

Guidelines for Purchases and Requesting Reimbursement for Materials/Supplies Needed for Your Project

This document is long but is broken down into topics that provide information and instructions on how to (but not limited to):

1. Access purchasing and reimbursement forms needed throughout the semester. Click [here](#).
2. Team budget - \$1250.00
3. Two options to purchase materials/supplies for your project to include software:
 - Submit a Material Request Form to Cindy Winkelblech to process your request.
 - **Will be accepted on Tuesdays and Thursdays ONLY until 3pm**
 - Team Members (who completed the Onboarding) can make purchases on their own.
4. [PSU contracted suppliers](#) or [PSU General Stores](#) must be used for purchases made by Cindy. See Page 2.
 - Use DigiKey Template for orders with DigiKey (must also include the MRF with the DigiKey Template)
5. [Popular vendor list](#) recommended for team members making the purchase.
6. Pick-up and location of packages – 4th floor EDIB – Learning Factory Lockers
7. Lowes, Home Depot, and Amazon (Amazon is NOT a PSU supplier)
8. Process to request reimbursement
9. Returning items to the supplier
10. LEOS Accounts
11. Utilizing the Learning Factory Shop machines/materials for your project
12. Software Purchases/File Sharing Websites
13. Hiring subcontractors
14. Focus groups
15. Site visits to sponsors (travel arrangements and reimbursement process)
16. List of non-reimbursable or unallowable purchases
17. Purchases in the Last Two Weeks of the Semester
18. Prototype Ownership and Certain Materials – Who can have them? PSU [Policy BS07](#) Authority and Procurement
19. Learning Factory Address in EDIB (Provide to sponsors who want to send something to your team.)

Team Budget

- Teams are allotted \$1250 for purchase of materials and supplies **required** for your project **THIS SEMESTER**.
- Your budget can be used for travel to site visits to your sponsor.
- Each team must designate a budget person (Onboarding not required) to keep track of the team's expenses.
- The budget person cannot submit reimbursement requests on behalf of a teammate.
- Anyone on the team who completed the Onboarding requirement can make purchases and request reimbursement. **ONLY YOU CAN REQUEST YOUR OWN REIMBURSEMENTS.**

Purchases of Materials/Supplies

There are two ways to purchase materials and supplies.

1. Ask LF Staff (Cindy) to make purchases using [PSU Suppliers](#). Refer to information on using *PSU Contracted Suppliers and Popular Vendor List* on Page 2. Amazon is not a PSU contracted supplier. Refer to Amazon section below.
 - a. **Purchases thru Cindy can be made on Tuesdays and Thursdays ONLY and accepted until 3pm.**
2. Anyone on the team who is in the United States can process (any day/time) and pay for purchases and request reimbursement. Students may use any supplier they want. *****IMPORTANT*** STUDENTS WILL NOT BE REIMBURSED FOR TAXES AND SHIPPING ON PURCHASES THEY MAKE THEMSELVES.**

Purchases Made by Cindy Winkelblech

- You will submit a Material Request Form (instructions in next section)
- You must use a [PSU Supplier](#). AMAZON IS NOT A PSU SUPPLIER. REFER TO AMAZON SECTION BELOW. You can also use PSU's very own [General Stores](#)/Office Depot (instructions below).
- If you want to use a non-PSU supplier, you must:

- Send an email to your instructor explaining your attempts to find your items on a PSU supplier, which supplier, and justify why you need to use another supplier. Your faculty member should reply to you (not me) either approving, denying, or asking for additional information or providing alternatives. When you are ready to submit an MRF for a non-PSU supplier, you will include the string of emails at that time.
- Cindy **will not** place orders with **any vendor outside of the US and Canada** even if the warehouse is in the US. **Ebay is acceptable if it is a 'buy now'** and the supplier is in the US or Canada.
- Before submitting your request to Cindy, make sure your items are in stock and the vendor is in operation. Some companies are out-of-stock and are back-ordered for weeks. When in doubt, call the company. Again, refer to the [contracted supplier list](#). With these suppliers, Cindy gets cheaper pricing than what you see on their websites, no tax, and reduced or no shipping charges.

