

POST-AWARD MANAGEMENT **Quick Reference Guide**

Congratulations on being awarded funding for your research endeavor. This guide is provided as a quick reference to get you started with your project expenses. Additional information on RF policies and procedures guiding sponsored funds administration can be found on the office web sites located at the end of this document. We encourage you to visit these web sites for additional information.

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Award Establishment

Once The Research Foundation (RF) receives official notification that you have received funding, a series of events take place. The Award Establishment and Maintenance Unit of the [Office for Sponsored Programs](#) (OSP) will create a Project-Task-Award (PTA) number(s) for your award and any related sub-awards. As long as any necessary human subjects (IRB) and/or animal subjects (IACUC) and/or rDNA research (IBC) approvals are in place, you will receive a hard copy of the abstract for your PTA. You will need this number to access your award funds. You will also receive a reminder of any special Terms and Conditions that apply to your award.

Depending on the way your funding is structured, it is possible that you will receive a new PTA for each year of your sponsored project.

Monitoring Sponsored Award Financial Activity

The RF offers two web-based systems to allow PIs to monitor the financial activity of their sponsored awards. Both Principal Investigator Award Interface (PIAI) and RF Quickview provide PIs (or others whom they designate) the ability to see the award's budget, what has been spent, what is encumbered, and what balance remains in each budget category. In order to access these systems, you must first register to gain access to the Research Foundation [web portal](#). Instructions for registering can be found by [clicking here](#). Once you gain access to the web portal, then you can request access to the PIAI and RF Quickview by [clicking here](#). Both systems can be accessed from any computer.

The PI is responsible for verifying that all expenses submitted for payment have been paid and that there are no unauthorized charges made against his/her award. For this reason, it is important that the PI (or designee) reconciles the activity on the account on a monthly basis.

Budget

As you are aware, your sponsored award has a budget that has been approved by the sponsoring agency. Part of effective post-award management is making sure that you stay within your budget parameters. PIAI is an effective tool to help with this. There will occasionally be times when you come to the realization that your projected expenses in one or more budget categories are either significantly more or less than you had planned. In cases such as these, PIs do NOT have the authority to simply change their budgets. Each sponsor has specific policies when it comes to making budget modifications that must be adhered to. If you need to modify your budget you must contact your [OSP Research Administrator](#). If required by the sponsor, he/she will help you secure the required written permission from your Project Officer at your sponsoring agency. This written permission must be on-file with the RF before any budget changes can be made. OSP will review and approve authorized changes to your budget.

Sponsored Funds Personnel

[Sponsored Funds Personnel](#) provides assistance with your sponsored award payroll and human resources needs, such as employee classification, compensation and recruitment; payroll; benefits; time, attendance and leave accruals; employee relations; and employment immigration and visa services. We also provide support for understanding and implementing Research Foundation and University policies.

HR Related Issues to Consider During Proposal Development

Please refer to the [HR check list](#) to assist you in considering items during the pre-proposal and budget process and in how you make up front commitments. Please review it carefully so that you are aware of potential issues and how they relate to your proposal. Before any commitments are made, verbally or in writing, you need to make certain you understand the applicable policies and regulations, including any implications.

Position Classification

In order to comply with applicable laws, the RF has established a [position classification system](#) for its employees for the purpose of maintaining salary and wage equity and for consistency in the treatment of its employees. Within the RF position classification system, all positions are categorized as exempt or nonexempt, and each position title falls within a [specified pay range](#). Prior to recruiting employees, the following classification steps should be completed:

Position Classification Steps	
1	Prepare a job description .
2	Determine and Certify Fair Labor Standards Act exemption.
3	Determine appropriate RF position standard from one of the following job series. The RF position standard must reflect the work to be performed as described in the job description. Research/Clinical Investigator Classification Series

[Research Technical Support and Service Classification Series](#)

[Project/Program Administration Classification Series](#)

[Nonexempt Salary Structure](#)

Affirmative Action Search Procedures

Recruitment and selection procedures can be located in the [Office of Diversity and Inclusion](#).

A full, open search is **not** required in the case of:

1. Appointments of six months or less.
2. Appointments of 50% obligation or less, regardless of duration.
3. [Postdoctoral appointments](#).
4. [Student appointments](#).

