

**SUNY Upstate
Research Foundation
Procurement Card (P-Card)
Guidelines**

Bank of America Visa

Table of Contents

1. What is a P-Card	2
2. Who can be issued a P-Card	2
3. Application Process	2
4. Card Purchases	2-5
A. Dollar Limits	
B. Responsibility of P-Card users	
1. Required Purchasing Practices	
2. Placing Your Order	
C. Examples of Generally Allowable Purchases	
D. Unallowable or Restricted Items	
E. Funding Restrictions	
F. Payment or Account Reconciliation	
G. PI or Delegate Approval of P-Card Transactions	
5. Questioned Items & Returns	6-7
A. Card user Responsibilities	
1. Sales Tax	
2. Returns and Credits	
3. Items Not Received	
4. Disputes	
B. Bank of America (BOA) Responsibility	
6. Lost or Stolen P-Card	7
C. Card user Responsibility	
D. RF BOA Visa Card Responsibility	
7. Liability	8
8. Suspension of P-Card Privileges	8-9
E. Misuse or Abuse of the P-Card	
F. Fraudulent Use of the P-Card	
G. P-Card User Separation	
9. Audits of Individual Accounts	9
10. Key Contact Information	10
11. Appendix	
A. Application	
B. Office and IT supplies on Federal Fund Account Memo	

I. What is a P-Card?

The Research Foundation Bank of America VISA Procurement Card (P-Card) provides a convenient method for principal investigators and authorized staff to purchase small-dollar materials, lab supplies and allowable travel costs such as registration, lodging and airfare necessary to conduct sponsored research at SUNY Upstate University.

General Guidelines

- All purchases made with the Purchasing Card ("P-Card") are subject to RF policies and procedures including the RF Travel Handbook Unrestricted Expense Policy.
- P-Cards are issued only with the approval of the campus Operations Manager ("OM") or designee.

II. Who Can be Issued a P-Card?

Only Principal Investigators, co-investigators and project-authorized signers can be issued P-Cards. P-Card user must be either a Research Foundation (RF) or State University of New York (SUNY) employee. P-Card user must have signatory and purchase authorization.

III. Application Process

To obtain a P-Card, each individual must complete an application and submit it to the P-Card Administrator in Sponsored Programs Post Award. The P-Card Administrator will verify applicants' authorization for P-Card privileges. If approved, applicant will be contacted to pick up and sign for their card upon arrival. The P-Card should arrive in approximately 7-10 days. See Appendix A for the application.

A requisition must be submitted on Self Serve in the amount of \$5,000 to reserve funds of the project/task/award.

IV. Card Purchases

A. Dollar Limits

Individual transactions cannot exceed \$2,500. The monthly limit is generally \$5K. The transaction and monthly limit are hard limits and cannot be exceeded. Orders must not be split in order to facilitate use of this P-Card. If the project being charged is over expended, the PI must identify another source of funding to cover the purchase. Each Purchasing Card will have a preset limit. This amount can be increased with OM or designee approval.

B. Responsibility of P-Card users

Each P-card user will be responsible for verifying all charges associated with the specific award/project number.

A P-card user must complete a P-Card Monthly Reconciliation Worksheet form for both non-travel and travel expenses. This documentation is used to (1) verify all purchases; (2) audit a specific card; (3) reconcile a reported billing discrepancy (4) document purchase authority (5) track all card activity and (6) record receipt of item.

The RF Purchasing Card is the property of Bank of America. It may not be transferred to, assigned to, or used by anyone other than the card holder. Bank of America or the RF may suspend or cancel the P-Card privileges at any time for any reason. The Cardholder will surrender the P- Card upon request, to any authorized agent of the RF or Bank of America.

1. Required Purchasing Practices:

Keep your card in a secure location and do not give your card or account number to anyone other than the supplier from whom you are making the purchase.

Use of this P-card is strictly limited to the purchase of commodities and expenses for official research use. **The P-card is not to be used for personal charges.** Improper use will result in P-card privileges being revoked.

If your purchase will exceed the per transaction limit, do not split your order so that you can use the P-Card. Use traditional purchasing procedures or contact the RF Purchasing Department at (315) 464-5720 for assistance.

