WHO?
WHAT?
WHEN?

Useful information for proposal submissions and the award management of Sponsored Projects at USC's Viterbi School of Engineering.

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General Contact Info

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Sponsored Research General Contact Information

Department of Contracts and Grants (DCG) - https://research.usc.edu/dcg-main-page

Contacts by Department - https://research.usc.edu/department/

- Katie Rountree, Associate Director - rountree@usc.edu
- Amanda Reguengo, Principal C&G Officer - amandas@usc.edu
- Vicki Iwata, Senior C&G Officer - viwata@usc.edu
- Kalief Washington, C&G Officer - kaliefwa@usc.edu
- Janet Ng, C&G Officer - janetng@research.usc.edu

Sponsored Projects Accounting (SPA) - https://fbs.usc.edu/departments/sponsored-projects-accounting/

- SPA 360 to locate your SPA accountant
- https://fbs.usc.edu/departments/sponsored-projects-accounting/contact-spa/

Viterbi Human Resources - https://viterbibusinessaffairs.usc.edu/human-resources-payroll/contact/

- Viterbi Faculty Issues/Questions - ViterbiFacultyPayroll@vsoe.usc.edu
- Viterbi Staff/Resource Employees Issues/Questions - ViterbiStaffPayroll@vsoe.usc.edu
- Viterbi Student Issues/Questions - ViterbiStudentPayroll@vsoe.usc.edu
- Viterbi Post Doctorate Issues/Questions - ViterbiPostdocsPayroll@vsoe.usc.edu
- General Questions - ViterbiPayrollHelp@vsoe.usc.edu

Viterbi Research Administration (VBA-RA) - https://viterbibusinessaffairs.usc.edu/research-administration/

- Nichole Phillips, Director of Research Administration - nicholep@usc.edu
- Lauren Ferrell, Associate Director Research Administration - lauren.ferrell@usc.edu
- Isabel Rodriguez, Contract & Grant Coordinator - isabel.rodriguez@usc.edu

Viterbi Finance - https://viterbibusinessaffairs.usc.edu/finance/

- Leticia Cornelio, Assistant Director, Budget Management - cornelio@usc.edu
- Greg Constante, Financial Operation Manager - lgconsta@usc.edu

Viterbi Information Technology (IT) - https://viterbiit.usc.edu/

Submit a service request - http://viterbi.usc.edu/servicedesk

- Michael Goay, Executive Director - mgoay@usc.edu
- John Ng, Operations Manager - johnng@usc.edu
- Jason Dziegielewski - Information Services Manager - dziegiel@usc.edu
- Andreas Tillmann, Public Communications Manager - tillmann@usc.edu

Viterbi Facilities - https://viterbibusinessaffairs.usc.edu/facilities/

- Jeffrey Wigintton, Director of Facilities - jwigintt@vsoe.usc.edu
- Gloria Wan, Facilities Coordinator - yuhungw@usc.edu

Travel and Expenses - https://businessservices.usc.edu/travel/

- Online booking support – onlinesupport@cbtravel.com
- Full-Service agent support – usc@cbtravel.com
- Group reservations – universitygroups@cbtravel.com

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Useful Links

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Useful USC Links

Research

- Viterbi Research Administration - https://viterbibusinessaffairs.usc.edu/research-administration/
- Viterbi Research Policies & Procedures
  https://viterbibusinessaffairs.usc.edu/research-administration/viterbi-policies-procedures/
- Viterbi Proposal Submission Timeline
  https://1p0ddnszgzf22dsaf3wu5chs-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2019/08/Viterbi-Proposal-Submission-Timeline-Revised-2019.pdf
- Department of Contracts and Grants (DCG)
  - Main page - https://research.usc.edu/dcg-main-page
  - Contacts by Department - https://research.usc.edu/department
  - Subawards - https://research.usc.edu/subawards/
  - Human Subjects IRB - http://oprs.usc.edu
  - diSClose - https://disclose.usc.edu
  - Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) - http://research.usc.edu/policies/rcr
- Sponsored Projects Accounting (SPA)
  - Main Page - https://fbs.usc.edu/departments/sponsored-projects-accounting/
  - SPA 360 - https://fbs.usc.edu/departments/sponsored-projects-accounting/spa-360/
- University Culture and Ethics - https://policy.usc.edu/university-culture-and-ethics/
- diSClose - https://disclose.usc.edu/
- Effort Reporting - https://fbs.usc.edu/departments/financial-analysis/effort-certification/
- Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) - https://oprs.usc.edu/training/rcr/
- Stevens Center for Innovation - https://stevens.usc.edu/
- Guide to Research at USC - https://research.usc.edu/files/2019/08/Guide-to-Research-2019.pdf

Business Services

- Purchases - https://businessservices.usc.edu/purchases/
- Corporate Cards - https://businessservices.usc.edu/corpcard/
- Travel & Expense - https://businessservices.usc.edu/travel/
- Travel & Expense Portal (Concur) - http://usc.edu/travelportal/
- Travel Policy - https://policy.usc.edu/travel-expenditures/
- Travel Maximum Rates - https://procurement.usc.edu/travel/request-reimbursements/maximum-rates/
- Office of Compliance Best Practices Guidance, Business Purpose and Travel -
  https://ooc.usc.edu/files/2017/12/5_Research-Compliance-Guidance-Business-Purpose.pdf

Other Links

- Extensive University Department Contact List -
- https://research.usc.edu/files/2014/07/Who-Do-I-Call-If-SC-Contact-list_REVISED-5.9.17.pdf
- Facilities Management Services (FMS) - http://www.usc.edu/fms/
- Department of Public Safety (DPS) - https://dps.usc.edu/
- Office of International Services (OIS) - https://ois.usc.edu/
- Trojan Learn – http://trojanlearn.usc.edu
- Employee Gateway - https://employees.usc.edu/

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Proposal Routing Guidelines & Deadlines

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Viterbi Proposal Submissions: Routing Guidelines & Deadlines

1. Notification of Intent to Apply

Solicited Awards:

- Funding Announcements are released 3-6 months out (many are posted in the Research Gist)
- PI must notify research administrator of intent to apply and provide him/her a copy and/or link to the funding solicitation.

Unsolicited Awards:

- PI must notify research administrator of intent to submit and provide correspondence from the sponsor which includes contact information.

Once RA is notified in writing of intent to submit, with solicitation/sponsor correspondence, RA will then notify the Viterbi Research Administration Office (VBA-RA) and the USC Department of Contracts and Grants (DCG).