Undergraduate and Graduate Student Employment

The RF encourages the employment of full-time SUNY students on sponsored programs relating to their fields of study. In order to do this, a student [fringe benefit rate](#) has been established for full-time SUNY students, which is lower than the charge on salaries and wages paid non-student employees. The student fringe benefit rate is charged against salaries and wages paid employees appointed to the student titles.

In order for an employee to be appointed to a student title the employee must be enrolled as a full-time SUNY student. To be certified full-time study, graduate students must: hold a full assistantship and be enrolled in 9 credits, or be registered for one dissertation load credit; undergraduate students must be enrolled in a minimum of 12 credits. The employee must also be engaged in work related to the student's education and training that leads to the fulfillment of academic requirements.

Full-time SUNY students can work a maximum of 20 hours per week (50% FTE) during the academic year. Students who have state appointments for less than 50% FTE can have a concurrent RF appointment, as long as the combined FTE does not exceed 50%. For example, a graduate assistant may be working 10 hours per week as a state appointee (25% FTE). He/she is then eligible for an RF appointment for up to 10 hours per week (25% FTE). Students may be eligible for full-time employment during the summer months if they were registered as a full-time student during the preceding academic year. More information on [student employment](#) can be found on the SFP Webpage.

Regular Employees

Many sponsored awards hire non-student personnel in various capacities (project staff assistants, research technicians, etc.). Most non-student RF employees are classified within the RF regular employee assignment group. A regular RF appointment is a full-time or part-time assignment that is not summer-only or extra-service.

Extra Service

[Extra service](#) is compensation to full-time professional employees for work beyond that which is normally required by their professional obligation. Full-time Research Foundation and SUNY professional employees may be compensated by means of extra service as long as all of the following criteria are met and can be properly documented.

- The work performed is different from or in addition to the person's professional obligation,
- The work performed is outside of regularly scheduled hours and extra service is actually rendered,
- The work is across departmental lines or involves a separate or remote operating location,
- The extra service is specifically provided for in the agreement or approved in writing by the sponsoring agency,
- The payment conforms to and is properly authorized under SUNY and Research Foundation policy, and
- The employment complies with RF position titles and standards, as well as federal and state laws and regulations regarding tax information.

In accordance with federal guidelines and SUNY regulations, compensation for extra service must not exceed an amount equal to 20 percent of regular base salary rate in any academic year or 12-month period. All university and sponsor approvals must be obtained **prior** to any commitments or work being performed.

Summer Employees

The summer-only employee, including an eligible faculty member, is an employee whose appointment period is within the "summer period" as defined by the campus academic calendar (the summer period must fall between May 1 and September 30). Summer-only employees are charged a lower fringe benefit rate as compared to a regular employee assignment. A summer-only appointment can only be used when *all* of the following conditions are met:

- The position is being established to reflect an operating location's special needs during the summer months or for use in compensating an academic-year employee for sponsored program activity outside of the academic year.
- The employee is not currently employed by the RF in an ongoing position.
- There is no expectation that the position will continue during the academic year.
- The employee is not on the RF payroll in a regular appointment prior to the proposed summer-only appointment.

A summer-only assignment is limited to four months. Summer-only assignments for SUNY faculty members with academic year obligations may be further limited by SUNY policy to a two-month appointment, except when approved for up to three months by the campus president or designee, provided that:

- the period of proposed employment does not overlap any part of the academic-year obligation, and
- the sponsor policy does not otherwise restrict or limit such employment.

Full-time SUNY employees with academic-year obligations should use the [SUNY Summer Salary Limitations Chart](#) to calculate their summer salary rate.

Fellowships

An [RF fellowship](#) is considered nonwage support. If the terms of the award require the recipient to provide a service [teaching, research, or other work that the recipient must agree to perform], the person **must** be appointed to the Research Foundation payroll as an employee and paid a salary or wage for the service provided.

Classifying Workers as Employees or Independent Contractors

Classifying a worker as an independent contractor rather than as an employee may appear to result in financial savings and less paperwork. However, if the employee is misclassified as an independent contractor, these perceived advantages are offset by the potential penalties that could be assessed by the Internal Revenue Service or New York State Department of Labor, by potential Workers' Compensation or unemployment claims, and by liability or malpractice suits.

