular A-21 which includes the expectation that awardees of federally funded grants, contracts, and other agreements will maintain time and effort records for organizational employees working on **federally funded** projects so that salary charges to an award can be adequately supported. The Office of Grants Administration will initiate this reporting activity semi-annually and will maintain the time and effort records.
- Faculty members sometimes provide advisement or evaluation services as specified in a written or verbal agreement. Compensation in this case is provided in the form of a stipend through the payroll department. An invoice and “Payment Request” are required for payment.

**Non-college full-time and part-time project staff** are sometimes hired by the college for multi-year grants. Since the hiring process can take two to four months, such an arrangement is rarely an option for single year projects. Standard college hiring practices apply for non-college personnel:

- Positions must be approved at all levels and, ultimately, by the Board of Trustees.
- Grant funded project positions are temporary, with clearly stated start and end dates that correspond with specifications in the approved grant contract.
- Positions should be advertised and standard search procedures followed.
- Positions are governed by the grant contract; the BCC Policy Manual and Administrative Guidelines, Regulations, and Procedures; and the College’s New Hire Process.

- When approved by the Board of Trustees, project staff follow the hiring process provided by Human Resources.
- Compensation is through the Payroll Department and therefore require W-4 and I-9 document processing.
- Project Activity and Time and Effort Records must be maintained as required by the funding agency and college guidelines. Staff can use the College's Daily Attendance Timesheet, the College's Student Timesheet, or the Example of a Daily Attendance Record (see Attachment 2 for this link), or the Government's "Activity Report: Contracted Personnel."

**Non-College Professional Services and Consulting Personnel** are often brought on to deliver specified services (e.g., conduct evaluation, provide a lecture). In this case, project personnel perform services in accordance with a clearly written agreement that you develop. Agreements include specific services to be rendered, starting and ending dates, deliverables to be provided, and payment schedule with benchmarks. Upon completion:

- Submit a "Payment Request" voucher accompanied by the written agreement (if applicable) and either an invoice or the College's Daily Attendance Timesheet. Additional documentation may also be required (e.g., receipts, deliverables).
- Accounts Payable issues payment for the full amount.

**Subcontracts** specify agreed-upon services of grant partner organizations. Subcontract agreements are generally developed by the Grants Office in collaboration with the Project Director. Agreements include specific services to be rendered, starting and ending dates, deliverables to be provided, and payment schedule with benchmarks. The final agreement is approved by the Vice President for Administrative Services and signed by appropriate authorities at BCC and the subcontracting agency.

**In-kind Contributions by College Faculty and Staff** often support grant project implementation and or institutionalization. Such efforts may initially be built into the grant proposal as institutional match or in-kind contributions or they may just naturally emerge as a result of faculty and staff interest generated by the project's success. In either case, it is important to document the time and effort for reporting purposes.

## **7. Purchase your equipment and supplies**

With your grant funded and budget account activated, immediately begin purchasing needed materials, especially equipment. Project time is limited and all funds must be expended by the conclusion of the project or shortly thereafter (usually 30 days past the end date). Equipment especially requires considerable time to purchase, receive, and install.

### **Start with equipment.**

- ◆ Meet with the Purchasing Department (prior to making or authorizing requisitions) to review and finalize materials and equipment specifications made in the grant contract.
- ◆ Complete the purchase request, get needed signatures, and provide all specifications as suggested by our purchasing department.
- ◆ Product specifications should be obtained from vendors on their letterhead to insure the most current and accurate price.
- ◆ For items costing \$1,000 or less, obtain approval from your Department Head and Dean.
- ◆ Items costing more than \$1,000 require approval from your Department Head, Dean, and Vice President.
- ◆ For items costing \$5000-\$25,000, competitive quotes must be obtained. Purchasing will contact at least three companies, according to County College Contract Law. This usually takes 4 weeks, and is initiated by your purchase requisition.
- ◆ For equipment costing more than \$25,000, the Purchasing Department may need to solicit bids. This process takes longer, up to two or more months, depending on the complexity of the project and the Board of Trustees' meeting schedule. As early as possible, therefore, you need to provide Purchasing with the name of the funding source and a justification for item purchase so it can prepare a Board of Trustees Authorization request.
- ◆ Keep track of your purchase requests and follow up with Purchasing periodically to ensure received.
- ◆ **NOTE:** *Technical equipment must be approved by the Office of Information Technology to ensure compatibility with existing College technology. OIT will give you product specifications and may recommend suppliers. You can obtain product and shipping/handling costs through Purchasing or going on manufacturer or supplier websites. [This should be part of the project proposal development process].*

**Expedite your other project purchases** by gaining approval to access DATATEL. For some projects, departmental secretaries may agree to overtime compensation from the grant to handle project related supply purchases and other clerical tasks. If you bring on a non-college project

assistant or staff to assume such responsibilities, it will be necessary to gain authorization for that person to enter purchase orders. That person should be specified on Page 1 of the Grant Budget Sheets. Contact the Office of Information Technology for access.