2. Cost Sharing & Space Request Process and Approvals

- Viterbi Cost Sharing guidelines: https://viterbibusinessaffairs.usc.edu/researchadministration/cost-sharing/
- Cost Share requests for approval must be received by VBA-RA:
  - **30 Business Days prior to the proposal due date** for multi-school, center and center-scale proposals
  - **14 Business Days** prior to the proposal due date for small proposals
- **Space/Facilities** requests must be approved by the department chairman or submitted to the Vice Dean for Administration. These requests must follow the minimum dates set for cost sharing above, and uploaded in the appropriate section of the TARA/KC proposal edoc.

3. VBA-RA Approvals

- VBA-RA must receive the TARA/KC Pre-Award electronic routing edoc for review **7-9 Business Days** prior to the submission deadline.
- TARA/KC Pre-Award electronic routing edoc must include all of the following attachments (as they are applicable):
  - Solicitation/Sponsor Correspondence
  - Cover Page
  - Budget
  - Budget Justification
  - Draft of the Scope of Work/Technical Justification (*for NSF, the broader impacts section must be included*)
  - If a Grants.gov application, SF 424 section needs to be completed with administrative information
  - Subaward/consultant packet

Once approved by VBA-RA, the application moves to DCG for review, approval and submission.

4. DCG Approvals

- DCG Service Commitment: https://research.usc.edu/files/2016/10/Department-of-Contracts-and-Grants-Service-Commitment.pdf
- VBA-RA approved TARA/KC Pre-Award proposal edoc should reach DCG for review and submission **3 Business Days** prior to the submission deadline.

Please note the dates given are the minimum dates required to guarantee submission and earlier submission of requests and proposals is preferred.

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Life Cycle of an Award

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Life Cycle of an Award: PI & Research Administrator To-Do's

Start of New Award

- PI and Research Administrator must review the terms and conditions in TARA
    - Note if sponsor approval required for any changes
    - Establish type of award
- Research Administrator must ensure budget is set-up as proposed/awarded and VBA approved
- PI and Research Administrator meet to go over the spending plan – keep in mind the RAAC principles

Each July when Reconciling

- Research Administrator must:
    - review account to ensure the F&A/IDC and fringe benefits are expensing appropriately based on award
    - Make adjustments for new fringe rate if applicable

Start of each Increment/Budget Period

- PI and Research Administrator meet to review budget, staffing and spending plan
    - Keep RAAC principles in mind when working together and any additional terms and conditions of the award
    - If budget modifications are needed, ensure they do not represent or constitute a change to the awarded scope of work
- For Subaward(s), Research Administrator must create purchase order(s) based on the awarded and approved budget, and/or extend and/or add funding to existing purchase order(s)

12 Months before End Date

- PI and Research Administrator meet to review budget, staffing and spending plan
    - Discuss any final equipment order(s)
    - Review any large M&S purchases
    - Review subaward(s) spending, if applicable
- Research Administrator must advise Post-docs/Research Staff regarding unused vacation; reminder to record in Workday any days used

6 Months before End Date

- PI and Research Administrator meet to discuss account close out procedures and requirements
    - Discuss whether a no-cost extension is required and will need to be submitted
- Research Administrator should:
    - reach out to SPA to confirm that F&A/IDC has been expensed at negotiated rate
    - Postdoctoral Fellows:
        - If there are any postdocs on the project, where the postdoc position extends beyond the life of the project identify other funding sources for their support or prepare to serve a 90 day termination notice
        - Remind regarding vacation days and recording in Workday
- Research Administrator must verify subaward spending and ensure they will be sending final invoices by dude date(s)

90 Days before End Date

- Research Administrator should:
    - Ensure 90-day termination notice was received by Post Doc if the Post Doc is not moving to another project.
    - Review Post Doc vacation days and ensure time off is in Workday
    - Request IDC and fringe analysis from SPA
    - Submit any appropriate/applicable budget reallocations needed based on IDC and fringe analysis

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- Request a tuition analysis from VBA-RA
  - Inform VBA-RA of any GRAs graduating during the semester the award is expiring or of any changes to effort distribution for accurate tuition expense calculations
  - Work with VBA-RA to process any pending tuition expenses
- Follow up on any un-posted/ pending charges and/or credits-internal requisitions
- Process any applicable expense transfers

60 Days before End Date

- Research Administrator should:
  - Purchase all final supplies necessary for project completion at least 30 days prior to the project end date
  - Process any applicable budget reallocations

30 Days before End Date

- Research Administrator should:
  - Cancel ongoing services (gas cylinders….)
  - Close out encumbrances
  - Report any unused, obsolete, stolen, missing, un-repairable capital equipment purchased by the project
  - Calculate and process any vacation pay due to post docs being terminated. Vacation pay must be paid from an unrestricted and/or discretionary account
- PI and Research Administrator should meet to ensure:
  - All subaward invoices, including final invoice, have been received, approved by the PI, and submitted for payment
  - All subaward reports, including technical, patent, etc. have been received and approved by the PI and forwarded to DCG Closeout Specialist
  - All salaries reconcile with effort certification
  - All project transactions were reconciled and managed using the RAAC principles, the Omni Circular, award terms and conditions, and USC policy.

Final Close-out

- PI should ensure he/she has submitted by the sponsor deadline(s):
  - all required technical/program reports, including final report to the sponsor
  - any applicable report of patents and inventions to DCG Closeout Specialist
  - a copy of the final technical report to DCG Closeout Specialist
- The PI and Research Administrator should together ensure:
  - the final financial report is completed and submitted by SPA
  - the final equipment report is submitted to equipment management

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Travel Reimbursement Guidelines

Updated: 10/2019

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Travel Reimbursement Guidelines

The following is a quick reference guide to travel related reimbursements. Please note this information is subject to change. For the most current and detailed information on USC's travel guidelines, please visit: https://policy.usc.edu/sponsored-project-funded-expense-provisions-expenditures/

General Reimbursement Information

Itemized receipts are required for ALL reimbursements. A credit card statement will not suffice as a receipt. All receipts should include the following information:

- merchant name
- date of charge
- itemized expenses
- amount of charge
- form of payment

Double-check your USC supplier profile to ensure your mailing address and bank information are current.

Note: Personal and USC travel card expense reports/reimbursements need to be finalized within 60 days of transaction. To ensure you are able to meet the finalization deadline requirement, please submit your expenses with supporting documentation 14 days from the last date of travel, if not sooner.

General Travel Information

Before arranging travel, please review your award and ensure you are aware of any unique travel guidelines.

Note that only travel related expenses, e.g. airfare, hotel, meals, ground transportation, hotel internet services, highway toll charges, etc., will be reimbursed.

You are highly encouraged to book travel arrangements using USC's approved travel agency (Christopherson Business Travel).

Air Travel

Sponsored research can be charged the cost of economy class (coach) commercial airfare. No upgrades can be charged to sponsored research. Ensure you submit the fare itinerary with your receipts.

