INTRODUCTION

This guide contains basic information for faculty and staff budgeting proposals for sponsored projects. It is updated periodically to reflect changes in budgetary policies and suggestions on budgeting likely costs in future years. All budgets must be prepared in accordance with the U.S. Office of Management & Budget (OMB) Uniform Guidance Cost Principles, University of Maine System (UMS) Administrative Practice Letters (APL), University of Maine policy and procedures, and sponsor guidelines.

When preparing a proposal budget, begin by reviewing the sponsor’s guidelines. The guidelines will include project specific allowable direct and indirect (F&A) costs and required budget formats.

ORA uses a required Budget spreadsheet template (Excel) to build budgets for proposal submissions. Please refer to the instructions included in the template for specific
guidance in how to use the template, and contact ORA proposal staff if you require assistance. Be sure to download a new spreadsheet for every proposal to ensure that all rates and formulas are current.

BUDGET BASICS

Expenses associated with sponsored projects are grouped into two types of costs: Direct Costs and Facilities & Administrative (also known as F&A or Indirect) Costs.

Direct Costs
Direct Costs are those costs that can be specifically ascribed to a particular research project, instructional activity, or other sponsored activity (i.e. community service). Direct costs include but are not limited to: salaries and wages, fringe benefits, equipment, materials and supplies, travel, consultant costs, professional services, subawards, publications, tuition and Graduate Student health insurance.

Facilities & Administrative (Indirect) Costs
Facilities & Administrative Costs are those costs that are incurred for common or joint objectives and, therefore, cannot be identified readily and specifically with a particular sponsored project, instructional activity, or other institutional activity. F&A costs include depreciation and interest on buildings, equipment and capital improvements; operation and maintenance expenses; library expenses; general, departmental, and student administrative costs; sponsored programs, etc. See UM’s federally negotiated F&A Rate Agreement for current rates.

The University requires including the appropriate F&A costs in all proposal budgets, unless the sponsor has a published policy that limits F&A recovery. The F&A rate is determined by the type of project i.e. research, instruction or other sponsored activities, and whether the project is performed on-campus or off-campus. Refer to ORA guidance on F&A rates for more information.

The distribution base used to determine F&A rates is Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) as defined by Uniform Guidance, 2 CFR §200.68. MTDC consists of all salaries and wages, fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, travel, and subawards/subcontracts up to the first $25,000 of each subaward/subcontract. MTDC excludes capital equipment, capital expenditures (construction, renovation or alteration of physical facilities), participant support costs, tuition, rental costs, scholarships and
fellowships, as well as the portion of each subaward/subcontract in excess of $25,000. For more information about Direct and Facilities & Administrative Costs, and the allowability of costs, refer to:

- UMS APL VIII(C) Direct Charging of Expenses (PDF)
- UMS APL IV(I) Use of University Funds (PDF) and
- OMB Uniform Guidance 2 CFR §200.412 - 414

**BUDGET CATEGORIES**

- Note that all budget categories on the ORA spreadsheet, with the exception of subcontracts, consultants, and participant support costs, refer to costs incurred by UM employees only.

**Personnel**

- Individual salaries must reflect actual rates of compensation and must be expressed either as a percentage of time or number of months dedicated to the project. To derive monthly salary figures, divide academic year salaries by the length of appointment (typically 9 months for faculty) and fiscal year salaries by 12, excluding any administrative stipends. Salaries will be paid by UM based on current compensation rates, up to the dollar amount budgeted by the sponsor.
- For assistance in determining the classification and salary/wage range of a new position, contact the Office of Human Resources.
- To help offset prospective increases in salaries and fringe rates, ORA recommends including a 2-3% annual increase on all salaries. The fact that an estimated increase is funded by an external source does not mean that such an increase will be given to employees. Employees receive only increases approved by the Board of Trustees and/or provided for in the appropriate collective bargaining agreement.
- Additional compensation beyond an individual’s base salary is typically unallowable for PIs and Co-PIs on federally funded projects. However, it may be allowed for non-PI faculty and monthly paid employees if prior approval is received from the federal sponsor. Hourly paid employees are not able to receive add comp and instead, are eligible for overtime pay for activity exceeding 40 hours per week.
- Additional compensation for PIs and Co-PIs on non-federally funded projects may be allowed with prior approval from the sponsor.
- Be sure to fill in the correct account code for each salary line, as that will determine the fringe rate applied to that salary. If someone is requesting both academic and summer salary, use two separate salary lines; one at the regular fringe rate and one at the temp/summer salary rate.
Senior Personnel
Senior personnel are individuals who substantially contribute to the scientific development or execution of a project. This category includes the Program Director or Principal Investigator (PI) and Co-Principal Investigators (Co-Pi).

