Award Cash Management Service (ACM$) 2020 Webinar Frequently Asked Questions

COVID-19 Financial Stewardship

NSF is continually updating guidance and online resources to keep you informed. The latest information is available at: https://www.nsf.gov/coronavirus.

We would like to pay for an employee's personal internet service to enable continued work from home during Covid. Is this an allowable expense?

"NSF Implementation of OMB Memorandum M-20-26" states that:

NSF continues to authorize recipients to charge other costs to NSF awards necessary to resume activities supported by the award, consistent with applicable Federal cost principles and the benefit to the project and the entity's existing policies and procedures.

When [a] COVID award is issued, will it have a separate line in [the] NSF portal for drawdown? Who will be the PI since all PI names are listed in the portal?

No, there will not be a separate line in ACM$ for drawdown if it is a COVID award. NSF recipients are reminded of the requirement to maintain appropriate records and documentation necessary to support charges to NSF awards.

The PI listed will be the primary PI.

Is Pay.gov going to be used by NSF from now on or is this a temporary solution to COVID-19 / work from home?

Pay.gov has always been one of the three options available for institutions to return funds to NSF. See "Can you please explain again the process to refund money to NSF?" for more information about refunds.

Our award date starts from 9/1/2018-8/31/2021. We haven't spent down the whole grant. Should I do anything at this point?

There are many factors to consider and it is recommended you reach out to your NSF Program Officer to discuss the current status of the award and anticipated work to be completed through the remainder of the award period of performance.

If per policy - salaries continue to be paid and charged to the research grant, are additional funds available if the research is not completed at the end of the period of performance?

> " *Recipients must not assume that supplemental funding will be available should the charging of such costs or other fees result in a shortage of funds to eventually carry out the original goals of the project.*
>
> *NSF may also evaluate the recipient's ability to resume the project activity in the future and the appropriateness of future funding, as done under normal circumstances based on subsequent annual project reports and other communications with the recipient.*
>
> *Due to the limited funding resources under each NSF award necessary to achieve its specific project, as specified in M-20-26, recipients must exhaust other available funding sources to sustain its workforce and implement necessary steps to save overall operational costs (such as rent renegotiations) during this pandemic period in order to preserve NSF funds for the ramp-up effort. Recipients must retain documentation of their efforts to exhaust other funding sources and reduce overall operational costs.*
>
> *This flexibility is time limited and will expire on September 30, 2020 See the NSF Coronavirus information page at https://www.nsf.gov/news/special_reports/coronavirus/*

Can non-refundable airline tickets that were unused due to pandemic be directly charged to an NSF grant if they will not be used for grant related activities during the grant period?

> OMB M-20-17, *Administrative Relief for Recipients and Applicants of Federal Financial Assistance Directly Impacted by the Novel Coronavirus (COVID19) due to Loss of Operations* (March 19, 2020), was rescinded effective June 16, 2020. Any requests for use of flexibilities specified in OMB Memoranda M-20-17 that were submitted prior to June 16th are actionable by NSF if included in the Foundation's implementation.

A conference was cancelled due to COVID-19, which the conference expense was refunded. But the flight expense will not be refunded by the airport. The flight expense [can] be used within a year of the original flight. Are we able to claim non-refundable travel expenses due to COVID-19?

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Award Cash Management $ervice (ACM$)

I am new to my position. How do I get added to the ACMS Automated email list for my institute?

The ACMS_POC listserv is updated quarterly on October 1, January 2, April 1, and July 1. The list includes any ACM$ official that has prepared or certified a payment in the last 24 months or any newly added ACM$ contacts in the last 6 months. If you are not included in the listserv, please send an email request to bfadfmgcms@nsf.gov with the subject line LISTSERV. We try to keep the list as up-to-date as we can, therefore, you must re-submit your request at the start of every fiscal year (October 1) if you are not an ACM$ official that has prepared or certified a payment in the last 24 months or you are not a newly added ACM$ contact in the last 6 months.

Can you please explain again the process to refund money to NSF?

NSF continues to operate remotely with limited access to our building and facilities. As such, there are delays in processing manual checks submitted for grant refunds and adjustments. To ensure timely processing of remittances, we highly recommend using electronic methods such as ACM$ or pay.gov.

Option 1: Make an adjustment in ACM$: An adjustment can be entered via a payment transaction and offset against another award for which your institution requires funds. Please remember: the net total of your ACM$ transaction must be greater than or equal to zero. When your institution has active and open awards, this is the preferred method.

Option 2: Pay.gov: Use this link (https://www.pay.gov/public/form/start/10506005) and follow instructions to fill out the NSF Remittance Form on pay.gov. You must enter the award number in the specified filed to ensure proper credit is given. For first time pay.gov users returning funds using a bank account, we recommend reaching out to your banking institution to ensure NSF is a valid entity to make ACH debits to the account. NSF's identification number for your bank is "National Science Foundation ALC: 49000001". If your bank requires a 10-digit version, please use 4900000101 instead.

Option 3: Mail a check (if you cannot use option 1 or 2): Send a check made out to "National Science Foundation" using the following mailing address:
National Science Foundation
Attention: NSF Cashier
2415 Eisenhower Avenue
Alexandria, VA 22314
Along with the check, please include a letter that indicates the award number(s), the amount to be applied to each award, and the reason for the return (audit disallowance, excess cash on hand, etc.).

NSF Critical Dates

When a cancellation email is sent out please let them know to share with contracts and grants department.

Notifications are sent to the latest ACM$ preparing and certifying official at the institution. We ask that the ACM$ point of contact at the institution act as a liaison to communicate this message with the PI, AOR, etc. as appropriate according to the institution's established policies and procedures.

Miscellaneous

Who can I contact after this webinar to discuss further?

Contact your GCMS Accountant listed at www.nsf.gov/bfa/dfm/cmeab.jsp.

Additional answers to common questions about the Award Cash Management Service (ACM$), Program Income Reporting, and other cash management topics can be found at the following FAQ: https://nsf.gov/bfa/dfm/docs/CashManagementFAQs.pdf.