Airfare must be purchased at least 2-weeks prior to departure and round-trip tickets are preferred. Please include a justification if your airfare is purchase within two-weeks or if you need to purchase one-way tickets.

Baggage fees and on-flight meals are reimbursable and not considered an "upgrade". Please retain your receipt for such extra costs to airfare.

Please note that your flight receipt must show the name of the traveler, amount of fare, and the method of payment.

When requesting for foreign travel, please note that tickets must be purchased with a U.S. flag air carrier or a foreign carrier that operates under a U.S. flag air carrier code-sharing agreement and tickets or documentation for electronic tickets identify the U.S. flag air carrier's designator code and flight number. Please refer to the Fly America Act/Open Skies Agreement.

Rail Travel

The university will only support the cost of economy class (coach) rail tickets. All upgrades will not be reimbursed (i.e. business or first class). In these instances, you will only be reimbursed for the lowest fare for your trip. If you do choose to upgrade, do so after you have purchased your regular train ticket in order to avoid delays in your reimbursement as a comparison fare will need to accompany the reimbursement.

Rental Cars

Please provide the receipt showing the itemized daily rate and taxes. A business justification needs to be provided for all Premium or SUV rentals (all sizes above Full Size). 10-passenger vans or SUVs will not be reimbursed.

Trip Insurance

Supplemental travel insurance from companies like Allianz Global Travel Insurance for trip protection, flight and car rental will not be approved for reimbursement.

Taxis and Ground Transportation

Please request a receipt from taxi drivers if you are not immediately provided one. You must obtain a receipt for public transit fares paid. Uber/Lyft receipts are acceptable and should be included in the single pdf receipt document.

Gas and Personal Vehicles

Gas/fuel purchases will be reimbursed only for rental cars.
Personal vehicle usage will be reimbursed based on the mileage at the federal published rate (current rate is $0.58 per mile). When requesting mileage, provide the date(s) of the trip and a Google map with the addresses of both origin and destination and the total miles.

Lodging

International rates are established by the State Department for the city/region.

If the lodging expense includes lodging for more than one person, please include the names of all guests and specific purpose.

Submit the hotel’s final bill that shows per night room rates and any taxes/fees.

If you claim lodging per diem, you will still need to submit the hotel’s final bill that shows per night room rates and any taxes/fees. You will be reimbursed for the lesser of the two (the lesser of the per diem rate vs the hotel’s final bill).

If you use a third-party website, e.g., hotels.com, the receipt they provide must have a detailed breakdown of the nightly rate and taxes. Many of these sites will only provide a grand total which will not suffice for reimbursement. Purchasing flight + hotel packages will also be problematic if your receipt does not show the detailed breakdown of the airfare costs and taxes and the room rates and taxes.

Please note: you will only be reimbursed for a nightly rate up to $400 for domestic lodging (excluding taxes and fees).

Meals for Travel

Alcohol is not an allowable expense and will not be reimbursed.

Personal meals will only be reimbursed for travel with an overnight stay.

Always request an itemized receipt for your meals (including meals charged to your hotel room).

The USC maximum meal limit is $100/day (including tax and gratuity). Itemized receipts are required. Receipts such as credit card slips that just specify the total paid will not be accepted for reimbursement. International meal allowance is based on the State Department's established rate for the city/region.

Meals for Meetings

Alcohol is not an allowable expense and will not be reimbursed.

Always request an itemized receipt for your meals (including meals charged to your hotel room).

Business meeting with meals require the names for all attendees, provide their title and affiliations and specify business reason on the receipt. Names, titles and affiliations are required for ALL guests.

Foreign Currency

Receipts in foreign currencies will be paid according to the historical exchange rate for the date of purchase. If the purchase was made by credit card, you may submit the credit card statement with the corresponding transaction to reimburse the actual charged amount.

Useful Links

- Per Diem Information - https://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per_diem.asp
- USC Travel Policy - https://policy.usc.edu/travel-expenditures/
- Sponsored Project Funded Expense Provisions - https://policy.usc.edu/sponsored-project-funded-expense-provisions-expenditures/
- Business Services - https://businessservices.usc.edu/

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Expenses: Business Purpose & Approvals

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Expenses: Business Purpose & Approvals

For more information, please see: https://policy.usc.edu/expense-business-purpose-and-approvals-expenditures/

All university expenses must be necessary and reasonable in terms of price and purpose. Therefore, each university reimbursement and payment request must be supported by a written business purpose, regardless of the item, type of service, amount or form of payment.

Written business purposes for any expenses charged to a sponsored project must clearly articulate the benefit to the project. For example, the business purpose should relate the expense to a particular research aim.

Additionally, names of the individuals who benefited from the transaction must be included on the payment request, regardless of source of funds, venue location (on or off campus), and form of payment used. In lieu of individual names for groups larger than ten, the approximate number of persons, and the group's identity, along with the business purpose, may be accepted.

Authorized Approver

Regardless of the type of purchase, funding source, amount, or form of payment used, all reimbursement and payment requests must be approved by an authorized approver as specified below:

- **Individual** – The individual who incurred the expense must initiate or approve his/her own reimbursement request
- **Manager** – Request to reimburse an employee must have the approval of that employee's immediate manager
- **Senior Business Officer (SBO)** – An SBO approval will be accepted in lieu of an approval from the individual who incurred the expense when at least one of the following conditions applies to the payee:
    - Is on medical leave
    - Is on a long-term travel status (more than 60 consecutive days)
    - Is a candidate for employment
    - Has terminated his/her employment
- **Department Financial Approver** (generally the SBO but could be delegate) – Must approve reimbursement and payment request
- **Vice President or Dean** – When stated in policy, expenditures which require VP/dean approval can only be approved by a VP/dean. A VP/dean is authorized to delegate their expense approval within their school/department to their most senior level administrator or financial direct report.
- **Additional Approvals** – Where indicated in policy.
- **Co-Approvals** – Any payment and reimbursement request that contains an expense that directly benefits the authorized signer of the account, even if the expense was not incurred by the authorized signer, must have co-approval of the authorized signer's manager.

Authorized Approver Responsibility

Authorized approvers are responsible for establishing and subsequently monitoring department-level procedures to ensure that expenses charged to their accounts are:

- allowed by the funding source being used;
- processed in a timely and accurate manner;
- support by sufficient funds;
- reasonable, necessary and supported by a written business purpose;
- supported by receipts when applicable;
- initiated or approved by the person who incurred the expense;
- approved by the authorized approver if a non-employee incurred the expense;
- co-approved by the authorized approver's supervisor, if the authorized approver benefited from the expense;
- approved, when an exception to the policy is warranted, by a dean or vice-president (those with titles such as associate vice president, associate dean, etc., are not authorized to make an expenditure policy exception);
- approved, where noted expense requires additional scrutiny, by a dean, vice president, senior vice president, or President (approver has unilateral authority to request further approval from a dean, senior vice president, or President, if necessary in the opinion of the approver);
- in compliance with all expense-related university policies; and
- in compliance with all applicable sponsored project policies.

