

April 2024 Research Administration Forum Q&A

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Contract and Grant Administration

Q1: Will the BruinBuy *Plus* QRG be updated? Will these slides be distributed?

A1: It is our understanding that a QRG will be developed for this new process. RAF slides will also be available on the OCGA website.

Q2: Are we still using the subaward checklists?

A2: Yes, we are still using the OCGA Subaward Checklist for requests that are submitted to the OCGA Subaward Team.

Q3: Is the total amount on the change order just for year one of the estimated grand total for all years of the sub-award?

A3: The total amount on the change order should be equal to the total amount actually allocated to the subrecipient -- not the total estimated award amount but the year 1 amount.

Q4: This process seems cumbersome for the Subaward Site. It sounds like they will first get an Award Notice for \$1, and then they will get an Award Notice for the full amount. Subaward sites are going to be very confused by this.

A4: The Outgoing Subawards Team will process the subaward for the amount listed on the Subaward Checklist (the actual award amount), even though the PO is only being processed for \$1. Once the subaward agreement is finalized and fully-executed, the department will use that FE'd copy in a change order request to Purchasing to have the PO updated to reflect the actual award amount. You can think of the \$1 PO as the new Draft PO. It's there as a placeholder. The Subaward Checklist and resulting Subaward agreement should always be for actual award amounts.

Q5: For Amendments to New Subawards, Step 1 says we should submit to OCGA the requisition #, do you mean the PO #? Because the original requisition will have already been converted into a PO by this point (if we're doing an amendment), right? The PO is what we've always done.

A5: At amendment stage, the PO can be included on the Subaward Checklist.

Q6: Can you please clarify the process to request Purchasing to update an already migrated PO to reflect an already executed amendment? OCGA sent the amendment to Purchasing a few months ago but Purchasing didn't update BruinBuy *Plus*.

A6: Even if your PO has migrated from BruinBuy to BruinBuy *Plus*, a change order to that migrated PO is not possible -- you will need to request a new BruinBuy *Plus* PO (detail on that process can be found on page 13 of the [Subaward/Subcontract Tips and Resources Guide](#)). If you have already requested setup of a new PO in BruinBuy *Plus*, and are following up on that PO, (until May 1st) you can just follow-up on OCGA's e-mail to Purchasing.

Q7: How do we closeout a subaward and release the remaining encumbrance? I have reached out to OCGA Subawards multiple times with the signed subaward closeout certification, but have not received any response.

A7: Please see: <https://ocga.research.ucla.edu/closeout-subaward-mca/>

Q8: When a purchase order gets issued, does the PO get automatically emailed to the email that the vendor has in PaymentWorks? Both during the \$1 and then the change order?

A8: Subrecipients should not be receiving an automatically e-mailed PO (with attached PO terms). The only applicable terms under a subaward are the subaward terms of award, which are managed through OCGA. If your Subrecipients do receive PO email(s), please let your OCGA OST rep (the OCGA OST rep who issued the Subaward/Amendment) know, as we can follow-up with Subrecipient to confirm the Subaward terms are the ones that apply. We do understand those automated emails are causing some confusion.

Q9: Checklists typically need to include the requisition # and be signed by the PI. I'm assuming the checklist we attach in our BruinBuy Plus requisition does not need to include the requisition # nor the PI signature, correct?

A9: Our understanding is that Purchasing primarily uses the vendor information on the Subaward Checklist for their review. We would agree with your statement above.

Q10: On the subaward checklist that we submit on the initial \$1 PO request, do we leave the PO blank or what do we enter?

A10: Please add the requisition # for OST's reference.

Q11: Is there any update about the fact that PI's are not able to approve incoming subaward invoices in BruinBuy Plus? There is a widespread problem with PI's not being able to approve them, or the wrong PI receiving the notice to approve them. It has been ongoing for months with no resolution. It would be helpful if ORA could work with Purchasing/BruinBuy Plus/AP to resolve this in a timely manner.

A11: I can assure you that OCGA has been working night and day to resolve subaward issues with BruinBuy Plus. We are also frustrated, but we know that systems implementation projects are always difficult and rarely come without issues. Please understand that ORA is doing everything it can to help resolve issues with subaward processing.

