

Grant Budget Basics

1. What costs do you need to cover to complete your research?

Here are a few of the most common budget items:

Salary or Stipend	Materials and Supplies (<\$5,000)
Fringe Benefits	Equipment (>\$5,000)
Air travel	Publishing Expenses
Lodging	Human Subject Payments
Meals/Per Diem	Facility Use
Ground Transportation	Access Fees (parks, museums, libraries, etc.)
Baggage Fees	Participant Support
Visa Fees	Tuition
Travel Insurance	Indirect Costs (IDC)
Consultant services (surveyors, translators, transcribers, guides, etc.)	

2. Read the grant guidelines. What is your budget max, what costs are **allowable**, and how is IDC applied?

3. What budget format does the sponsor request? If none is provided, use **standard budget categories**, in the order below, and create your budget in Excel.

Personnel
Domestic Travel (Incl. Mexico, Canada, U.S. possessions)
Foreign Travel
Consultant Services
Material and Supplies
Equipment
Other Costs
Indirect Costs

Note: Using Excel makes summing budget totals and making neat, easy-to-read columns much easier. If your final budget needs to be embedded in a Word document, copy it in later as a table or as a PDF.

4. Add detailed **line items** under each relevant category, based on real cost analysis. Don't round.

5. If required by the sponsor, write your **budget justification**, based on your finalized Excel budget.

Common Budget Mistakes

- Making unnecessary **cost sharing** commitments
- Not including a budget justification
- Requesting the same items from multiple sponsors
- Spending funds before the start of the grant period, or after the grant period is over
- Not including Indirect Costs (IDC), a.k.a. overhead or administrative costs
- Not including fringe benefits and tuition for salaries