

FRAP CARD PROGRAM – FISCAL YEAR 17/18

Policies & Procedures

The FRAP Card

The FRAP Card is a university purchasing card exclusively for use in the Arts & Sciences Faculty Research Allocation Program (FRAP). The card can be used for most FRAP purchases, including, but not limited to, air and ground transportation, book purchases, office supplies, shipping, professional membership dues, computers, computer peripherals and software. (For a more comprehensive list of eligible FRAP Card expenses, see **Attachment A.**)

The FRAP Card is a declining balance card. Each faculty member eligible for FRAP will be issued a FRAP Card pre-set with a spending limit that matches his/her FRAP allocation. Faculty can use the card in stores or on-line where VISA is accepted for FRAP-eligible purchases up to the amount of their individual FRAP allocations. As purchases are made, the amount available to spend on the card will automatically decrease until the FRAP allocation is fully spent.

What are the benefits of the FRAP Card?

- 💰** **No Layout of Funds; No Waiting to be Reimbursed** – All purchases are charged directly to a FRAP account in the Arts & Sciences.
- 💵** **No Sales Tax on Most Purchases** – The FRAP Card clearly identifies Columbia University's tax exempt status.
- ✂️** **Reduction of Paperwork** – No travel and business expense reports to be signed and approved by Arts & Sciences and Accounts Payable.
- 🕒** **Later FRAP Deadline** – By eliminating the reimbursement process with Accounts Payable, we can extend the FRAP deadline for FRAP Card purchases from the first week of May to last week in May.

FRAP Program Guidelines and Procedures

The FRAP Card is intended to streamline the FRAP program, making purchases easier for faculty and reducing paperwork for department staff. The FRAP program runs from July 1st through May 31st.

New FRAP Application

Each faculty member must deposit a completed FRAP Application prior to incurring the first expense each fiscal year under the FRAP program. Faculty in non-tenured ranks will need the form signed by his/her Department Chair. *[Note: Non-tenured School of the Arts Faculty must have their FRAP application signed by the Dean or his/her designate.]* We encourage faculty to submit the FRAP application as early in the fiscal year as possible. In addition to a description of the faculty member's research project, this "blanket" FRAP Application should include a proposal for **all** spending projected under the FRAP program during the fiscal year. Once the "blanket" FRAP Application is approved, faculty will not need to submit any further FRAP Applications with their receipts or paperwork for actual purchases, unless a purchase is for an item or use not covered under the initial FRAP Application.

- Department chairs must review and approve the initial, as well as any supplemental, FRAP Applications each year for all faculty in non-tenured ranks in their departments. Faculty in tenured ranks no longer require the department chair's signature. Approved FRAP Applications must be forwarded to the Arts & Sciences. The approved FRAP Application may be returned by-hand or interoffice mail to the Office of the Vice President for Arts & Sciences. We will also accept forms returned via e-mail from the chair as long as the e-mail message explicitly gives the chair's approval.
- No faculty member will receive a new FRAP Card or have their existing Card reactivated unless Arts & Sciences has received an approved FRAP Application & there are no outstanding receipts overdue from the previous fiscal years.

The Blanket FRAP Application form is available at the end of these guidelines. By signing the form, you are affirming that you have read the guidelines and will follow the policies contained within.

Making Purchases with the FRAP Purchasing Card

Faculty can use the FRAP Purchasing Card in stores or on-line wherever VISA is accepted.

****For on-line purchases the billing address should always be:

**105 Low Library, MC4302
535 West 116th Street
New York, NY 10027
212-854-6080**

Tax Exemption:

As a not-for-profit, Columbia University is exempt from paying sales tax in many states. For a complete list of states that either exempt sales tax or charge no sales tax, see Attachment B. You can also visit the Columbia University policy library website

[http://www.columbia.edu/cu/administration/policylibrary/policies/acpy/acpy_035.html]

