



## NSF's Critical Dates Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. How will the National Science Foundation's (NSF) new financial system, iTRAK, impact Research.gov's Award Cash Management Service (ACM\$)?

There will be no changes to the ACM\$ payment request processes due to the implementation of iTRAK, however users will see a change to the amendments and splits data on the ACM\$ Award Details page. When NSF converts to the new financial system, historical data dating back 15 months from October 2014 will be summarized at the split level for all open awards. Historical data and transaction level detail will be available through your Grantee Cash Management Section (GCMS) Accountant.

### 2. When is the last day I can draw funds through ACM\$?

In preparation for the implementation of iTRAK, ACM\$ will be unavailable beginning September 18 at 8:00 p.m. EDT through October 13, 11:59 p.m. Awardee organizations will NOT have access to the ACM\$ payment process during this transition period. This outage will allow NSF to finalize payments, reconcile its general ledger accounts, and transfer historical data from the old accounting system to the new system. ACM\$ will be back online beginning October 14, 2014.

NSF is requesting that beginning September 1st and continuing through September 18th, awardees enter a comment on the ACM\$ transaction summary page in the Internal Comments field for all payment transactions submitted to NSF.

- For all payment transactions covering expenditures through September 30th, awardees must enter a comment on the ACM\$ transaction summary page in the Internal Comments field stating that "This request is to cover expenses for the period through September 30."
- For all payment transactions covering expenditures for October 1st to the 13th, all awardees must enter a comment on the ACM\$ transaction summary page in the Internal Comments field stating that "This request is to cover estimated expenses for the period of October 1-13."

### 3. How and when will I get instructions on payment requests for anticipated expenditures to be incurred during the transition period?

Your GCMS Accountant will be sending instructions by email and conducting webinars throughout the summer. Written instructions will also be available on the Research.gov ACM\$ Information Page.

### 4. Will there be a number to call if we encounter problems during and after the transition period?

If an awardee encounters a financial emergency, they should immediately contact their GCMS Accountant listed at <http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dfm/cmeab.jsp>. If you are unable to contact your GCMS accountant, please call the NSF Help Desk at 800-673-6188.

## 5. Is there a penalty for over-estimating the amount of funds we will need from mid-September to mid-October?

There will be no penalty for over-estimating funds needed during the period ACM\$ is off line. However, if an awardee discovers they have overestimated and that they will not be expending the funds shortly after ACM\$ becomes available again, then the awardee should return the excess funds to NSF.

## 6. Will I have to keep additional records or need additional approvals to request funds?

Awardees will not be required to seek additional approvals or keep additional records.

## 7. How can I amend my estimated payments requested to cover the transition period after September 18?

If an estimated payments request needs to be amended, the awardee will have to wait until ACM\$ is back online to submit adjustments. Adjustments to open awards can be completed on the ACM\$ payments screen. Adjustments to financially closed awards can be entered on the ACM\$ adjustments screen.

## 8. Why do I have to register my financial information with SAM.GOV?

All NSF awardees must maintain an active System for Award Management (SAM.GOV) registration as NSF will begin making payments using SAM banking information beginning October 14, 2014. Additionally, iTRAK will not make payments to any awardee with an expired or invalid SAM registration.

## 9. Why is my award listed as cancelling in ACM\$ and why did I get a canceling email from my GCMS Accountant?

NSF appropriations must comply with (§1405(a) of Public Law 101-510) requiring all Federal agencies to close fixed year appropriation accounts and cancel any remaining balances by September 30th of the 5th year after the period of availability. For most NSF appropriations, the period of availability is a two-fiscal year period, not necessarily 24 months. For Fiscal Year 2014 this means that any unspent appropriations from FY 2008 (October 1, 2007 – September 30, 2008) will be canceled by September 30, 2014.

Awardees must complete their final cash draws for canceling awards by September 18th at 8:00 p.m. EDT as noted in question #2 above.

## 10. Why is my award listed as cancelling in ACM\$ and why did I get a canceling email from my GCMS Accountant?

For Fiscal Year 2014, only the part of an award that was funded with FY 2008 appropriation will be canceled. Undrawn funds under this appropriation will be unavailable for expenditures, obligations or payment request after September 18 due to the transition period noted in question #2 above.

For example, a recipient has an award with appropriations in FY 2008, FY 2010, and FY 2013. September 30, 2014, marks the 5th year after the FY 2008 appropriation's two fiscal year period of availability, whereupon FY 2008-appropriated funds are canceled. The 2010 and 2013 funds will still be available. The FY 2010 funds will cancel by September 30, 2016, and the FY 2013 will cancel by September 30, 2019. A good way to remember it is that the 5th year after the two fiscal year period of availability is the same as saying the 6th year after the fiscal year of appropriation.

Date of Appropriation	Year of Appropriation	Period of Availability	Cancellation of Funds by
12/01/2007	FY 2008	12/01/2007 - 09/30/2009	09/30/2014
10/01/2009	FY 2010	10/01/2009 - 09/30/2011	09/30/2016
02/01/2013	FY 2013	02/01/2013 - 09/30/2014	09/30/2019

### 11. Will I still have 90 days to submit final cash draws for awards with canceling appropriations?

No, you will not. Awardees must complete their final cash draws for canceling awards by September 18th at 8:00 p.m. EDT as noted in question #2 above.

Usually, an institution is allowed ninety (90) days to complete final financial activity prior to the award financial closing. This means that an institution has up to ninety days to correct errors, post charges that were incurred before the end date, and address other close-out requirements, such as final project reports. All payment activity must be completed by September 18, 2014, for awards whose appropriations are canceling. Any remaining funds for the award after that date will be de-obligated and returned to the Department of Treasury.

### 12. I have an award that was PI transferred to our institution about a year ago. I think it has fiscal year 2008 appropriations. Will this award still be canceled?

Yes, it will. If the original awardee institution had funds appropriated for the award in FY 2008, those funds, even though transferred to your institution, would still be under that year's appropriation and the funds will be canceled by September 30, 2014. The payment rules also apply whereby awardees must complete their final cash draws for canceling awards by September 18th at 8:00 p.m. EDT as noted in question #2 above.

### 13. How do I know which awards will have their appropriations canceled this year?

To determine which awards will have their appropriations canceled this year, look for a Red Flag next to the award number on the ACM\$ payment screen. Also, the GCMS accountants will notify all institutions that have awards with funds to be canceled each fiscal year.

Below is an example of an award that has FY 2008 appropriation. The "From" date will show the original appropriation date (MM/YY).

From	To	Total Federal Funds Authorized
09/08	08/14	\$200,000.00

### 14. Can I make adjustments to my award expenses after it financially closes?

Once an award has been financially closed, any changes to the final expenditure amount must be reported in the Adjustments tab of ACM\$. Awardees can enter upward adjustments to closed awards within 15 months after the financial close date and can enter downward adjustments until the appropriations funding is canceled. All adjustments must be at least +/- \$1.00.

