

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): Award Obligation Setup

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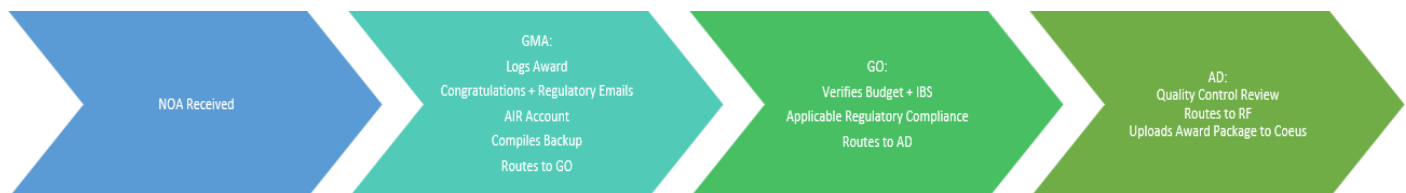
Purpose

NU-RES Research Administration is responsible for the complete and consistent institutional review of all award obligations made to Northeastern University (NU), including adherence to University policies, verification of applicable regulatory compliance and confirmation of the institution’s ability to accept the terms and conditions of the award. Acceptance of an award occurs once this institutional review is completed by NU-RES Research Administration and the award notice and related materials have sent to NU-RES Research Finance for award setup in Banner, the University’s system of record.

Note: Please refer to the [NU-RES Glossary](#) for additional information and definitions related to terms referenced within this document.

Receipt of Award Obligation

A fully executed (or if applicable, no signature required) Notice of Award (NOA) obligating funds is sent to NU-RES@northeastern.edu.



Getting Help

Support: NU-RESHC@northeastern.edu

Grant Officer: <https://research.northeastern.edu/nu-res/contact/>

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Grant Management Administrator (GMA) Responsibilities

GMAs are responsible for tracking and final processing of all award obligations received by NU-RES@northeastern.edu. Each award obligation is entered on the Tracking Log by the GMA and assigned a tracking number.

The GMA will send the Congratulations Email and any other applicable emails as described below. All email templates are located on the [NU-RES SharePoint](#).

1. Congratulations Email:

- An email is sent from the GMA to the PI with a cc: to the Department Administrator, GO, and researchcompliance@northeastern.edu (if prime award NASA or DOE) and Banner_setups@northeastern.edu.
 - Congratulating them on their newly awards funds.
 - Indicating the tracking number for their award obligation.
 - Asking them to:
 - Complete a new Award Obligation Budget(s) when:
 - The obligation differs from proposed budget; and/or
 - Child accounts are applicable but separate budgets not provided.
 - Produce any other documents/certifications pertinent to this award, including verification of applicable regulatory compliance (e.g. FCOI, IRB, IACUC, IBC, etc.).
- **The congratulations email will also include a request for Research Finance (RF) to do the following:**
 - For new awards, request that an administratively initiated advance account (AIR) be created. GMA should assign the AIR request a UPAF tracking number, which will be noted in the request.
 - For new awards that already have a department initiated advance account, request that the account be updated to AIR to remove UPAF in title and loading budget.
 - For continuations, RF will be responsible for determining if any Banner updates/additional accounts are needed.

2. RCR Notification:

- For applicable awards with student support (undergraduates, graduates, post-docs), GMA sends Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) notification email to PI, with a cc: to the Department Admin and GO.

3. Financial Conflict of Interest (fCOI) Forms:

GMA initiates fCOI review and completes the Project Information section of the Financial Conflict of Interest fCOI Certification form and the Investigator Financial Conflict of Interest Determination Certificate form on the [NU-RES Sharepoint](#).

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NOTE: If unsure if an item is required (e.g. updated budget, IRB, IACUC, IBC, RCR, etc.), GMA should discuss with GO before requesting information from PI, Department or Research Finance. Alternatively, if unsure, GMA can request that the GO follow up with the appropriate party to determine what items are needed.

