

At-Risk Advance Accounts FAQs

What is an At-Risk Advance Account?

An At-Risk Advance Account is an Award created in Workday in anticipation of a sponsored project. It allows the departments to begin incurring expenses prior to the full execution and acceptance of the award. The account is “at-risk” due to the lack of a fully executed agreement, and therefore should be considered carefully before requesting. The department must provide a discretionary account (Cost Center) to cover any incurred expenses in the event the anticipated project fails to be funded. Advance Accounts should not be requested if the agreement is already fully executed, if there is no Sponsor indication that the proposal will be funded, or in an effort to speed up the setup process.

How is an At-Risk Advance Account different than a fully-executed Award in Workday?

Awards that are At-Risk Advances in Workday will have the Award Lifecycle Status of Active – At-Risk Advance. This status denotes that the Award is active to incur expenses but is not yet supported by an executed agreement. The Funding Details will show the Award Total matching the Not-To-Exceed Amount provided by the department, the Authorized Amount of \$1 to prevent invoicing before the Award is fully Active, and the Anticipated Sponsor Total matching the expected Total Anticipated Award amount provided by the department. The Award’s budget in Workday will be \$1 in the Other Institutional Costs Object Class until the Award Lifecycle Status is updated.

When should an At-Risk Advance Account be requested?

They can be requested prior to the full execution of the agreement and when there is an immediate, time-sensitive need for the account information, such as payments to students or booking upcoming travel. This may be while the agreement is under review or while Northeastern is waiting to receive the unsigned agreement from the Sponsor.

How do I request an At-Risk Advance Account?

Complete the NURES At-Risk Advance Request questionnaire in Workday. This can be done by typing “Create Request” in Workday’s search bar, selecting the Create Request Task link, and selecting the NURES At-Risk Advance Request Type.

What information is required to request an At-Risk Advance Account?

1. A completed NURES At-Risk Advance Request - all the fields in the form should be filled out prior to submission, and an incomplete form may result in the inability to or delays in process. Forms without an ePaws proposal number, Cost Center, or proper approval attachments will not be processed and returned to the Initiator.
2. Written confirmation of the Sponsor’s intent to fund the project. Copies of unexecuted agreements may be used as confirmation of the Sponsor’s intent.

Getting Help

Support: RFAccountSetups@northeastern.edu

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Can I request an At-Risk Advance Account for a subsequent year of funding on an existing project?

Yes, if the project is incrementally funded and carryover is restricted. If the request is for an additional year of funding not yet obligated to NU, the form should be completed with Yes – Additional Year with the existing Grant number. Failure to complete this question correctly can result in a duplicate Award being created, which when identified later, would need to be closed and the department would need to move any expenses from the duplicate account to the correct account.

How long will it take me to get my At-Risk Advance Account?

All At-Risk Advance Accounts are considered expedited requests. Expedited setup requests are typically completed within 5 business days. If an incomplete form is received, the goal will be 5-days from the receipt of the updated form, not the original form. Actual completion time may be affected by the volume of requests.

Should I request an At-Risk Advance Account for all my anticipated sponsored projects?

No. At-Risk Advance Requests should be used sparingly for those awards where the agreement execution is delayed or has time-sensitive expenses. If an agreement is fully executed, a request should be sent to nu-res@northeastern.edu to expedite the intake and award acceptance, rather than requesting an At-Risk Advance Request.

How long can I keep an At-Risk Advance Account?

Aging At-Risk Advances are monitored by the RF Setups Team. Advance accounts exceeding 120 days in age will undergo enhanced scrutiny and follow-up with the department.

How do I close an At-Risk Advance Account?

At-Risk Advance Accounts will automatically turn into an Active Sponsored Award after the Workday update from the receipt of the fully executed agreement from the Northeastern Grant Officer (GO). The RF Setups team will update Workday with all the missing information from the fully executed agreement and Workday will send a notification that the Award has been amended. If the At-Risk Advance Account needs to be closed because the sponsored award is not going to be funded, the department must move all the expenses off the account to the Cost Center, and an email should be sent to both the department's Research Finance Analyst (RFA) and nu-res@northeastern.edu to request that the account be inactivated in Workday.

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