Central Approvals

Reimbursement and payment request are subject to audit and approval by the applicable central administration (i.e., Payment Services or Payroll).

Responsible Office

Business Services: 213- 740-2716
https://businessservices.usc.edu/

Issued By

James M. Staten, Senior Vice President, Finance and Chief Financial Officer University of Southern California

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Pre & Post-Award FAQs

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Pre-Award FAQ's

1. **At what point should a PI contact his/her Research Administrator if he/she is interested in submitting a proposal?**
   The Principal Investigator (PI) should contact his/her Research Administrator as soon as a funding opportunity is identified or a potential sponsor requests an estimate of expenses or a draft budget.

2. **Do Preliminary Proposals/White papers need to be routed through TARA?**
   If the sponsor requires an institutional commitment for the preliminary proposal/white paper, yes, this must route through TARA.

3. **What are the minimum items to be included in TARA for VBA to review and approve?**
   In general, VBA must review solicitation or program announcement, cover page/signature sheet (if applicable), budget, justification, subcontract packet (if applicable), draft Scope of Work or project summary, disclose (if HHS; ex. NIH) .

4. **When routing a TARA proposal edoc, does the budget need to be final when it reaches VBA?**
   Yes, the budget will need to be FINAL and marked complete in order to route in TARA. Please note, any changes made to the budget after VBA has approved requires the proposal to be rerouted for approvals.

5. **What should be done if a PI wishes to include a Subcontract?**
   At the start of putting the proposal together, the PI must provide the Research Administrator the subawardees contact information and any budgetary requirements/parameters. The Research Administrator will then contact the subawardee for additional information needed for the subaward packet.

6. **What should be done if a subawardee has become non-responsive or cannot supply the needed documentation by the time we need to obtain TARA proposal approvals for a submission? Can we go ahead and submit, and then collect the documents later?**
   No. If a subaward is proposed, the packet including a letter of agreeance to participate signed by an authorized official of the entity is required, in order for the subawardee to be included in the proposal.

7. **What is VBA's Cost Sharing Policy?**
   Please refer to the following site:
   https://viterbibusinessaffairs.usc.edu/research-administration/cost-sharing/

8. **How long does it take to route a proposal in TARA, and receive all required approvals?**
   Due to the complexity of some proposals, sponsor deadlines, and the possibility of collaborating institutions' and/or subcontracts' internal deadlines, this time frame can vary greatly. It is extremely important that the PI contact his/her Research Administrator as soon as he/she has decided/committed to submit a proposal. Please note, VBA Research Administration policy is to review all proposals in the order received, and VBA-RA requests a minimum of 7-9 business days for review of the TARA proposal packet.

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<u>Post-Award FAQ's</u>

1. **A PI found out that a proposal he/she submitted a year ago is being funded. So much has changed since then. May he/she give his/her Research Administrator a revised budget for this award set up?**
    a. No, but there are options:
        i. An award **<u>must</u>** be set up as proposed/awarded to remain for compliance and audit purposes. If after set up, it is determined that changes are needed for the project, a Budget Reallocation Request should be submitted through MyViterbi.
        ii. Alternatively, the Research Administrator can submit a revised budget to VBA for review and approval. Once approved, VBA will provide to DCG who will work with the sponsor to obtain the approval. Once approved, SPA should modify the account according to what was approved by the sponsor.

2. **A PI really needs to continue working on his/her Sponsored Project, but additional incremental funding has not yet arrived, and he/she has run out of funds in the account. May he/she put the needed charges on another Sponsored Project temporarily, and move it later once the funding arrives?**
    a. No, but there are options:
        i. Charges posted against a Sponsored Project **<u>must be directly related to that project, and allowable by the terms of the award.</u>** In this scenario, the PI can work with their administrator to send VBA a request for advanced funding of the award. Once approved, the PI can continue to spend against the award without having to wait further for the funds to arrive.
        ii. Alternatively, the PI can post the charges against his/her discretionary account. Once the funds arrive the PI/administrator would need to transfer the funds to the Sponsored Account. Please keep in mind, payroll expense transfers are processed differently from non-payroll expense transfers.

3. **A PI has CoPI's on a Sponsored Project. Once the PI receives the award notice and the account is created, the PI and CoPI's can all get to work, correct?**
    a. No, not yet. There are things that need to happen first, to ensure the entire award is set up, and monitored correctly.
        i. The PI on a Sponsored Project is the lead. The Co-PIs and anyone who may need an account under the PI's master account will not receive a notification like the PI did. The PI must work with his/her administrator to ensure the satellite accounts are set up, and set up as proposed/awarded.
        ii. Also, remember that the PI is obligated to monitor the spending under your award. This includes any satellite accounts. The PI and his/her administrator should be able to view the ASRs of all satellites under the master account.

4. **A PI works for/with/owns a private company that he/she would like to give a subaward to on one of his/her Sponsored Projects. This company has resources not readily available at USC, and would be valuable to the award. So long as the PI can prove the value to the project, adding the company to the project should be fine, correct?**
    a. No, but there are things that need to happen first, to ensure this is allowable.
        i. Compliance
            1. The PI will need to reach out to the Compliance Department to ensure there is no conflict of interest, by filing a disclosure through the USC Disclose system. If Compliance approves they will put together a management plan that the PI will use to do this.
        ii. DCG
            1. Most awards will require sponsor prior approval to move a significant amount of funds to a new subaward, or to add a subaward in general. DCG will need to seek the proper approvals required.

5. **A PI would like to use some of the funds budgeted for tuition toward unexpectedly needed materials and supplies. May the PI ask his/her student(s) to take less units next semester or none at all next summer?**
    a. No.
        i. It is inappropriate to request or advise a student to take less units than they intend. However;
        ii. Consider other ways you can still make the needed purchases.
            1. Use discretionary funds.
            2. If the PI has multiple awards, will the items be used on more than one? If so, split the costs between the awards.
            3. The PI should ask his/her research admin to check into SIS and learn how many units the student is taking. Often times, there is excess tuition that can be moved after calculations are done to know what is needed for the tuition.

6. **A PI has a number of Sponsored Projects. He/She thinks it is easiest to charge all of his/her salary to Sponsored Project A, and then his/her travel and materials to Sponsored Project B. This is OK, correct?**
    a. No.
        i. If PI effort will apply toward multiple awards, traveling and presenting for more than one award, purchasing materials that will be used on more than one award, etc, these charges should be split among all of the awards it can be directly attributed to.

