

General Questions

Where can I find my contact for our state?

Contacts can be found on our webpage: <https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dfm/cmeab.jsp>

Can we ask our contact logistical questions as well as financial?

While we primarily field financial inquiries, we will always welcome any other questions you may have and will route them to the appropriate contact within NSF.

Will the slides be available for download?

Yes, they can be found on our webpage: <https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dfm/cmeab.jsp>

Is there any penalty if we returned the funds late?

Unless this is a debt collection, there is no penalty. Again, it is recommended to do so as soon as possible.

How many times are you allowed you extend if you have unspent funds?

Awards should not be extended if you have unspent funds. Extensions should be requested when more time is needed to complete the project.

If we over-estimate the expenses for an advanced draw on a cancelling appropriation, what is the preferred route to return excess funds to NSF? Pay.gov? Or does the ACM\$ system remain available for credits?

Pay.gov or Check are the only two options. ACM\$ will not accept credits against awards that are canceled.

Where can I call for the no-cost extension?

We recommend contacting your NSF Program Official for the award in question.

Can an awardee ask for a no-cost extension before the final Project Year of the award if they are certain they will need it (e.g., Covid-related delays in student recruitment)?

As a grantee, you can initiate your first request to extend as a "Grantee Approved" no-cost extension at least ten days prior to the end of the award. We recommend discussing this further with your NSF Program Official for the award in question.

The SBE Postdoc grant was extended to cover the period of Sept 1st - Dec 31st. Do the postdoc fellows need to make an no-cost extension request?

If the award end date in ACM\$ is not through December 31st, we recommend contacting your NSF Program Official for the award in question.

I was awarded in June of 2021 and the end date is 11/30/21. Does the Sept. 23 date apply to all awards?

The 23rd is the last day funds can be requested from ACM\$ before it is taken offline for fiscal year end close. It will resume operation the morning of October 1st. This has no impact on your award end date.

What situations would you return funds? Only after completion of the award when funds have not been spent?

Generally, grantees return funds after an award has ended for a variety of reasons. However, there are situations where funds are returned during a project to avoid having a cash on hand award balance. An example of this would be a large refund from an expenditure that would not be immediately used for new expenditures against the award.

When is the deadline to return unspent funds?

There is no deadline, but it is recommended to do so as soon as possible.

Will you go over FFR process?

With the implementation of ACM\$, award expenses are reported to NSF at the time of drawdown. Therefore, we do not require the quarterly FFR.

Are annual SF425 required for submission?

No

If SF425 & FFR reporting are not required. Just to confirm, the program/award official will not ask for these separately?

They will not ask for these separately. However, if your award(s) has Cost Share you will need to submit this through the Notification process.

If we don't really understand most of the processes and scenarios mentioned, what would be a good resource to understand the background and processes?

Your financial point of contact can meet with you to discuss. Contacts can be found on our webpage: <https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dfm/cmeab.jsp>

Is there a training session offered that covers end to end processes such as any requirements prior to first draw, quarterly/periodic reporting requirements, NCE requirements, financial close-out, etc.

We currently do not have any training sessions, but you are always free to reach out to your financial contact to set up some time to go over these topics with you. Contacts can be found on our webpage: <https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dfm/cmeab.jsp>

If I understand correctly the cut-off applies to all NSF awards and the cut-off for all FY21 expenses. Or is the cut-off of Sept 23 only for NSF projects 'flagged'? The grant of concern is a 3 year grant and we are only in year 1.

The cutoff applies to the use of ACM\$. This does not impact your award.

We have an award end date, and an ACM\$ close date - which is the one that we have to complete spending by?

Spending should be completed by the award end date. The ACM\$ financial close date is 120 days after the award end date and is a period when final cash requests should be made for expenses incurred by the award end date

What type of covid-related adjustments or allowances might be expected? For example, covid-related travel limitations mean travel heavy awards can't be completed until travel restrictions lift.

