

Arkansas State University
Sponsored Programs Accounting
Conferences, Meetings, and Workshops

Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to define Conferences, Meetings and Workshops for Sponsored Programs.

Conferences, Meetings, and Workshops

For purposes of this procedure, Sponsored Programs are externally-funded activities in which a formal written agreement, i.e., a grant, contract, or cooperative agreement, is entered into by the University and by the sponsor.

Conferences as defined by 2 CFR 200.432 can be a meeting, retreat, seminar, symposium, workshop or event whose primary purpose is the dissemination of technical information beyond A-State and is necessary and reasonable for the successful performance of the award. In general, the following expenses are allowable for conferences: rental of facilities, speakers' fees, cost of meals and refreshments, local transportation, and other incidental items. In addition, conference hosts should take steps to ensure that conference costs are appropriate, necessary and managed in a manner that minimizes costs.

Meal Cost Guidance

In response to the guidance above, meals at conferences should not exceed the A-State daily per diem rate for the city in which the event is held. The per diem rates can be found on the Travel website. Any deviations from this guideline must be approved by the sponsor and Sponsored Programs Accounting.

For conferences in the Jonesboro area, employees may only be reimbursed for meals with a business purpose. Business purpose may be documented with a meeting agenda or other written documentation.

Specific Agency Guidance

Certain federal agencies further restrict the costs for conferences. Please see the chart below for each agency.

Agency	Reference	Selected Items
NSF	PAPPG II.C.2.g (xiii)	NSF funds are not to be spent for meals and coffee breaks for intramural meetings of an organization. Conference expenses must be included in the proposal.
NIH	NIH Grants Policy 14.10	<p>The following items are unallowable:</p> <p>Honoraria or other payments given for the purpose of conferring distinction or to symbolize respect, esteem, or admiration may not be paid from grant funds.</p> <p>Local Participants' Expenses - With the exception of local mileage as indicated under Allowable Costs—Travel above, grant funds may not be used to pay per diem or expenses for local participants in the conference.</p> <p>Direct charges for meals/food and beverages are unallowable charges to an NIH grant where the primary purpose is to support a scientific meeting/conference.</p> <p><i>The NIH highly regulates conference expenses. Before making any conference arrangements, please schedule an appointment with your SPA Accountant.</i></p>
NIJ	OCFO Financial Guide 3.6	<p>All conferences must have prior written approval before the start date of the award.</p> <p>Meals and refreshments are generally unallowable. If food is provided at a conference, but purchased with institutional funds, a sign must be displayed noting that NIJ did not pay for the food and drink.</p> <p><i>The NIJ highly regulates conference expenses. Before making any conference arrangements, please schedule an appointment with your SPA Accountant.</i></p>
ONR	Terms and Conditions #25	ONR funds shall not be used to pay for food or beverages.