7. **There is a conference just past a PI's home state/country, which is awesome because he/she can stop to then spend time with family there/on the way back. Is the PI able to charge this entire trip to the Sponsored Project?**
    a. No, and there are crucial steps the PI will need to take **<u>prior to purchasing travel</u>**.
        i. The PI will need to work with his/her administrator to:
            1. Look up, print and save estimates of the cost to fly roundtrip from USC directly to the location of the conference. This will need to be submitted with the request for reimbursement/charge to the sponsored project.
            2. Look up, print and save estimates of the cost to fly roundtrip from USC to the place the PI wants to visit for personal reasons. This will need to be submitted with the request for reimbursement/charge to the sponsored project.
            3. The difference between the two, is what the PI should cover from his/her personal/NON USC account.
            4. Please note, the PI is only permitted to charge hotel and meals during the dates for the conference travel.

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8. **A PI has a lot of funds left on a Sponsored Project that ends in the next few months or less. The PI needs new equipment, and believes equipment is allowable on this project. This is OK, correc**t?
    a. Generally speaking this is **<u>not</u>** OK, but there may be parameters in which this could be allowable.
        i. Work with DCG:
            1. To establish if prior approval is required. If it is, DCG will need to request approval from the sponsor, before the PI/administrator makes the purchase(s).
            2. To request a no cost extension from the sponsor, which would give time to make the purchase and use it on the Sponsored Project.
        ii. If it will also be used on other Sponsored Projects, only charge a portion of it to the award. The portion should be reasonable considering the amount of time it will be used on a specific Sponsored Project.
        iii. Ensure there is a strong documented justification of why this item benefits this particular award considering the project is nearing its end.
        iv. If the account closes in 30 days or less, the administrator may need prior approval from Equipment Management.

9. **Is there a difference between a Program Director and a Grants Officer and may a PI contact the Program Director for approvals since they have an established relationship?**
    a. Yes, there is a very important difference between the two roles:
        i. The Program Director who is the technical contact for most Sponsored Projects, usually not have signing authority on behalf of the sponsor, and cannot make contractual changes to the award. The Program Director is in essence, the sponsor's equivalent of a PI.
        ii. The Grants Officer is the person with signing authority on behalf of the sponsor. They can approve items that require sponsor prior approval and make and execute amendments to an award. The Grants Officer is in essence, the sponsor's equivalent of DCG.
    b. No, the PI and research administrator should work with his/her DCG administrator to seek the proper approval from the sponsor. *Please note, many awards require requests for approvals to come directly from the authorized official (DCG), in writing, to the sponsors authorized official. This is why it is imperative to work with DCG to obtain these approvals.

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Teamwork & Collaboration

Updated: 10/2019

Adapted from *Sponsored Research Administration: A Guide to Effective Strategies and Recommended Practices*, April 2015 Update.
For information on this publication see the advertisement on page 11.

Renewed Partnerships:

Where People Come First and the Business of Research Compliance Follows

By Roseann Luongo and Denise Moody

Research administrators are continuously challenged to develop, communicate, manage, and enforce institutional policies and federal regulations with many internal and external constituents to include faculty, researchers, central and department administrators, peer institutional collaborators, sponsors, agencies, and auditors. Most recently, the Uniform Guidance has gone into effect, and research administrators have been collaborating nationwide to ensure that their institutions are fully compliant. At the same time, faculty and researchers are faced with administrative burden as described in the National Science Board report on *Reducing Investigators' Administrative Workload for Federally Funded Research* (2014).

What is the key to achieving research compliance while not overburdening our faculty and fellow administrators? Focus on people and renewing partnerships first; research compliance will follow. We contend that there are five key competencies that a research administrator needs to establish to effectively balance customer service and compliance.

1. Strong working relationships

If trust is the foundation, then strong working relationships are the mortar that help us build effective and productive organizations to achieve the research mission. Strong working relationships, overtime can lead to well-founded external and internal partnership. We invest time for developing strong levels of expertise, through training and other methods. Similarly, we must have the commitment for developing working relationships. Developing and managing their relationships helps institutions build strong internal control systems of compliance. These systems include strong communication, clear roles and responsibilities, collaborative business processes, and effective monitoring procedures.

Strong relationships and trust enhance our customer service ability, facilitate enforcement of policies and procedures, and help us accomplish tasks. They can make having a difficult conversation, about unallowable costs, write-offs, or non-compliance, a little easier. An established relationship with an IRB administrator may help when you need a protocol expedited — you won't only know who to call, but the person on the other end of that call will be more willing to go that extra mile to help you in an urgent situation.

Keys to developing strong working relationships include the following:

Focus on people 1st, business 2nd. It is important to make a personal connection first; once you have established the basis of your relationship, the business naturally follows.

Respect opinions. We may not always see eye to eye with colleagues or administrators, but it is important to try to understand and respect their point of view on issues.

Listen and communicate. Active listening is essential for creating a valued partnership. Effective working relationships also need frequent, open, relevant, and direct communication. Our colleagues and faculty need information, in varied forms and at different times, depending on the situation. We need to be flexible and adapt our communication styles according to the individual and the need at any given time.

2. Trust

Warren Buffet once said, *"Trust is like the air we breathe. When it's present, no one really notices…when it's absent, everyone notices."* Trust is as critical to working relationships as air and breath is to life. Trust is the foundation of our relationship with our sponsors. If sponsors do not trust that our institutions can manage research funds with care and are committed to following through with the work that was proposed, then they will not grant us research funding. The same methodology applies to our relationships as research administrators with Principal Investigators (PIs) and collaborators. If PIs and collaborators did not trust our expertise and commitment to the work, then they would neither rely on us for advice nor invest their time in a relationship with us. The foundation of our relationships with sponsors, PIs, employees, and collaborators is trust and that is as important as the "*air we breathe*".

We can build trust by:

1. building a network of collaboration and teamwork through time and shared experiences.
2. communicating openly, frequently, and honestly.
3. Providing a high-level of customer service through responsiveness and following through.

3. Collaboration/Teamwork

Forming strong working relationships and building trust with your colleagues and faculty, fosters a more collaborative, team-building environment that lends itself to accomplishing the task at-hand. Federal regulation updates often result in an institution's need to develop new or update existing policies, procedures, and/or systems. Often, institutions are provided a short turnaround time for development, communication, training, and implementation in response to a federal mandate. Therefore, people and resources must be rapidly and strategically organized to problem-solve and implement the necessary changes. Policy, procedures, and/or systems updates must be implemented in full collaboration with the key constituents.