Please be sure that funds are available at the time of purchase.

2. Placing Your Order

Orders may be placed by phone, fax, online, or in person.

- Notify suppliers that the purchase is tax exempt and provide the NYS Tax Exempt Number or tax-exempt certificate if necessary. Only do business with suppliers who will accommodate our tax exempt status. Out of state tax charges are allowable and chargeable to RF projects.
- Give the supplier your name as it appears on the card, the account number, and the card expiration date.
- All related invoices should be sent directly to the ordering P-card user. All merchandise should be delivered to central receiving who will then deliver the materials.

- Submit monthly the completed P-Card Monthly Reconciliation on Self Serve. Attach all receipts and bank statement to the form.

NOTE: If making your purchase in person: Obtain an itemized receipt, in addition to the credit card receipt and check the credit card receipt to insure accuracy before signing. Receipts that do not clearly list the items purchased will not be considered adequate documentation.

C. Examples of generally allowable sponsored purchases (up to \$2,500). Please inquire with P-Card administrator if questions about unusual purchase or have general related P-Card questions:

- ❖ Registrations for conferences and seminars
- ❖ Books
- ❖ Supplies and materials
- ❖ Film processing
- ❖ Postage
- ❖ Printing
- ❖ Shipping charges (UPS, Federal Express, Airborne, etc.)
- ❖ Online purchase of any of the above
- ❖ Allowable Travel (i.e., airfare, car rental, taxis, shuttles, parking, lodging, registration, gas, etc.) Only travel items that are receipted.

D. Unallowable or Restricted Items on Federal Sponsored Programs:

- ❖ Personal use
- ❖ Flowers, greeting cards
- ❖ Personal celebrations and gifts of sentiment (birthdays, retirements, etc.)
- ❖ Staff morale and recognition
- ❖ Gift certificates, gift cards, stored-value card
- ❖ Recognition gifts
- ❖ Alcoholic beverages, coffee service, etc.,
- ❖ Orders exceeding the \$2,500 limit – use traditional purchasing methods
- ❖ Maintenance agreements
- ❖ Medical services
- ❖ Cash advances, Cash back on purchases, Cash refunds on returns
- ❖ Controlled substances (e.g., narcotics and prescription drugs)
- ❖ Live animals, Radioactive materials, Specialty gases/cylinder rentals
- ❖ Any material, agent, or toxin identified as a Select Agent or Toxin by U.S. Government regulations.
- ❖ Purchases requiring a contract and signed university authorization
- ❖ Contracted services from an individual
- ❖ Leases, insurance
- ❖ Monthly recurring or automated charges
- ❖ Computers
- ❖ IT supplies without justification as to why the item is necessary to achieve the aims of the study. See Appendix E for memorandum.

E. Unrestricted Funds Policy

- 1.** Expenditures of Unrestricted Funds must be used to fund expenses of the RF central office, RF operating locations, or SUNY that support:
 - Instruction,
 - Organized research and other sponsored activities, or
 - Institutional activities

- 2.** In order to be paid directly by the RF or reimbursed to an individual, an expenditure of Unrestricted Funds must be:
 - Necessary to perform a valid business purpose fulfilling the mission of the RF or SUNY.
 - Reasonable in that the expense is not extreme or excessive, and reflects a prudent decision to incur the expense commensurate with the business purpose. The determination of reasonableness of the dollar amount of an expenditure must take into account relevant factors including the business purpose, the context, the source of funds, and the circumstances surrounding the expenditure.
 - Appropriate in that the expense is suitable and fitting in the context of the valid business purpose, with the primary benefit to the institution, not an individual's personal benefit.

See the current Unrestricted Fund Expense Policy at the following link:

http://www.rfsuny.org/media/RFSUNY/Policies/unrestricted_fund_expense_policy_pol.htm

All purchases are limited to official research use and must be made in a reasonable, rational, cost effective manner. To be allowable and allocable, the purchase must be related to the program purpose. All activity is subject to periodic audit to monitor compliance with policies and procedures governing this program. Improper use will lead to suspension of privileges.

