



Overview

This resource provides guidance on requesting and managing No-Cost Extensions (NCEs) for sponsored awards. It summarizes required procedures, key deadlines, and the documentation—such as justification letters and budget balances—needed by federal and non-federal sponsors.

No-Cost Extensions

No Cost Extensions (NCEs) may be requested **ONLY FOR PROGRAMMATIC** reasons. Programmatic reasons typically involve situations where the work took longer than initially expected. An extension will generally not be granted solely because money is left over; programmatic benefit must always be justified. However, when requesting an NCE, it is appropriate to state that sufficient funds remain to support the project for the additional period of time.

Requesting a No-Cost Extension

If you require a No-Cost Extension, you must contact your Grants Specialist via email.

Required Attachments/Information

The email request must include the following information and attachments:

1. Award Information: Including the award number, award title, and sponsor name.
2. Justification Letter: This letter must detail:
 - What unexpected event(s) delayed the progress and completion of the project.
 - How the unexpected events were remedied.
 - What progress will occur during the No-Cost Extension period to successfully complete the Scope of Work.
 - How the No-Cost Extension will benefit the award's results.
3. Anticipated Balance: Indicating the anticipated amount of funds remaining for the No-Cost Extension period.
4. Compliance Information (if applicable): Detailing the protocol type (e.g., IRB, IACUC, REHS), number, title, and expiration date.

No-Cost Extension Deadlines and Prior Approval

Sponsors require NCE requests to be submitted prior to the award's current end date. You should notify the Grant Specialist as soon as possible to ensure adequate time for review, internal approval, and adherence to Sponsor-specific guidelines and electronic systems. Always review the award document terms and conditions to determine specific applicability and prior approval requirements.



Award Type Detail	Description and Deadlines
Federal On-time Extension (Prior Approval Exempt)	<p>Some federal sponsors (e.g., NSF, NIH, ARO, AFOSR, NEA, NEH, DOE, DoED) have delegated the authority to the Institution to internally approve a one-time request to extend the project period up to an additional 12 months. Prior approval is required for any subsequent extensions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NIH: Request is due between 0–90 days prior to award expiration. • NSF: Request is due at least 45 days prior to award expiration.
Federal, State, Municipalities, and Not-For-Profit Entities (Prior Approval Required)	<p>Other sponsors (e.g., ONR and State of New Jersey) generally require prior approval for NCE requests. If the sponsor has not delegated approval authority to the Institution, a written prior approval must be obtained directly from the Sponsor.</p>

Note:

NSF requires that NCE requests be submitted via NSF’s electronic system, research.gov. The PI or department administrator should initiate the request and submit it for review. Our Grant Specialist will then review, confirm, approve, and submit the request to NSF.

Notification and Sponsor Refusal

Your Research and Sponsored Programs Grant Specialist will notify the PI of the Sponsor’s decision. The Sponsor always retains the right to refuse an NCE request.

- Examples of reasons a Sponsor might refuse an extension include:
- The request falls beyond the required No-Cost Extension request deadline.
- The funding came from a prior year’s appropriation and cannot legally be extended.
- The requested amount remaining for the extension appears excessive to the Sponsor.
- Programmatic benefit has not been adequately justified (meaning the extension is requested solely because money is left over).

Best Practices

It is advisable to request the No-Cost Extension ahead of time to ensure the orderly accomplishment of project work. It is also crucial to have a contingency plan ready in case the Sponsor does not approve the extension.