Other Personnel
Other personnel include salaries for all other UM personnel who will work on the project, such as Post-Doctoral associates, professional employees, graduate students, undergraduate students and temporary employees, etc.

- **GRADUATE STUDENTS**: The minimum stipend rates for graduate research assistantships, tuition rates, and health insurance costs are available on ORA's Rates Page. Investigators may propose higher stipend levels to help graduate assistants offset mandatory fees, which can exceed $1,000 per year. Do not list “fees” separately unless required by the program solicitation, as they are almost always unallowable as direct costs. Note that tuition and health insurance are budgeted separately under "Other Direct Costs" and should not be included in the personnel line.

- **SECRETARIAL/CLERICAL**: Salaries and wages of administrative or clerical staff are typically treated as an F&A cost and may be requested as direct costs only for projects requiring an extensive amount of administrative or clerical support and where these costs can be readily and specifically identified with the project with a high degree of accuracy. The circumstances for requiring direct charging of these services must be clearly described in the budget justification, and must demonstrate that the effort required is well beyond the routine requirements of sponsored projects. See OMB Uniform Guidance 2 CFR §200.413 (c) or UMS APL VIII-C (PDF), for examples of where direct charging of administrative salaries may be appropriate.

Fringe Benefits
The University has two fringe benefit rates, one for temporary employees, which also applies to faculty summer salary, and a second for all other non-student personnel, which includes Faculty academic year salary/ release time. See ORA’s Rates Page for rates currently in effect.
Note that fringe rates are negotiated on an annual basis and are subject to change every July 1st. Only approved fringe rates are allowable on grant submissions.

**Capital Equipment**
Capital equipment refers to an item of nonexpendable, tangible property having a useful life of at least one year, an acquisition cost of $5,000 or more, and the ability to function as a stand-alone unit. Equipment meeting all three criteria are exempt from indirect costs unless specified by the sponsor.

Capital equipment may also include components needed for the construction of a stand-alone unit valued over $5,000.

When including capital equipment in a budget, PIs should obtain quotes for equipment and have them available upon request.

**Travel**
Eligible travel costs usually include the costs of attending professional meetings to confer with colleagues and to disseminate the results of the project, as well as the costs of travel necessary to conduct the project. ORA requires that travel be broken down into in-state, out-of-state, and foreign travel. Most sponsors have restrictions on foreign travel, so if foreign travel is anticipated, be sure to thoroughly justify the necessity of such travel relative to the project.

Travel details should match that of sponsor requirements. At minimum, an overall cost per trip should be included as well detailed regarding included elements of the trip cost (lodging, subsistence, per diem, etc.) UM per diems are reimbursed at $46/day for meals. Local travel must include an approximate number of miles, with costs based on the current UM reimbursement rate of $0.44/mile. If using UM motor pool, use the current [Motor Pool mileage and daily rental rates](#).

Note that expenses in this Travel category apply only to UM Employees or graduate/undergraduate students. Travel for consultants and other non-UM employees must be listed elsewhere (under Consultants, Subcontracts, or Other Direct Costs/Non-Employee Travel).

**Participant Support Costs**
Per [Uniform Guidance](#), Participant Support Costs may include only “stipends or subsistence allowances, travel allowances, and registration fees paid to or on behalf of participants or trainees (but not employees) in connection with conferences, or training
projects” unless otherwise directed by the RFP. Facility rental, speaker fees, advertising/publication fees, program-related materials/supplies, incentives, etc. are not considered Participant Support, and must be itemized separately as Other Direct Costs. Correctly categorized participant support costs are exempt from indirect costs. For more detailed information, please refer to the UMS APL VIII-M.