E. Funding Restrictions

Before placing any order, insure funds are available in your project/award. Funding will not be available to cover expenses that exceed a grant balance. P-Card should not be used during the last 90-days of an externally sponsored award/project or after an award/project terminates. Questions regarding this restriction should be directed to the P-Card Administrator. In the event of an unallowable expense, the PI is responsible to identify another source of funds to cover the expense(s).

F. Payment or Account Reconciliation

Your **monthly** review, must be done by the designated date of each month and must include the following:

- Review the BOA statement.
- Attach **all** applicable original receipts for travel and non-travel to Self Serve.
- Any charges for sales tax are identified as a credit pending or write a personal check to cover the tax amount made out to The Research Foundation.
- Ensure credits appear on the BOA statement for any returns. If a charge appears on your BOA statement for an item ordered, but not received, contact the supplier to resolve the matter. Suppliers should not submit charges to BOA until the goods have been shipped. If you cannot resolve the matter with the supplier, follow the process for disputes within 15 days. (see page 9).
- Any unauthorized transactions must be reported to BOA for dispute.

G. PI or Delegate Approval of P-Card Transactions

The monthly review and approval of all P-Card transactions must be done by an individual other than P-Card user, an individual with a higher level of authority. Unless otherwise specified, this will be assigned to the Principal Investigator listed on the P-Card application form. If the reviewer does not agree with the monthly statement, the card user will be asked to verify the documents and explain the reason for any discrepancy.

Principal Investigators or Project Directors must inform the P-Card Administrator or Campus Purchasing of any transfer or termination of a card user or the transfer or termination of the designated reviewer.

V. Questioned Items & Returns

A. Card user Responsibilities

Whenever an item purchased with the P-card is returned to the supplier, the P-Card user must request that the supplier issue a BOA Visa credit. Under no circumstances will cash be accepted to resolve a credit situation.

1. Sales Tax

The Research Foundation is tax exempt. If a charge for NYS sales tax appears on the BOA Statement, the P-Card user will contact the supplier directly to arrange to have this charge reversed. Ask the supplier to credit

your account for the sales tax charged and note the credit pending on the transaction log; attach the documentation showing that the request for a charge reversal was made. BOA will not assist with sales tax issues. If you are unable to obtain a credit, a personal check must be made out to The Research Foundation.

2. Returns and Credits

All credits and returns should be documented on the transaction log and filed in your file for reconciliation of the next statement.

To make a return, contact the supplier directly to determine the proper return procedures. Any credits issued will appear on a subsequent Visa statement.

3. Items not Received

If a charge appears on your RF BOA Visa statement for an item ordered but not received, contact the supplier to resolve the matter. Suppliers should not submit charges to Visa until goods have been shipped. **Report unauthorized transactions to BOA for dispute within 15 days.**

If you cannot resolve any of the above matters with the supplier with the exception of sales tax, follow the process for disputes below.

4. Disputes

If the P-Card user cannot resolve a dispute with a supplier or there is a charge that is unauthorized or unrecognized on the card users' Visa statement, the card user must initiate a dispute with BOA Visa within 15 days of the transaction appearing on the statement. To initiate a dispute, the card user should contact BOA directly at 888-449-2273 and also notify the P-Card Administrator or Campus Purchasing at (315) 464-5720.

B. BOA Responsibility

BOA will issue a credit to the card user's account and process the appropriate chargeback for all questioned items resolved in favor of the Research Foundation.

VI. Lost or Stolen P-Card

A. Card user Responsibility

Any lost or stolen P-Card must be reported immediately to BOA Customer Service at 888-449-2273. Immediately following this verbal notification, the card user must also report the lost or stolen card to P-Card Administrator at 315-464-5720. A replacement card will not be issued unless the P-Card administrator is also notified. The card user should be prepared to give their name exactly as it appears on the face of the card, the account number, the card's expiration date, and a brief explanation surrounding the loss.

Failure to comply with this notification process will result in the card user becoming personally liable for the fraudulent use of the card.