Principal Investigators should ensure that workers are properly classified when preparing application budgets and when hiring an employee or engaging an independent contractor. **The RF is legally obligated to properly classify workers even if a sponsor provides funds for independent contractors in an award.**

In general an *employee* is subject to the control of the employer as to *what* work must be done and *how* the work must be done. It is not necessary that the employer actually direct or control the manner in which the services are performed; it is enough that the employer has the *right* to do so. Under the common law rules cited in IRS rulings, an employee-employer relationship exists when the organization for which services are performed has the right to control and direct the individual who performs the services, not only as to the result accomplished by the work, but also as to the details and means by which the result is accomplished.

An *independent contractor* is subject to the control and direction of the organization for which services are performed only as to the *result* of the work and not as to the means. An independent contractor is compensated based on an established fee and payment is made through the RF's vendor payment system. Their procurement falls within the jurisdiction of the Office of Purchasing & Contracts and Accounting/Sponsored Funds Financial Management (see below).

Required Forms

To appoint an employee, including undergraduate and graduate student employees and eligible faculty summer employees, to the RF payroll, **all** of the forms located on the [New Employee Forms](#) section of the website **must** be completed, or you can call 437-4500 to request a new-hire packet. To avoid payroll delays, please ensure that all forms are completed and submitted to Sponsored Funds Personnel, Management Services Center Room 326, by the [payroll deadlines](#).

Timeliness

It is critical that PIs complete and submit paperwork in a timely manner. Specifically, a properly completed federal I-9 form (with supporting documentation attached) AND a signed appointment form must be completed and received by SFP **no later than one day after the date of hire** so that E-Verifications can be performed in the required timeframe. PIs should anticipate these requirements when making offers to potential employees. Departments can fax the I-9

AND appointment forms to 437-4504. Upon receipt of faxed forms, SFP will send a confirmation of receipt of forms to the contact e-mail address listed on the appointment form.

[E-Verify](#) is an internet based verification system operated by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in partnership with the Social Security Administration (SSA), that allows an employer, using information on an employee's form I-9, to electronically verify employment eligibility.

Sponsored Funds Financial Management

Financial Management

[Sponsored Funds Financial Management](#) (SFFM) is responsible for post-award administration and financial compliance for all grants and contracts received by the RF. Specifically, they review all non-procurable payments such as travel advances and reimbursements; subject cost payments; participant stipends; and independent contractors. Each sponsored award is assigned to a [Grant Administrator](#) in SFFM based upon the organization/department receiving primary credit for the sponsored award as stated in the COEUS Lite database.

Release Time Appointments

Faculty members whose awards support release time (course buy-out) must complete the [Release Time Appointment Form](#) in order for funds to be transferred to their IFR Account. The Release Time process is the mechanism by which a sponsored award reimburses the salary and fringe benefits paid to state funded faculty and staff devoting effort to the sponsored award. Release Time Appointments require the signature of the PI (or designee), and the SUNY employee's department Chair and/or Dean before it can be submitted for processing. Faculty members with Release Time are not considered employees of the RF.

[Release Time Requests](#) should be made in a timely manner; at or before the beginning of the Release Time appointment period. Any requests submitted later than 90 days after the start of the appointment will be considered exceptions and the PI must provide a detailed explanation for why the request was not submitted in the appropriate timeframe. SFFM reserves the right to reject any Release Time request which places the University at risk for an audit finding or disallowance.

Effort Reporting

Each exempt employee who is paid with sponsored funds is expected to dedicate the indicated amount of effort to the project. SFFM sends Effort Reporting forms to PIs three times per year (at the end of each semester and at the end of the summer). The PI must sign and return the forms to certify that the individuals named in the reports did in fact work the reported effort percent. Failure to certify employee effort on a timely basis could result in disallowances. Nonexempt employees certify their effort on their biweekly timesheets.

Payments & Reimbursements

The basic form needed for most transactions by SFFM and the [Office of Contracts and Purchasing](#) is the RF Purchase Requisition (PR) form. Each form has its own unique ID number, and can be obtained via the [Purchasing Office's website](#).

The PR form asks for basic information, such as who is making the request, which PTA needs to be charged, expenditure type (supplies, conference expense, etc.), and a detailed description of the expenditure. How the expense relates to the sponsored award needs to be included as justification. Meeting expense reimbursements also require a copy of the meeting agenda, a list of attendees, and an **ITEMIZED** receipt showing what food and drinks were ordered. SFFM requires this documentation to ensure that no alcohol charges are being reimbursed with sponsored funds. Alcohol is considered an unallowable expense in accordance with Federal regulations.