4. GMA creates Coeus Award Module Shell

5. **Compilation of Award Package:**

- As the necessary documentation is provided to the GMA, the electronic AwardPackage (AP) is compiled.
- Award Package Order, as applicable:
 - Award Obligation Setup (AOS) Form (saved as a stand-alone PDF)
 - Applicable Award Obligation Budget(s) (saved as a stand-alone Excel)
 - If budget(s) are not provided on the NU-RES budget allocation template, GO will be responsible for transferring the budget(s) to the template.
 - Backup Documentation (saved as 1 PDF Portfolio):
 - Notice of Award
 - Financial Conflict of Interest (fCOI) Certification Form
 - Investigator Financial Conflict of Interest (fCOI) Determination Certificate (if applicable)
 - Regulatory Compliance Documents (e.g., IRB, IACUC, etc.)
 - Completed Award Setup Checklist
 - Any emails applicable to the award
 - Final, Submitted Application¹
 - Funding Opportunity Announcement, if applicable
- GMA sends AP package via email to GO.
- GMA changes status on Obligation tracker to “GO Review” while the file undergoes GO review.
- GMA changes the status to “Director Review” while the file undergoes Quality Control review.

6. GMA responsibilities are continued below in the *Routing to Research Finance (RF) for Final Processing* section.

¹ The relevant application should be included in the backup. For example, for new awards, it will be the application submitted to receive funding, for supplement setups, it would be the supplement application. If you are processing out year increments (year 2, 3, etc.), you do not need to attach the application since it would have already been attached to the original year 1 setup. For NIH out year increments, you should be including a copy of the applicable RPPR.

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Grant Officer (GO) Responsibilities

GOs are responsible for reviewing the entire award obligation package to ensure all funding agency and institutional regulatory and compliance matters are accurately documented.

1. Budget Review:

- Budget is reviewed against sponsor guidelines. If any errors are present, GO will return budget to College/Department for corrections.
- If budget(s) are not provided on the NU-RES budget allocation template, GO should transfer the budget(s) to the template.
- Any changes to IDC rate and/or excluded categories will be entered into Comments/Notes section.
- Any mandatory cost share requirements will be entered into the Comments/Notes section.
- **Institutional Base Salary (IBS):**
 - Confirm that IBS has been calculated correctly (Appendix A) and is accurately represented on the Award Obligation Budget.

Acceptable IBS verification documents		
Copy of letter of appointment	-OR-	Certification (Appendix B) by individual with direct knowledge of the following: Individual’s Appointment(s) type and title, e.g.: Professor (faculty); Chair (administrative supplement); <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. FTE: Full Time (1.0) or if PT % (e.g. 0.6 FTE); 2. Base Term of the appointment (8 months/9 months/12 months); and 3. Compensation
<p>Note: Some Colleges have elected to provide NU-RES with a spreadsheet that outlines the required IBS elements for each of their faculty. Those spreadsheets can be found in the College Appointment Letters SharePoint folder and can be used in lieu of the above referenced verification documents.</p>		

- **Measurable Effort:**

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- All extramurally funded research programs should have some level of committed faculty (or senior researcher) effort, whether supported by the grant or cost shared by NU. Please refer to the [Measurable Effort and Salary Support on Grants](#) guidance document for requirements pertaining to measurable effort.

- **Capturing NU's Contribution to Research and Sponsored Activities**

- NU's contribution to research is captured on the AOS form and includes the following information:

Projected NU Contribution to Research	
SalaryCap:	<input type="text"/>
Voluntary Committed Cost-Share:	<input type="text"/>
Stipulated Committed Cost-Share:	<input type="text"/>
Direct Cost Subtotal:	\$ 0.00
<u>Under Recovery of F&A</u>	
Voluntary:	<input type="text"/>
Stipulated:	<input type="text"/>
Cost-Share/Salary Cap Related:	<input type="text"/>
Indirect Cost Subtotal:	\$ 0.00
Total NEU Contribution:	\$ 0.00

- This information can be found on the Award Obligation budget/cost share budget(s). It is the GO's responsibility to complete this section.