There is an Ascend Research Newsletter coming out today or tomorrow that reports a list of PIs and Fund Managers assigned to POs, along with instructions on how to correct errors in assignments. I hope the list will be available soon and that it will help resolve some of the PO approval issues.

Q12: If there are subawards on an application that needs to go out and if they are not using the new thresholds for equipment, should we go back to them to use new dollar amounts?

A12: If there is time we recommend changing.

Q13a: Uniform Grants Guidance 2024 Revision, increased threshold effective when? 1/1/2024?

A13a: October 1, 2024 but agencies can potentially adopt earlier (60 days after its been posted in the fed register). It's currently in pre-publication status. We will be providing a deeper dive after we and our professional organizations have

had an opportunity to read through the 600 pages. So we encourage departments to include the new thresholds now so that you have sufficient budgets.

Q13b: Will OCGA's indirect cost MTDC language be updated to reflect this update?

A13b: October 1, 2024 is the effective date. I don't know if our rate agreement will be modified, but ORA guidance will be updated to reflect this update.

Ascend 2.0

Q1: What if Negative Appro was a Carry-forward from previous years? There is no way to correct.

A1: Please send this example to Stephanie Perez (stephanie.perez@research.ucla.edu) for further review.

Q2: Sub 03 is not only materials and supplies, Sub 03 is also used for services. I don't see services on here. Is this being mapped elsewhere?

A2: There will be a dedicated budget/expense category for 'Services' in Oracle PPM. The project team will revisit the decision to map all Sub 03 expenses to 'Materials and Supplies' and share if any changes are made.

Q3: Do we need to reallocate Sub 08 appropriations to other subs before the conversion?

A3: It is best practice to reallocate the budget according to the sponsor-approved budget. This can help identify when prior sponsor approval is required for re-budgeting, if expenses exceed the budgeted line item, etc. If the appropriation remains in Sub 08, it will be converted to PPM as 'Other Direct Costs'.

Q4: We don't usually allocate funds between the subs as most of our grants are modular. We therefore don't allocate within the subs until either the end of the budget or project to avoid having to do TOFs between subs on a monthly basis.

A4: Thank you for sharing. The Ascend conversion team recommends reallocating the budget according to the latest internal budget. In the future state, departments will only be able to reallocate budgets using the new Budget Tool when the sponsor restricts rebudgeting (more information can be found at the [March 2024 RAF](#)). Therefore, we recommend reallocating the budget accordingly in the current financial system.

Q5: Just to clarify, the negative balances we're required to eliminate via TOF by 4/30 are those in the appropriations column for each sub, rather than the figures in the fund balance column? And does this apply to each account, or only to the home department's account?

A5: This applies to all expenditure accounts that are being converted to Oracle. Yes, the figures to correct are in the appropriation column, not the fund balance column.

Q6: What about those C&G accounts in negative balance, but waiting for next budget appropriation?

A6: These recommendations apply only to appropriations (budget), not to balances. Balances in overdraft will not fail the conversion.

Q7: A guide on how to find each of our populations for these data conversion action items would be helpful. Having a quick guide to refer to in order to run each report for our departments would assure we are looking at the correct population of items needing correction.

A7: Thank you for the feedback! The project team will work on developing a quick guide for these conversion action items.

Q8: Sorry this question is not directly related to Ascend 2.0. Can you please clarify consultant payments (professional services payments) should be charged to 03 or 07?

A8: The financial system allows consultant expenses (object code 3455) to be charged to various sub codes: 03-Supplies and expense, 05-Special items (generally travel), 07-Special use (generally subaward/subcontract expenses) and 08-Unallocated funds. If departments would like to track consultant expenses separately for a financial reporting need, then any of these sub codes can be utilized.

Q9: Did you address PI approvals on subaward invoices?

A9: No, this Ascend presentation did not address PI approvals for subaward invoices. If you have specific questions, please reach out to BruinBuy *Plus* Support at help@it.ucla.edu.