- In-store purchases. Sales tax should not be charged on the FRAP Card in the eligible states. The University's tax -exempt number is printed on the face of the card and is usually accepted by most vendors. Faculty members must mention to the salesclerk at the time of purchase that the card is tax-exempt so that they won't be charged for sales taxes. Nevertheless, faculty will be provided with a copy of the University's tax-exemption certificate to guard against instances where the vendor requires supplementary verification. On-line purchases. For on-line vendors that charge sales tax, the faculty member is responsible for contacting the vendor to remove the charge. Many large on-line vendors, such as Staples and Amazon, recognize Columbia University purchasing card numbers as tax exempt. When sales tax is inappropriately charged, usually all that is necessary is to fax a copy of the University's tax-exempt certificate to the vendor. Many on-line vendors' sites contain instructions for removing the tax for non-profit purchasers. Otherwise, you should call the vendor directly. If necessary, your academic departmental administrator can assist you with this process.

Purchases in Excess of FRAP Allocation Balance:

- Under the new FRAP program, faculty will no longer be able to carryover expenses from one fiscal year to the next. This is true for both the FRAP Card and reimbursable purchases.
- To handle a purchase that exceeds the balance available in a faculty member's FRAP allocation, faculty should pay out-of-pocket for the goods and submit paperwork for reimbursement (**except for equipment purchases, see below**). In situations where it is both feasible and desirable, faculty may split the cost with one or more other university-funded account, such as a research account or a set-up account
- Due to IRS regulations, equipment purchases (such as computers) may not be combined with personal funds. You may, however, combine FRAP funds with other university funds available to you. For equipment purchases that exceed your FRAP balance, please contact Arts & Sciences before making the purchase to discuss how to proceed with your order.

Card Declined at Point of Purchase

There are five primary reasons a purchase using the FRAP Card will be declined.

- Inactive FRAP Card. A&S will not activate FRAP Card in new fiscal year unless a new Blanket FRAP Form and all outstanding receipts are received. In addition, a FRAP Card may be suspended without notice, therefore inactive, if a faculty member did not submit receipts by the due date.
- Insufficient Funds. If the purchase exceeds the balance of your FRAP allocation, it is recommended that you purchase the good or service out-of-pocket and get reimbursed for the amount available in your FRAP allocation. Due to IRS regulations, equipment purchases cannot be combined with personal funds. However, for equipment purchases you may be able to combine FRAP funds with other university funds that are available to you (such as a research or set-up account). [See *Purchases in Excess of FRAP Allocation Balance*, above]
- Ineligible Expense. The FRAP Card is pre-set with codes that, in most instances, will block ineligible purchases. However, these codes are not foolproof. If you are unsure if your purchase is ineligible, you should call Arts & Sciences before making the purchase.
- Extraordinary, but Permissible, Expense. Sometimes faculty need to purchase an item that generally would not be permissible under the FRAP program, but is required for their particular research. If the card rejects a purchase that you feel is required for your research, please contact Arts & Sciences to discuss how to proceed. You should contact Arts & Sciences before making the purchase with personal funds.
- Incorrect Billing Address. For on-line vendors, the purchase will be declined if the billing address that you provide is not the one associated with the FRAP Card. Please remember to use the billing address provided at the top of the section for all on-line purchases.

If a FRAP purchase is declined at the point of purchase and continues not to go through, please contact Arts & Sciences. We may be able to help you fix the problem.

Returned Goods/Cancellation of Services:

As with any credit card purchase, items or services purchased with the card and subsequently returned or cancelled should be credited directly back to the card. In such instances, the funds will be restored to the FRAP Card once the vendor credits the account. **If the vendor offers store credit only, the faculty member is responsible for reimbursing the Arts & Sciences directly for the cost of the item.**

Non-Delivery of Purchased Items:

If you have not received an item purchased with the FRAP Card, you should contact the vendor directly. If a dispute with the vendor results, or if the vendor is not responsive, contact the card issuer, Bank of America. The issuing bank will usually credit your card until the dispute is resolved.

Final Note: When using the FRAP Card abroad, an international transaction fee (of approximately 1%) may be charged on all transactions. Those charges are considered a cost of the good or service and will be deducted from your FRAP allocation.

