



**STSCI GRANTS ADMINISTRATION OFFICE
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)**

September, 2001

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STScI GRANTS ADMINISTRATION OFFICE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

Please note that the electronic Grants Management System (GMS) is continuously updated and improved. Therefore, the answers to some of the questions may not be applicable with each new build. Please try to use the answers listed below. However, if they fail please contact the Grants Administration Office either by phone (410)-338-4200 or email grantinfo@stsci.edu. We will be happy to help you.

I. Electronic Grants Management System (GMS) Questions

1. How do I get an account and/or password on the Grants Management System and what is my user name?

If your institution's GMS account has not yet been activated by the STScI Grants Administration Office, please call any staff member listed in the [contact list](#) located on the Grants Administration Office web page: <http://www.stsci.edu/ftp/stsci/grants/>. If your institution's account has been activated, contact someone in your Sponsored Programs/Research office to obtain a password and privileges. The official website for the STScI Electronic Grants Management System is <http://gms.stsci.edu>.

Generally, usernames are the user's last name unless the user has transferred grants from one institution to another. In that case, accounts are setup at both institutions using different usernames. The accounts will only be enabled at the user's current institution. If you cannot access the gms using your last name, please contact the Grants Administration Office either by phone (410) 338-4200 or email grantinfo@stsci.edu. We will be happy to help.

2. It appears that the GMS web page gives requirements for Windows NT/2000 only? I use Windows 95.

Under the heading, **Running GMS on Windows NT/2000**, there is a bullet item for Running on Windows 95/98/ME (unsupported – hints for running anyway). In most cases, GMS will run on Windows 95/98 using the hints provided. In addition, if you have any of these Windows platforms, be sure to read “Known problems” for help.

3. How should I assign Privileges for other users? How is the user type “Administrator” different from the user type “AO Designee”?

If a user needs to have access to information for all grants at an Institution, then assign that user type “AO Designee” (i.e., accounting staff). All levels of

privileges (none, view, prepare, submit) are available under AO Designee user type and can be assigned accordingly. If the user is limited to specific Investigators, then the user type “Administrator”, can be used and the appropriate science staff may be assigned to them using the Assign Staff function. The same privileges are available (none, view, prepare, submit) and should be assigned to an “Administrator” according to their level of responsibility.

4. What information is required in the Budget Narrative?

A narrative must accompany each budget submitted for a Program. Please do not reiterate the science proposal. The purpose of the narrative is not to justify the science, which has already been approved by the TAC and the Director, but to justify the resources requested. The narrative should explain in a few sentences the plan to achieve the science goals in the proposal through the data reduction and analysis. It should describe the plan in a sufficient level of detail to justify the level of effort for which support is being requested. The narrative should highlight any unique or unusual aspects of the reductions and analysis and how these affect the project resources requirements.

All budgeted costs must be reasonable given the amount of data to be analyzed. All non-labor costs (e.g., travel, computer equipment, publication charges, etc.) should be described and justified. Any special charges that are unusual or unique should be described in detail. Please list expected purchases of major science software packages. In addition list the software and hardware developed or obtained from previous HST programs that will be reused. If there is foreign participation on the program, the narrative must also include a discussion of the allocation of effort between U.S. and non-U.S. investigators. Finally, please provide a description of any cost sharing that will be provided for the project. If cost sharing is proposed, it should be auditable.

NOTE: If you are the Program PI, please list the amounts approved for each of your Co-Is in the budget narrative.

5. When entering text in the GMS, can I use symbols, subscripts, and/or superscripts?

The GMS does not support symbols, subscripts, or superscripts within the budget narrative, performance reports, or any other function that allows the free input of text. However, STScI does make the scientific proposal available to the Financial Review Committee (FRC) when it meets to review budgets for each cycle.

The FRC expects each budget narrative to justify the resources requested in the budget. While they do expect to see why you need the resources requested (data reduction and analysis plans), hopefully you will not have to use the various symbols or can write them out if necessary. The purpose of the narrative is not to

justify the science, which has already been approved by the TAC and the Director, but to justify the resources requested.

