

The Institute may waive the match and cash match requirements in certain circumstances. See section VIII.A.8.c.

8. Which of the Two Budget Forms Should Be Used?

Section VI.A.1.c. of the SJI Grant Guideline encourages use of the spreadsheet format of Form C1 if the application requests \$100,000 or more. Form C1 also works well for projects with discrete tasks, regardless of the dollar value of the project. Form C, the tabular format, is preferred for projects lacking a number of discrete tasks, or for projects requiring less than \$100,000 of Institute funding. Generally, use the form that best lends itself to representing most accurately the budget estimates for the project.

9. How Much Detail Should Be Included in the Budget Narrative?

The budget narrative of an application should provide the basis for computing all project-related costs, as indicated in section VI.A.4. of the Guideline. To avoid common shortcomings of application budget narratives, applicants should include the following information:

Personnel estimates that accurately provide the amount of time to be spent by personnel involved with the project and the total associated costs, including current salaries for the designated personnel (e.g., Project Director, 50% for one year, annual salary of \$50,000 = \$25,000). If salary costs are computed using an hourly or daily rate, the annual salary and number of hours or days in a work-year should be shown.

Estimates for supplies and expenses supported by a complete description of the supplies to be used, the nature and extent of printing to be done, anticipated telephone charges, and other common expenditures, with the basis for computing the estimates included (e.g., 100 reports x 75 pages each x .05/page = \$375.00). Supply and expense estimates offered simply as "based on experience" are not sufficient.

In order to expedite Institute review of the budget, make a final comparison of the amounts listed in the budget narrative with those listed on the budget form. In the rush to complete all parts of the application on time, there may be many last-minute changes; unfortunately, when there are discrepancies between the budget narrative and the budget form or the amount listed on the application cover sheet, it is not possible for the Institute to verify the amount of the request. A final check of the numbers on the form against those in the narrative will preclude such confusion.

10. What Travel Regulations Apply to the Budget Estimates?

Transportation costs and per diem rates must comply with the policies of the applicant organization, and a copy of the applicant's travel policy should be submitted as an appendix to the application. If the applicant does not have a travel policy established in writing, then travel rates must be consistent with those established by the Institute or the Federal Government (a copy of the Institute's travel policy is available upon request). The budget narrative should state which policies apply to the project.

The budget narrative also should include the estimated fare, the number of persons traveling, the number of trips to be taken, and the length of stay. The estimated costs of travel, lodging, ground transportation, and other subsistence should be listed and explained separately. It is preferable for the budget to be based on the actual costs of traveling to and from the project or meeting sites. If the points of origin or destination are not known at the time the budget is prepared, an average airfare may be used to estimate the travel costs. For example, if it is anticipated that a project advisory committee will include members from around the country, a reasonable airfare from a central point to the meeting site, or the average of airfares from each coast to the meeting site, may be used. Applicants should arrange travel so as to be able to take advantage of advanced-purchase price discounts whenever possible.

11. May Grant Funds Be Used To Purchase Equipment?

Generally, grant funds may be used to purchase only the equipment that is necessary to demonstrate a new technological application in a court, or that is otherwise essential to accomplishing the objectives of the project. The budget narrative must list the equipment to be purchased and explain why the equipment is necessary to the success of the project. The Institute's written prior approval is required when the amount of computer hardware to be purchased or leased exceeds \$10,000, or the software to be purchased exceeds \$3,000.

12. To What Extent May Indirect Costs Be Included in the Budget Estimates?

If an indirect cost rate has been approved by a Federal agency within the last two years, an indirect cost recovery estimate may be included in the budget. Recoverable indirect costs are limited to no more than 75% of a grantee's direct personnel costs (salaries plus fringe benefits). Grantees may apply unrecoverable indirect costs to meet their required matching contributions, including the required level of cash match. A copy of the approved indirect cost rate agreement should be submitted as an appendix to the application.

If an applicant does not have an approved rate agreement and cannot budget directly for all costs, an indirect cost rate proposal should be prepared in accordance with section IX.I.4. of the Guideline, based on the applicant's audited financial statements for the prior fiscal year. (Applicants lacking an audit should budget all project costs directly.)

13. What Meeting Costs May Be Covered With Grant Funds?

SJI grant funds may cover the reasonable cost of meeting rooms, necessary audiovisual equipment, meeting supplies, and working meals.

14. Does the Budget Truly Reflect All Costs Required to Complete the Project?

After preparing the program narrative portion of the application, applicants may find it helpful to list all the major tasks or activities required by the proposed project,

including the preparation of products, and note the individual expenses, including personnel time, related to each. This will help to ensure that, for all tasks described in the application (e.g., development of a videotape, research site visits, distribution of a final report), the related costs appear in the budget and are explained correctly in the budget narrative.

Appendix B—Answers to Grantees' Frequently Asked Questions

The Institute's staff works with grantees to help assure the smooth operation of the project and compliance with the Guideline. On the basis of monitoring more than 1,000 grants, the Institute staff offers the following suggestions to aid grantees in meeting the administrative and substantive requirements of their grants.

1. After the Grant Has Been Awarded, When Are the First Quarterly Reports Due?

Quarterly Progress Reports and Financial Status Reports must be submitted within 30 days after the end of every calendar quarter—i.e., no later than January 30, April 30, July 30, and October 30—regardless of the project's start date. The reporting periods covered by each quarterly report end 30 days before the respective deadline for the report. When an award period begins December 1, for example, the first quarterly progress report describing project activities between December 1 and December 31 will be due on January 30. A Financial Status Report should be submitted even if funds have not been obligated or expended.

By documenting what has happened over the past three months, quarterly progress reports provide an opportunity for project staff and Institute staff to resolve any questions before they become problems, and make any necessary changes in the project time schedule, budget allocations, etc. The quarterly progress report should describe project activities, their relationship to the approved timeline, and any problems encountered and how they were resolved, and outline the tasks scheduled for the coming quarter. It is helpful to attach copies of relevant memos, draft products, or other requested information. An original and one copy of a quarterly progress report and attachments should be submitted to the Institute.

Additional quarterly progress report or Financial Status Report forms may be obtained from the grantee's Program Manager at SJI, or photocopies may be made from the supply received with the award.

2. Do Reporting Requirements Differ for Continuation Grants?

Recipients of continuation grants are required to submit quarterly progress and Financial Status Reports on the same schedule and with the same information as recipients of grants for single new projects.

A continuation grant should be considered as a separate phase of the project. The reports should be numbered on a grant rather than project basis. Thus, the first quarterly report filed under a continuation grant should be designated as number one, the second as number two, and so on, through the final