Who is a participant?
A participant is a non-UM employee who is a recipient or beneficiary of a service or training session associated with a workshop, conference, seminar, symposium or other information sharing activity. Participants perform no work or services for the project or program other than for their own benefit. A participant is not involved in providing any deliverable to the university or a third party, or would not be terminated or replaced for failure to perform.

In general, participant support allowances may not be paid to trainees who are receiving compensation, either directly or indirectly, from other Federal government sources while participating in the project.

Materials & Supplies
Materials & Supplies include project specific consumables such as laboratory materials and supplies, and equipment with a unit cost less than $5,000 or an expected useful life of less than one year. If materials and supplies needs are large, classify them by major items or categories, and include subtotals and justifications for the larger categories. Materials and Supplies includes laptops and software specifically allocable to this project only. Additional UM spreadsheet categories that may be included in the sponsor’s “Materials” line item include: non-capital equipment, publications, computer software <$5,000, computer or lab eqpt. < $5,000. Keep in mind that routine office supplies are considered F&A costs and are unallowable.

Consultant Services
Consultants are experts (normally individuals, not organizations) engaged by the project for short-term or sporadic periods, usually to provide technical assistance or to render evaluation services. Consultants should be identified in your budget by name. If another institution, company, or organization will play a significant role in the project, they should be identified as a Subrecipient as opposed to a Consultant (see below). University of Maine employees or students may not be budgeted as consultants and must instead be included in the senior or other personnel salary lines.
Also review:

- UMS APL VII-A(2): University of Maine System Purchasing Procedures (in particular, section VIII: Procurement of Professional Services and Consultants)
- UMaine Human Resources - Procedures to Determine Independent Contractor/Consultant Status

Anticipated consultant services must be justified and the following information must be provided in a signed letter of commitment from the proposed consultant prior to proposal submission: the individual’s expertise, their primary organizational affiliation, their normal daily compensation rate, and the number of days of expected service. Consultants’ travel costs may be included in this line item.

**Professional Services**

Professional services refers to vendors, distributors, or other specialized group providing goods or services that are necessary for the conduct of a sponsored project. See Uniform Guidance §200.459 for specific defining qualifications. Vendors generally: provide the goods and services within normal business operations; provide similar goods or services to many different purchasers; operate in a competitive environment; provide goods or services that are ancillary to the operation of the sponsored project; and are not subject to compliance requirements of the grant sponsor. Professional Services, like Consultants, are simply providing a one-time service and are not playing a significant role in the design, development, or implementation of the overall project.

Professional Services over the current small acquisition threshold of $3,000 must be put out to bid unless the service provider is justifiable as a sole-source (see Uniform Guidance Procurement Standards, 2 CFR §200.319-20).

For more guidance on distinguishing between a vendor and subrecipient, and related compliance requirements, refer to Uniform Guidance §200.330.

**Subrecipients**

Subrecipients are organizations or institutions, not individuals, who will play a significant role in the planning and execution of the project, and to which a portion of the project activities will be delegated. Subrecipients are distinguished from vendors (Professional Services) by having their own key personnel, scope of work, budget and budget justification. A signed Subrecipient Commitment Form, budget, budget justification, and scope of work is required by UM prior to proposal submission. The Subrecipient Commitment Form is an internal form and should not be submitted to the sponsor. However, a separate subrecipient budget, justification, and key personnel documents (CV, Current & Pending Support) are often mandatory documents that need to be
submitted to the sponsor as part of the proposal. Awards made to subrecipients are formal arrangements and usually carry the same terms and conditions as the prime award.

As described in Uniform Guidance §200.330, a subrecipient generally: “determines who is eligible to receive what [Federal] assistance, has its performance measured in relation to whether the objectives of a [Federal] program were met; has responsibility for programmatic decision making; has responsibility for adherence to applicable [Federal] program compliance requirements; and in accordance with its agreement, uses the [Federal] funds to carry out a program... as opposed to providing goods or services for the benefit of the pass-through entity.”

**Tuition**
Tuition is typically included for graduate students engaged on a sponsored project. A 5% increase is recommended for Estimates for tuition costs. Calculations including number of credits, number of students, and rate per credit must be included in the budget justification.

