

Considerations for Prolific and mTurk Participant Payments

The information below describes documentation and approvals that may be involved when using Prolific or mTurk for participant recruitment and compensation. Departments may have different internal procedures for reviewing, approving, and processing these requests. Researchers should work with their departmental fiscal personnel to determine the appropriate process for their unit.

Researchers planning to use Prolific or mTurk for participant recruitment and compensation should begin the approval and payment request process well in advance of their study timeline. Processing and review may take several weeks, and last-minute requests may not be accommodated. Researchers are encouraged to incorporate these administrative timelines into project planning.

General Advice

- Consult with your department's fiscal tech before initiating any Prolific- or mTurk-related activity to ensure all requirements are understood and funding arrangements are in place.
- In some cases, the simplest approach may be for the researcher to pay study costs directly and request reimbursement through established university procedures, subject to departmental approval.
- Submit all required documentation as a complete package whenever possible to avoid processing delays.
- Departments should establish a method for organizing and retaining all supporting documentation related to the request.
- The department fiscal tech should review materials for completeness before submitting them to the proper departments.

Documentation That May Be Requested

Departmental Coordination

Prior to incurring expenses, researchers (faculty, staff, or students, as applicable) should consult their department regarding any approvals that may be required before expenses are incurred, such as approval from the Academic Unit Head (AUH) or their designee.

Research Documentation

The researcher may provide the following materials to the department's fiscal tech for review and submission, such as:

Project Description

If providing, the project description should be written for an audience without specialized expertise in the research area and should include:

- **Introduction**
 - Overview of the research topic
 - Relevant background information
 - Purpose and significance of the project
- **Methods**
 - General description of the study design and procedures
 - Sufficient detail to understand the research activities without extensive technical information
- **Expected Outcomes**
 - Anticipated results
 - Potential implications and impact of the project
- **Itemized Budget**
 - Detailed explanation of planned expenditures
 - Participant compensation rates and calculations
 - Any additional study-related costs, with justification as appropriate

Human Subjects Documentation (if applicable)

- Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval letter
- Any additional IRB documentation required by the institution or department

Cost Information

- Itemized estimate, quote, invoice, or summary of anticipated charges, as applicable

Funding and Payment Requests

Depending on departmental procedures and funding arrangements, a funding request, advance funding form, or similar documentation may be needed. Such requests typically include:

- Amount paid per participant or task
- Estimated number of participants and/or tasks
- Total anticipated study cost
- Funding source

Accounting Voucher Submission

The department must submit an accounting voucher, along with all required supporting documentation. The department's fiscal tech may prepare and submit this document, provided all necessary information has been supplied.

Researcher Justification Letter

The researcher requesting reimbursement or payment through Prolific or mTurk may provide a letter of justification for the payment to be submitted.

Departmental Funding Approval

The AUH or authorized authority representative should provide written approval of the expenditure, including:

- The total amount being funded or reimbursed
- The funding source or budget account to be charged
- Identification of Prolific or mTurk as the payment platform
- The name of the researcher associated with the request

Fiscal Review

After receiving all required materials, the departmental fiscal tech should review the documentation for completeness and compliance with institutional requirements. If all materials are complete, the fiscal representative will submit all documentation to the proper departments.

Communication and Follow-Up

The departmental fiscal tech should communicate with the researcher throughout the process, including:

- Notifying the researcher if additional information, corrections, or revisions are required
- Confirming when the request has been submitted for processing
- Informing the researcher when the reimbursement or payment request has been approved and processed, as applicable