2. FCOI Requirements:

- Financial Conflict of Interest (fCOI) Certification Form:
 - GO reviews the fCOI documents completed by GMAs during intake for accuracy.
 - If fCOI documents are still outstanding when AP is routed to GO, GO follows up with PI, GMA, Research Compliance Office, as applicable.
- PHS FCOI Policy:
 - If Sponsor follows PHS FCOI policy, GMA verifies whether all Investigators have completed FCOI training.
 - Verification is available via the CITI website.

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- Per PHS FCOI policy, training must be completed every four years.
 - If training is outstanding, GMA sends training request to applicable individuals and keeps PI informed.
3. Compliance/Special Reviews:
- Complete the compliance/special reviews information on the AOS form. The compliance/special review categories are defined in the [QuickCard: Coeus Special Review Types](#) located in Sharepoint.
 - Confirms that all applicable approvals are accounted for. If an approval is missing or approval documentation is incomplete, GO emails the appropriate compliance office for proof of approval/congruency.
4. **Best Practices:**
- In an effort to expedite awards that include certain elements, the order of precedence for review of AOS packages should be as follows:
 1. Contracts with immediate invoicing requirements.
 2. Awards with a performance period of less than a year.
 3. Awards that include outgoing subaward(s).
 4. All other awards that do not fit into the above categories.
 - Review all award/proposal documents (e.g. funding opportunity announcement, proposal, award notice, associated terms & conditions, etc.) using the Award Setup Checklist. Be sure to review for language related to insurance, export controls, confidential information, etc. and ensure appropriate approvals are in the file.
 - Review AOS form and budget to make sure all fields are complete and correct.
 - If items are missing (e.g. IACUC, IRB, Budget, etc.), GO follows up with the PI/Department or relevant office on status.
 - If RCR requirements are applicable, but RCR notification was not generated by GMA, GO asks GMA to prepare.
 - Restricted Awards:
 - If a compliance check cannot be verified at award setup, for example, IRB work is not anticipated until later in the project and therefore approval is not available, on a case-by-case basis, a determination can be made to process the award as restricted. If the GO believes there is a legitimate reason for why a compliance check cannot be done at this time, they should discuss with the Associate Director. If a decision is made to process

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as restricted:

- The restriction will be placed on the UPAF tracking log and assigned to the GO. GO will be responsible for following up until applicable approvals are obtained.
 - GO will reach out to the PI with a cc to the department admin asking the PI to certify that no work, which involves activities that have not received full approval, will be conducted under this award. That confirmation should be included in the award backup. A sample “Restricted Award – Principal Investigator Statement” is located in Appendix C.
 - On the AOS form, GO should include a note identifying what the restriction is and include the U# tracking number.
- Once the AP is updated and complete, GO emails it to the Associate Director with cc: to NU-RES@northeastern.edu, and Nancy Bynoe and Julie Renkas (if subawards are present).
-

Quality Control Review

Associate Director conducts final compliance and regulatory review and approves the AP. Upon approval, Associate Director emails package to Research Finance and other relevant stakeholders for their records. If questions arise, Associate Director returns AP to GO for resolution.

Routing Final Package

Once the AP is approved, AD emails the final package to the following stakeholders for their records:

- Banner_Setups@northeastern.edu
- NU-RES@northeastern.edu
- Principal Investigator
- Department Administrators
- Grant Officer
- Subcontract Manager (*if applicable*)

If award is being processed as restricted, the email will indicate the restriction.

Associate Director will upload final AP to the Coeus Award Module (see Coeus Award Guide for instructions). During upload, Associate Director will also update the special reviews tab to match information provided on the AOS form.

GMA completes the following final tasks:

1. Changes status in Coeus Award Module from “Under Review” to “Active” and removes “Under

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- Review” \$\$ entry on Money & End Dates Tab.
2. Updates the transaction to closed on the obligation-tracking log.
 3. Research Finance reviews the package for:
 - CFDA, sponsor name, pass through name, project period, project title and IDC rate for accuracy.
 - Rebudget requests that were approved by sponsor between account set up and AOS will be revised, otherwise internal budgets remain the same.
 - Package is uploaded to Banner Document Management (BDM).