**Graduate Student Health Insurance**
Health Insurance is required for all Graduate Students working at least half time (10 hrs/wk), regardless of the number of weeks they will be working on the project. One half of the premium must be charged to the grant providing their salary, although PIs may request up to the full amount. This is a required cost unless the specific graduate student has already been identified and has health insurance through another policy. It is recommended to include a 5% increase annually for this cost.

**Miscellaneous:**

**Publications**
Publication costs (60900) include the costs of preparing and publishing the results of research conducted under the project, including costs of reports, reprints, page charges, or other journal costs, and necessary illustrations; cleanup, documentation, storage and indexing of data and databases; and development, documentation and debugging of software etc.

**Phone**
Long-distance telephone calls may be appropriate to include in a proposal budget as long as the expenses are directly allocable to the specific grant project. As a general rule, telephone hardware, installation and line connection costs and
cellular phones are considered F&A Costs and should NOT be directly charged to federally sponsored project accounts.

**Printing, Postage, and Shipping**
Printing/ Copying (60800, 60603, 60604), Postage/FedEx/UPS (60400), and Shipping (60400) costs, if directly allocable to the project, may be budgeted as allowable Other Direct Costs.

**Rentals**
Rentals from non-UMaine entities are excluded from indirect costs.

**Interdepartmental Services**
This cost category, 61008, includes all services provided by UMaine departments. Interdepartmental services includes but is not limited to CORE facilities, analysis, MAFES, and the advanced computing group. A basis of cost must be included in the budget narrative.

**Non-participant stipends**
Non-participant stipends, such as those for advisory board members, facilitators, workshop leaders, or expert panelists should be budgeted in the Other Direct Costs section of the ORSP budget template using Account Code 60004, Honoraria and Lecture Fees.

**Human Subjects Payments**
Human subject payments should be budgeted using Account Code 60000, Independent Personal Services.

**OTHER BUDGET COMPONENTS**

**Cost-Sharing**
Cost-share/Match are funds that either UM or a third-party contributes to a project as specifically required by the sponsor. UM policy limits the cost-sharing amount to the minimum limits imposed by the sponsor. If additional funds will be needed above and beyond the specified match ratio in order to complete the scope of work, permission must be granted in writing by the VPR. All University cost-sharing must be approved.
within PARS prior to proposal submission. Third-party and UM voluntary cost-share must be corroborated by a signed letter of commitment received prior to proposal submission.

“In-Kind” cost-share does not exist at UM. All expenses must be auditable, and therefore must have a dollar value associated with them. A percentage of someone’s salary, for example, is still a portion of that person’s time that must be quantified and accounted for, and therefore documented in the budget. Equipment use fees are real expenses as well, and therefore should be charged accordingly. Third party cost share may be designated as “in-kind” by that organization, however all matching funds must be documented, auditable, and directly allocable to the project.

While the University may in principle share in any of the costs, the preferred contribution from the University is a portion of the personnel costs: salaries and wages, plus the fringe benefits associated with them. The University also incurs the F&A costs associated with the direct costs it contributes. It is most common for academic release time to be the source of cost shared salary.

University cost-sharing also takes the form of sharing a portion of the F&A costs associated with sponsor-funded direct costs, if the sponsor has a published policy that limits F&A recovery. The F&A portion not recovered will be shown on the UMaine budget template as University cost-sharing for auditing purposes, but may only be included on sponsor budgets when allowable as cost-share.

Note that UM has entered into cooperative agreements with the State of Maine and a few other sponsors and programs which establish exceptions to the federally negotiated UM F&A Rate Agreement. Questions regarding limited indirect cost rates and cost-sharing should be directed to ORA.

For more information on Cost-Sharing, see Uniform Guidance §200.306.

**Budget Justification**

The Office of Research Administration requires that a budget justification accompany the ORA spreadsheet to ORA staff for review and approval. Almost all sponsors require a detailed narrative description/justification of budgeted items for each project year. The level of detail required may vary, but in general all personnel time commitments must be included, as well as an explanation of all funds being requested or contributed in each major budget category described above, including fringe benefits and F&A costs. For an example of a budget justification, see the Sample Budget Justification below.
Budget Justification: University of Maine

SALARIES AND WAGES

SENIOR PROJECT PERSONNEL SALARIES AND WAGES
1. Dr. Jane Doe (PI). The PI requests two months of summer salary per year during the entire study to design, implement, collect data, analyze data, supervise work by graduate and undergraduate students, draft publications, attend meetings to present formative and final results of the project. Salary includes a 2% annual increase.