NSF provides guidance on our webpage: https://www.nsf.gov/news/special_reports/coronavirus/ . For more award specific guidance, we recommend reaching out to the NSF Program Official for the award(s) in question.

ACM\$/Cash Request Questions

Several fellows were concerned about the statement that ACM\$ will be "shutting down" or "closing operations". It is still unclear to me what this means - will we be unable to pay our salary during the ACM\$ shut down period?

ACM\$ will be going offline starting at 2pm EDT on September 23rd. This means all requests for cash will need to be made for expenses incurred or projected through the end of September. ACM\$ will be online starting the morning of October 1st.

Our award will end in September and our September payrolls will be post completely until the end of October.

If your award does not have canceling funds, you will be able to request funds as usual starting on October 1st and you will have the 120 day window to submit requests for funds.

If ACM\$ will be shutdown during October, can we request our September and October salary during September?

We do not anticipate ACM\$ being shut down in October.

If we don't submit a draw down by September 23rd, will we be able to do so on October 1st, for the same period covered?

Yes, as long as the award funds are not canceling. In ACM\$, they will have a red flag next to the Award ID if they are canceling.

NSF Postdoc fellow here. Does this shut down have the same impact for us? Each quarter, funds have to be made available in order to request them. My funds have not been consistently available each quarter before the 1st. Will the funds for Oct 1st be available by September 23?

Your NSF Program Specialist manages the funds available in ACM\$. We recommend reaching out to them to determine the status of the fund availability.

Can we request a draw down after October 1, 2021, for service period in the Fiscal year ended Sept. 23?

Yes, as long as the award funds are not canceling. In ACM\$, they will have a red flag next to the Award ID if they are canceling.

By drawdown ability is it meant that we are unable to make request for payment between Sept 23 and Oct 1? Do we need to make sure to process a payment BEFORE Sept 23 and will we be paid on Oct 1?

Yes, ACM\$ will be offline for drawdowns starting September 23rd at 2pm EDT. Any requests made before this time will be processed and paid within 2-3 business days.

Do final outcome reports and final project reports need to be in before all funds are draw down?

Generally, fund availability is independent of reporting requirements. However, you should always refer to your award letter to confirm this.

I'm supposed to scheduled fellowship stipend payments before the start of each month, and I'm currently not able to schedule any payments past September 23. Will I be able to schedule the rest of my monthly stipend payments after October 1?

Yes, on October 1st you will be able to schedule payments into September 2022.

For Postdoc Fellows, can you recommend the best date to drawdown our October stipend payments? It appears we cannot schedule a payment past the end of September. Should we drawdown that stipend payment for mid September?

We recommend reaching out to your NSF Program Specialist. ACM\$ will be online starting October 1st.

If funds are returned to NSF before the project is complete, will these funds still be available for later draw down against expenses on the project before it is completed?

Yes, as long as the funds returned are not canceling.

In a multi-year grant that is not closing this year, can payroll from September be drawn in October and still be applied to the year ending September?

Funds can be requested in October for expenditures in September.

Our grant was extended to 8/31/2022. By when do we have to request the final drawdown?

If your award has canceling funds, they need to be requested by 2pm EDT September 23rd. Otherwise, final drawdowns should be requested 120 days after the grant end date.

I've been drawing down funds to pay for various expensive during my research. Where do I specify what I'm using the funds for?

This information is not required at the time of drawdown in ACM\$. However, you should be keeping records and accounting for your funds spent.

Do the financial folks need to wait for the PI to finalize their final technical report before checking the final flag box within the ACM\$ website?

We recommend you consult with your PI before initiating the financial close of the award.

Do cancelling funds have to be submitted by September 23rd, if costs were incurred before September 23? Or can we wait until after Oct. 1st?