Submission of Receipts

FRAP Card Purchases only:

The submission of itemized receipts to Arts & Sciences **is required** for all FRAP Card purchases. Faculty are strongly encouraged to submit itemized receipts to A&S within 5 days of the date of each FRAP Card purchase. Receipts are due on a monthly basis (10th of every month for prior month). If receipts are not received by the due date, the faculty member's FRAP Card may be suspended. If a faculty member is unable to submit their receipts by the due date, because of some unexpected circumstances (travel, family emergencies, etc), they must inform A&S prior to the due date, so that there won't be a risk of Card suspension (see below).

- Faculty may e-mail online receipts or scan and e-mail paper receipts to **frap@columbia.edu**.
- Provisions to extend the period for submission can be made for faculty who are on leave and away from the University at the time of the purchase or who are traveling when the purchase is made.
- Continued failure to submit receipts in a timely fashion will result in the permanent revocation of the FRAP Card.
- Faculty are encouraged to submit receipts via email to FRAP@columbia.edu. If not sent by email, faculty should make copies of any receipts, to ensure against loss, before forwarding them to Arts & Sciences. A drop-off box is available at WATSON HALL for hand-delivery of FRAP Receipt Envelopes. Faculty may also use inter-office campus mail. The address for receipt submission is: FRAP Program
WATSON HALL 612 W. 115th Street 7th Floor New York, NY 10025.

Departmental Charges

The academic departmental administrator must forward to Arts & Sciences within 24 hours any ZT, SAF or evidence of other charges processed by the department on behalf of a faculty member under the FRAP Program. **It is highly recommended that DAs check with the Arts & Sciences to ensure there are balances remaining in the faculty's FRAP account prior to processing any charges on a department account.** The department will be responsible for covering any expense already incurred for which there are insufficient funds available in the faculty's FRAP account

Out-of-Pocket Purchases only:

Faculty members are expected to use the FRAP Card for all FRAP eligible purchases. Out of pocket reimbursements will only be allowed for hotels or in certain circumstances where the FRAP Card is declined. An example of an allowable circumstance is if a vendor does not accept the card. An example of an unallowable circumstance is a card that is declined because the wrong billing address is used. Please review the section “Card declined at point of purchase” above for common reasons why the card may not be working. Also, feel free to contact the Arts & Sciences if you are having any trouble getting your card to work or if you have a question regarding the eligibility of your circumstance for reimbursement.

Before making an out of pocket purchase, faculty need to pick up their FRAP card and submit their FRAP form. Faculty will not be reimbursed for purchases that are made before these two actions take place.

The submission of itemized receipts, along with proof of payment and a Travel & Business Expense Report, **is still required** for FRAP purchases made out-of-pocket and requiring reimbursement to the faculty member. [See Attachment A for acceptable forms of proof of purchase.] **All paperwork must first be processed in the department before being forwarded to A&S for processing.**

- Faculty are encouraged to submit their documentation for reimbursement for instances where out-of-pocket reimbursement are allowed, as soon as possible, but no later than 120 days after date of purchase. Once the documentation is received by the Arts & Sciences, the cost of the reimbursement will be deducted from the balance on the faculty member’s FRAP Card, to the extent that funds are still available.
- If faculty identify certain out-of-pocket or department costs, such as the hiring of research assistants, in their initial blanket FRAP Application, Arts & Sciences may initially set the credit limit on the faculty member’s FRAP Card to an amount less than their FRAP allocation. The setting of credit limits at an amount less than the faculty’s FRAP allocation will be discussed with the individual faculty member ***before*** it is initiated.

Checking FRAP Balances

Faculty can call the 1-888 number on the back of the FRAP Card to find up-to-date balance information. Faculty may also request for their spending report and/or balance directly from A&S.

