Listing of Acceptable Direct Costs

Examples of acceptable direct costs that meet the OMB Uniform Guidance requirements and “that can be identified specifically with a particular final cost objective, such as a Federal award, or other internally or externally funded activity, or that can be directly assigned to such activities relatively easily with a high degree of accuracy” [OMB Uniform Guidance, section 00.413] are listed and explained below:

1. **Salaries, Wages and Fringe Benefits** – (includes researcher or technician salary and fringe benefits). See item 5 below for discussion of in-house consulting by faculty members (overload pay). According to the Uniform Guidance, clerical salaries and wages shall normally be treated as indirect costs. There are situations where direct charging of administrative and clerical salaries is appropriate. These situations are discussed in the Charging Administrative Expenses to Federal Awards Policy.

2. **Animals and Animal Care** costs.

3. **Computing** – Project specific costs for scientific computing and programming costs.

4. **Scientific Computer Software** – Project-dedicated software that is necessary to carry out the scope of the project.

5. **Consultants** – (expertise of a well-defined nature for a fixed period of time) both external and internal consultants. At NYU, consultant agreements issued for sponsored projects are executed by the Contract Office.
   - **External Consultants** – A consultant generally provides needed expertise to a project for a limited period of time. They function as independent contractors (with little or no day-to-day supervision by NYU staff) and they are not employees of the University. Consultants are typically paid on an hourly or daily fee plus reimbursement for travel and other incidental expenses. External consultant fees are normally treated as Other Than Personnel Services (OTPS).
   - **Internal Consultants** – Intra-university consulting is generally a university obligation requiring no additional compensation in addition to the institutional base salary of faculty/staff members. This principle applies to faculty members who function as consultants or otherwise contribute to a sponsored project conducted by another faculty member of the same institution. However, in unusual cases where consultation is across departmental lines or involves a separate or remote operation and/or the work performed by the consultant is incidental and in addition to his regular departmental load, any charges for such work representing extra compensation above the base salary are allowable provided that such consulting arrangements are specifically defined or stated in the agreement and/or approved in writing by the sponsoring agency and the authorized University official.

6. **Equipment** – An article of nonexpendable, tangible property having a useful life of more than one year and (permanent equipment, greater than NYU capitalization threshold, currently, $3,000).

7. **Equipment Maintenance Contracts** – Equipment maintenance contract expenses of project-dedicated equipment or shared equipment with monitored usage and an appropriate cost is charged directly to the grant account.


9. **Participant Costs** – Payments made directly to or on behalf of participants, including stipends, tuition and fees, dependency allowance, participant travel and other miscellaneous participant costs.
10. **Publications, Printing, Binding and Copying Services** – Indicate and itemize costs and include any publication costs connected with dissemination and evaluation, and check journal page rate costs for a correct and current estimate.

11. **Rental of Off-Campus Space** – Some projects require special space needs or staff stationed for long-term field site work. Lease agreements can be negotiated to lower space and housing costs with the rental costs charged directly to the project.

12. **Shipping/Overnight Delivery Services** – Federal Express, U.S. Postal Priority Mail, DHL and UPS overnight delivery services specifically define costs at the individual or account level and can be directly charged to the grant/contract account. Routine postage charges are normally treated as an indirect cost unless special purposes and circumstances exist for the project. If the project requires substantial mailing expenses in the performance of the project activities or technical work, postage should be directly charged to the project. Refer to the Charging Administrative Expenses to Federal Awards Policy.

13. **Specialized Facilities Required by a Specific Program** – If a project requires the creation of new, more secure facilities – including the acquisition of alarm equipment, special construction, or other project-specific facility costs – these costs may be directly charged to the project. These special-purpose facilities may or may not be usable by future programs. This cost category would also include increased security services required due to the level of classification/special access for the project.


15. **Supplies** – Office supplies (laboratory, educational/instructional) are normally treated as indirect costs unless a special purpose or circumstance exists for the project. For allowability of computer supplies as a direct cost, refer to the Charging Administrative Expenses to Federal Awards Policy.

16. **Telephone Toll Charges** – In addition to long distance charges, this category includes the toll charges and equipment for phones needed during fieldwork, cellular phones needed for field site coordination and phone call charges while in travel status. If the sponsored project does not have a dedicated line, then an access code should be obtained from Telecommunications Services so that any long distance calls for the project may be identified with a specific access code on the monthly telephone bill. See the Charging Administrative Expenses to Federal Awards Policy.

17. **Travel Costs** – Travel required to fulfill the sponsored project requirements.

18. **Other direct costs may include**:

   (a) Equipment rentals;

   (b) Reference books and materials directly related to project scope;

   (c) Search service charges associated with research; or

   (d) Insurance expense for project-dedicated equipment.