Successful teamwork and collaboration will result in better understanding of and a higher compliance rate for adherence to the new regulation. It is the result of a consensus-driven approach rather than a top-down approach and must be formed on the basis of trust. A team leader must be strong and have the ability to steer a team in the right direction while producing timely and effective results. Spreier states that "A leader's hunger to achieve…fuels innovation, productivity, and growth… But taken to an extreme, overachievers command and coerce employees rather than coach and collaborate with them… eroding organizational performance, demolishing trust, and undermining morale" (2006). In other words, collaboration is essential. Heifetz states that while "It's tempting to go it alone when leading a change initiative…It's also foolish. You need to recruit partners, people who can help protect you from attacks and who can point out potentially fatal flaws in your strategy or initiative" (2002).

When new policies, procedures, or systems are developed, ensure that the team is thoroughly represented and that there is sufficient time to allow for feedback from an even wider constituency. If a policy or system is released without vast user input, the likelihood that people will support, understand, and adhere to the requirements is reduced. Alternatively, successful teamwork and wide collaboration foster mutual understanding and support even the most onerous of new federal mandates.

4. Communication

Effective communication is essential for a research administrator, especially when conveying a new policy in response to a federal regulation update, which can often be perceived as onerous or contentious. First, communication within the research administration office is essential, since these "front-liners" are the staff members who must fully understand the policy and/or systems updates, respond to any questions from external constituents, and ensure compliance with the new federal regulations. Internal staff training should focus on the reasons behind the policy (the "Why") in order to clearly communicate and provide an explanation to other administrators and faculty.

Next, communication to faculty, department administrators, and other central offices must be effective and efficient. The media type, timing, and content for communication must all be taken into account when conveying a message such as a release of a new research policy. The communication must reach a broad audience, contain the most relevant points, and be easily understood. How often have you received an email blast at your institution that conveys a new institutional policy, but you stop reading after scrolling once or twice down the page? Not only should a policy be easily understood, but the communication message regarding the policy should be even more succinct. Otherwise, the audience and the message are lost altogether.

5. Customer Service Focus

Successful research administrators view all of their constituents, including sponsors, faculty, administrators, and collaborators as their customer base. Knowing who comprises your customer base, or circle of key stakeholders, is important. This circle could be much broader than initially thought. Placing primary importance on customers' needs helps to develop and sustain positive customer relationships, which is essential when attempting to develop and release a new policy in response to a federal mandate.

A positive customer service attitude requires social skills. Goleman states "Socially skilled people are proficient in managing relationships and building networks and are able to find common ground and build rapport… which leads to effectiveness in leading change, persuasiveness, and expertise in building and leading teams." Social skill is "not just a matter of friendliness but friendliness with a purpose: moving people in the direction you desire" (2004).

Finally, good customer service requires the research administrator to listen first to the needs of the customer. NCURA's Holm and Ventimiglia state "A leader should seek input, must want to listen, and must "actively" listen" (2006/2007). The same traits apply to successfully developing and implementing a new policy or system in response to a federal update. Successful research administration and research compliance oversight involves first listening to the customer needs and then balancing those needs with maintaining compliance with the federal regulations.

Conclusion

Without these five key competencies in place, policy enforcement and research compliance are unachievable. The common theme for all competencies is that people and partnerships come first, and the business side of research administration and compliance then follow naturally. Mutual respect, greater listening skills, and collaborative teamwork can, over time, build effective relationships and trust. In the end, research administrators might (just might!) achieve full compliance through a collegial and even enjoyable process. N

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Mobile (Concur) Reimbursements

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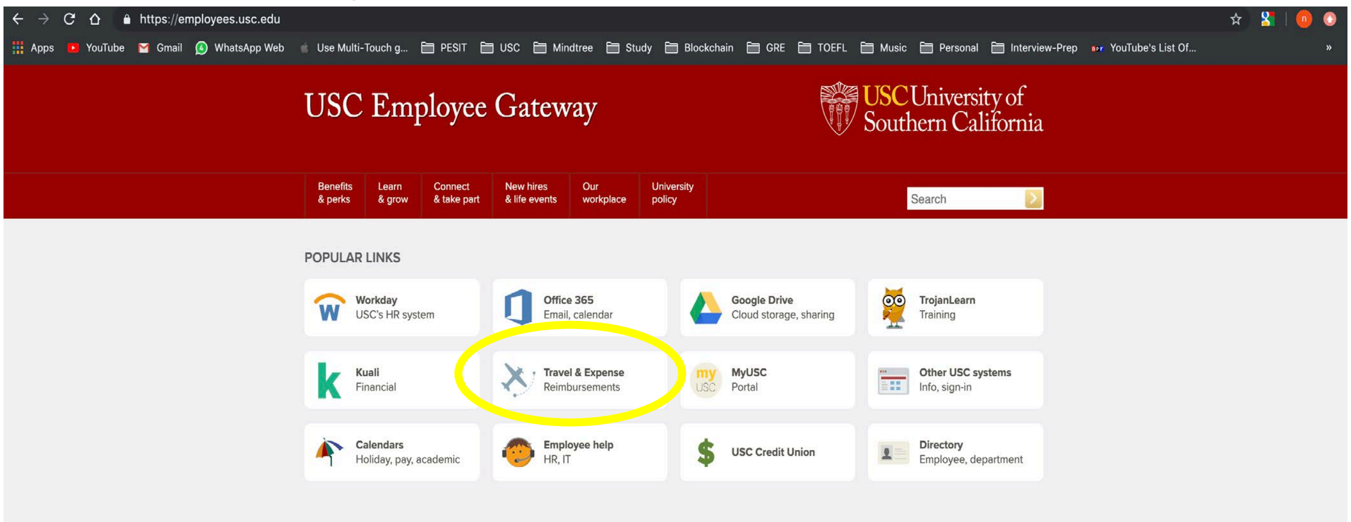
Mobile (Concur) Reimbursements

I. To submit reimbursements via your mobile device, you will need to first set-up your Concur account to allow mobile access:

