



*Tuesday Tips* is a new outreach effort by OGCA. The idea behind *Tuesday Tips* is to convey tips, tricks and other helpful information around the area of research administration. Our goal is to post on (almost every) Tuesdays. If there is something you would like to see covered on *Tuesday Tips*, email: [UAF-GCReATE@alaska.edu](mailto:UAF-GCReATE@alaska.edu). For more Tips visit [OGCA website](#).

## General Guidelines/Cost Accounting Standards

Researchers at University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) have a variety of cost accounting standards they must adhere to when spending extramural funds, including [Office of Management and Budget \(OMB\) - Uniform Guidance](#) and [University of Alaska/UAF](#) charging practices.

Because the majority of UAF's research funding comes from the federal government, most of our cost accounting standards are based on federal regulations. These are listed in circulars provided by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in the executive branch of the federal government.

All federal sponsor policies that govern grant management (such as the NIH Grants Policy Statement) are based on the OMB Uniform Guidance, which establishes principles for determining allowability of costs applicable to grants, contracts and other agreements with educational. Per Uniform Guidance, all costs in the budget should be **allocable, reasonable and allowable**.

1. **Allocable** costs are clearly associated with the particular project. For example, chemicals purchased for use on a specific project should only benefit that project. Restocking general chemical supplies used for a variety of purposes would benefit many projects and may not be easily allocated to individual projects. Consider whether the cost will be incurred solely to advance the work under the sponsored agreement. For example, travel costs incurred for the Principal Investigator to obtain data on the topic of the research would generally qualify, but travel costs to attend a conference on a topic not related to the research would not.

2. **Reasonable** costs would generally be accepted as necessary per a "prudent" person's review. For example, the purchase of a laptop computer for field research by a graduate student researcher on the project would generally be accepted as reasonable, while the purchase of a laptop for non-project related coursework by a graduate student researcher would not.

3. **Allowable** costs are permitted by institutional and sponsor regulations and are consistent with UA/UAF charging practices. There are some costs which are specifically prohibited from being charged to a sponsored project, such as alcoholic beverages, advertising, lobbying or entertainment charges. These are known as "unallowable" costs. It is important to ensure that a cost is allowable before including it in a proposal.

For additional information visit the [Office of Grants and Contracts Administration](#).