Process for Submitting a Material Request Form

1. Students complete a Material Request Form (MRF) for each supplier. NOTE!!!! Amazon is **not** a PSU Supplier. However, it is one supplier regardless of how many suppliers are used within Amazon, therefore, submit only one MRF.
2. Cindy will place the order using standard shipping unless specified and will be shipped to the Learning Factory. Refer to the section on *Picking Up Packages* at the Learning Factory.
3. Students listed on the MRF will receive email confirmations of the order to include shipment confirmations with tracking numbers.
4. The first student listed on the MRF will receive an email when packages have arrived and how to obtain them from the Learning Factory lockers (located on the 4th floor of EDI Bldg).

Purchases Made by a Team Member (will not receive reimbursement for taxes and shipping so always best to purchase through Cindy) **PSU prefers that purchases that total more than \$50 are NOT made by students and should be made by Cindy.** Students can purchase from wherever they want online or in person, no approvals required. Always go through Cindy if your supplier is one of the PSU contracted suppliers to get the discounts and tax exemption/shipping privileges. (PSU tends to question why you purchased on your own from a contracted supplier so try not to do it.)

PSU Contracted Suppliers, PSU General Stores, and Popular Vendor List - PSU contracted suppliers provide reduced pricing from what you see directly on their website, waive or reduce shipping costs, and do not charge tax. PSU's General Stores has items in stock and also outsources to Office Depot. Failing to use Cindy for your purchases and making purchases on your own will result in receiving partial reimbursement.

- *When submitting an MRF, you must use PSU contracted suppliers or General Stores.* Amazon is NOT a PSU contracted supplier.
- *When submitting an MRF, requests to use a non-PSU supplier must receive prior approval from your instructor using the instructions mentioned above in yellow.* You must provide him/her with justification as to why the non-PSU supplier must be used. When you submit a non-PSU supplier MRF to Cindy, you must include your instructor's approval (this can be an email between the two of you) and it must include the justification.
- [Vendor List](#) – popular vendors suggested for students to use when they make the purchase.
- [General Stores](#) – On the General Stores website, click on the Products arrow at the top. It is easiest to use the Products arrow and not the Search box. Every product will have an ITEM # so please enter it on the MRF.

Picking Up Packages from The Learning Factory Lockers in EDIB – 4th Floor - Packages can be picked up in the Learning Factory lockers. The first student listed on the Material Request Form will receive an email when the items have arrived. The email will include details on how to retrieve the package(s) from the lockers. The lockers will be accessible as long as EDIB is open. **Once the locker(s) has been opened, all packages must be removed. Once the locker closes, the code to retrieve them is void. Packages cannot be stored in the lockers.**

Lowes and Home Depot Orders - Cindy can place orders and someone from the team can personally go and pick up the order. It is recommended to use Lowes before Home Depot. Include the name and cell # of the person who will be picking up the order.

Amazon Order – Amazon is not a PSU contracted supplier and should not be used unless absolutely necessary. To use Amazon (if Cindy is processing the order), send an email to your instructor explaining your attempts to find your items on a PSU supplier, which supplier, and justify why you need to use Amazon/another supplier. Your faculty member should reply to you (not me) either approving, denying, or asking for additional information or providing alternatives. When you are ready to submit an MRF, you will include the string of emails at that time. Amazon is considered one supplier and only one MRF should be submitted even if there are multiple items on your order from different suppliers.

In Amazon, you can put together a cart and share the URL to the cart to Cindy along with the MRF that includes details of each item. This will enable her to simply click on the URL, add everything to her cart under her Amazon Business Account (Prime), and submit the order. This will also ensure she orders exactly what you want.

*****KEEP THE PACKAGING IN CASE ANYTHING NEEDS TO BE RETURNED*****

Reimbursement for Purchases – Before submitting a request, you will need: all receipts saved as **individual .pdf files**, a Non-Employee Information (NEI)* form if applicable (see below), and any supporting documentation that may be requested on the NEI form. Reimbursement requests will be processed at the end of each month therefore it is suggested that you submit all receipts closer to the end of the month. Cindy does not want multiple submissions in one month for the same person. Each student must request their own reimbursement and they must be submitted within 30 days of the purchase. Meaning, do not hold receipts until the end of the semester or longer than 30 days after making the purchases. Follow the steps below.

ALL RECEIPTS MUST SHOW THE SUPPLIER NAME, DATE OF PURCHASE, AND A DESCRIPTION OF ITEMS PURCHASED Do not discard any original receipts until you have received your reimbursement AND after the semester is over.