To facilitate the purchasing process, you should possess manufacturer, vendor, product, and cost information before requisitioning online. Because purchasing is a multi-stage and multi-person operation, it is critical that you oversee the various parts of the approvals process to ensure successful, timely completion of purchases:

- Learn how to approve requisitions in the DATATEL system. "Purchase Requisition Approval Procedure" guidelines are available in print from the Purchasing Department.
- Remind your authorized staff member to make a note of the assigned requisition number before logging off the DATATEL system. He/she must notify you that there is a requisition waiting in the system for approval and provide you with the requisition number. **THIS APPLIES TO ANY FACULTY OR STAFF WHO ORDER MATERIALS FOR THE GRANT.**
- Follow up, if necessary, with approval givers up the line.
- If approvals are not given, the requisitioning process does not proceed and the purchase is not made.
- Purchases should be made online using DATATEL.
- Delivery of equipment and furniture can take up to 8 weeks.
- The Purchasing Dept. does not expedite orders.
- The College Fiscal Year is July 1 through June 30.
- In order to be charged to a current College fiscal year budget, all your purchases must be made, received and paid for before June 30 (i.e., cash basis).
- Goods and services received or paid for after June 30 will be charged to the new College fiscal year budget starting July 1.

Following notification of delivery of purchases, Accounts Payable will send an invoice to the authorized DATATEL person on your staff. You should sign immediately, obtain any other necessary signatures, and return to Accounts Payable.

## **8. Maintain/Install your supplies, instrumentation & equipment**

If you included major equipment in the grant, we no doubt consulted with appropriate departments for installation needs and requirements. Now that you're funded, however, you must follow up with respective offices (Campus Planning, Physical Plant, and or OIT, as appropriate) as soon as possible to arrange for needed services. Additional considerations:

- Personnel making campus deliveries must check in with Public Safety before bringing their materials to the College's Shipping Office. Smaller items will be brought to your office by the Mailroom.
- You will be notified if an item is too large for mailroom delivery, and you can submit a "Physical Plant Work Order Request" for delivery.
- Should it be necessary for an outside vendor to deliver something directly to your office, Public Safety will issue a signed and dated pass to the vendor. If outside delivery personnel appear in your office without this pass, contact Public Safety immediately (ext. 9200, 7116, or speed dial 6).

## **9. Keep Current with Project Reports**

Your grant contract specifies reporting requirements. Most contracts require interim as well as end of year program narratives and fiscal reports. Reports must be reviewed and submitted by the Grants Office. However, the Project Director is responsible for preparing the narrative as well as the fiscal reports. These should be completed and provided to the Grants Office a minimum of five (5) working days prior to the due date.

When preparing reports, it is best for the Project Director to work closely with the Grants Office to ensure that all funding agency requirements are met, the budget report is reconciled with the Grant Accountant's, and that necessary signatures are obtained. The Grants Accountant must approve and initial all fiscal reports.

**Follow directions when preparing your program report.** Review the guidelines/contract to make sure you address every goal, objective, and activity you specified in the proposal. If there were unanticipated changes or goals were not fully attained, exceptions to the plan must be clearly explained. The funding agency may also have specific questions to be answered in the report. These too must be fully addressed.

**Fiscal Reports** generally consist of a spreadsheet displaying the approved budget along side the expended budget. Difficulties can sometimes arise when attempting to reconcile the differences between the agency and the college budget line items. You may need to review notes you made in the budget activation process to ensure college budget categories are properly re-coded for consistency with the agency's approved budget lines. Here too, it will be helpful to work with the Grants Office.

Remember that fiscal reports will likely require the approvals and signatures of the Chief Financial Officer and the President. It is essential that you:

- ***Prepare fiscal reports on the funding agency's reporting forms.***

- Give yourself extra time when compiling and writing your reports. It is best to begin a month before the due date.
- Base your expenditure reports on the most current Budget Detail supplied by the Grants Accountant. Request this printout at least two weeks before the report is due. In addition, plan to give the Grants Accountant a **minimum of 5 working days** to approve the report.
- Be aware that most agencies will accept encumbrances in an interim fiscal report. However, our institution operates on a **cash basis**. To provide an accurate picture of interim project fiscal activity, therefore, it may be necessary to provide a budget narrative to include encumbered funds. This is not usually an issue with final reports as they are generally due 30 – 90 days after the project concludes and funds are expended.
- Final fiscal reports may require completion of an Equipment/Software Inventory Form. The college Inventory Control Office tags and records the location of all items costing \$1,000 or more. Contact the Office to obtain an Inventory Report for your project a minimum of five (5) days in advance of your report due date.

