



Award Cash Management Service (ACM\$)

1 How do I request funds on my award?

The majority of awardees must submit their payment request through the NSF Awards Cash Management Service (ACM\$) at: <http://www.research.gov>

2 What is the Award Cash Management Service (ACM\$)?

ACM\$ is NSF's system for awardees to submit cash request and adjustments on a grant by grant basis. More information can be found on the ACM\$ information page at:

https://www.research.gov/research-portal/appmanager/base/desktop?_nfpb=true&_pageLabel=research_node_display&_nodePath=/researchGov/Service/Desktop/AwardCashManagementService.html

3 How do I get access to ACM\$?

Instructions for gaining access to ACM\$ can be found at:

https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dfm/docs/NSF_Financial_Functions_Instructions.pdf

4 How do I add/update banking data?

NSF disburses funds to your organization's bank account based on the banking information submitted to the System for Award Management (SAM). Before requesting a payment transaction, please insure your organization's SAM registration is active and up to date, including the banking data. NSF's new accounting system stops payments to any awardee with an expired or invalid SAM registration.

The SAM user guide is at: https://www.sam.gov/sam/SAM_Guide/SAM_User_Guide.htm

5 How do I return funds to NSF?

If your organization needs to remit funds to NSF due to a positive cash on hand balance, the remittance can be completed two ways, using Pay.gov or by check.

Option 1: Pay.gov

Click the link below and follow instructions to fill out the NSF Remittance Form on Pay.gov. You must enter the award number in the specified field to ensure proper credit is given. Send a refund to NSF via Pay.gov at:

<https://www.pay.gov/public/form/start/10506005>

Option 2: Mail a check

Send a check made out to 'National Science Foundation' to the following address **through September 29, 2017**:

National Science Foundation
ATTN: NSF Cashier
4201 Wilson Boulevard
Arlington, VA 22230

Beginning October 1, 2017, the submission address will be:

National Science Foundation
ATTN: NSF Cashier
2415 Eisenhower Avenue
Alexandria, VA 22314

Along with the check, please include a letter that indicates the award number(s), the amount to be applied to each award, and the reason for the return (audit disallowance, excess cash on hand, etc.).

6

How long do I have after my award expires to draw down funds before it is financially closed?

You can continue to draw down funds for 120 days after your award expires. After 120 days it will be financially closed and you will only be permitted to do adjustments.

7

How long do I have after my award is financially closed to make adjustments?

After the award is financially closed, awardees can enter upward adjustments to closed awards within a maximum of 14 months after the award financial close date and can enter downward adjustments until the appropriations funding the award cancel. All adjustments must be at least +/- \$1.00.

8

Can I use a file upload to submit my payment transaction?

Yes, you can download an Excel template within ACM\$ to allow for easy payment requests on multiple awards. You can also utilize an XML format for uploading payment requests. For more information, please go to the ACM\$ Informational Page on Research.gov, and see the ACM\$ XML File Upload Process Frequently Asked Questions, Data Dictionary and Instruction Guide.

Note: Excel and XML upload options are only available for payment requests on open awards but not adjustment requests on closed awards.

The most common cause of failures with the MS Excel upload process is that users unprotect the Excel download worksheet, make their updates and then try to upload the worksheet to ACM\$. The second most common cause of an upload failure is that users inadvertently paste formulas into the worksheet.

9

My Recipient Account Numbers are not being saved, what's wrong?

Changes made to the recipient account number field on the "Payment" screen are only saved for use on subsequent transactions when the award has a payment amount requested and the payment transaction is certified and submitted to NSF. If the award payment amount is \$0.00, any change to that recipient account number will not be saved even if the overall payment transaction is saved and submitted to NSF. Changes made to Recipient Account Numbers on payment transactions that are saved to draft status are only saved for that draft. It is recommended to develop an internal process for updating the recipient account numbers taking into consideration the issues above. Remember the ACM\$ database is only permanently updated upon certification and submission of a payment transaction to NSF.

10

What do I do if I receive a warning message during my payment request?

If a payment transaction has items that generate warning messages at the top of the ACM\$ payment transactions screens, the user is not able to complete the payment transaction. Warning messages will not prevent the submission of the payment transaction, but the ACM\$ preparer must click on the "Ignore & Continue" located directly beneath the ACM\$ warning message. This button is easily overlooked, but is required to continue with the payment process. Users should be aware that error messages will stop a payment transaction.

