

LASTEM CEA COST REPORT GUIDANCE

To ensure consistency in reporting across the LASTEM Regional STEM Centers and ensure processing is as efficient as possible, we have created a cost report packet with required templates and instructions to guide all centers in submission of required Cooperative Endeavor Agreement (CEA) cost reports during FY 2024-25. This will assist Centers and their fiscal agents in organizing and checking packets and documentation prior to submission as well as assist Board of Regents staff in reviewing submissions, resolving any issues, and processing payments as quickly as possible.

Note that the process outlined below is mandatory for all Contracting Parties/Entities as a component of the CEA. Regents will not hold Cost Report packets for payment past the end of the following period. Any reimbursement denied due to inadequate documentation may not be carried forward to another period.

General Requirements:

A cost report presents all allowable and budgeted expenditures during the period to be reimbursed in accordance with the terms and budget of the CEA. All items contained in the Center packet must be reviewed for allowability and relevance to LASTEM activities as presented in the CEA work plan. An expense can be allowable within state procurement, travel, and other guidelines, but be disallowed due to lack of appropriate, complete documentation and/or lack of alignment with activities and goals outlined in the CEA work plan. It is essential, therefore, for the cost report to present clearly all expenses incurred in their proper context.

Each item included for reimbursement must address the “who, what, where, when, and why” – of each expenditure:

- Who was paid (or paid for, such as when costs like meals are paid by the Center on behalf of attendees at an event)?
- What item or service was purchased?
- If an event or travel, where were services provided? If equipment or supplies, where will items be used/housed?
- When was the item received?
- Why was the expenditure made in support of LASTEM activities?

If expenditures for a single activity cross multiple budget categories, each piece of documentation must be annotated to capture the information above or reference the information provided in another expenditure category. Under no circumstances should documentation be provided without appropriate context.

The Center Support Form is required to process Cost Reports. Cost Reports submitted without the completed Center Support form will be held for processing until the form is received. Per the RFA, the Center’s host entity must provide support totaling not less than 60% of the amount provided by the Board of Regents.

LASTEM staff will provide video training related to Cost Report requirements and process. All Center Directors and fiscal staff assigned to LASTEM are required to complete this training prior to submission of the first period Cost Report. The video will be posted and Centers notified of its availability by August 1, 2024.

Required Documents (submitted in the order listed):

- 1) Completed Cost Report Form (template & completion instructions attached)
- 2) First Period Only: Certification of Completion of Mandatory Cost Report Training by Center Director and Fiscal Staff Assigned to LASTEM
- 3) Invoice
 - a. Each Invoice must include:
 - Completion on the entity's letterhead
 - Fiscal contact and "remit to" details
 - Invoice number, date, billed amount, and CEA number
 - Brief description of the services being invoiced
 - Signature of an authorized fiscal agent for entity hosting the Center
 - List the Louisiana Board of Regents as the Bill-To entity
- 4) Summary of Period Expenditures (template & completion instructions attached) – include associated meetings/events, participating personnel, and relevant dates
- 5) Supporting Documentation
 - a. Receipts and other relevant documentation necessary for reimbursement with cover sheets between each budget category and identifying information on each item to allow BoR staff to link to the appropriate budget category and budget narrative description.
 - b. This section must follow the budget categories found in the cost report and Comprehensive Budget incorporated as Appendix B of the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement (CEA). Note that items not included in the Comprehensive Budget, as amended if appropriate, will not be reimbursed. (Further instructions for organizing and compiling supporting documents are attached.)

If you have any questions related to cost reports and/or supporting documentation, contact the LASTEM team at lastemsupport@laregents.edu or (225) 342-4253.

Instructions for Completing the Cost Report and Center's Support Templates

1) Add the entity name, period number, period date range, and CEA number to the template header.

2) Complete the table:

Column 1 – “Expense Category”

- These categories must match the Comprehensive Budget in Appendix B of the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement (CEA)

Column 2 – “Total Budgeted Amount”

- These numbers must match the numbers in the Comprehensive Budget in Appendix B of the CEA, as amended if applicable.
- If a budget re-alignment has been executed via an amendment to the CEA, this column must be updated with the new budgeted amounts prior to submission

Column 3 – “Total Prior Period(s) Expenditures”

- The total amount of expenditures up to the current period

Column 4 – “Current Period Expenditures”

- All current period expenditures must be included in this column

Column 5 – “Balance Remaining”

- A calculation of Total Budgeted Amount minus Total Prior Period Expenditures minus Current Period Expenditures

3) Check the box indicating all items have been received and service has been rendered.