Travel

Conference and research travel are common aspects of many sponsored awards. SFFM can issue travel advances to RF employees or SUNY faculty when requested prior to the travel date using the appropriate [Travel Form](#). Post-travel reimbursement is processed using the same form. Travel expenses (meals & hotel) are reimbursed based upon federally established per diem rates for the destination. The RF cannot reimburse above the Federal per diem rates unless there is acceptable written justification showing how the award benefits from this additional cost. For example, if a conference is being hosted at a hotel and there is a published, negotiated conference rate (higher than the per diem), the RF can reimburse at the conference rate with documentation. PIs who need to travel internationally should check with their Grant Administrator before making any travel arrangements. There could be restrictions on foreign travel based on sponsor policy or other Federal regulations.

Flight reservations can be made either directly with the airline, through a website, or through a University approved [travel agent](#). Utilizing these agents will enable the expense to be directly billed to the RF and will eliminate the need to charge a personal credit card and wait for reimbursement.

All requests for travel reimbursement require original detailed receipts. Conference travel requires proof that the traveler actually attended the conference. Acceptable proof is a copy of your conference name tag or a copy of the conference brochure. Travel for meetings requires a copy of the written agenda.

Subject Costs

Sometimes awards provide payments to human subjects as an incentive for them to participate in the study. The PI may also choose to use gift cards or other non-cash incentives in lieu of actual cash payments. Information regarding the appropriate paperwork and documentation can be found on the [SFFM web site](#).

Participant Stipends

Participant stipends are payments for participation in vocational training, secondary school training, and other non-academic programs. It is not related to an academic endeavor. There is no

real wage, just the expectation that the participant be present at some event. The necessary form can be found on the [SFFM web site](#).

Graduate Assistants Tuition

In the event that a sponsored award provides for a graduate assistant's tuition, it is paid as part of their compensation package. In order for the sponsored award to pay tuition, the PI needs to obtain a Third Party Invoice from the [Office of Student Financial Services](#) which will indicate that the sponsored award will be paying \$X of the graduate assistant's tuition for the semester. Once the invoice is received, a Purchase Requisition needs to be completed and sent to SFFM, requesting payment of the graduate assistant's tuition for X semester. The graduate assistant's student ID number needs to be listed on the Purchase Requisition.

Consultants (Independent Contractors)

Consultants are not employees of the RF and must receive approval prior to engaging in any work for the project. It is important that the required [Independent Contractor Approval Request](#) form be received by SFFM PRIOR to the consultant beginning work on the project. When completing the IC Approval Request form, the PI must provide documentation or a justification supporting the selection process for the consultant. If the service provided is widely available by other vendors, then the request must go through a competitive selection process. Please contact [SFFM](#) if you need assistance in how to proceed with engaging Consultants.

Once the consultant is approved, a Purchase Order (PO) will be established for the consultant to invoice charges. All invoices for this consultant must be submitted using the established PO number.

Please note that University at Albany faculty, RF employees and key personnel to the award cannot be paid as contractors. Additionally, payment to a non-us citizen will require additional information regarding their visa type. Please contact your Grant Administrator for additional information.

Cost Transfers

Sometimes a PI will discover that a cost was improperly charged to an award and will need to transfer the cost to the appropriate award. Transfer requests for payroll charges must be documented on the [Labor Distribution Form](#). Other Than Personal Service (OTPS) cost transfers must be submitted on the [Cost Transfer Form](#). **ALL** cost transfers must include in a justification that addresses the following:

- A reason for the transfer
- A description of why the cost is appropriate for the new account that is being charged
- An explanation why the new award wasn't charged in the appropriate timeframe
- Cost transfers more than 90 days old will be considered on a case by cases basis and only with proper justification. SFFM reserves the right to reject any cost transfer request which places the University at risk for an audit finding or disallowance.