B. RF BOA Visa Card Responsibility

BOA will take immediate action to cancel the card reported lost or stolen. BOA will initiate steps to issue a replacement card as soon as possible. The replacement card will be sent directly to P-Card Administrator or Campus Purchasing. The card holder must pick it up from the Administrator's office to avoid being lost in the office mail. Card holders do have an option for the new card to be mailed through the inner office mail upon request, but must be aware of the risk.

VII. Liability

The PI and or P-card user is responsible for all unallowable purchases, disallowances, misuse, fraud and costs not covered by RF or sponsor. This will also result in the termination of the P-Card. It is important to report immediately any lost or stolen P-Cards to BOA and the P-Card Administrator at Campus Purchasing. Failure to comply with this notification process will result in the card user becoming personally liable for the fraudulent use of the card.

VIII. Suspension of P-Card Privileges

Improper use of the P-card by the card user will lead to suspension of all P-Card privileges. Failure to reconcile activity as noted in these guidelines will also lead to suspension of all P-Card privileges. P-Card usage will be audited periodically.

A. Misuse or Abuse of the P-Card

The term "misuse or abuse" means the use of the P-Card outside the card users authorized parameters (e.g., charges in excess of the permitted limit; split-ordering,

purchases of items of a type other than those allowed, failure to reconcile as noted within these guidelines, failure to report card lost or stolen, sharing card or the card number with another person). The P-Card will be revoked when misuse or abuse occurs.

Abuse includes, but is not limited to:

- Habitually failing to submit a monthly reconciliation report by the monthly deadline.
- Purchasing items for personal use.
- Failure to return the P-Card when terminated, or upon request.
- Failure to maintain proper records in accordance with RF guidelines.
- Using P-Card after receiving notice of its cancellation

B. Fraudulent Use of the Card

The term “fraudulent use” means the use of the P-Card with a deliberately planned purpose and intent to deceive and thereby gain a wrongful advantage for oneself or anyone else other than the RF. The following actions will be taken:

- Immediate suspension of card privileges;
- Removal of card user’s purchasing authority;
- Mandate employee reimbursement to the RF; and
- Formal disciplinary action which may result in termination of employment.

C. P-Card user Separation

If the P-Card user leaves SUNY Upstate or joins another department, the PI or card user will send the cut up card to the P-Card Administrator with a request to cancel the account. The P-Card Administrator will direct BOA to cancel all P-Card privileges for any card user who leaves Upstate University for any reason. The card user will make all attempts to complete any outstanding reconciliation(s).

The P-Card user will continue to be liable for any charges incurred by the P-Card user until BOA is directed to cancel the P-Card.

D. Failure to Submit Worksheets in a Timely Manner

Cards will be subject to termination if the required documentation is more than 3 months past due, and the card holder has been contacted numerous times.

IX. Audit of Individual Accounts

It is important to note that the RF as well as external sponsors may elect to audit any and all P-Card activity at any time. Performance of these audits does not require

advance notice. Therefore, it is extremely important that all project investigators and or staff retain accurate records of all transactions made using their assigned P-Cards. Copies of reconciliation documentation should be kept on file in the P-Card users office for 6 months.

X. Key Contact Information

Research Foundation at SUNY Upstate Medical University

Accounts Payable and Travel
(315) 464-4978
SLC 2025

Campus Purchasing and P-Card Administrator
(315) 464-5720
SLC 2048

BOA CUSTOMER SUPPORT

TO REPORT AND CANCEL LOST OR STOLEN CARDS:

Call BOA at 888-449-2273

This number is available twenty-four (24) hours per day, seven (7) days per week.

Immediately following this verbal notification, the card user must also report the lost or stolen card to P-Card Administrator at 607-777-6752.

XI. Acknowledgement

We want to sincerely thank Donna Scuto and Carol Julian from the University of Buffalo and Buffalo State Campuses for generously allowing us to customize their P-Card guidelines and adapt it as we see suitable for the Upstate campus.