## **10. Conduct Interim Grant Management Conferences**

An excellent vehicle for discussing and reviewing grant progress, upcoming reports, and closeout procedures is the grant management conference which should occur a minimum of once each semester and be attended by you, the Grants Office staff, and possibly your Department Head and Dean. The Grants Office will schedule these meetings.

## **11. Close out the project and prepare for an Audit**

**Timely Budget Expenditures.** For all grants, unless otherwise specified by the funding agency, expenditures must be completed within the time frame of the grant project. For example, Education Department General Administration Regulations (EDGAR) Section 80.23 (b) stipulates that all funds must be obligated (encumbered and delivered) by June 30, 20xx and liquidated (paid) by September 30, 20xx, for a grant project that operates between July 1 and June 30. For other requirements, consult your grant project contract.

**Closing out your project** involves making sure that all grant requirements you described in the contract have been met. Throughout your project effort, but especially two to three months prior to the project end date, you should review your progress to ensure that all contracted activities were or are being conducted, that project goals and objectives are attained or on target for completion. By the conclusion of the project you will also need to be sure that:

- All supply, material, and equipment purchases are completed (received, installed, and paid for);
- All project staff effort is documented and all staff are paid.
- Formal project evaluation is completed;
- Institutional match and in-kind contributions are completed and documented.
- Fiscal report is completed, certified by Grants Accountant, and delivered to the Grants Office a minimum of five (5) days prior to the due date.
- Equipment and Software Inventory is completed and certified.
- All program reports are completed and reviewed/approved at appropriate levels, and provided to the Grants Office a minimum of five (5) days prior to due date.
- Your project book is up to date.

**12. Conduct Your Close-out Conference.** Your close-out conference with the Grants Office affords an opportunity to review project accomplishments, identify ways to strengthen the grants management process, and initiate next-steps for project continuation. Specifically, we will:

- Review accomplishments and benefits of the project
- Assess the value of Grants Office services
- Identify policies, procedures, or services that facilitate or impede effective grant project operations
- Review and finalize any remaining outstanding issues
- Ensure availability of materials and resources for an audit, if required
- Determine next-steps for institutionalizing effective project elements or for continuing the project.

**ATTACHMENT 1**  
**Online Resources**

**OMB Circular A-21** Cost Principles for Educational Institutions:  
[http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a021/a21\\_2004.html](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a021/a21_2004.html)

**OMB Circular A-110** Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education:  
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a110/a110.html>

**OMB Circular A-133** Audits of States, Local Governments and Non-Profit Organizations (includes non-profit institutions of higher education):  
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a133/a133.html>

**EDGAR**. Education Department General Administrative Regulations:  
<http://www.ed.gov/policy/fund/reg/edgarReg/edgar.html>

**Grant Recipient's Manual for Discretionary Grants**. New Jersey Dept. of Education:  
<http://www.state.nj.us/education/grants/discretionary/management/manual.shtml>

**National Science Foundation Grant Policy Manual**. Basic policies & procedures from award issuance through closeout:  
[http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub\\_summ.jsp?ods\\_key=gpm](http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=gpm)

U.S. General Services Administration. U.S. Government-wide Policy: Per Diem Rates  
[http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/contentView.do?contentId=9646&contentType=GS\\_A\\_BASIC](http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/contentView.do?contentId=9646&contentType=GS_A_BASIC)



## **Attachment 2**

### **Useful Forms and Resources**

- Budget Sheets (set of 3 Excel worksheets).  
<http://www.bergen.edu/documents/grants/Grant%20Budget%20Sheets.pdf>
- Project Personnel Authorization Form is a Human Resources form available through the following link. <http://www.bergen.edu/pages/464.asp#grants>
- Time & Effort Certification Report (for organizational employees working on federally-funded grants and projects)  
<http://www.bergen.edu/documents/grants/Personnel%20Activity%20Time%20Certification%20Report.pdf>
- Example of a Daily Attendance Record.  
<http://www.bergen.edu/documents/grants/Daily%20Attendance%20Record.pdf>
- Partner Subaward Agreement
- Datatel Purchase Requisition Training
- Datatel Purchase Requisition Approval Procedure
- Payment Request Form
- Physical Plant Work Order Request
- Request for Travel & Advance Authorization
- Travel Reimbursement Request
- New Hire Recommendation Process