6. Can I download a file directly into the GMS?

For security reasons, we do not permit grantees to download files into our system. Since our on-line forms do not support a full-screen text editor, we recommend that you prepare your text using your preferred word processor, and then cut and paste the text into the form.

7. Are there any tips that could help when inserting text into the GMS using a UNIX workstation?

- ?? Get the budget narrative (or other text) in final form in an X-window.
- ?? Grab the text you want to paste by highlighting it with the mouse. This should be done page by page if the text is several pages long.
- ?? Click the edit button at the top of your X-window and click on COPY. This copies the highlighted ASCII text into an X-window buffer that is transferable between the X-window editor and the GMS window.
- ?? Make sure the GMS window is open at the appropriate page (budget narrative, performance report, administrative request window) and place the cursor where you want the text to-be-pasted to go.
- ?? Hit the EDIT button at the top left of the GMS window, and click on PASTE. The new text will now be pasted into the GMS window.
- ?? SAVE the results in GMS.

8. How can I cut and paste on my Macintosh?

In order to cut and paste on a MAC, you must use “Command (Apple) C” rather than “Control C”.

9. Is there a TEST GMS?

Not at the present time. We plan to have a test site for users in the near future. Users wanting to become familiar with the system may do so in the operational system. However, the user should not save his/her work. When the user has completed testing, use the cancel button to leave the screen without saving the test work that was just done.

10. When using the GMS, how can I access the GMS Help file, if the “Help” menu is not working?

At the GMS Website <http://gms.stsci.edu> there is a listing of all GMS documentation, including “Help.” By selecting “View the GMS Help file through your browser” you will see the list of topics included in the Help. Click on a topic to get more information. If you cannot find advice for the topic you need, or have

other questions or problems, please contact the Grants Administration Office at (410) 338-4200, or grantinfo@stsci.edu.

11. Does my Sponsored Projects Office receive notice that a document needs to be reviewed and submitted?

Yes. The GMS now has a Save & Notify function. This allows those with the “prepare” privilege to save a document and automatically notify the sponsored programs officials to review and submit a request. When the Save & Notify button is selected, the user will see a form of the following message:

“Request has been saved by STScI.
Any document submitters were notified.”

12. How do I know that a document has only been “saved” and not “submitted?”

If you know that a request document needs to be submitted, but are unsure whether or not it was done, select Retrieve Document from the Proposal/Grant Menu option. Select the Program/Grant you need from one of the drop down list(s). Look for the request type you need from the list of requests (documents) retrieved. Check the status of the request. If the status of the request you need is “submitted,” and the date of submission is what you expected, then your document has been submitted. If you do not see the request listed for the date expected, then it has only been saved. You must then go to the request screen, select the Program/Grant number you need, review the request, and select submit.

13. I filled out my financial report and/or budget, selected submit, but the system comes back with a “null field” error. What am I doing wrong?

On the financial report, as with the budget, if you have a line item on the report, it must contain an amount, even if that amount is \$0.00. Therefore, review your report or budget for blank spaces (i.e. spaces where an amount should be). If there should be an amount in that space (even if \$0.00), fill it in. If you are changing information on a line in the report or budget, select the text/number that needs to be changed and input your change. If the line is not needed or a report is not required, then delete or exclude that line.

When completed, select submit again and insert your password. Depending on which document you submitted, you should receive a message stating that the report was submitted to ST ScI or that it was forwarded to the PI for approval prior to submission to ST ScI.

On the budget, if a line item is not needed on a specific budget tab (example: computer support), then do not add a line. All lines added to the budget by the user must contain an amount (even if \$0.00). When deleting or excluding a line on the budget, be careful not to use the buttons that will delete the entire budget.

14. How can I give the Post-Doc access to his/her program in GMS in order to prepare performance reports, and other documents?

Currently, there is no way for a Post-Doc to directly access his/her program in the GMS. Science Principal Investigators do not have GMS privileges. Only Administrative PIs are given privileges. The workaround is to set up an “Administrator” account in GMS for the Post-Doc and assign “Administrator” privileges. Then assign the “Administrator” to the Administrative PI’s grants. The caution is that ALL of the Administrative PI’s grants are then accessible to the Post-Doc. Please do not attempt to create accounts for Investigators. The Grants Administration Office must create all Investigator accounts.