11 Why was the payment I received less than what I had requested?

The most common reason for a reduced payment is that it has been reduced by a treasury offset.

More information regarding the Treasury Offset Program (TOPS) can be found at https://fiscal.treasury.gov/fsservices/gov/debtColl/dms/top/debt_top.htm. If you have questions regarding an offset, please call (800) 304-3107.

12 Who can reset my password?

Instructions to reset your Research.gov password can be found on the Password Reset Guide at <https://www.research.gov/common/attachment/Desktop/Rgov%20Password%20Reset%20Guide.pdf>.

13 How has the National Science Foundation's (NSF) new financial system, iTRAK, impacted Research.gov's Award Cash Management Service (ACM\$)?

There are no changes to the ACM\$ payment request processes due to the implementation of iTRAK, however, users do see a change to the amendments and splits data on the ACM\$ Award Details page. When NSF converted to the new financial system, historical data dating back 15 months from October 2014 was summarized at the split level for all open awards. Historical data and transaction level detail will be available through your Grantee Cash Management Section (GCMS) Accountant.

NSF Critical Dates

1 When is the last day I can draw funds through (ACM\$) for the current fiscal year?

The Award Cash Management Service (ACM\$) will be temporarily unavailable beginning September 22nd at 12:00 p.m. EDT. Awardee organizations will NOT have access to the ACM\$ payment process during this period. This will allow NSF to finalize payments and reconcile its general ledger accounts. Our goal is to have ACM\$ available beginning on October 1, 2017.

2 Is there a number to call if we encounter problems during the period of unavailability?

If an awardee encounters a financial emergency, they should immediately contact their GCMS Accountant listed at <https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dfm/cmeab.jsp>. If you are unable to contact your GCMS accountant, please call the NSF Help Desk at (800) 673-6188.

3 Why is my award listed as cancelling in ACM\$ and why did I get a canceling email from my GCMS Accountant?

NSF appropriations must comply with (§1405(a) of Public Law 101-510) requiring all Federal agencies to close fixed year appropriation accounts and cancel any remaining balances by September 30th of the 5th year after the period of availability. For most NSF appropriations, the period of availability is a two-fiscal year period, not necessarily 24 months. For fiscal year 2017 this means that any unspent appropriations from FY 2011 (October 1, 2010 — September 30, 2011) will be canceled by September 30, 2017.

Awardees must complete their final cash draws for the canceling awards by September 22nd at 12:00 p.m. EDT as noted in the critical date question above.

4

My award has multiple appropriations. Will I be losing everything?

For Fiscal Year 2017, only the part of an award that was funded with the FY 2011 appropriation will be canceled. Undrawn funds under this appropriation will be unavailable for expenditures, obligations or payment request after September 22nd due to the payment cutoff.

For example, if a recipient has an award with appropriations in FY 2011, FY 2012, and FY 2015. September 30, 2016, marks the 5th year after the FY 2011 appropriation's two-fiscal year period of availability, whereupon FY 2011-appropriated funds are canceled. The 2012 and 2015 funds will still be available. The FY 2012 funds will cancel by September 30, 2018, and the FY 2015 will cancel by September 30, 2021. A good way to remember it is that the 5th year after the two-fiscal year period of availability is the same as saying the 6th year after the fiscal year of appropriation.

Date of Award	Year of Appropriation	Period of Availability	Cancellation Date
12/01/2010	FY 2011	12/01/2010 – 09/30/2012	09/30/2017
10/01/2011	FY 2012	10/01/2011 – 09/30/2013	09/30/2018
02/01/2015	FY 2015	02/01/2015 – 09/30/2016	09/30/2021

5

Will I still have 120-days to submit final cash draws for awards with canceling appropriations?

No, not for funds impacted by the cancellation. Awardees must complete their final cash draws for the canceling awards by September 22nd at 12:00 p.m. EDT even if the award end date extends past this date.

Usually, an institution is allowed one hundred-twenty (120) days to complete final financial activity prior to the award financial closing. This means that an institution has up to one hundred-twenty days to correct errors, post charges that were incurred before the end date, and address other close-out requirements, such as final project reports. All payment activity must be completed by September 22, 2017, for awards whose appropriations are canceling. Any remaining funds for the award after that date belonging to the impacted funding appropriation will be de-obligated and returned to the Department of Treasury.

6

I have an award that was P.I. transferred to our institution about a year ago. I think it has fiscal year 2011 appropriations. Will this award still be canceled?