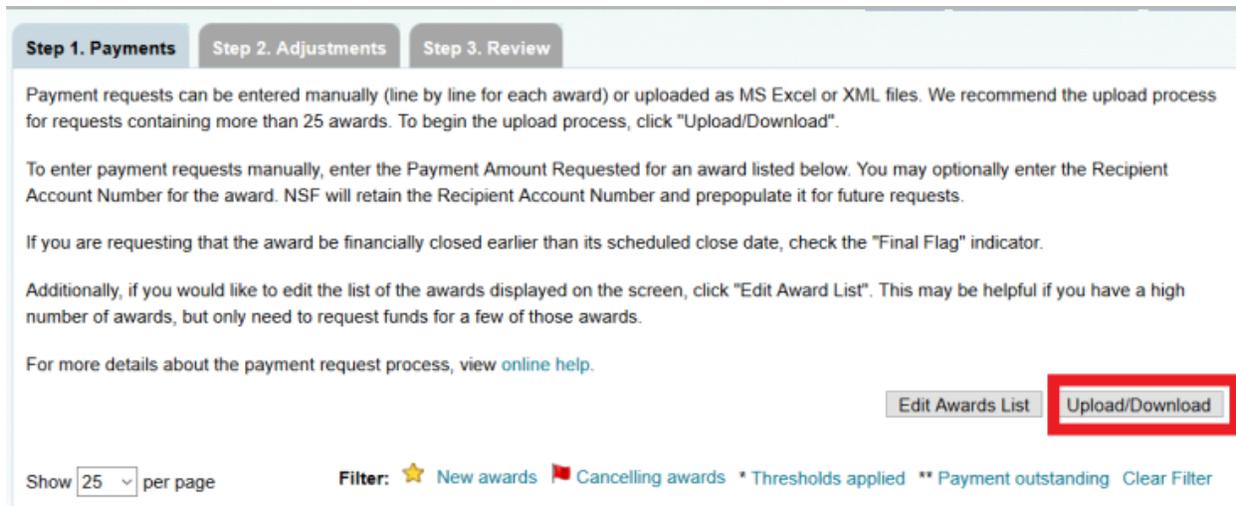
You cannot wait until October 1st, as the funds will have been swept back to the Department of Treasury. All requests for awards with canceling funds must be made no later than 2pm EDT on September 23rd.

How do cancelling funds impact or account for or relate to possible NICRA adjustments?

Please reach out to your designated financial contact and we can discuss your situation further. Contacts can be found on our webpage: <https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dfm/cmeab.jsp>

Can you talk more about where to find the form for the upload of the drawdowns?

It can be found within your drawdown request transaction by clicking the "Upload/Download" box. Please see screenshot below:



The screenshot shows a web interface with three tabs: "Step 1. Payments", "Step 2. Adjustments", and "Step 3. Review". The "Step 1. Payments" tab is active. The main content area contains the following text:

Payment requests can be entered manually (line by line for each award) or uploaded as MS Excel or XML files. We recommend the upload process for requests containing more than 25 awards. To begin the upload process, click "Upload/Download".

To enter payment requests manually, enter the Payment Amount Requested for an award listed below. You may optionally enter the Recipient Account Number for the award. NSF will retain the Recipient Account Number and repopulate it for future requests.

If you are requesting that the award be financially closed earlier than its scheduled close date, check the "Final Flag" indicator.

Additionally, if you would like to edit the list of the awards displayed on the screen, click "Edit Award List". This may be helpful if you have a high number of awards, but only need to request funds for a few of those awards.

For more details about the payment request process, view [online help](#).

At the bottom right, there are two buttons: "Edit Awards List" and "Upload/Download". The "Upload/Download" button is highlighted with a red border.

At the bottom left, there is a "Show 25 per page" dropdown menu. At the bottom center, there is a "Filter:" section with several options: a star icon for "New awards", a red flag icon for "Cancelling awards", "* Thresholds applied", and "** Payment outstanding", followed by a "Clear Filter" link.

When ACM\$ reopens, will there be any system changes or upgrades that we should be aware of?

There will be no system changes or upgrades when ACM\$ is back online on October 1st.

