2021 1ˢᵗ Quarter Newsletter

Upcoming Event

Spring 2021 Forum via Zoom: May 26, 2021, 11 AM - noon

- If you would like to suggest a topic, please email gcahelp@uw.edu
- Prior Forum recordings and slides are available here

NEW! Advance Budget Process – Coming Soon!

The rollout for the new and improved Advance Budget process is now targeted for release in May 2021. The goal of the project is to streamline the current process by centralizing all actions in SAGE, automating the eligibility check, and replacing paper printouts that require signatures with electronic approvals. Our current process can take up to 8 days from start to finish, but the new process is designed to reduce the turnaround time to 3 days. Here is how you can prepare:

- Clean up any existing Advances that are in a "created" or "completed" status in SAGE but have not yet been submitted to GCA for processing. Any Advances in "created" or "completed" status that you wish to move forward with will need to be submitted to GCA before the new process rolls out in SAGE (exact cutover date to be determined); otherwise they will have to be recreated using the new process in SAGE.
- Assign the new SAGE ASTRA role "Advance Reviewer" for your organization code to approve Advance Budget Requests.
  - Current ASTRA Authorizers for SAGE Department and Division Reviewers have the authority to assign the new role.
  - If Advance Reviewers are not assigned, the Advance Budget Request will be blocked from routing for review. On-screen alerts will notify you that the reviewer has not been assigned.

- o   Preparers will not need the Advance Reviewer role assigned.
- Keep an eye out for updates and guidance on the new Advance Budget process on the GCA/Office of Research webpages and in email announcements to the MRAM and SAGE contact lists.
- Attend the May MRAM meeting for a comprehensive overview and demo of the new Advance Budget Request process.

Department-Submitted Invoices: Q&A

GCA submits the majority of invoices we issue directly to the sponsor. However, if an award's terms call for invoices with a level of backup GCA cannot provide, we work together with the department to meet the sponsor's requirements. In such cases, GCA prepares the invoice and notifies the department via Grant Tracker that it is ready to submit along with the required backup.

How does GCA determine which budgets fall into this category?
At initial budget setup, GCA staff review the award's invoicing terms and conditions. If it calls for backup documentation we cannot access, such as receipt copies, timesheets, or a breakdown of expenditures by task, we internally code the budget as requiring department backup.

How will I know if this applies to one of the budgets I work with?
Each time GCA prepares an invoice to be submitted by the department, we send a Grant Tracker Note with the subject line "GCX###### Ready for Submission" that includes the following text:

Within 5 business days, by MM/DD/YYYY, please make sure to:

- *Review the invoice and notify GCA if there are any corrections that need to be made*
- *Send the invoice with any required backup documents to the sponsor*
- *Notify GCA by replying to this Grant Tracker when the invoice was sent*

NOTE: GCA issues these Grant Trackers in the Completed status rather than Requesting Dept. Input, which is reserved for cases where GCA cannot act without additional information from campus. **Please be sure to read all Grant Tracker Notes you receive notifications for, regardless of status.**

Who gets these Grant Trackers?
They are sent to the campus contacts listed on the Grant Tracker Budget Information page. If no contacts are listed, notifications will go to the PI only. To ensure that the

correct staff members receive these and other urgent notices in a timely manner, we recommend that you maintain up-to-date campus contacts for all your award budgets. (See the following article for information on how to update these contacts.)

<u>What should I do when I get one of these Grant Trackers?</u>
Gather the backup as soon as possible and email it to the sponsor along with the invoice, and update the Grant Tracker once you've done so! If you aren't sure what kind of backup is needed or who to send it to at the sponsor's office, please reply to the Grant Tracker, and GCA will assist you.

<u>What happens if the department does not send the invoice to the sponsor?</u>
Since the invoice already shows as issued in our system, the sponsor will eventually receive a delinquency notice for an invoice they have never seen. It is therefore extremely important to send out these invoices promptly in order to receive timely payment and ensure good communication with the sponsor.

<u>But what if my department thinks our award's invoices should be submitted by GCA?</u>
Contact us via Grant Tracker and let us know! Depending on the situation, we will either clarify why department submission is required or update the award's setup to direct GCA invoicing going forward.

