PARTICIPANT SUPPORT VS PARTICIPANT INCENTIVE

Participant Support

Per Uniform Guidance 2 CFR 200.1 Participant Support is a direct cost 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 conference, or training projects.

Examples of Participant Support Costs
- Stipends or subsistence allowances (commonly budgeted on NSF REU Supplements)
- Travel allowances
- Registration fees paid to or on behalf of participants or trainees (but not employees) in connection with conferences or training projects

F&A
Participant Support Costs are exempt from F&A for project when using UT’s negotiated F&A rate. The rate uses an MTDC Base, which excludes Participant Support Cost.

Rebudgeting
Uniform Guidance 2 CFR 200.308(c)(5) requires prior sponsor approval to transfer funds budgeted for participant support costs to other budget categories.

NOT Participant Support
- Honoraria – guest speaker at a conference, symposium, or workshop
- Project organizer, consultant, facilitator, or coordinator of the workshop, conference, or training session
- Speaker (unless the majority of time is spent as a participant and not a speaker)

Participant Incentives

Participant Incentives are low value payments or items given to individuals to encourage them to participate in research. In order to be an incentive, the value of a payment or item must be minimal and should be provided to all participants in the research projects.

Examples of Participant Incentives
- Compensation to run on a treadmill for an hour
- Gift certificates to participate in a survey
- Petty cash “gifts” to encourage rural interviews

F&A
Participant Incentives are part of the MTDC Base, and F&A should be calculated for funds budgeted in this expense category.

Rebudgeting
Any prior approval requirements to rebudget this expense category will be detailed in the sponsored award document.

Paying individuals in exchange for their participation is a common and, in general, acceptable practice. Payment to individuals for their participation in studies is not considered a benefit and is not taken into account when IRB weighs the risks and benefits of the research.

UT Austin allows for use of Tango Card to compensation research participants. Tango Card is an online gift card service that enables researchers to allocate research compensation remotely.
• Fellowships – financial support for a postdoctoral fellow to do things such as attend conferences or workshops