

# Computational Biology & Medicine

## Research Allowance Policy

Effective July 1, 2022

### Purpose

The research activities of most students are supported in large part by funds available to the laboratories in which they work. However, students receive an annual research allowance to assure them some fiscal independence. Research allowances may vary each fiscal year and are subject to budgetary approval by the Tri-Institutions. See below for specific information regarding use of research allowance funds. Students must be in good academic standing to receive funding. Note: For students who join a laboratory at The Rockefeller University, see FAQs below for additional information.

### Research Allowance Funding

Previously	Effective July 2022
Year 1: \$2,500	Year 1: \$2,500
Years 2-5: \$1,000	Years 2-5: <b>\$1,500 [NEW]</b>

Unused funds may carry over from Year 1-4 only and no carryover is allowed after Year 5. In year 5, students must submit reimbursement requests no later than June 1.

### Reimbursement Process and Timeline

- Students must submit reimbursement requests from a research allowance fund within 60 days of expenditure; if received after 60 days, the expense(s) are subject to taxation.
- Reimbursements will be approved and processed by the Tri-I office and will be distributed directly through payroll if you are on the Weill Cornell/SKI campuses.

### Examples of Allowable Expenses

NOTE: As a general rule, if you are unsure about reimbursement for any purchase, travel, insurance, etc., please confirm with the Tri-I Office (see also specific information about purchase of computer-related equipment).

- Moving-related expenses (in year 1 and allowed in year 2, if moving due to thesis lab selection)
- Official transcripts and standardized test reports, if applicable (year 1 only)
- **[NEW] A maximum of \$3,500 (over the course of the 5 years of support from the research allowance) is for computer purchases (desktop, laptop, tablet, printer) and/or computer-related expenses (software; computer peripherals; etc.) Purchase of a desktop computer, a laptop and/or a tablet must be made no later than end of year 3. We encourage students to make these purchases through the institution, but it is not mandatory. These purchases require prior approval from the Tri-I office.**
- Books (relevant to thesis research)
- Laboratory supplies
- Subscriptions to scientific journals and membership to professional scientific organizations
- Travel to a science conference. **[NEW] Up to \$1,500 per year** may be used from research allowance for attendance at meetings and conferences. The \$1,500 allowance can be used to cover expenses for meeting/conference registration, travel, room and board. Registration, travel and room charges must be documented with receipts. There is a per diem food allowance per day depending on the location. Please check the Tri-I Office for more information.

- Local travel (e.g. Metrocard) to another campus for required course(s) or certain electives that are not offered within the Tri-Institutions.
- **[NEW] For those students who are residing in campus housing located a distance from the main campus, or reside in off-campus housing, the research allowance may be used to offset part of the monthly public transportation costs. Reimbursement is limited to \$50.00 per month for as long as a student resides in that housing.**
- Vision and dental insurance (funds are also available to offset the costs for insuring a qualifying family member for vision & dental insurance)
- Internet service (if internet is not provided in student housing and/or if living off-campus).

Kathleen Pickering and Margie Mendoza are responsible for the review and approval of all research allowance requests for reimbursement. If you have additional questions, please direct them to Margie Mendoza ([mah2036@med.cornell.edu](mailto:mah2036@med.cornell.edu))

## Frequently Asked Questions & Answers

### 1. How does the research allowance work?

Students typically pay for expenses first, then submit reimbursement. Funds are processed through payroll by direct deposit.

### 2. What is the timeline for submitting reimbursement?

We strongly recommend receipts to be submitted within 60 days of expenditure to avoid tax issues on the reimbursement (this is an IRS regulation). When submitting receipts that are both within the 60-day window and beyond 60 days, 2 separate forms need to be completed with the receipts for each reimbursement request attached.

### 3. What do I need to submit to receive reimbursement?

Students need to complete the reimbursement request form and provide a copy of the receipt and credit card statement showing the charges. Please follow the instructions provided on the form.

### 4. As of July 2022, there is an increase in the research allowance. What does this mean?

Beginning July 2022, students in years 2-5 based at WCGS will receive \$1,500 per year versus \$1,000. This is consistent with the allowance provided to students at The Rockefeller University.

### 5. Effective July 2022, there is a \$3,500 limit to computer-related purchases. What does this mean?

Students now have the flexibility to decide what computer-related purchases they want to make, as long as it falls within the \$3,500 maximum spending limit. Once a student meets this maximum, they can no longer use their funds for computer or computer-related purchases.

<p><b>Example 1:</b> Student buys a \$2500 laptop They will have \$1,000 remaining for other computer-related purchases.</p>	<p><b>Example 2:</b> Student buys a laptop, tablet, printer or computer peripherals totaling \$3500; no additional funds for other computer-related purchases</p>
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- 6. Tri-I encourages you to make your desktop/laptop/tablet purchases through Weill Cornell. How do I go about doing this?**  
First, determine what computer equipment you want to purchase and email Francine Collazo-Espinell at [fcollazo@med.cornell.edu](mailto:fcollazo@med.cornell.edu) to start the process. The advantage of purchasing through WCM or the Cornell Store is that it is tax free (if paid using departmental funding) and students do not have to use their own credit card. Please keep in mind that any electronic equipment purchased through WCM needs to be tagged by ITS, but it remains the personal property of the student.
- 7. Why do I have to buy my desktop/laptop/tablet by Year 3?**  
The funding provided to students is meant to support expenses during their training and Year 3 is the cut off time established by the program to ensure this goal is met.
- 8. How do I find out how much money is in my research allowance?**  
Please email Francine Collazo-Espinell at [fcollazo@med.cornell.edu](mailto:fcollazo@med.cornell.edu)
- 9. Is there a time limit for how long I can access research allowance funds?**  
Students have funding through year 5 in the program. Accounts will close by June 30 in Year 5 and no additional funds are available.
- 10. When will I not be permitted to use my research allowance?**  
Students who are on academic probation or are behind on academic milestones are not eligible to use their research allowance funds until they return to good standing.
- 11. What happens if I decide to leave the program with a terminal master's degree?**  
Students who terminate from the program will no longer have access to their research allowance.
- 12. What happens to research allowance if I join a Rockefeller University (RU) lab?**  
Once a student joins an RU lab, any unspent funds will be transferred, and reimbursement requests will be managed by the RU Dean's office and not the Tri-I Office.

## Reimbursement Request Form

### Instructions

1. Please use pre-tax amounts for expenditures > \$100. For travel, you may include all taxes.
2. Please provide proof of payment (foreign currencies must be converted to US dollars).
3. Please separate out expenses that are within 60 days of the charge and those that are beyond 60 days.
4. For conference reimbursements: Provide a flyer showing conference dates.
5. Please send this form and all supporting documents in one pdf file to: Margie Mendoza, [mah2036@med.cornell.edu](mailto:mah2036@med.cornell.edu) and Francine Collazo-Espinell, [fcollazo@med.cornell.edu](mailto:fcollazo@med.cornell.edu).

<b>Name:</b>
<b>Address:</b>
<b>City, State, Zip Code:</b>
<b>EMAIL address:</b>
<b>Mobile phone:</b>

<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>Requested Reimbursement Amount</b>
<b>Travel</b>			
<b>Academic</b>			
<b>Computer</b>			
<b>Other miscellaneous expenses</b>			
<b>TOTAL</b>			