Reminder: Please Update Campus Contacts in Grant Tracker

Have you ever wondered how GCA determines which campus contacts receive information regarding each budget? The first place we look is Grant Tracker, where your department can maintain a list of email contacts for each budget. If you do not have campus contacts set up in Grant Tracker, or they are outdated, your department could be missing important communication from GCA or even sponsors (via GCA). It's also very helpful for working in tandem with GCA on completing items such as financial reports or invoices.

Please routinely review your campus contacts so that we can quickly send information to the right people and provide the best service to your department and our sponsors. You can add or update contacts on individual budgets, or you can update multiple budgets simultaneously through a bulk process that allows you to query based on org code or PI.

For detailed instructions on the process, please visit our web page Updating Campus Contacts in Grant Tracker.

Rebudgeting 101

The budget as established in an award agreement is intended to outline the project's needs. However, these needs might change over the life of the project. For example, the project location might change from on campus to off campus, or you may require more funds for contractual services as opposed to supplies.

Sponsor approval – Yes or No?
How you go about revising your award budget will depend on your award. Some sponsors may allow you to deviate from the original budget without their approval, while others require additional documentation (such as a budget justification) before the budget can be changed.

If you need to revise your award budget, first review your award's terms and conditions to see if there are any rebudgeting restrictions. If it isn't clearly outlined in the award, we will reach out to the sponsor for clarification.

Submitting a Rebudgeting Request
If sponsor approval isn't required (or you're unsure), please forward a Rebudgeting form to GCA via Grant Tracker. We will double-check the rebudgeting terms to make sure approval isn't required and process the request.

If sponsor approval is required, we will need a Rebudgeting PAC before we can revise the budget. The sponsor's approval should be forwarded to OSP so they can issue the PAC. We will complete the revisions when we receive and process it.

Additional Resources:

- Award Changes (Rebudgeting)
- Rebudgeting Funds on a Grant or Contract
- Rebudgeting (PAFC)

Requesting a Sub Budget Requiring Separate Billing

When you request a new sub budget, it is extremely important to notify us if the sub budget needs to be billed separately from the parent. GCA defaults to combining parent and sub budget billing, since this is the correct process for the majority of awards. However, once sub budget transactions have been commingled in our billing system with those from the parent budget, it is a complex and time-consuming process to make corrections to prior invoices—especially if we have received payments from the sponsor.

When submitting a paper TRANSPASU form, you can include a message about separate billing requirements in your Grant Tracker request. But how can you do this when requesting a new sub budget via the online tool in Grant Tracker (MyTRANSPASUs)?

1. Follow the normal process for requesting sub budgets online.
2. Once your request has flowed through the required approvals, a Grant Tracker request is automatically created on the parent budget. The request's topic will be "Transpasu," and it is immediately assigned to GCA for processing.
3. Locate this Grant Tracker request in the "Open GT Notes" or the "Notes" list on the parent budget.
4. Update that request with a message notifying us of the need for separate sub budget billing.

If the request is updated before we have set up the new sub budget, we will be able to implement separate billing right away. However, if we have already established the budget, please let us know as soon as possible if separate billing is needed (ideally before charges start to post) so that we can make the necessary corrections before an invoice is issued.

Short Training Videos Now Available on the GCA and PAFC Websites!

In an effort to make our website more interactive, you may have noticed that we have started to post training videos throughout our web pages. These video clips are taken from training sessions provided by the Post Award Fiscal Compliance Team, and cover a variety of subjects under the award management process like cost share and closeout.

If you haven't already, please take some time to check them out! And if you have any feedback, or future video ideas please let us know by sending your suggestions to gcahelp@uw.edu. Thanks!

GCA Training Videos Webpage
Post Award Fiscal Compliance Training & Outreach Webpage

Organizational Change in UW Finance

Effective February 1, 2021, GCA's parent organization changed its name from the Controller's Office to Research & Student Accounting (RSA). RSA includes Grant & Contract Accounting, Research & Cash Accounting, Post Award Fiscal Compliance, Systems & Data Analysis, Management Accounting and Analysis, and Student Fiscal Services. You can find an updated RSA organization chart here.

If you have any questions about topics discussed in this newsletter or would like to suggest topics for future newsletters, please contact us via email at gcahelp@uw.edu. Inquiries related to a specific budget should be sent via Grant Tracker.

GRANT & CONTRACT ACCOUNTING   **GRANT TRACKER**