



Budget Justification Instructions

Please use the following guidelines to complete your budget form. Ensure all costs are rounded to the nearest dollar. Documentation, such as a vendor quote, is required for justification of costs. If you are unsure about any costs, a cost basis must be submitted with your budget.

1. Personnel

List costs only for employees of the primary applicant. Subrecipient or vendor staff should be listed under "Contractual."

- **Identification:** List staff by **Position Title**, not by name.
- **Calculations:** Enter the total hours and the hourly base pay rate.
- **Rate Basis:** You must specify how the rate was determined (e.g., actual salary, state civil service rates, or labor distribution reports).
- **Loaded Labor Rates:** If you use loaded rates, you must itemize what they include in the **Additional Explanation** section. Note that the DOE will review these for "unallowable costs" like profit or fees.
- **Multiple Staff:** If one position title represents multiple people (e.g., three Technicians), please specify the number of individuals in that role.

2. Fringe Benefits

- **Level of Detail:** You may list benefits by position title or labor type. If all employees receive the same benefits, you may simply list "Total Personnel."
- **Consistency:** Apply fringe rates to all positions, regardless of whether they are funded by the Federal Share or your Cost Match.
- **Complexity:** Do not average different rates into one single percentage. If your calculations are complex, please provide a breakdown in the **Additional Explanation** section.



3. Travel

Travel must be necessary for project performance

- **Documentation:** List the basis of cost (past trips, travel quotes, or General Services Administration (GSA) rates).
- **Regulations:** Travel costs should align with your organization's written travel policy. In the absence of a written policy, organizations must follow the regulations prescribed by the GSA.

3. Equipment

Equipment is defined as tangible property with a useful life of 1+ year and a per-unit cost of at least \$10,000 (or your organization's lower capitalization threshold).

- **Basis of Cost:** Provide supporting documentation for all costs (e.g., vendor quotes, catalog prices, or prior invoices). For existing equipment, provide a logical basis for its estimated value.
- **High-Value Items:** For any equipment over \$50,000, you must provide a vendor quote. If the final price differs from the quote, explain why in the **Additional Explanation** section.
- **Custom Items:** If equipment is purpose-built and a quote is not possible, provide a detailed engineering estimate.
- **References:** See 2 CFR 200 for specific federal definitions.



4. Supplies

Supplies are items costing less than \$10,000 per unit or having a life expectancy of less than one year. Computing devices under \$10,000 are always considered supplies.

- **Documentation:** List the basis of cost (quotes, invoices, or historical pricing).
- **Categorization:** Items must be direct costs to this project. Do not include items already covered by your "Indirect Cost" pool.
- **Assembly:** If you are buying multiple supplies (under \$10,000 each) to assemble a single piece of equipment worth more than \$10,000, list those costs under the **Equipment** tab instead.

5. Contractual (Subrecipients & Vendors)

- **Vendors/Contractors:** Use this for entities providing standard commercial goods or services.
 - For any vendor cost exceeding \$500,000, you must provide a basis of cost (quotes, invoices, etc.).
- **FFRDCs:** Federal Lab partners must submit a signed Field Work Proposal. While they may provide info directly to the DOE, you must still list their total costs here.

6. Other Direct Costs

Use this for direct project expenses that do not fit into the categories above (e.g. printing).

- **Verification:** Provide a basis of cost, such as published price lists or prior similar purchases.
- **No Double-Counting:** Ensure these costs are not already included in your indirect/overhead rate.