1. Wait to request reimbursement until you receive notification that your items have shipped and your receipt shows 'shipped' (most particularly Amazon). While you will not be reimbursed for the shipping and tax, PSU requires the receipt that shows shipped status. It is understood that not all receipts will show 'shipped' but Amazon definitely provides one that shows "shipped."
2. AFTER compiling all receipts and saving them as **individual .pdf files** and completing any required paperwork (Non-Employee Information (NEI) form if applicable (see details below*)) submit a *Request for Reimbursement* (RFR) Google Doc form <https://forms.gle/7LdbLxSXkqBZwqbMw9>.
3. A maximum of 10 documents can be submitted with each RFR. If you have more than 10, you will have to submit additional RFR forms and attach the corresponding receipts.

Both the RFR and NEI form (if applicable) will need to be submitted EACH TIME you request reimbursement. The same NEI form can be used, therefore, keep a copy on your computer.

How will you receive your reimbursement?

- EMPLOYEES OF PSU – via a deposit into the bank account you have set up with PSU.
- NON-EMPLOYEES OF PSU – via a check *mailed USPS* to the address specified on the RFR and NEI forms. The same address must be used on both forms.

***Non-Employee Information (NEI) Form** – Non-employees or non-US citizens must complete an NEI form when requesting reimbursement. Depending on what status you choose in Section II, you may be required to provide additional documentation (e.g. I94). **If you choose US Citizen in Section II, do not complete any other sections beyond that point other than sign and date the bottom.**

Returning Items – Cindy will return items to suppliers that she processed. Student will give items to Cindy in original or comparable packaging. Do not seal the package. Students are responsible for returning items for orders they processed and will not be reimbursed for shipping or any materials to return the shipment.

LEO Accounts – Contact Cindy for account information if you are using on-campus services that request an account to be charged.

The Learning Factory (LF) Shop Charges - There will be a charge when you use certain equipment and materials in the LF. You do not pay for anything out-of-pocket nor do you have a cost center or internal order number, if asked. Simply tell the LF staff you are working on a capstone project and provide them with the name of your project and sponsor company. The charges will be entered into the LF billing system and will be deducted from your budget at the end of the semester. They should be able to give you a quote for your budget person, if needed.

Software/License - <https://purchasing.psu.edu/software> This is a very sensitive purchase so read carefully and entirely. You may need to work very closely with your instructor.

- **Software Purchase/Reimbursement** - Since software providers will most likely require the user to agree to terms, Cindy will not agree to the terms on behalf of someone else, therefore, students or faculty will make the purchase and then request reimbursement. If a faculty member is making a PSU software/license purchase on behalf of the team, Cindy will provide the instructor with the internal order (budget) number to be charged.
- **Software Offered Through PSU/PSU Labs** - Discuss your needs with your instructor and always check PSUs software store and/or computer labs to see if they offer the needed software or something comparable.
- **Non-PSU Software** - University Policy states that non-PSU offered software must get prior approval whether there is a cost, no cost, or even a free trial if the software is going to be loaded onto a PSU computer.
 - If it is going to be loaded onto a student's personal computer, approval is not necessary.
 - If the software is going to be loaded on a PSU computer or used in an entire class (not just one team), **your instructor** must submit a Software Request Form to the University to maintain legal and university compliance. Using the information below, click on the Software Request Form Checklist and be prepared to provide this information to your instructor. **It is highly suggested that you sit together with your instructor when completing the actual Software Request Form in the event your instructor has questions for you.**
- **Note to instructors:** 1) If multiple teams are using the same software, you only need to submit this request once. 2) Answering the "Courseware" question....You will indicate that this IS Courseware if you are using it in your class. <https://sites.psu.edu/coursewarepsu/> If it is something that one team or one team member is using on their personal computer, no software request form is required. 3) Be very careful how you answer the Open Source question as this will route differently when submitted. If applicable, most suppliers will list Open Source on the main face of their website so check their first. <https://opensource.com/resources/what-open-source>
- **How to Route a Software Agreement for Review** – Instructor's complete the [Software Request Form](#) to determine how the associated Software Agreement (electronic or hard signature) must be processed. If you have not completed this form before, please review the [Software Request Form Checklist](#) for a general overview of the information that will be requested.

File Sharing Websites - Monthly subscriptions to file sharing websites are not considered software, therefore, students can purchase this on their own as long as MONTHLY subscriptions are available (versus 1 year subscription). You can submit receipts for reimbursement once a month or at the end of the semester. Talk to Cindy first.