15. How do I add an account in the GMS for an Investigator?

Accounts are automatically created in the GMS for Investigators who have had approved GO/AR programs in the current cycle or in previous cycles. Oftentimes, the institution is listed incorrectly on the proposal causing the Investigator to be assigned to the wrong institution. If an account was not created, please contact the Grants Administration Office at grantinfo@stsci.edu or call (410) 338-4200 for help. The Grants Administration Office must add all accounts for PIs and Co-Is.

The Institution may create accounts for Administrators and AO Designees. Please do not attempt to create accounts for Investigators.

II. GENERAL GRANT QUESTIONS

1. Who do I contact for additional information about funding, the budget submission, or grant award processes?

Questions may be addressed to a staff member listed on the contact list located on the web site: <http://www.stsci.edu/ftp/stsci/grants/>. In addition you may send email to grantinfo@stsci.edu or call (410) 338-4200. If you are specifically questioning the Director’s Approved amount for a Program, please contact Elyse Wagner (wagner@stsci.edu or phone (410) 338-4201 or Ray Beaser (beaser@stsci.edu or (410) 338-4203.

2. Where can I get additional information on guidelines for the preparation of a GO/AR budget?

Please see the General Grant Provisions 3/00, on the Grants Administration Office website <http://www.stsci.edu/ftp/stsci/grants/>. In addition, information concerning allowable costs may be found in the Call for Proposals for a particular

Cycle at the STScI home web site <http://www.stsci.edu>. Please note that budget items not fully justified in the Budget Narrative section of the budget will affect the total funding allocated for the Program.

3. When is the GO/AR budget deadline?

The deadline for the receipt of the budget for a particular Cycle is normally the same as the Phase II deadline for each General Observer/Archival Research Program. The budget deadlines will be listed on the GMS web page <http://gms.stsci.edu>. For grantees whose accounts have been activated on the STScI electronic Grants Management System (GMS), a detailed budget should be submitted electronically to the Grants Administration Office.

If a GMS account for an institution has not yet been activated, please see Section I above for instructions. If your institution does not have access to the internet, STScI will permit the submission of a paper budget using budget forms GF-97-1, 97-3 which can be requested from the Grants Administration Office. Please call (410) 338-4200 or send email to grantinfo@stsci.edu to request hard copies of the budget form.

4. What is the budget deadline for Hubble Fellows?

Generally, the Hubble Fellows budget deadline is June 30, each year. Please go to <http://www.stsci.edu/stsci/hubblefellow.html> for the current deadline information or contact the Grants Administration Office at (410) 338-4200 or send email to grantinfo@stsci.edu.

5. What is the budget deadline for E/PO Programs?

Please go to <http://cycle-epo.stsci.edu/> for the current deadline or call the Grants Administration Office at (410) 338-4200. You may also send email to grantinfo@stsci.edu.

6. What is the budget deadline for the IDEAS Program?

The deadline for the IDEAS proposals and budgets is generally October 31st. Please go to <http://ideas.stsci.edu> for the current deadline. You may also call the Grants Administration Office at (410) 338-4200 or send email to grantinfo@stsci.edu.

7. What is the budget deadline for any given cycle?

For electronic budget submission, the deadline will always be 5:00 pm LOCAL Institution time (where the Investigator is located) on the date the budget is due. Therefore, if a budget is being submitted from an Investigator in California, his/her budget should be submitted no later than 5:00 p.m. Pacific time.

Please note that if a Co-I on a Program is submitting the budget, the Program PI must approve the amount budgeted by the Co-I using the GMS PI Program Management function. Accordingly, it is recommended that the budgets for Co-Is be submitted prior to the due date to allow sufficient time for the Program PI to approve the funding. Co-I budgets are not submitted officially to ST ScI until the Program PI has approved the Co-I budget.

