

1. Why do we have to charge grants for any salary?

Sponsors require that we track effort for key personnel on grants. In order to create an auditable trail on effort certification forms, an actual expense must be charged to the grant. This expense can be charged as base or supplemental salary.

2. Who must charge salary to grants?

All Key Personnel must have salary directly charged to the grant. Key Personnel includes Principal Investigator (PI)/Project Director (PD), Co-PI/PD and other individuals deemed essential to carrying out the work of the grant. These people are responsible for the design, conduct, and reporting of the funded project and are critical to the project success.

3. How much salary must be charged?

A minimum of 1% effort (base or supplemental, if allowed by sponsor), regardless of appointment type, must be charged to the grant.

4. What is the definition of Co-PI?

Co-PI(s) share equal authority and responsibility for all elements of the project with the PI -- equally responsible for project performance, reporting, management, and financial stewardship of the grant.

5. Can both base salary and supplemental salary be charged to the grant?

Yes. Both base salary (resulting in salary savings) and/or supplemental salary (if allowed by the sponsor) can be charged to the grant.

6. Will the college keep any portion of the salary savings?

The College will not to keep any portion of salary savings from grants attributed to the charging of base salary to grants. Salary savings are transferred to the unit's general funds and distributed at the discretion of the department head.

7. Does this rule apply to all sponsors?

Penn State's Vice President for Research, with support from the Corporate Controller's office, has decided that this requirement will be enforced consistently across all sponsored activities. A reasonable allocation of effort should be reflected on all sponsored projects.

8. Are there exceptions when PI effort is not required?

PSU Policy RA21 (<https://policy.psu.edu/policies/ra21>) documents a number of exceptions when key personnel effort is not required. For example:

- Gifts
- Instrumentation grants (where the sole purpose of the grant is to procure equipment or property)
- Conference/workshop grants (where the sole purpose of the grant is to support a conference or workshop)
- Training grants and other student-led projects where the PI is just supervising student effort
- Industry membership agreements (as long as some source of funds is identified for covering the PI's administrative effort)
- Non-federal projects < \$50K as long as a percent of the PI's time is paid on general funds. (If a researcher is paid solely on external funds, then some percentage of his or her funds must be charged to every project on which he or she works.)