

The **purpose** of the justification is to justify all expenses required to achieve project aims & objectives. It should:

- Follow sponsor proposal instructions, providing as much detail as required
- Explain why each of the requested items is necessary to accomplish the proposed research – do not leave the reviewer wondering why an item was requested
- For CAS exceptions:
 - Administrative/Clerical Expenses
 - General Supplies
 - Memberships and Subscriptions
 - Other Electronics
 - Phones
 - Postage

Consult the [Cost Accounting Standards](#) for guidance and additional information on what the justification must include.

PERSONNEL – Identify staffing requirements:

- Position title
- Number of months devoted to the project
- For hourly workers include the hourly rate
- Brief description of duties
- Explanation of the essential/integral nature of the position to the project

Graduate Research Assistant (GRA) effort – Sample Justification Language:

Note: Samples are based on a GRA budgeted at 20 hours per week year-round.

Sample 1: “TBD, Graduate Research Assistant (GRA) – (20 hours per week over 9.0 academic months and 3.0 summer months, designated as 100% effort during the academic year and 50% effort during the summer. 20 hours per week is considered full time during the academic year and half time during the summer.”

Sample 2: “Funds are requested to support a Graduate Research Assistant (GRA). The GRA will devote 100% FTE for the academic year (AY) and 50% FTE during the three-month summer, each year of the X-year project. Per University policy, GRA effort cannot exceed 20 hours per week during the AY, therefore 20 hours/week during the AY and 40 hours/week during the summer is considered 100% effort for a GRA.”

Sample 3: “The budget allocates sufficient funds to support a Graduate Research Assistant (GRA) for 9 academic months at 20 hours per week and 3 summer months at 20 hours per week each year throughout the life of the

project. Arizona State University considers full-time GRA effort to be 20 hours per week during the academic year and 40 hours per week during the summer.”

Mandatory Annual Escalation Factor

It is recommended that budget justifications include the following escalation factor verbiage, (without calling out the mandatory 3% escalation rate specifically): “An estimated cost escalation has been included in the out years, consistent with ASU policy.”

ERE (AKA FRINGE BENEFITS) - Include the following statement:

"Arizona State University defines fringe benefits as direct costs, estimates fringe benefits as a standard percent of salary applied uniformly to all types sponsored activities, and charges benefits to sponsors in accordance with the federally-negotiated rates in effect at the time salaries are incurred. The rates used in the proposal budget are based on the current federally-negotiated rate agreement. An estimated cost escalation has been included in the out years, consistent with ASU policy.” Provide the ERE table located on [Salary, Wages, and ERE](#) webpage. rate.

TRAVEL – EXPLAIN:

- the need for travel (e.g. to present results, share information, work in a remote location)
- how the travel will benefit the project’s aims

International and/or domestic airfare - Indicate origin and destination (country/city), number of travelers and unit cost per round trip. All travel must be booked with economy class fares only. Applicants must explain differences in fares among travelers on the same routes. Note that for all federal funds, travel, must comply with the Fly America Act. For more information, see the [foreign travel topical guide](#).

In-country travel - Indicate origin and destination (city), type of transportation, number of travelers and unit cost per traveler per trip.

Per diem/maintenance - Include lodging, meals, and incidentals for staff travel. Indicate that per diem rates will be used in accordance with ASU’s travel policy and that ASU sets rates at or below federal rates. Per diem rates may not exceed the published U.S. government allowance rates.

Concur Technologies – Include the expense reporting fee along with the following language: “ASU’s travel system software provider, Concur Technologies, assesses a charge of \$10.45/per person for each travel expense report submitted. The expense is a direct cost charged per trip.”

[International Travel Registry](#) - Include the registry fee, when applicable, along with the following language (tailor as needed, to conform with sponsor requirements): “International Travel Service Fees (estimated at \$3.00 per registered traveler, per day, plus annual escalation for out years) have been budgeted for any ASU students traveling on the project, as well as any faculty/staff members accompanying ASU students. This fee is associated with mandatory registry in ASU’s [International Travel](#)

[Registry](#), a secure system for students traveling outside the United States and its territories to record international travel plans and contact information, support emergency communications, and give registered travelers access to valuable international health, safety and security resources. The expense is a direct cost charged per traveler, per day.”

DANGER PAY (DPA) – For budgets that present Danger Pay costs, include the following statement:

“Danger Pay has been included for proposed project staff while working in eligible areas. Costs have been calculated based on posted US Department of State rates and policies. Estimates of days and/or daily rates are furnished solely to evaluate this proposal. It is understood that, other than retention of travel documentation, the University will not be required to maintain a record of days or hours of effort under any resultant award nor required to invoice personnel effort by days or hours.”

EQUIPMENT PURCHASE/RENTAL - Provide:

- Name
- Model, if known
- Names of vendors, if available
- Basis for estimate (e.g. quote, catalog, historical information)

MATERIALS/SUPPLIES – Indicate:

- Itemization of individual supplies (e.g., test tubes, pipettes, etc.) not just lumped together under “scientific supplies”
- Dedicated only to this project
- Essential to meet project’s aims

CONSULTANT - Provide:

- Statement as to:
 - why the [consultant](#) is the only qualified individual/entity to perform the work in question
 - how the consultant’s selection will benefit the sponsor
- The following information from the consultant’s [letter of commitment](#)
 - Period of Performance
 - Total number of hours
 - Fully burdened rate per hour
 - Brief description of service

TUITION REMISSION – Include the following language:

“Tuition remission for the graduate student is included as a mandatory benefit and is charged in proportion to the amount of effort the graduate student will work on the project.” Provide the tuition table available on the [Proposal and Information Resources - Other Direct Costs](#) webpage.

SUBCONTRACTOR/SUBRECIPIENT - Include:

- what the [subrecipient](#) is responsible for
- why they are the only qualified entity to perform the work in question
- how they were selected and how their selection benefits the sponsor

The subrecipient should provide the budget justification for their own budget. These justifications should not be intermingled, i.e., the personnel section should NOT include ASU personnel and subcontractor personnel.

FACILITIES AND ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS

Sponsors using DHHS approved rates: F&A is budgeted at the (on campus) or (off campus) rate approved in [ASU's DHHS rate agreement](#).

Sponsors using published rate: F&A funds are budgeted at _____. This rate is in accord with (Sponsor's published policy) or (ASU's policy).

ASUF proposals: F&A funds are budget at _____. This rate is in accord with (Sponsor's published policy) or (ASU's policy). Include the following language: "A percentage of the funds will be paid to the ASU Foundation in consideration for their services in support of this project. "

CHECKLIST FOR REVIEWING BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

Use the following checklist to review your budget justification:

- Does the budget justification follow the same order as the budget?
- Does it give additional details to explain the costs included in the budget?
- Does it include only items that are allowable, reasonable, & allocable?
- Is it easy to read (short paragraphs, headings to separate different budget categories, etc.)?
- Is it concise?
- Do the numbers in the budget justification match those in the budget?
- Has consideration been given to budget justifications submitted to industry sponsors?

PROPOSALS TO INDUSTRY SPONSORS

- The budget &/or budget justification that is being sent to an industry sponsor should be a Category Budget Breakdown that includes Fully Burdened Rates in all the applicable cost categories.
- Specifically this means that ERE and F&A will be included in the total of each budget category rather than identified separately.
- When there is Human Subjects included as part of the project, the IRB fees need to be included as part of the proposal. Please work with your GCO or ORIA regarding the appropriate costs.

Keywords:
Budget Narrative, Budget Explanation, Budget Justification

[Suggestions/Feedback](#)