Principles of Budget Design
Getting Started

Plan ahead
Always refer back to your work plan
Determine maximum available dollars
Always double-check solicitation for specific requirements or limitations
Use a template if possible
Don’t forget about indirect costs
Don’t be afraid to ask for help!
Salaries

Base calculations on actual salary figures
You can’t give yourself a pay raise!
• Do include an annual 3% cost of living increase for multi-year projects
Make sure you put people in the correct salary categories
Don’t forget to include benefits
Faculty Salaries

Typically in Form of Summer Salary

- Sometimes you can include course buyouts
- NSF and other agencies limit total amount of faculty time on all grants to no more than two summer months
Staff Salaries

Non-faculty collaborators
Types of role might include:
• Project Management
• Programmers
• Sys Admin
You can’t include salary for proposal development
Don’t underestimate salary needs
Students

Research Assistants or Hourly Students?

• Depends on type of work being asked of them
• Research assistants good for projects that require sustained engagement or intellectual role
• Hourly students useful for specific, short-term action items, such as web site maintenance
• Research assistants typically must include some form of tuition remission (either percentage of salary or flat rate)
Other Direct Costs

Equipment

- Only include large single-item equipment needs (over $5,000)
- Equipment can only be used for work specifically described in your proposal
- Include vendor quotes in your justification or as supporting materials
Other Direct Costs

Travel

• Can be used to meet with collaborators at other universities
• Okay to travel to conferences so long as it is connected to your project
• Differentiate between domestic and foreign travel
Other Direct Costs

Participant Support Costs
- Only applies to NSF-Funded Projects
- Can be applied to:
  - Travel and accommodation costs for non-project staff (i.e. Workshop Attendees)
  - Catering
  - Room Rental
- You do not have to pay indirects!
Other Direct Costs

Materials and Supplies
  • Miscellaneous Expenses
  • Printing Agendas, Name Tags, etc.

Publication Costs
  • Publishing Fees for Project-Related Articles
Other Direct Costs

Other

- Server Hosting Fees
- Small Equipment Purchases (including computers)
  - Can only be used for project
- Catering/Room Rental if Participant Support category is not allowed
- Consultant Fees or Honoraria
- Anything Else!
Subcontracts

For multi-institution collaborations

- One institution is designated the lead and manages all money
- Partners submit separate budgets, which are approved by their grants office before submission
- Indirects are typically charged on first $25,000
Indirects

Your institution wants their cut!

- Pays for administrative overheads
- Federally negotiated rate
- Typically calculated as 50-60% of your direct costs
- Is not charged on participant costs or large equipment purchases
- Not all solicitations allow charging of indirects
- Different rates for different activities
- You can sometimes request a waiver from VPR
Credits

Jennifer Guiliano
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“Principles of Budget Design”
www.devdh.org