



Participant Support Guidelines

Participant support costs (PSC) are defined by the National Science Foundation (NSF) as “direct costs for items such as stipends or subsistence allowances, travel allowances and registration fees paid to or on behalf of participants or trainees (but not employees) in connection with meetings, conferences, symposia or training projects.”

PSC are those costs used to pay program participants small *non-compensatory* stipends; possibly reimbursement of travel costs or other out-of-pocket costs incurred to support attendance at a workshop, conference, seminar, symposia or other short-term training or information sharing activity. The purpose of participant support funding is to enable and encourage individuals to attend conferences or training programs without financial burden. The expenses may be paid for directly or as a reimbursement made to the individual. Participant support cost should not be considered as compensation for labor or work performed on a deliverable task.

Examples of acceptable participant stipends are:

- Conference Attendance: A highschool teacher participating in a conference aimed to educate instructors on how to integrate STEM curricula in K-12 classrooms
- NSF REU Supplements ONLY: WPI receives an award from the NSF that includes an REU component. The REU component allows the PI’s lab to support undergraduate student positions during the academic year over the course of the three-year grant. The students will be mentored and will assist with various research projects, e.g., media preparation, plant tissue culture, cloning, and mutant analysis. The student support would be considered participant support costs.

A participant *cannot* be:

- A “Human Subject” whom you collect data on
- An employee of the institution
- Advisory board members
- Interns with a “paid appointment”
- Guest speakers
- Anyone who has a *deliverable* or is primarily *providing a service* to the project

These costs would be placed in “Other Direct Costs” instead.