Please keep in mind that certain cost transfers are suspect by their very nature and are to be avoided whenever possible. These include:

1. Transfers to or between sponsored awards
2. Transfers that are late (greater than 90 days after discovery of the error)
3. Transfers to a project occurring at the end of the project, thereby giving the appearance of utilizing funds inappropriately
4. Transfers with an inadequate explanation
5. Transfers between projects that clear an over expenditure on one of the projects

Sub-awards

Occasionally, sponsored awards will have sub-awards/sub-contracts to other agencies, institutions, or individuals. Each sub-award is given its own PTA (typically it is only the task number that is different from the primary PTA) and a PO is created based upon a signed subcontract. The PI is responsible for verifying that all deliverables associated with a given invoice from the sub-contractor have been delivered according to the subcontract. SFFM will send a copy of the invoice and a memo to the PI requesting review and approval of the invoice. Once the PI is satisfied that the invoice is accurate, he/she must sign the memo and return it to SFFM for processing of the payment.

Office of Purchasing & Contracts

The [Office of Purchasing and Contracts](#) provides procurement and contractual services for commodities and technical/professional services to project managers in order to meet the goals and objectives of the sponsored award. The office staff endeavors to find the best prices for items based upon available institutional and/or negotiated discounts. All requests for goods and services must be routed through the Office of Purchasing and Contracts using the standard [Purchase Requisition](#) form. The Office in conjunction with the project director is responsible for ensuring that all relevant Federal, State, University, Research Foundation and sponsor regulations are followed. [Information](#) on purchasing goods and services is available on the Office website. The Office of Purchasing & Contracts negotiates contracts for work to be performed on grants and contracts. They can assist in sending out Requests for Proposals and/or Bids and can identify appropriate vendors for specific procurements.

Printing work that will use the University's marks and/or logos must be pre-approved by the Office of Purchasing and Contracts prior to purchase. Information on the use of University marks and logos may be found in the [Graphic Standards Manual](#).

[Apparel](#) purchases or other clothing/textile items may be secured provided the vendor certifies compliance with anti-sweat shop regulations. The Purchasing office enforces such regulations and will not authorize a purchase to a non-certified vendor.

The State Accounting Office must be notified when procured items have been received. To document receipt of items received, an electronic [AP-102](#) Form must be completed and submitted to the State Accounting Office. This documentation authorizes the State Accounting Office to pay the invoice once it is received from the vendor. Until the [AP-102](#) is submitted, the State Accounting Office will not pay the vendor. Failure to send an [AP-102](#) in a timely manner may jeopardize the University's ability to do future business with that vendor.

Equipment with a unit cost of \$500 or greater must be marked with an identification tag affixed by the Office of Equipment Management staff. A [New Asset Receipt Form](#) must be completed and returned to the Office of Equipment Management (OEM). OEM staff will determine the appropriate type of tag and, after inspection of the asset, will affix the tag to the equipment.

In essence the purchasing process can be summed up as follows:

- PI submits a Purchase Requisition (PR).
- The Office of Purchasing & Contracts determines the process required depending on the value and type of commodity.
- Once a procurement process is followed, a vendor is identified and pricing negotiated, a Purchase Order (PO) is issued to the vendor.
- The Project Director receives the goods and submits an AP-102 form to the State Accounting Office.
- The State Accounting Office uses the AP-102 authorization to pay the invoice.
- For equipment \$500 or greater, the Project Director submits a completed New Asset Receipt Form to the OEM and OEM makes an appointment to tag the item.

Compliance Issues

OMB Circulars

The Research Foundation must comply with regulations provided by the federal government governing the conduct of sponsored programs. The Office of Management & Budget's (OMB) circulars provide the standards by which our sponsored programs administration must abide. Circular [A-21](#) establishes principles for determining costs applicable to sponsored awards. Circular [A-110](#) establishes the requirement to consistently and uniformly apply principles. Therefore, the principles of A-21 are applied to all Research Foundation accounts, regardless of the source or type of funds. Circular A-133 establishes the basis for audit requirements and standards. Our campus is visited annually and audited for our compliance with these standards. A report of the audit is issued to the Research Foundation, filed with the federal government, and made available on the Research Foundation portal as it is requested by most sponsors. The PI is responsible for being aware of and familiar with these regulations.

Budget

One of the primary compliance issues that PIs frequently face is adherence to the established budget. Some sponsors give the RF what is commonly known as "expanded authorities." This expanded authority allows the RF to make budgetary changes up to a certain % of the overall budget. This authority, however, only applies to certain sponsors. PIs are responsible for working with their [OSP Research Administrator](#) to secure advance permission if needed, in writing, for any proposed budgetary changes in order to be in compliance.

