

Post-Award Administration: Case Studies

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Business Purpose – Travel



Fight On

Hypothetical One – Dr. Turner

Dr. Perry, a researcher at a university in the Netherlands, sends an invitation letter to Dr. Turner, a USC faculty member in the School of Engineering, to speak to Dr. Perry's research team in the middle of August about his current research projects, including a project sponsored by the NSF.

Dr. Turner takes up Dr. Perry on his offer and travels to the Netherlands to meet with the research group.



Hypothetical One – Dr. Turner (continued)

Upon his return to the United States, Dr. Turner submits a reimbursement request totaling nearly \$8,000 for his trip, submitting the back up provided to you. His stated business purpose for the trip is “Travel to Europe for research collaboration with Dr. Perry.”

- Would you approve this reimbursement request? If so, why?
- If you would not approve this reimbursement request, what kinds of additional supporting documentation would you require from Dr. Turner prior to approving his reimbursement?



Hypothetical Two – Dr. Sanchez

Dr. Sanchez attends a conference in Australia. When she returns she submits a reimbursement request to charge her grant for the trip.

- Would you approve this reimbursement request? If so, why? If not, why not?
- If you approve it, what would you include with the documentation?
- Could Dr. Sanchez charge the grant for the cost of the more expensive ticket?



Hypothetical Three – Dr. Bernstein

Dr. Bernstein purchases a high-precision isotopic piece of equipment for approximately \$60,000, \$16,272 of which he charges to an NSF award ending in 4 months.

He purchases the equipment to replace an obsolete older model of the equipment that was far slower and less precise in its measurements.



Hypothetical Three – Questions

- Would you approve this charge? If so, why?
- If you would not approve this charge, what kinds of additional supporting documentation would you require from Dr. Bernstein?
- What recommendations, if any, would you make in terms of reporting to the sponsor regarding this purchase?



Hypothetical Four – Dr. Singh

Thirty days prior to the end date of her award, Dr. Singh orders a laboratory clean hood to perform data sample analysis prior to the award expiration date. Please review the back-up documentation provided and then consider the following questions:

- Would you approve this charge? If so, why?
- If you would not approve this charge, what kinds of additional supporting documentation would you require from Dr. Singh?
- What recommendations, if any, would you make in terms of reporting to the sponsor regarding this purchase?