Appendix A

VISA Card Application & Agreement for Sponsored Grants (NOT Medical Services Groups)

TO: SPONSORED PROGRAMS, 209 CAB

CARD REQUESTED FOR: _____

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

DATE: _____

PROJECT NUMBER(s) which this individual may charge against:

General Guidelines

- All purchases made with the Purchasing Card ("P-Card") are subject to RF policies and procedures including the [RF Travel Handbook Unrestricted Expense Policy](#) and
- P-Cards are issued only with the approval of the campus Operations Manager ("OM") or designee.

The undersigned, in applying for a Research Foundation VISA Card, agrees to the following terms and conditions:

1. All VISA Card purchases shall be limited to travel , memberships, registrations, subscriptions, meeting expenses (including all meals), and small dollar purchases, as allowable per the grant. The card cannot be used for equipment including computers, equipment repairs, consultant fees and expenses, or service agreements. (contact the Travel office at x4977 or x4978 for more information on Travel) Use of VISA Card for personal expense is expressly prohibited.
 2. Each individual purchase shall not exceed \$2,500 and total expenditures may not exceed \$5,000 per monthly billing cycle.
 3. The cards will be issued in the individual's name and there will be a maximum of one card per individual. The Principal Investigator will be responsible for indicating (above) which grants may be charged against by the individual. [CARDS ARE TO BE USED BY CARDHOLDERS ONLY](#). Use of VISA Card by non-cardholders is prohibited.
 4. Project accounts (grants) shall be charged for all purchases made on the VISA Card accounts(s) assigned to the individual. The Individual card holder shall be responsible for paying all costs not allowable on sponsored projects.
 5. Purchases made during the last 30 days of a project period shall be limited to emergency purchases only.
 6. Original detailed charge slips/receipts are to be retained by the individual cardholder and must be kept until receipt of monthly statement. When incurring food charges for meetings, the purpose of the meeting and list of attendees must be included. Upon receipt of monthly statement, the individual cardholder will review it for appropriate charges and then submit it with all receipts attached to the Principal Investigator. The Principal Investigator will indicate which grants(s) should be charged for
-

each item on the statement. The Principal Investigator will submit the approved statement together with the original detailed charge slips/receipts and assigned grant numbers by the 20th of each month following your statement (ex.Statement date 10/31 paperwork to be submitted by 11/20)to Accounts Payable. If the statement and receipts are submitted late 3 times within an 18 month period the card will be cancelled.

The Principal Investigator will keep a copy of the statement on file until grant is closed. Accounts Payable will reconcile against monthly statements to make sure that all statements have been approved and will forward them to Accounting to charge to the grant.

- When **VISA** Card transactions are processed via telephone, the purchaser must request the vendor to forward hard-copy receipts.
- In the event that receipts are lost or other wise unavailable, it is the responsibility of the card holder to contact the vendor and arrange to obtain a replacement original receipt. These receipts must be kept on file for audit purposes.

➤ Note: All VISA Card purchases are NYS-tax exempt and no sales tax charges should be incurred.

IF TAX IS CHARGED IT IS THE CARDHOLDERS RESPONSIBILITY TO REIMBURSE THE GRANT FOR ANY TAXES PAID.

7. It is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator and cardholder to notify the following offices in the event that an **VISA** Card is lost, stolen, or is used by an unauthorized individual:

VISA: 888.449.2273
Research Purchasing: 464-5720

Notification shall be made immediately upon learning of problem, and shall provide all pertinent information with respect to the loss, theft, or unauthorized use. Failure to promptly notify the above parties may result in financial penalties which will become the personal responsibility of the project director and/or cardholder.

8. The Principal Investigator shall make every reasonable effort to recover the card from an employee whose authority to use the card has terminated, or from any other unauthorized user.
9. The cardholder shall settle all disputes related to **VISA** Card purchases directly with the merchant involved. If a credit is due, the cardholder shall instruct the merchant to issue an **VISA** credit Voucher.
11. The Principal Investigator is ultimately responsible for all transactions involving **VISA** Card purchases assigned to his/her RF projects(s), together with the following:
- Ensure that the **VISA** Card will be used only for those purposes allowed within this Agreement and within sponsor guidelines, and that each authorized cardholder is aware of his/her responsibilities in this regard.
 - Ensure that the aggregate charges made on the AMEX Card(s) do not exceed the credit limit established; assume responsibility for any bank charges imposed for exceeding this credit limit.

