

University Enterprises, Inc. Sponsored Project Participant Gift Card Procedure

Purpose:

This procedure is established to clarify under what circumstances gift cards may be purchased as incentives for sponsored project participants and to set forth the documentation required to process gift card expenditures, document use, and ensure the cash handling policy is followed.

Gift cards may be purchased and distributed as incentives to participants in a sponsored project's research activities (e.g., completing surveys, attending seminars, participating in a focus group, etc.). Gift cards are not for payment of services such as conducting surveys or assisting with the sponsored project. The use of incentives is allowable when they are within the project's approved scope of work and/or budget parameters. If there is the potential for UEI or CSU employees to participate in the activity, notify your SPA account administrator before the activity commences.

Procedure:

I. Purchase

Allowable gift cards may be purchased using UEI's normal purchasing mechanisms. Physical gift cards can be purchased with a cash advance via check request or with a purchase order if accepted by the vendor.

Gift cards (physical or electronic) cannot be purchased with a UEI credit card. If gift cards are purchased using a personal credit card, the cardholder is liable if the expense is deemed unallowable. Reimbursement to the purchaser is requested via a check request. It is advisable to obtain UEI review prior to purchase.

II. Documentation

The expenditure request/reimbursement document must include 1) a description of the reason for providing the incentive(s), 2) the dollar amount per person, and 3) the following documentation for the applicable circumstance:

At Event- Physical Gift Card distribution

- a. Signed and dated acknowledgment of receipt of the gift card by each participant; or
- b. Original written certification of the authorized project representative who distributed the gift card(s), certifying as to the purpose for the incentive, the date the card(s) were distributed, and listing all individuals who received the card(s).

After Event- Physical Gift Card distribution:

Written documentation of participation (e.g., copy of sign-in sheet with attendee names and signatures) and original written certification of the authorized project representative who distributed the gift card(s), certifying as to the purpose for the incentive and the date the card(s) were distributed.

After Event-Electronic Gift Card distribution:

Written acknowledgment of electronic gift card from recipient.

If participant name is considered confidential due to sensitive research information that must be de-identified, notify your SPA account administrator before purchasing gift cards.

III. Inventory “Cash” Management

1. Assign a custodian who will be responsible for issuing and tracking gift cards through use of a log. Custodian must have received a background check at the time of employment and have knowledge of UEI’s cash and cash equivalent handling policy.
2. Maintain physical gift cards in a locked cabinet or similar location.
3. Reconcile gift card inventory on a regular basis with documented reviews.
4. Provide UEI access to the gift card information to perform unannounced gift card audits as necessary.

IV. Project Protocol

UEI will request a formal written gift card protocol for any projects that require participant gift cards for large dollar amounts or in large quantities, long term durations, or other situations that may require it. This is at UEI’s discretion and could include a physical review of the secure location.