8. When will funds be approved and awarded for the GO/AR Program?

The ST ScI Financial Review Committee (FRC) will review General Observer (GO) and Archival Researcher (AR) Program budgets in late March or early April. FRC funding recommendations are then forwarded to the STScI Director for approval. Grants are awarded in the April/May time frame.

For General Observer programs (GO), if preparatory funding is requested, it will be awarded in April. With the exception of preparatory awards, grant funds are normally awarded after the first observation is obtained for each Program. If the requested funding is reduced by the STScI, grants will be awarded after the receipt of a revised budget for the PI and Co-Is (if applicable). Please note that funding will be delayed if there are any overdue reports on existing grants. Individual grants will be awarded to the PI and Co-I institutions.

9. Which scientists are eligible or ineligible for funding under the GO/AR Program?

Funding from STScI may be requested by scientists who are U.S. citizens residing in the United States, or abroad if salary and support are being paid by a U.S. institution, and U.S. permanent residents and foreign national scientists working in and funded by U.S. institutions in the United States. No support (salary, travel, equipment, etc.) may be requested or provided to any non-U.S. investigator.

10. Can preparatory funding be awarded?

Yes. If preparatory funding is necessary, Investigators may request up to 25% of the funds approved for each Program. Currently, this amount can be entered in the area labeled "Preparatory Funding" located on the Indirect Cost Tab of the budget. You may have to resize your window to view the data entry area. **Future Change:** A tab labeled Preparatory Funding is under development. Watch for that change on the budget editor screen.

III. SPECIFIC BUDGET QUESTIONS

1. Who should submit the budget?

The budgets may be submitted electronically by the person with the submit privilege at your Institution. Budgets need to be submitted via GMS for each U.S. Investigator who is requesting funds to reduce and analyze HST data for a particular Program. They may be the Program Principal Investigator or a Co-investigator on the Program.

2. Should I mention any cost sharing on the budget?

Cost sharing can be entered in the GMS budget editor under the tab “Indirect Costs”. You may have to resize your screen to view the data entry area. Please note that if cost sharing is proposed, it must be auditable. The cost sharing should also be mentioned in the budget narrative.

3. When preparing a budget, is there a standard “dollars per orbit” figure that is utilized in the evaluation of the budgets?

The variance in the \$/orbit in the GO/AR Program is so large that an average \$/orbit figure is not useful. The funding approved is based on the complexity of the reduction and data analysis, the number of instruments used, the number of exposures/spectra, etc. The FRC does a bottom-up review of each program first determining what the Committee members feel is reasonable and then comparing it to what was requested.

The Committee reads all narratives to determine if there are any special requirements for the analysis that are not obvious from the abstract or the proposal. In addition, the FRC uses the instrument, target and exposure/spectra information to determine the approved funding. We recommend that the PI determines with his/her Co-Is (if applicable) the resources needed to fully reduce, analyze, and publish the results of the data anticipated rather than try to develop a budget based on a specific \$/orbit figure.

4. Why is the Instrument, Target and Exposure information necessary?

All of the above information is critical for the allocation of funds for a GO/AR Program to determine if the resources requested are reasonable for the amount of data to be analyzed. An inadequate budget narrative, which does not provide sufficient justification of the requested funding or fails to provide correct instrument, target and exposure information, may result in a reduced level of support. Please see the instructions on the Budget Narrative for additional information.

5. Why do ARCHIVAL research programs require the submission of target and exposure information?

The Financial Review Committee (FRC), a committee of 10 scientists, meets to review GO/AR Budgets and makes funding recommendations to the ST Sci Director. The FRC needs to know the amount of data being retrieved from the archive in order to appropriately assess the reasonableness of resources being requested.

STScI needs to know the number of scientific images/spectra to be analyzed, the instrument(s) used to obtain the data (i.e. WFPC2, FOC, STIS, etc.), and the number of distinct targets. The PI enters this information into the GMS using the PI Program Management screen found under the Proposal/Grant menu item. By clicking on the flag next to the instrument displayed, a list of all the instruments will be displayed. Please select as many as necessary.

6. Is a revised budget narrative necessary if there is reduced funding?

Yes, but ONLY if there are items included in the revised budget that were not in the budget originally submitted, such as revised travel destinations, or different equipment items being purchased.