Subcontractors - Payment to vendors/suppliers who are providing a *SERVICE* (e.g welding, cutting glass, sewing). Only Penn State can pay a subcontractor/vendor for providing a SERVICE. This is different than purchasing an item. **Ask the supplier if they accept credit card payments. If they will not accept credit card payments, they must be registered in PSUs system in order to receive a check or wire transfer.** Cindy can check if they are in PSUs system and assist with the registration process. You will get an invoice with the following information from the subcontractor/vendor and give to Cindy to process: Date, vendor name, address, phone number, contact person, tax exemption # if applicable, social security # if applicable, detailed description of the work performed, hourly rate if applicable, total amount due, and who to make the payment "payable to." **You cannot 'hire' a friend/family member/PSU student/faculty to do work for you unless they have their own business registered under their social security number or Tax Identification number.**

Focus Groups - Contact Cindy to discuss the process. You may use **prepackaged** food as an incentive such as donuts or cookies, bottled water, etc. Non-food nor other items are permitted to be purchased as incentives (e.g. gift cards). A list of participants and their email address must be obtained at the time of the focus group event and a faculty member must be present at the event.

Site Visits to Sponsor – You will make and pay for your own arrangements and then request reimbursement.

1. Prior to the first visit and only if your instructor wants it, complete the Emergency Contact form.
<https://www.lf.psu.edu/students/forms.aspx>
2. TRANSPORTATION (two options)
 - a. Use your own vehicle. *Roundtrip* mileage *or* gas receipts are reimbursable on personal vehicles with a starting point of State College, PA. Travelers are entitled to roundtrip mileage and the rate is currently 0.67 cents/mile. However, teams have instead opted for actual gas receipt reimbursement since it saves on the team's budget. If opting for actual gas reimbursement, you must submit actual gas receipts. If requesting mileage, it will be calculated in PSUs system based on the details you provide.
 - b. Rent a car. PSU will only reimburse rental cars from **NATIONAL** or **ENTERPRISE**.
 - i. Use this URL <https://procurement.psu.edu/car> When starting the reservation:
 - ii. Choose Option #3 National Car Rental and Enterprise Rent-A-Car.
 - iii. Choose Directly with the Supplier.
 - iv. Choose Business Use and then Car Rental.
 - v. Pickup Location is *SCE* and then complete the remainder of the of reservation form.
 - vi. When **picking up the vehicle**, students must present a letter of authorization from and signed by the renter's instructor, on Institution letterhead, which states the purpose of the rental and specifically indicate that the vehicle will be used for an official Institution function or purpose. Sample memo at the bottom of this document.
 - vii. Students must have a valid credit card. Students age 18-20 shall be restricted to rentals of Economy, Compact, Midsize/Intermediate, Standard, Full Size, Minivan and Intermediate/Midsize/Standard SUV vehicle classes.
 - viii. If you reserve the car under this program, you should not request or be asked to choose the young renters fee. It is already included. If you rent the vehicle but do not use this program you will have to choose the young renters fee.
 - ix. Reimbursement for the vehicle will include **basic cost of rental car, applicable taxes, young driver fee, and only the days you traveled for the project.**
 - x. Additional coverage voluntarily purchased by the driver will **NOT** be reimbursed (e.g. roadside assistance). If you return after the agency is closed, they have drop boxes for the keys **Rental of the car beyond your actual travel dates will not be reimbursed.**
3. HOTEL (if applicable): Students should make their hotel accommodations and double-up in one room when possible. Submit detailed/itemized '*paid*' hotel receipt.
4. MEALS:
 - a. Students will receive reimbursement for meals for **overnight** site visits ONLY and are in excess of \$10.00 (total of all meals). Meals purchased within 30 miles of State College will not be reimbursed. YOU MUST PROVIDE ITEMIZED RECEIPTS THAT SHOW WHAT IT IS YOU ATE AND DRANK.
 - b. Group meals are not permitted. Each student must buy their own meals and request reimbursement.
 - c. PSU allows up to a 20% tip. Keep in mind that every penny spent comes out of your \$1000.

The University has a per diem policy which means there is a maximum in which travelers can be reimbursed on meals and hotels and it varies based on where and when the travel took place. The **Federal rules governing per diems** are here <http://travel.psu.edu/travel-tools> > Reimbursement Rates > [U.S. General Services Administration Per Diem Rates for CONUS Meals & Incidentals](#).