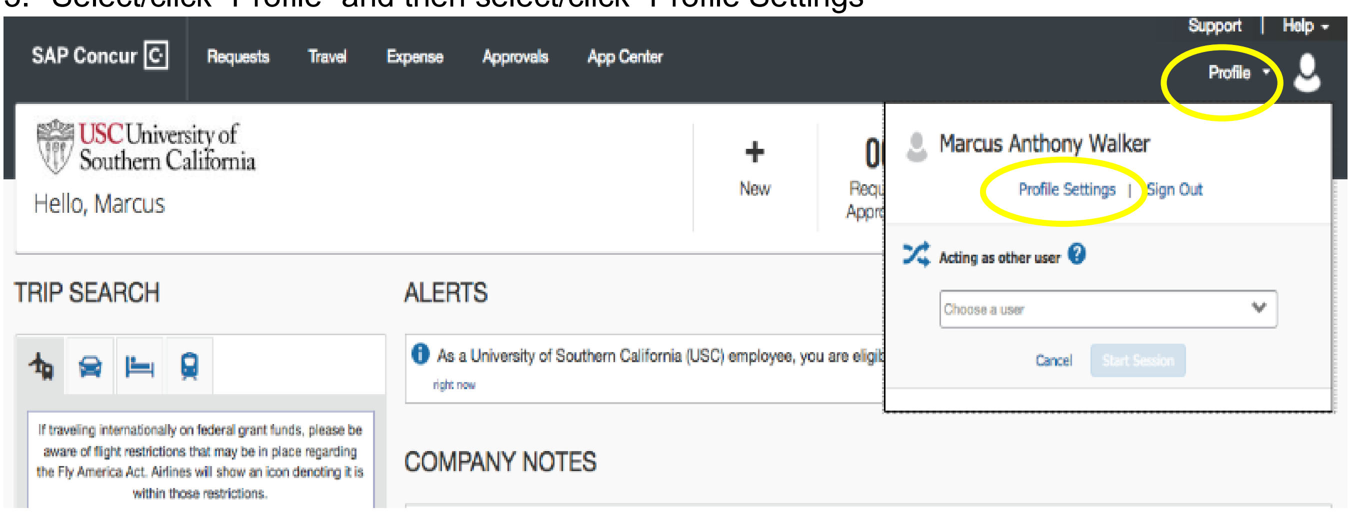
1. Go to https://employees.usc.edu/

2. Click on "Travel & Expense"

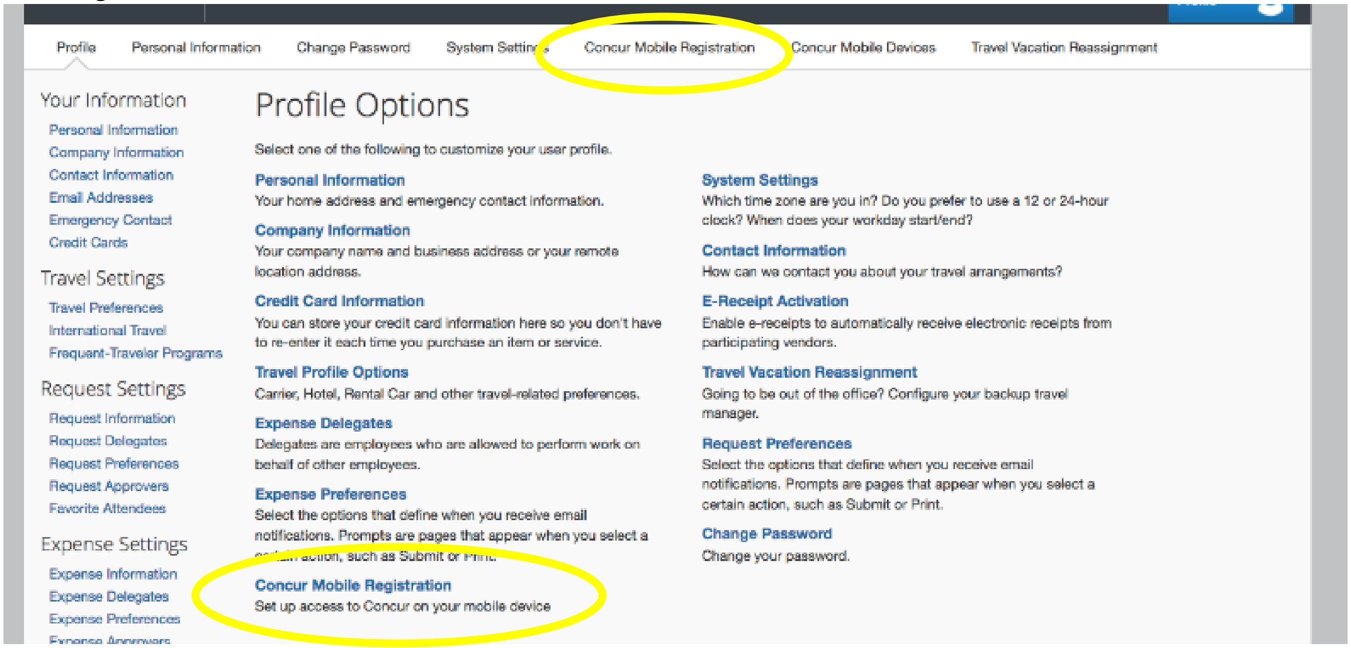


*If you are prompted to sign-in, please enter your USC credentials to log in.

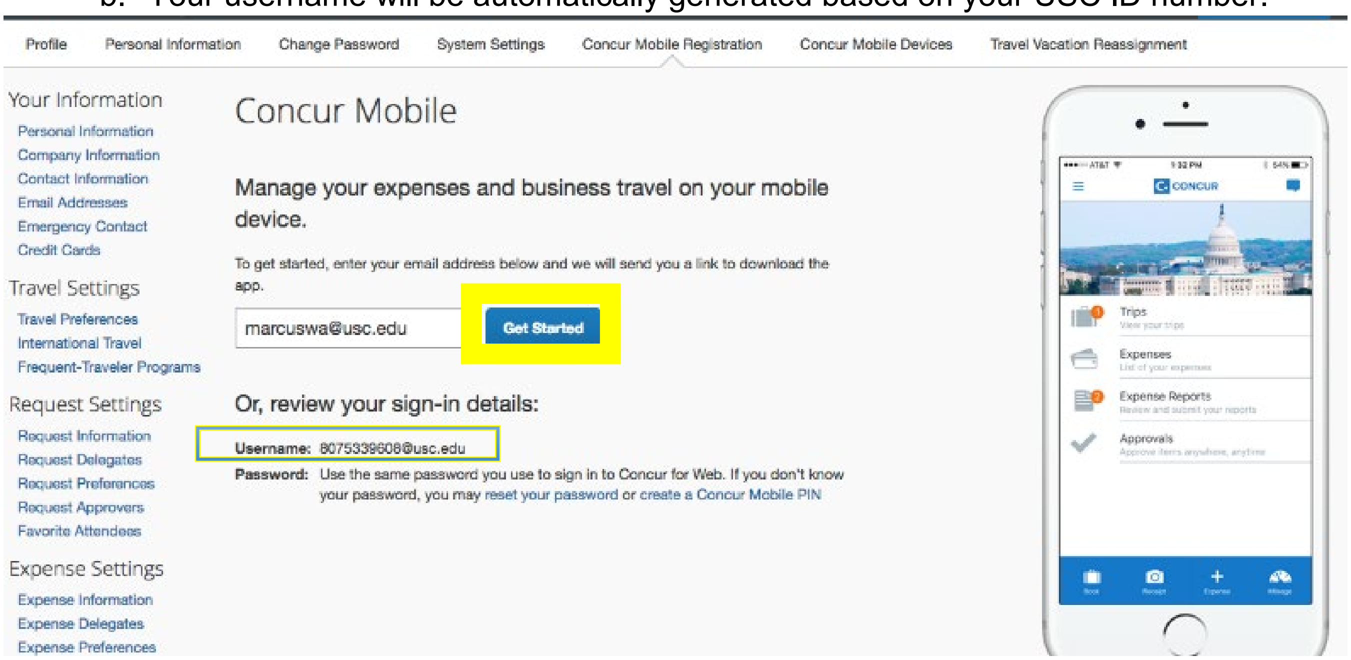
3. Select/click "Profile" and then select/click "Profile Settings"



