



Guidepost

Newsletter for Proper Execution of Public Research Funds
Wishing "Guidepost" to be a coordinate axis for the proper execution of public research funds



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Please execute research funds in a well-planned manner as we head toward the end of the academic year.

With the start of the New Year, the end of AY2023 is less than three months away. Many research funds are required to be executed on an academic year basis. Please make sure that your research funds are executed in a well-planned manner as we head toward the end of the academic year.



■ Reimbursement for business trips after winter vacation

Those who plan to travel after the winter vacation are requested to follow the necessary procedures promptly, such as submitting a business trip instruction form prior to your business trip and submitting a business trip report and documentary proof of business trip afterwards.

■ Deadline for submission of invoices, receipts, and other vouchers

Please be reminded that, apart from some research funds, vouchers for the AY2023 budget must be submitted by the date below. If you are compelled to submit these documents past the deadline due to the research to be undertaken, please consult in advance, without fail, with the accounting staff of the Research Office in charge of the budget to be expended.



Deadline for submission of invoices, receipts, and other vouchers: Friday, March 1, 2024

■ Research Budget Management System (BCM: Budget Cycle Management)

(1) Researchers have conducted trial use of the BCM.

At the 7th Committee on Research Administration, we proposed the trial use of the research budget management system (BCM) by researchers, which is to start operation in April, and the trial was conducted in the period between Monday, December 18, 2023 and Sunday, January 14, 2024. Based on the type of research funds and the details of previous years' execution, we asked researchers and research assistants (personal secretaries to faculty members) for their cooperation. Their cooperation was greatly appreciated.

(2) Public comment submission form

The Committee on Research Administration has requested that we provide a framework to gather faculty members' opinions through public comments and other means, and a system to respond thereto. As we receive feedback from faculty members, we may be required to perform system modifications.

Accordingly, we have prepared a public comment submission form exclusively for the BCM, so if you have any comments or requests, please do not hesitate to submit them via the URL below or the QR code at right.

<https://forms.office.com/r/d4FqPsBZ4N>



Cases of misconduct actually occurred in other universities

On the webpage below of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), the outlines of the actual cases of misconduct are disclosed.

https://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/kansa/houkoku/1364929.htm (in Japanese only).

There were seven cases reported in the last academic year: the report below pertains to one of them.



Type of misconduct	Billing fraud (fake gratuities), refluxing of funds
Year of occurrence	AY2010
Amount of research funds improperly spent	102,000 yen
Number of researchers involved	1 person
Motives, background	<p>The faculty member in question entered an unrealistic work record in this work report and filed a fictitious claim against the university. In addition, after the part-time job allowance was transferred to A's account from the university, the faculty member instructed A by e-mail or orally to bring the specified amount of money in cash to the laboratory and collect the money.</p> <p>The said faculty member was in a position to provide substantial research guidance to A, and had a great influence on A's position in the laboratory and his subsequent advancement to the doctoral course. Based on this superiority of the position, the faculty member took advantage of A and committed misconduct related to research funds.</p>
Occurrence factors	<p>Although this case occurred before the revision of the MEXT guidelines made compliance and research ethics education mandatory for each research institution, the faculty member in question seemed to have a correct understanding of the proper and improper expenditures of public research funds as of AY2010. Despite this, he/she engaged in fictitious claims and refluxing while recognizing the fraudulent activities.</p> <p>In addition, while the number of temporary employees such as research assistants and teaching assistants increased as educational and research activities became more active, the university as a whole did not have sufficient procedures in place from hiring to employment contracts, nor did it have centralized management of temporary employees' contract information and work information.</p>

This case is a retroactive misconduct case. As in this case, the investigation of misuse is not limited to the most recent research funds. For this case, there was a report made to the MEXT regarding the misuse, and the case was discovered as a result of the investigation. As mentioned in the occurrence factors above, it has been pointed out that not only the researcher, but also the research institution itself, mismanaged the research funds.

For more information on the University's approach to the proper execution of research funds and various procedures therefor, please refer to the Research Fund Spending Guidebook (2023).

https://www.ritsumeikan.ac.jp/research/member/research_expenses/re02/english.html/

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Research Office at your campus.

Publication of Newsletter

This Newsletter is published quarterly as part of our awareness-raising activities, and is intended to disseminate and deliver information for the proper execution of research funds on a regular basis, such as sharing of misuse cases including those that have occurred at other organizations and the factors that have led to their occurrence, as well as matters pointed out during internal audits and voucher inspections. The next issue is scheduled to be published in March 2024.



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