OTHER PERSONNEL
1. One graduate student is supported by this project with an annual stipend of $21,840. This student will focus on data collection and analysis. Salary includes a 2% annual increase.
2. Undergraduate students: 10 undergraduate students will be hired to support data collection, database creation and database management. Y1-Y5: 500 hrs. of work per year ($12/hour).
3. TBN (Software Engineer) - Funds are requested for a 1/3 time software engineer to provide web design, software interface development and optimization support. Yr 1 only.

FRINGE BENEFITS $13,680
Fringe benefits are charged in accordance with the UMaine negotiated rate agreement. The summer salary fringe benefit rate is 7.6% in year one and 7.8% in years 2 and 3. Regularly salary fringe rates are charged at 52.3% in year one and 53.4% in years 2 and 3. Fringe benefits are not charged on student salaries.

CAPITAL EQUIPMENT $50,000
$50,000 is requested in yr 1 for the purchase of a Giant Sample Analyzer from Specific Supply Company. Quotes were obtained by three companies for the analyzer. The cost of the Analyzer from Specific Supply Company includes installation and shipping.

TRAVEL $10,652

DOMESTIC TRAVEL
1. Conference attendance (domestic): two national conferences ($1,500 per conference) will be attended by PI to present formative and final results of the project. Five days is anticipated for each trip (Y2 and Y5). Funds will cover airfare, lodging, conference registration, ground transportation and per diem charged at the University of Maine rate of $46 per day.

2. Trips by two people (PI and graduate student) to facilitate participatory planning workshops out-of-state; one workshop per year (Y3 and Y5). Per trip breakdown: $2,826. Funds will cover airfare, lodging, conference registration, ground transportation and per diem charged at the University of Maine rate of $46 per day.

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL
3. Conference attendance (international): one international conference ($2,000) will be attended by the PI to present results of the project. Five days are anticipated for this trip (Y3 only). Funds will cover airfare, lodging, conference registration, ground transportation, per diem (OCONUS rates) and conference registration.
OTHER DIRECT COSTS

MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES $6,500
1. Supplies for fieldwork per year: flagging ($200), lab consumables ($1000)
2. Two (2) field data entry device ($500 per unit) for data collection and real-time data analysis. (Year 1 only)

SOFTWARE $1,170
Computer software will be purchased for qualitative data analysis, quantitative data collection, and GIS mapping and planning.
1. Three (3) NVivo11 license (Y1: $950 per license)
2. Three (3) NVivo license upgrade (Y3: $300 per license)

CONSULTANT SERVICES $6,000
Dr. Susan Smith will serve as a consultant in year 5, assisting with project evaluation. She will work for a total of ten days (80 hours) at the maximum consultant rate of $600/day. Total requested costs are $6,000. A copy of the signed commitment letter from Dr. Smith is included with this budget justification.

SUBRECIPIENTS
This project includes a subaward to Boston University (PI: John Brown). The total amount of the subaward over 5 years is $50,000.

OTHER - GRADUATE STUDENT TUITION $50,941
1. Graduate student tuition covering 21 credits per year at $439/credit, for five years, with a 5% annual increase

OTHER – GRADUATE STUDENT HEALTH INSURANCE $15,720
1. Health insurance for graduate student, with a mandatory 5% annual increase per University of Maine policy with a base rate of $2,845 in Year 1.

OTHER—PHOTOCOPYING/PRINTING
1. Photocopying and printing: $500 per year

OTHER – FACILITY RENTAL
1. Rental costs of $370 for 0.1 acres of blueberry land are requested for the first year to conduct experiments on ascospore dispersal. Rental of blueberry land is $3700 per acre at Blueberry Hill Research Farm, Jonesboro, ME where field experiments measuring spore dispersal will be performed. Rental costs are excluded from the indirect cost base.

INDIRECT COSTS (F&A)
Indirect costs are charged at the University of Maine’s federally negotiated rate of 44% of modified total direct cost in Year 1 and 46% MTDC in Year 2.