4) Secure the signature of the host entity's authorized fiscal representative.

Instructions for Completing the Summary of Period Expenditures Template

1) Prior to submission to BoR, organize all documentation by budget category and order to align with the Summary of Period Expenditures Template (i.e., personnel documentation, followed by fringe, etc.)

2) On the Summary of Period Expenditures Template, list each expense for the current period under the appropriate budget category, using one line per expense under the “Category” column

a. For Personnel & Fringe, include position title as well as individual's name

- Example: 1) John Doe, Regional Director \$3,000
2) Jane Doe, Coordinator \$1,500

b. For all other budget category expenses, include name of company/store/etc. and the

purpose (in accordance with Appendix B) to which the expense relates

- Example: 1) Walmart (office supplies: notepads, pens, etc.) \$52.00
- 2) Apple (Lab supplies: Chromebooks) \$5,743.68
- 3) Amazon (Event supplies: STEM kits) \$2,792.55

- 3) List the amount of each line-item cost under the “Costs” column and total at the bottom of each budget category
- 4) Once all budget categories are completed, total all expenses under “Total Expenditures for This Period”

Instructions for Supporting Documentation

- 1) All expenses must be supported with proper documentation. Acceptable supporting documentation includes but is not limited to the types listed below. Documentation for any expenditure must be sufficient to show all aspects of the transaction (e.g., a professional services reimbursement must, at a minimum, document the services agreement, dates of service, deliverables required, deliverables received and date received, and payment):

- Payroll documents: Copy of pay stub or payroll report showing gross pay, employer benefits and pay period
- Purchase documents: Purchase order and/or purchase requisition, proof of receipt (receipts or packing slips), copy of invoice and proof of payment (copy of check, direct deposit advice, credit card statement, or accounting report)
- Catering documents: Purchase order and/or purchase requisition, agenda, sign-in sheets, invoice, and proof of payment (copy of check, direct deposit advice, credit card statement, or accounting report).

Note: Sign-in sheets are required for all events in which meals and/or refreshments are provided. Each individual sheet must include the following information: a header including the name, date, time, and location of the event and columns to capture the full name, title, and signature of each attendee. If attendees are minor children, their last names may be redacted provided their title is listed as “minor student” and a note is included indicating the reason for the redaction.

- Travel documents: Travel authorization, agenda of offsite meeting/event, travel expense report, receipts, and proof of payment (copy of check, direct deposit advice, credit card statement, or accounting report). Travel expenses can be reimbursed only in accordance with the Louisiana State Travel Guide (PPM 49) and Board of Regents Travel Policies. Single-day travel, per PPM 49, does not entitle the traveler to reimbursement for any expenses except transportation. For an overnight stay to be reimbursed, the location of the meeting(s)/event must be at least 250 miles from the traveler’s domicile (office or home, whichever is nearest to the destination) or must take place over multiple days. Documentation, including agendas, calendar holds, lists of attendees, and purpose of meetings, is required to demonstrate eligibility of

an overnight stay when multiple meetings/events over multiple days are held in a location requiring travel from the domicile.

- Professional services documents: Copy of contract/services agreement, documentation showing all deliverables have been provided and accepted, and proof of payment (copy of check, direct deposit advice, or accounting report).
- Participant support documents: Participant report/stipend form and proof of payment (copy of check, direct deposit advice, credit card statement, or accounting report)

- 2) Goods and services must be paid for and received in order to be reimbursed. Screenshots of online shopping carts cannot be accepted as documentation in any category, as they do not show an order was placed, a purchase was received by your facility, or the items were paid for.
- 3) Each individual supporting document must be marked to identify the applicable budget category, in Appendix B of the CEA, and the project activity (e.g., the event, purchase, trip, etc.) to which the documentation applies. Each budget category with its supporting documentation must be separated by cover sheets. Budget categories must match the Comprehensive Budget in Appendix B.