7. Are budget narratives necessary for all Investigators on a collaborative Program?

Yes. Each Investigator associated with a GO/AR Program is required to submit a narrative to support and justify the costs listed in their budget. Inadequate justification of budgeted costs may result in a reduction in the level of support for a Program.

8. Is there a required length for the budget narrative?

Please see budget narrative instructions on the budget narrative form in the GMS. The instructions are also on the budget narrative form at following web address: <http://www.stsci.edu/ftp/stsci/grants/grants97.htm>. Select the Cycle 9 budget narrative instructions. They are available in MSWord and Text files. The purpose of the narrative is not to justify the science, which has already been approved by the TAC and the Director, but to justify the resources requested.

9. What period of performance should I use when preparing the budget?

The period of performance should reflect a one-year grant period starting when observations are anticipated. Since that date is often not known at the time the budget is submitted, a date should be listed that is most convenient for your Institution (i.e., at the beginning of a fiscal year). If the Program is approved, you will have the opportunity to revise the budget for the appropriate grant period.

Please note that a two-year grant period will be provided for GO/AR grants. If you feel it is necessary to request funding that exceeds one year, list the quantity as two items, for example: two post docs for 12 months @ 100% instead of one post doc for 24 months @ 100%. Please justify this request in your budget narrative.

10. Is funding for foreign investigators allowable?

No funds may be provided to a foreign investigator. This includes salary, honoraria, other support costs and travel costs. Please see Frequently Asked Section I, Questions 9., for the definition of foreign or non-U.S. investigator.

11. What is the Institutional Identifying Number?

The Institutional Identifying Number refers to your Institution's internal identification number. If you would like the number to appear in the electronic GMS on the grant screen and financial report please be sure to enter it on the initial budget. After that, it will have to be entered using the window on the grant screen. A user must have the "Manage" privilege of the "Proposal/Grant info" area to enter the number using that window.

12. Are costs associated with ground-based observations allowable?

Yes. The total cost of ground-based observations must be a small part of the overall budget and in general should not exceed 5% of total project costs. Such costs must be fully justified.

13. Is a list of current and pending support necessary from all U.S. investigators?

Yes. A list of pending support is required only for the senior personnel receiving salary support. Senior personnel involved with the project not receiving salary support and other funded personnel are not required to submit this section in the GMS. A copy and paste function is available for that screen. You may copy from one budget and paste in another if desired.

14. Will STScI provide increased support for collaborative Programs?

Although STScI encourages collaboration on GO/AR Programs, the costs associated with those Programs must be reasonable. Costs for all Co-Is must be fully justified in relation to their effort on the project. STScI will not support trips to scientific conferences or a significant amount of summer salaries for Co-Is marginally associated with a Program. The Institute will support a team meeting only if fully justified.

- 15. I am the Program Administrative PI. In the past, I entered Co-I amounts in the budget section entitled “Other (and Subcontracts).” Is this still applicable?**

No. Co-I amounts are no longer entered directly on the PI’s budget in the “Other (and Subcontracts)” section of the budget. The PI should list his Co-Is’ approved amounts within the budget narrative. This will assist the Grants Administration Office with verifying and approving the budgeted amounts as they are received, and will help expedite grant award(s) once observations have been received for a Program.

- 16. Based on an estimated 18-month observation period (from first observation until the last observation), I anticipate approximately two years of performance to completely review, analyze, and publish the data. Since the STScI budget is submitted for a 12-month period, how do we budget the costs to complete the second year’s performance?**

Costs should be budgeted for one 12-month period. If it is necessary to request funding that exceeds one year, list the quantity as two items. For example: two post docs for 12 months @ 100% instead of one post doc for 24 months @ 100%. However, the PI should also mention in the budget narrative that the costs budgeted are for the entire period of the program. If the budgeted costs fall under different overhead/indirect or facilities and administrative rates, use separate lines to allow for the input of different rates and allocate the estimated costs accordingly.