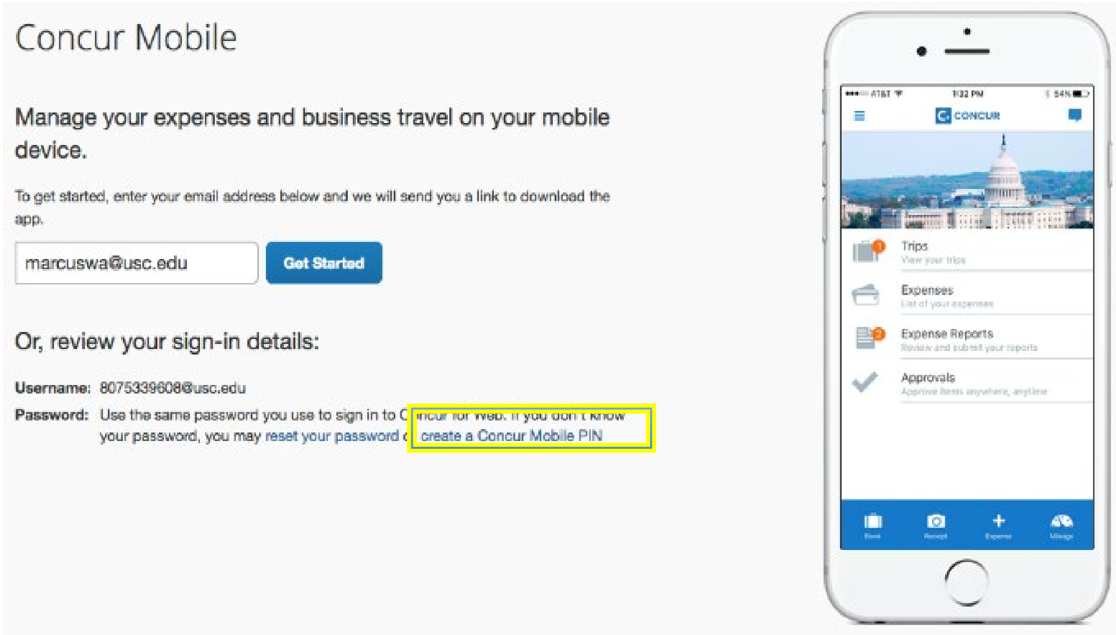
4. On the “Profile Settings” page, select/click one of the two links for “Concur Mobile Registration”



5. Have your mobile device handy, so you can prepare to download the app.
   a. If you receive emails on your mobile device you can download the app by entering your email address then selecting “Get Started” which will send you an email with a link to the app which you should open and download; OR Search your devices app store for “SAP Concur, and download.
   b. Your username will be automatically generated based on your USC ID number.



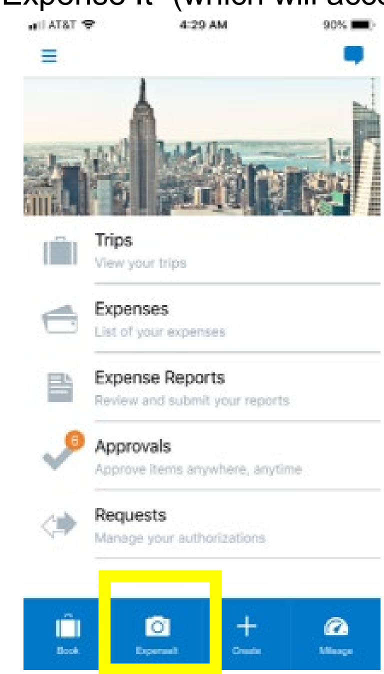
6. Select/click “create a Concur Mobile PIN” and enter then set a pin.



7. Open the Concur app on your mobile device and enter in the username and password/pin. You now have the ability to submit expenses for reimbursement through your mobile device.

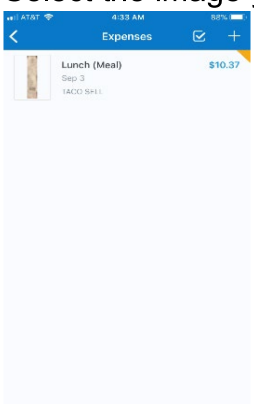
II. Submitting expenses for reimbursement through mobile device

1. In the Concur app, select “Expense It” (which will access your camera).

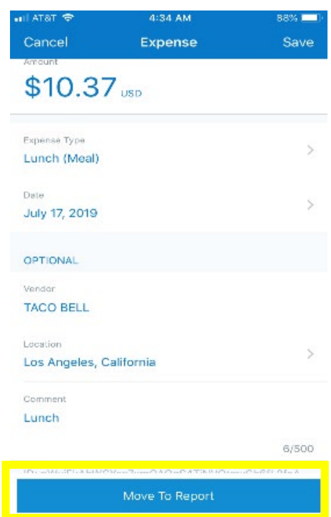


2. Take a clear image of your receipt. The image will be automatically uploaded.

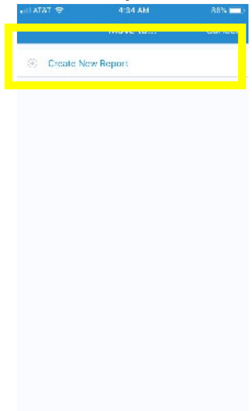
3. Select the image you just uploaded.



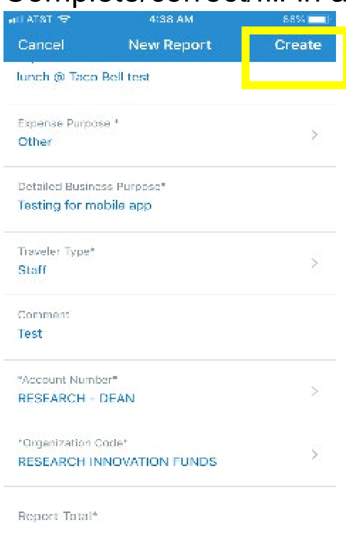
4. Complete/correct/fill-in applicable information for the expense, then select "Move to Report"



5. Select “Create New Report”



6. Complete/correct/fill-in all mandatory fields then select “Create”



7. Once you are sure you have entered in all pertinent information, select “Submit”