Audits and Site Visits

Sponsors, by virtue of the fact that they are investing money in a sponsored award, are entitled to perform audits of all aspects of the award (financial and programmatic). These audits may also be accompanied by site visits where the sponsor sends an individual or team to get a first-hand look at award activity to ensure that it is in compliance with the sponsor's regulations and the scope of work outlined in the funded proposal. The RF is obligated to comply with any requests

for audits and/or site visits. The PI will need to notify his/her [OSP Research Administrator](#) as soon as he/she is informed that an audit or site visit will be taking place. The RF will provide appropriate personnel and resources to the sponsoring agency to demonstrate compliance.

Nepotism Conflict of Interest

Unless specifically pre-approved in writing by the sponsoring agency, a PI is prohibited from hiring family members (and others defined to create either a real or perceived conflict of interest) to work on his/her projects. Family members will not receive approval from either SFFM as consultant or [Sponsored Funds Personnel](#) as employees to be paid using sponsored funds without the sponsor's approval.

Reports

Financial, technical, and progress reports are often required by sponsors on a fixed schedule throughout the lifetime of an award. These reports provide the sponsor with assurance that project activities are moving forward according to the terms of the agreement. SFFM is responsible for providing the official financial reports associated with the award. PIs are responsible for making sure that all progress reports are submitted to the sponsor on time and that copies of all reports, along with the transmittal letter or E-mail is on file with the Office for Sponsored Programs. Failure to provide the required reports can cause funding delays in multi-year awards, early termination of the award by the sponsor, jeopardize the University's ability to apply for any future awards from the sponsor, and delay sponsor payments to the RF.

Award Extensions

Sometimes a project cannot be completed in the agreed-upon timeframe. In this case, the PI may need to request a no-cost extension to allow for time to finish the work. Requests for no-cost extensions usually include a justification and a projected budget that provides a spending plan for any unused funds. Requests for no-cost extensions must be coordinated with your [OSP Research Administrator](#) and should be done several months in advance of the award's termination date.

Final Close-out

Once the award period officially ends, each sponsor establishes its own deadlines for the submission of final financial and technical reports, as well as final invoices. Before SFFM will provide the final financial reports, the PI needs to be sure that all encumbrances have been paid and that there are no outstanding charges against the award. SFFM will contact the PI to ensure that all expenses are paid. Once the PI has certified that all financial obligations have been met, SFFM will close out the award and process final financial reports.

Unexpended direct costs from a fixed-price award greater than \$200 can usually be transferred to a fixed price balance account in the name of the PI. If one does not exist, the Office for Sponsored Programs can establish one.

If a sponsor requires other close out documentation such as: Assignment and Release Forms, completed by SFFM; Property Reports, completed by OEM (within the Office of Purchasing and

Contracts); Patent and Invention reports, completed by OSP; Final Technical or Progress Reports, completed by the PI; and documentation regarding the conduct and/or submission of A-133 reports, which are completed by the Audit Department at The RF central office, the submission of these reports is generally coordinated by the OSP Research Administrator. Once all of the income due on a particular award has been received, SFFM will mark the award “CLOSED” in the RF’s Oracle financial management system

Helpful Links for Spending Sponsored Award Money

[Sponsored Funds Financial Management](#)

All accounting-related tasks (travel reimbursement, payments, etc.)

[SF Personnel/New Employee Forms](#)

All human resource issues (appointing all RF-paid individuals, payroll information, etc.)

[Government Per Diem Rates](#)

Official rates for travel to all domestic and international locations. Standard used by the RF for all travel payments

[Purchasing](#)

Procurement of all commodities, services, purchase requisitions, contracts, etc.

[AP-102 Form](#)

Used to report receipt of items from a Purchase Order. Form must be completed online before payment will be made to the vendor.

On-line access for purchase of office supplies, industrial commodities, letterhead, business cards, envelopes, Contact [Purchasing](#) to establish an account for the award

[PI Award Interface](#) and RF Quickview

Access form available from SF Financial Management forms link

[Office for Sponsored Programs](#)

Account Establishment and Management Unit sets up awards and tracks changes to budgets