Reimbursement for Travel – Within 30 days of each trip, each student must request their own reimbursement. Complete the correct Travel Reimbursement Form (TRF) and a Non-Employee Information (NEI) form if applicable. See below. Upload these documents with your itemized receipts (meals, rental car, hotel, tolls, parking, etc.) as separate .pdf files on the [Request for Reimbursement Google Doc form](#).

Which forms do I complete?

- If you are an employee of PSU (RA, TA, Wage Payroll), complete the [Employee Travel Reimbursement Form](#).
- If you are NOT an employee of PSU, complete the *[NON-Employee Travel Reimbursement form](#). **You must fill in one of the three boxes at the very top of the form** because you may be required to complete a Non-Employee Information (NEI) form and provide additional documentation (e.g. I94). READ CAREFULLY!!!!!!!

*[Non-Employee Information \(NEI\) Form](#) – Non-employees or non-US citizens must complete an NEI form when requesting reimbursement. Depending on what status you choose in Section II, you may be required to provide additional documentation (e.g. I94). **If you choose US Citizen in Section II, do not complete any other sections beyond that point** other than sign and date the bottom.

Non-Refundable Expenses (BUT NOT LIMITED TO):

- Food/meals for sponsor or team meetings.
- Purchases made in the last two weeks of classes that were not preapproved and were not required to complete the project.
- Meals while on travel unless you meet the criteria listed in the Site Visits to Sponsor section.
- Taxi, Uber, personal mileage in the State College area UNLESS you are visiting your sponsor who is located in State College.
- Mileage to and from rental car agency.
- On-campus parking.
- **All** clothing or boots/shoes.
- Give-a-ways, trinkets, gift cards, etc. for focus groups or any other recipient.
- Voluntary coverage on rental cars (e.g. damage waiver, liability fees, roadside assistance fees, etc.).
- Rental of the car outside of your travel dates. If you return after the agency is closed, all of them have drop boxes for the keys. Therefore, rental of the car beyond your actual travel dates will not be reimbursed.

Purchases in the Last Two Weeks of the Semester

- Teams cannot purchase items in the last two weeks of classes that are not REQUIRED for completion of the project THIS SEMESTER. Last-minute requests must go through the Learning Factory staff and may or may not be approved.
- Sponsors may ask you to buy 'extra' materials/supplies to 'use up the budget.' This is NOT PERMITTED and the purchase/reimbursement request will be denied.
- Sponsors and instructors cannot give approval for last-minute purchases in the last two weeks, however, they may be consulted by the Learning Factory staff, if needed.

Prototype Ownership and Certain Materials

- [Policy BS07](#) Items purchased by the LF staff, or something you purchased and received reimbursement for, are the property of PSU. For example, if a cell phone, an Ipad, a computer, or even as simple as an extension cord not permanently attached to a prototype are purchased, they must be returned to the LF staff at the conclusion of the semester. They do not belong to anyone on the team and they do not belong to the sponsor. **Items should not be purchased for simply using it as an example. If it isn't required for the project, don't buy it.**
- Prototypes become the property of the sponsors, subject to limitations outlined in [PSU Policy BS07 Authority and Procurement](#). There may be items that can be given to the sponsor. Items that are not permanently attached to the prototype do not get returned to the sponsor. Again, there are exceptions.

Learning Factory (LF) Address to Ship Materials from Sponsor – Sponsors may want to ship materials to you for your project. They should send them at the sponsor’s expense to the address below and notify someone from the team when the package is sent. Tracking numbers are helpful. Students must then contact Cindy Winkelblech (ckb2@psu.edu) so she can contact the recipient when the package arrives. “405 EDI Building” should be used in the ‘street’ field of the address. PSU does not go by streets, avenues, drives, boulevards, etc.

Address for Shipping to the Learning Factory (If needed, telephone number is 814-863-6380)

Your Name

405 EDI Building

University Park, PA 16802

Example of Letter to Rental Car Agency

(Must be printed on your faculty member’s department letterhead)

DATE: Today’s Date

FROM: Professor XXXXX, phone number and email

TO: Name of Rental Car Agency (National or Enterprise)

SUBJ: Business travel for engineering students on behalf of Penn State University

On January 19, 2024, a team of senior engineering students in ME 440.001 will be visiting their senior design project sponsor, Ford Motor Company, in Dearborn MI to tour the facility, meet with company representatives, discuss project deliverables, and/or provide updates to the project. This is required for the project and as part of the course. The team members are XXXXX.

Please allow this team to receive the BIG Ten Corporate Discount and coverage.

Please contact me with any questions.

Thank you.