# Frequently Asked Questions for Faculty Research Grant (FRG) Budgets

**What do I need to know about spending FRG funds?**

UNC Charlotte Faculty Research Grants are awarded with state funds; therefore, all normal state purchasing procedures apply. Faculty should work with their department administrative assistants to understand the UNC Charlotte purchasing regulations.

Administrative assistants should refer to the purchasing manual for guidance on the regulations governing FRG funds.

# What are the FRG budget year options?

There are two options for start dates on Faculty Research Grants. Faculty select the budget option they want at the time they write their proposal. Because we have a very small staff to administer the FRG program, faculty may not change their budget option once an award is made.

**Budget Option 1**

* Start date of Jan. 15, 2024, ending May 31, 2025.
* Fiscal Year One funds are available Jan. 15, 2024, through May 31, 2024. Funds

***must*** be expended by May 31, 2024.

* In rare instances it is possible to request to move Fiscal Year One funds to Fiscal Year Two, but such requests must be made by May 15, 2024.
* Fiscal Year Two funds are available from July 1, 2024, through May 31, 2025, and

***must*** be expended by May 31, 2025.

* Faculty stipends, where appropriate, will be included in the grantee’s May 15 payroll check of the year indicated on the budget form.
* Advantage for Option 1 budgets: funding begins at the start of the spring semester.

**Budget Option 2**

* Start date of July 1, 2024, ending Dec. 31, 2025.
* Fiscal Year One funds are available from July 1, 2024 through May 31, 2025, and funds ***must*** be expended by May 31, 2025.
* In rare instances it is possible to request to move Fiscal Year One funds to Fiscal Year Two, but such requests must be made by May 15, 2025.
* Fiscal Year Two funds are available from July 1, 2025 through Dec. 31, 2025, and funds ***must*** be expended by Dec. 31, 2025.
* Faculty stipends, where appropriate, will be included in the grantee’s May 15, 2025 payroll check. For Budget Option 2, stipends are only available in Fiscal Year One.
* Advantage for Option 2 budgets: funding includes two summer periods.

# Can I change Budget Options after an award is made?

No. Because of limited staffing to administer these budgets, it is not possible to change Budget Options once an award is made. You should therefore choose your Budget Option carefully.

# Why do FRG budgets have two fiscal years?

The FRG award period (18 months) will cross the UNC Charlotte fiscal year. ***Because you cannot carry state funds over from one fiscal year to the next, you should carefully consider how you allocate funds between Year One and Year Two.*** You must also carefully monitor your funds to ensure they are spent in time. Any funds remaining in your FRG budget at the end of the fiscal year ***will be lost***.

# When can I start spending my FRG money?

As soon as your budget has been approved and you have a fund number, you can begin spending money. If you have a Compliance Hold, this should be approved prior to spending.

# How will I get my fund number?

You will receive your fund number via email from the Division of Research Budget & Personnel Team .

**My project requires approval for human subjects or animal subjects research. Do I have to get the compliance committee’s approval before I can spend my money?** Yes. If your project requires approval from any of the UNC Charlotte compliance committees (Human Subjects, Animal Subjects, Radioactive Materials, Biological Hazards, Chemical Hazards) your funds will not be released until the Director of the Center for Research Excellence has received a copy of your approved protocol.

If you choose Budget Option 1 (start date of January 15, 2024) and your project will require compliance committee approvals, please carefully consider whether you will be able to have your protocol written and approved within the first six-month budget period. You will not be able to receive any funds (including stipends or graduate assistant salary) until your protocol has been approved.

# Once I have compliance approval, how can I pay research participants?

You can pay by check or cash equivalent (gift cards).

# I have included temporary wages for students in my budget. When will time for June be processed?

Students receiving stipends are paid twice a month (on the 15th and last day of the month). If the student has a summer stipend through June, then the student will be on the June payroll. For example, if you selected Budget Option 1, the summer stipend through June should be accounted for under Year 1.

Students paid on an hourly rate basis are paid bi-weekly. Since students paid by the hour are paid two weeks behind, the last payroll date for June is June 28th for work performed June 2nd-June 15th. Any hours worked after June 15th will be paid in July.

# I have money in the travel line that includes purchasing an airline ticket and *per diem*

**expenses. How will these funds be handled?**

Except for prepaid items, travel funds come out of your budget when the Travel Reimbursement Form is processed. So, if you are traveling in June, but returning in July, you will need to have travel funds in your Fiscal Year 2 budget. If you prepay the airline ticket, that should be included in your Fiscal Year 1 budget.

# What do I have to do to get my FRG stipend?

Nothing. Faculty stipends for the Principal Investigator and Co-Investigator (If applicable) are automatically included in the May 15 paycheck for the appropriate fiscal year.

# Do I have to include fringe benefits in my budget?

You don’t have to list fringe benefits as a line item, but you need to be aware that taxes and fringe benefits will be deducted from your stipend.

# I have a Special Payment to another UNC Charlotte faculty member. How will that payment be made?

Your department administrative assistant will have to make a Special Payment to another UNC Charlotte faculty member.

**Can I pay someone who is not on the UNC Charlotte payroll to work on the project?** Yes, but you must follow all UNC Charlotte Human Resources regulations for non-student temporary wage employment ([PIM-8](https://hr.charlotte.edu/about-hr/personnel-information-memorandums-pims/pim-08-temporary-staff-employees)). Hourly pay rates will be based on the current N.C. state grade and salary schedule. Temporary employees are typically paid at the minimum of the grade level considered by Human Resources to best match the level of the duties performed. For help in determining pay level, consult Human Resources. You cannot allow someone to begin work on the project until all necessary paperwork has been completed.

# Can I move money between budget lines?

Yes. Work with your department administrative assistant and Lolita Gonzales and/or Sheri Rice in the Division of Research Budget & Personnel Office to make changes in your budget.

# Are there unallowable expenses for FRGs?

Yes. The following are **not** allowed:

* Stipends for faculty on 12-month appointments
* Purchase of computers
* Academic year release time
* Travel to conferences for disseminating research results
* Production costs for books (*i.e.,* page charges, subventions)
* Professional transcription services.
* Food.

**I have money left in my Fiscal Year 2 budget. Can I pay myself a second stipend?** The maximum stipend amount allowed by the FRG program is $4,200 per faculty member. If you choose Budget Option 1 and if your stipend in Year 1 was less than that amount, you may include funds that total up to that maximum in the second year.