What are the warehousing limits when submitting ACM\$ Transactions? Eg, trying to set up in advance monthly stipend transfers for the NSF PRFB leads to an error "Payment Date Requested exceeds the Warehousing Limit set by NSF."

ACM\$ allows warehousing of transactions up until the end of the fiscal year. Therefore, starting October 1st you will be able to schedule payments through September 2022.

Our award is allowed to do reimbursement. our award is for 3 years but the first period is 10/1/2020-09/30/2021. By when should I submit a reimbursement request for 2021 September?

Since this award does not have canceling funds, there is no prescribed time for you to request funds. ACM\$ will be online the morning of October 1st for cash requests.

How to do adjustment in ACM\$?

The following site, Page 4, provides a step-by-step visual on this process:

<https://www.research.gov/common/attachment/Desktop/ACMS%20External%20User%20Getting%20Started%20Guide.pdf>

Program Income

Please repeat the date that the Program Income worksheet is due?

Due date is November 15th, since the 14th falls on a Sunday

Please confirm the annual income worksheet is not required for SBIR awards

No, it is not. As seen in our FAQs below:

You said SBIRs and STTRs are not required to submit. What is SBIR and STTR? How do I know if I am one?
SBIR stands for "Small Business Innovation Research" and STTR stands for "Small Business Technology Transfer". To receive an SBIR or STTR award, a grantee must qualify as a Small Business Concern (SBC) as defined by SBA regulations at 13 C.F.R. §§ 701-705. The eligibility requirements for the SBIR/STTR programs are unique and do not correspond to those of other small business programs. If you do not meet these requirements, you are not an SBIR/STTR grantee.

Is [program income reporting] for only non-profit organizations or higher education organizations?
Not necessarily. There are some institutions who are not non-profit or higher education organizations that need to report program income. Please consult your NSF grant terms & conditions.

What is Program Income?

Program income is gross income earned by the awardee organization that is directly generated by a supported activity or earned as a result of NSF-funding. This would include things such as fees for services performed, the use or rental of real or personal property acquired under the grant, the sale of commodities or items fabricated under the grant, and license fees. Interest earned on advances of Federal funds is not program income, furthermore program income does not include payments received as reimbursement for award expense

Are program income funds cumulative from year to year?

Reporting is cumulative from the award(s) inception to 9/30 of the current year.

Is there a template to submit financials?

Yes, it can be found on the following webpage: <https://www.research.gov/research-portal/appmanager/base/desktop?nfpb=true&pageLabel=programIncome>

If we don't have program income, do we need to report 0.00?

Yes

Just checked the website and did not see an updated Program report

This will be available on October 1st for download

SBIR/STTR

If we have already downloaded all the grant funds from ACM\$, used them for our SBIR phase 1 research, and the grant period is over since our report is approved, do we need to know anything else?

From our side of the operations, there is nothing else at this time.

For SBIR, our second tranche is available for withdrawal now but for tax purposes, we want to do it later. So Sept. 23 is the last day we can withdraw from ACM\$ in 2021? The close date is 11/2022.

No, September 23rd will not be the last day. You will have 120 days after the award end date to request funds.

I represent a company which has a 256k SBIR Ph1 grant with award date April 21, 2021 and with period end date 30 April 2022. I assume cancelation of funds is not an issue for us this year?

Correct

Our company is operating under an Phase I SBIR award from 5/15/19. We have been granted an NC extension until 12/31/21. We have drawn down all of the available funds to finish the research. There is a hold on the remaining funds until we submit our final report by 12/31/21. Is there anything we will need to do on our end or will the final funds be released in ACMS once the final report is approved?

Once your NSF Program Officer approves the report, they usually release the remaining funds shortly after.

Do we need to list or report anything for SBIR beyond our Phase 1 report, when we apply for the last 25k of the award? This report is due around month 6, correct? Is there a guide or list of requirements for this?

Please check your award letter for any special terms, conditions, or instruction.