12. **VISA** Card privileges may be revoked for the following reasons:
- The **VISA** Card is the property of the bank and the bank may, without liability or notice, revoke or cancel all or any part of the privileges at any time.
 - Sponsored Programs may revoke or cancel **VISA** Card privilege if terms of this Agreement are violated.
 - Use of a Research **VISA** Card for any type of personal expense (whether or not subsequently reimbursed) will result in cancellation of the **VISA** Card.
 - Apparent and/or intentional misuse of the **VISA** Card will result in personal liability for all questioned charges and revocation of the card.
13. If a cardholder intends to expend funds on behalf of the grant for an individual who is not listed as providing effort, preauthorization must be obtained. This would occur, as an example, when a Principal Investigator travels with students whose efforts during that travel support the grant. The required preauthorization can be obtained through the Accounting and Budgeting Office, Sponsored Programs.
14. The use of this card results in the expenditure of monies prior to encumbrance against a grant's balance. Thus, in order to assure that the grant maintains adequate funds to cover expenses incurred through the use of this program/card, the accounting office will reserve \$5,000 of the annual funding of the named grant. A purchase requisition in the amount of \$5,000 must be submitted when requesting an **VISA** Card. The funds will be disencumbered upon notification from Sponsored Programs that your account is closing or that you no longer wish to use your **VISA** card. If you have an award for which the unspent balance must be returned to the sponsor upon termination, it is your responsibility to request the return of the **VISA** reserved funding to the budget so that it may be spent. The request must be submitted to Sponsored Programs in the final year of the award, two months prior to the account's termination.
15. The RF Purchasing Card is the property of Bank of America. It may not be transferred to, assigned to, or used by anyone other than those in the Cardholder's assigned department. Bank of America or the RF may suspend or cancel the P-Card privileges at any time for any reason. The Cardholder will surrender the P- Card upon request, to any authorized agent of the RF or Bank of America.

CARD HOLDER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Print RF Purchasing Cardholder Name: _____ Campus: _____

RF Purchasing Cardholder Signature: _____ Date: _____

Manager Approval: _____ Date: _____


OM/Designee Approval: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

For Office Use Only	
Purchase order: Date: _____	PO Cancel date: Initials: _____

Appendix B



To: Principal Investigators, Business Managers
From: Debbie Weber, Sponsored Programs Administrator 
Subject: Office and IT supplies on federally funded accounts
Written Justification Now Required
Date: February 17, 2016

This past year our campus was audited by The Research Foundation's Internal Audit Department in which they reviewed departmental processes and performed a risk assessment. A few items that were found to be unallowable on federally funded accounts were office supplies and computer/IT supplies and the expenses were moved to other accounts. These types of expenditures are considered indirect costs and not allowed as direct charges to federally funded accounts.

Under NIH guidelines, costs not readily identified or allocated to a specific project or activity incurred for the benefit of multiple projects or activities are considered indirect costs. Office supplies and IT costs are usually for the benefit of a group and are consumed by office staff or lab staff on a daily basis. Items such as toner cartridges, pens, paper, flash drives, binders, or office machines are not allowable costs. IT supplies such as hard drives, routers, software, or IT support are not allowable costs. These types of purchases are deemed to be for the daily use of all staff and not related to any specific account or grant.

There are instances where office supplies or IT supplies are necessary to complete the aims of a project or projects. If a specific type of computer is required to run a scientific program or perhaps binders, magazine racks, etc are needed for outreach programs then they may be allowed. In these situations you must provide a written justification stating how these items are necessary to complete the aims of your federally funded project when you submit a purchase requisition.

Upstate is scheduled for a federal A-133 audit this May/June and we are instituting this new requirement to be pro-active and avoid any audit findings. I understand providing a justification for these types of purchases is additional work, but by doing so we hope to avoid having to move charges and trying to find an acceptable account.

Cc: T. Boyle
S. Delaney
S. Mascari
G. McMahan
B. Moore
J. Rudes