IV. GRANT QUESTIONS

- 1. How do I request supplemental funding for a Program?**

The Program Administrative PI should prepare a Special Request in the GMS detailing the reasons for the additional funding, and listing the Co-Is who will be submitting supplemental budgets. A listing, by Investigator, of the anticipated budget amounts will help STScI staff ensure that the Program’s supplemental budget submission is complete. Only one Special Request for the program needs to be submitted.

Each Investigator requesting additional funds must then prepare a supplemental budget. The budget narrative should be specific to each Investigator’s contribution to the Program.

The supplemental proposal will be considered under the competitive peer review process with a recommendation to the Director for approval. The funding, if approved, will be added to the original grant.

2. Will my Co-Investigators receive separate awards?

Yes. STScI awards a separate grant to the PI and each Co-I associated with a GO/AR Program.

3. How do I transfer my GO/AR funding if I move to a different Institution?

If an Investigator changes Institutions prior to the award of the grant, a transfer request should be submitted via the GMS from the former Institution releasing the intended funding. Upon receipt of a budget from the new Institution, the grant will then be awarded to them.

If an Investigator changes Institutions after a grant is awarded, STScI will need a transfer request and a final financial report from the former institution. The new Institution must submit a budget for the remaining funds. Upon receipt of the final financial report from the former institution, the Grants Administration Office will notify the new institution of the amount to be budgeted. Equipment may be transferred to the new Institution with permission from the former Institution.

4. When will my institution receive a payment of grant funds from STScI?

A payment of funds on a STScI grant is made upon the receipt of an electronic quarterly financial report or a payment request. A payment request may be submitted at anytime. For grants under \$100K, an advance payment may be requested for up to a 90-day period. Grants exceeding \$100K may request an advance payment only for a 30-day period.

5. When are quarterly financial reports due?

Quarterly financial reports for institutions with grants totaling under \$100K are due on a calendar quarter basis. STScI allows 30 days after the end of each quarter for those reports to be submitted. Therefore, the due date of all quarterly financial reports is 1/31/XX, 4/30/XX, 7/31/XX, and 10/31/XX. Institutions with grants exceeding \$100K must submit financial reports on a monthly basis.

6. How do I request an extension of the grant period?

STScI provides two years for the reduction and analysis of data and the publication of the results. A one-time automatic extension may be requested using the no-cost extension request in the GMS. Please write in the request area that you are taking this option. If additional time is required after the automatic extension period, another no-cost extension request should be submitted via GMS that includes a brief explanation of the reason(s) an extension is necessary. The request will be reviewed and the appropriate response will be made.

For an extension request of six months or longer, an interim performance report should be submitted along with the request. If interim financial or performance reports are outstanding, grant period extensions, or any administrative action, will not be made until the reports have been submitted to STScI.

7. May I submit a performance report that includes all of my Co-investigators on the Program?

No. Each Investigator must submit his/her own interim and final performance reports. The reports should provide a brief description of the work each Investigator performed on the HST data that was obtained. However, each Investigator may share general performance information by copying and pasting text into their report from a separate text document and then adding their contributions to the project.

8. Can I add a scientific Co-investigator to the Program?

Yes. Requests to add an investigator to an approved Proposal should be sent to the Dr. Duccio Macchetto (Macchetto@stsci.edu) for approval with a copy to the Grants Administration Office (grantinfo@stsci.edu) and the PC for your Program, (see STScI web page for PC's name assigned to your Program). The request should indicate the reason(s) for including the individual in the Program, their area of expertise and their contribution to the research. Please note that the above is different from an Administrative PI who may be designated by the institution to administer a grant in the case the Science PI being a Post Doc or in the absence of the PI because of a transfer or a periodic absence. Upon approval from Dr. Macchetto, the Grants Administration Office will add the investigator to your Program. Please do not attempt to add the investigator yourself.

9. Is it necessary to submit a quarterly financial report listing zero expenditures if none were incurred during the preceding quarter?

Yes, even if no expenditures were incurred on a grant, a zero dollar (\$0.00) amount should be entered on the quarterly report template and submitted to STScI. The submission of this report satisfies the quarterly financial reporting requirement for the grant.