Tri-Institutional PhD Programs in Chemical Biology and Computational Biology & Medicine

Research Allowance Policy

⚡ QUICK FACTS

It's a yearly allowance, not a lump sum. You're reimbursed only up to the balance you've accrued **($2,500 in Year 1; $1,500 in Years 2–5**).

Funds refresh every **July 1** (fiscal year is July 1-June 30). No borrowing ahead against next year's funds; unused funds carry over but expire at graduation.

⏰ Deadlines for submitting reimbursement requests

- Submit within **60 days of purchase** – after that we can't process it.
- **Mark your calendar:** The last Friday in May is the final deadline for fiscal year purchases. This cutoff ensures enough time to process reimbursements by June, so they count toward the current fiscal year's balance. **Please refrain from making any purchases from June 1–30** to ensure your request is processed on time and charged to the current fiscal year.

Get pre-approval first. Travel, equipment, and software/subscriptions all require a quick email to Francine before you spend.

Spending caps apply. $65 cap per month for public transportation. **$1,500 cap per year** for conference travel; **$3,500** cap total over the life of the allowance for computer/equipment.

📌 **Good standing keeps it active**. A student in good standing means they are not on probation. Any expenses incurred while access is paused is subject to review for reimbursement eligibility. As soon as you're back in good standing, email Francine to confirm whether your paused-period expenses qualify and by when to submit them.

Overview

The research allowance is a benefit offered by the Tri-Institutional Programs in Chemical Biology and Computational Biology & Medicine to support students' academic and professional development. Access to research allowance funds ends for students leaving with a terminal master's degree immediately upon departure. If a student joins a Rockefeller University lab, any unspent balance is transferred at the time the student joins the RU lab, and reimbursements are then managed by the RU Dean's office. For students who leave the program for other reasons, access to the research allowance ends as of the student's official departure date.

Eligible Expenses

Expenses fall into three categories:

✅ Allowed	⚠️ Allowed, with Pre-Approval	🚫 Not Allowed
• Moving expenses¥ • Official transcripts and test reportsΩ • Books for research	• Conference travel § • Software and subscriptionsᵊ • Laptop, iPad, Desktop, Printer, and	• Furniture • Groceries • Utility bills • Personal items • AI subscriptions • Lab supplies

- Professional organization memberships - Internet[±] - Public transportation[∂] - Vision and dental insurance[€]	Computer accessories[β]	Job search travel

Notes

[¥]Moving expenses in Year 1 and Year 2 (as applicable). Note all moving expenses are taxable as they are considered a fringe benefit.
[Ω] Transcripts and test reports in Year 1 only.
[±] Internet fees if not provided in student housing.
[∂] Public transportation at $65/month max to offset commuting expenses, not cover them entirely. Can not be used if already receiving MSK commuter benefit.
[€]Also for vision and dental insurance costs for spouse/domestic partner and dependents.
[§] Conference travel: $1,500 cap per year (see Quick Facts).
[ᵌ]AI subscriptions do not qualify.
[β] The Cornell Store is the preferred vendor, but you may use other vendors if they offer a lower price. This category has a $3,500 cap total over the life of the allowance (see Quick Facts).

Getting Pre-Approval

Anything in the ⚠️ **Allowed, with Pre-Approval** column needs sign-off before you spend. Just email **Francine Collazo-Espinell** (fcollazo@med.cornell.edu) with what you're planning to buy or where you're traveling to and why, and a full cost breakdown. A reply from Francine is required before purchasing. Please allow up to 2 business days for a response. If the purchase is time-sensitive, please note it on your email. International travel additionally requires registering in advance via the Travel Registry.

How to File a Reimbursement Request

- Pre-pay for the expenses yourself.
- Complete the Expense Reimbursement Form (see final page of this document).
- Attach a copy of your receipt and account/credit card statement as proof of payment (foreign currencies must be converted to US dollars). Charges that show as pending are not acceptable.
- For conference reimbursements, also attach a flyer showing the conference dates.
- Use pre-tax amounts for expenditures over $100; for travel, you may include all taxes.
- Submit within the deadlines noted in Quick Facts above (60 days from purchase; last Friday in May is the year-end cutoff).
- Send the completed form and all supporting documents as one PDF file to Francine Collazo-Espinell (fcollazo@med.cornell.edu). A request will be denied if it is missing documentation and students will be asked to resubmit documents.

Questions?

For additional information regarding the use of the research allowance, your account balance, or the reimbursement process, please contact **Francine Collazo-Espinell** (fcollazo@med.cornell.edu).

Expense Reimbursement Form

Student Name:		Expense Period	
CWID:		From:	
		To:	

Business Purpose:

Please use pre-tax amounts for expenditures > $100. For travel, you may include all taxes.
Please provide proof of payment (foreign currencies must be converted to US dollars).
For conference reimbursements: Provide a flyer showing conference dates.

Itemized Expenses

DATE	DESCRIPTION	CATEGORY	COST
		TOTAL REIMBURSEMENT	

Don't forget to attach receipts!

Student Signature Date

Please send this form and all supporting documents in one pdf file to:
Francine Collazo-Espinell, fcollazo@med.cornell.edu.