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SOP Quick Guide

1. **NOA is received.**
2. **Tracking number assigned.**
3. **A congratulatory email is sent to PI with tracking number, requesting new budget and pertinent documentation, as applicable. AIR account is requested as applicable.**
4. **Coeus Award Module shell is created.**
5. **Award Obligation Setup (AOS) form is created and backup compilation begins.**
6. **Institutional Base Salary and other regulatory requirements are confirmed.**
7. **Final AP routed to all relevant stakeholders.**
8. **AP uploaded to COEUS.**
9. **Award is setup and the status on tracking sheet is changed to complete.**

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Appendix A- IBS Calculator Instructions

IBS Calculator can be found on the NU-RES Resources Webpage.

IBS Calculation Instructions:

Step #1

- **Establish the Proposed Level of Commitment (Effort)**
- **Convert % Proposed Level of Effort into Person Months (PM)**
 - **Academic Year Period and, if any,**
 - **Outside-Academic Year (OAY)/Summer Period**

Step #2

- **Establish the individual's IBS**
- **Calculate the Corresponding IBS Per Month Rate**

Step #3

- **Multiply the PMs x IBS Per Month Rate = Salary Support on Grant (SSOG)**

Identify any issues that may complicate Steps 1-3

(Variance of 3-5% due to inflation is acceptable)

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Appendix B- IBS Certification Form

In accordance with Northeastern University’s Policy on Institutional Base Salary for Extramurally-Funded Sponsored Projects¹, Research Enterprise Services (NU-RES) requires IBS² documentation on file for all individuals who attribute effort to a sponsored project.

The preferred form of IBS documentation is the individual’s appointment letter(s). The purpose of this form is to provide an alternate method of collection when the letter(s) are unavailable or cannot be shared. An updated form should be submitted beginning of each NU fiscal year or anytime changes affecting IBS occur.

Name:		NU Fiscal Year:	
Primary Appointment			
College:		Department:	
Appointment Title:		Term (in months):	
Full-Time Equivalent %:		Salary:	
Subsequent Appointment			
College:		Department:	
Appointment Title:		Term (in months):	
Full-Time Equivalent %:		Salary:	
Subsequent Appointment			
College:		Department:	
Appointment Title:		Term (in months):	
Full-Time Equivalent %:		Salary:	
Subsequent Appointment			
College:		Department:	
Appointment Title:		Term (in months):	
Full-Time Equivalent %:		Salary:	
Comments/Notes:			

The information contained herein is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, accurate and current as of the date of this certification.

Signature:

Date:

Name:

Title:

¹ <https://research.northeastern.edu/nu-res/institute-base-salary-policy/>

² Institutional Base Salary (IBS) is defined as the annual compensation paid by Northeastern University for an individual’s appointment(s), whether that individual’s time is spent on research, teaching, administration, or other activities.

IBS includes regular salary as well as administrative and endowed supplements for additional appointment(s) such as dean, chair, and/or center or institute director.

IBS does not include bonuses, honoraria, extra service or incentive pay, if any, reimbursed expenses, or any income that an individual earns outside of duties or responsibilities performed for NU, such as consulting. IBS also does not include supplemental pay that may be issued for temporarily performing duties that fall outside the responsibilities associated with current appointment(s).

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Appendix C: Restricted Award – Principal Investigator Statement – Email Template

Dear Prof. X,

Restricted Award – Principal Investigator Statement

P. I.:

NU-RES Award #:

Follow-Up Tracking #

Sponsoring Agency:

Agency Award #:

Title:

The above-referenced award has not received all regulatory/institutional approvals related to:

- IRB (Human Subject Research)
- IACUC (Animal Use & Care)
- IBC (BioSafety)
- SCRO (Stem Cells)
- Export Controls
- Other: _____

In order for NU-RES to accept the award and establish a restricted Banner fund for this award, the Principal Investigator must indicate concurrence with the Principal Investigator Statement below. Concurrent can be provided via email.

Principal Investigator Statement:

I certify that no work, which involves activities that have not received full approvals, will be conducted under this award; I further certify that none shall be conducted until appropriate institutional approvals are obtained.

If there are any questions, please let me know.

Thank you,

Grant Officer Name

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