Yes, any funds funded by the impacted appropriation year will cancel. If the original awardee institution had funds appropriated for the award in FY 2011, those funds, even though transferred to your institution, would still be under that year's appropriation and the funds will still be canceled by September 30, 2017. The payment rules also apply whereby awardees must complete their final cash draws for the canceling awards by September 22nd at 12:00 p.m. EDT.

7

How do I know which awards will have their appropriations canceled this year?

To determine which awards will have their appropriations canceled this year, look for a Red Flag next to the award number on the ACM\$ payment screen. Also, the GCMS accountants will notify all institutions that have awards with funds to be canceled each fiscal year.

Program Income Reporting

1

Am I required to report on my organization's program income?

The 2016 Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide (PAPPG) requires that all awardee organizations submit a Program Income Reporting Sheet. Starting October 1st, all awardee organizations must report the amount of program income earned and expended as of September 30th each year. Awardee organizations will be required to submit the Program Income Reporting Sheet by November 14 to report the amount of program income earned and expended as of the end of the previous Federal fiscal year.

2

What is program income? Is it the revenue I received in response to my payment request?

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 revenue received as reimbursement for award expenses.

Where can I find the Program Income Reporting Sheet and more information on how to complete the worksheet?

More information can be found on the Program Income Report webpage found on Research.gov at:

https://www.research.gov/research-portal/appmanager/base/desktop?_nfpb=true&_pageLabel=programIncome

Baseline Monitoring Activities

1

Final Unliquidated Balances

Large unliquidated balances nearing the end of an award are monitored for concerns. The criteria for this effort is defined as awards with high unliquidated balances of 75% or greater within 3 months prior to the expiration date. Each month, GCMS reviews these awards because large unliquidated balances could indicate the institution is encountering problems with completing the award project. We may contact you for more information to determine what the issue is, and if funds can be returned to NSF as those funds could be used for other awards.

2

Payment Testing

From February to June each year, NSF conducts a statistically valid random sample selection of grantees that made a payment request from ACM\$ during the prior fiscal year (Oct 1 – Sept 30). Emails are sent to the ACM\$ Certifier of the selected institution and detailed documentation of expenses are requested.

- Part 1 request is an accounting ledger of all expenses that made of payment request (by award).
- Part 2 is detailed documentation of selected expenses (invoices, payroll, travel). These part 2 expenses are then “tested” for allowability per NSF’s PAPPG, Uniform Grants Guidance (2 CFR 200), Federal Travel Regulations, and Institution policies.

What can you do to prepare for a better testing outcome?

- Be aware of what allowable costs are.
- Be first line of defense of checking for improper payments before payment is requested.

3

Grant Accrual Validation

From February to March each year, NSF conducts a statistically valid random sample selection of grantees that NSF believes may have had expenses incurred but not reported to NSF based on an outstanding award amount. NSF is required by Financial Reporting standards to accurately reflect expenses at year end, so this grant accrual estimate is necessary to properly report expenses. E-mail surveys are sent to the ACM\$ Certifier of the selected institution to provide the grantee’s Cash-On-Hand (COH) balance as of 09/30. Utilizing these responses, NSF can extrapolate results across our population to determine if the grant accrual estimate was accurate.

Other Cash Management Topics

1

Where to submit single audit reporting package?

More information regarding submission of a single audit reporting package can be found on the Federal Audit Clearinghouse webpage: <https://harvester.census.gov/facides/account/login.aspx>

2

How can grantees obtain a grant's CFDA Number?

CFDA numbers are included at the end of all NSF Award letters. Visit <http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/cfda.jsp> for a catalog of CFDA numbers.

3

How can grantees get copies of all NSF Award letters?

Go to FastLane -> Research Administration -> Award Documents. You can then search by award number, date, or PI Name. An award abstract can also be found via the Research.gov 'Research Spending & Results' webpage at: https://www.research.gov/research-portal/appmanager/base/desktop?_nfpb=true&_eventName=viewQuickSearchFormEvent_so_rsr

4

Where do I get information concerning specific requirements for payment and reporting?

The following 2 webpages would be a great place to start:

- <https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/index.jsp>
- <https://www.nsf.gov/awards/managing/rtc.jsp>

Division of Financial Management

Office of Budget, Finance, and Award Management

National Science Foundation

4201 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22230
703.292.8280 | <https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dfm>