Distribution of the FRAP Card

Faculty can pick up their initial and/or replacement FRAP Cards in the Office of the Executive Vice President for Arts & Sciences, located at Watson Hall – 612 W. 115th Street 7th Floor (between Broadway and Riverside Drive) during regular business hours, 10 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday. If you have a new card, we suggest picking up your card as soon as possible so that you may make the most of your funds.

The FRAP Card will be replenished with the new fiscal year's allocation in early July once the activation requirements (new Blanket FRAP Form is received & no outstanding receipts are due) are met.

Before the FRAP Card will be released to faculty:

- Faculty must have read the guidelines and procedures for the FRAP Card program and sign a letter affirming compliance with the program.
- A FRAP Application, approved by the department chair for non-tenured ranks, must be sent to Kathy Maqsudi, Office of the Vice President for Arts & Sciences, 612 West 115th Street New York, NY 10025 or to km3052@columbia.edu.
- Newly hired or recently promoted tenured faculty must submit their TFRP Application to Joseph Werst, Manager of Academic Appointments, Office of the Vice President for Arts & Sciences, 612 West 115th Street New York, NY 10025
- Newly hired Arts & Sciences faculty cannot be issued cards until their nomination forms and associated documentation are received by the Office of the Vice President for Arts & Sciences, 612 West 115th Street New York, NY 10025 Attention: Joseph Werst.

Faculty must show a valid photo id (Columbia ID Card, Driver's license, etc.) when picking up their cards.

In addition to receiving a FRAP Card, faculty will also be given the FRAP program policies and guidelines and a copy of the University's tax exemption form, to be used in instances where it is required by the vendor.

Extensions and Exceptions

We encourage thoughtful planning of FRAP funds throughout the fiscal year. We understand that there may be certain extenuating circumstances in which your plans for your FRAP funds fall outside of these guidelines. Notwithstanding all of the policies and procedures above, extensions and exceptions may be granted in some situations. Extensions and exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If you have a situation that may require an extension or exception, please contact **Kathy Maqsudi** via email @ km3052@columbia.edu **before** making the purchase to discuss your options.

All requests for extensions or exceptions must be made by **May 1, 2018**. Under no circumstances will an extension or exception be granted after this date. This is to provide Arts & Sciences with sufficient time to complete administrative duties associated with running the FRAP program.

FRAP Card User Information

- **Valid Use Dates.** For fiscal year 2017-2018, once activated, FRAP Cards may be used as early as July 1, 2017. The last day charges will be accepted on the FRAP card is May 31, 2018. On that date, the card will no longer be active for charges.
 - We strongly suggest not waiting until the last minute to make purchases. Many online vendors (such as Amazon, Apple and Dell) do not charge the card until an item is shipped.
 - It is the faculty member's responsibility to check with the vendor to confirm that the card will be charged by May 31, 2018. We will not be able to reimburse faculty from their FRAP funds for items charged after May 31st, even if the item was ordered before the deadline.
- **Re-activation of cards for new fiscal year.** Faculty who have a FRAP Purchasing Card from the prior fiscal year will have their card reactivated each fiscal year that the card is still valid. (Please check the expiration date on your card to ensure it is still valid) In order to replenish the funds on the FRAP Card, a completed and signed Blanket FRAP Form must be submitted each fiscal year, preferably prior to its start of July 5th, as well as any outstanding receipts from prior fiscal years.
- **If your card has expired,** a new card will be issued for you. New cards must be picked up in the Office of the Executive Vice President, located in Watson Hall - 612 West 115th Street 7th Floor (between Broadway and Riverside Drive)
- **If your card is lost,** contact both Bank of America directly at the number below, and Arts & Sciences. A replacement card will be issued within 10 business days and may be picked up in the Office of the Executive Vice President, Watson Hall - 612 West 115th Street 7th Floor (between Broadway and Riverside Drive)
- **If your purchase is declined,** contact Arts & Sciences (see contact info below)
- **If there is a dispute over the goods or services purchased,** first contact the vendor, then, if necessary, Bank of America at the number on the reverse of the card
- **If tax is charged on a purchase which should be exempt,** contact the vendor directly.

FRAP Deadlines for Fiscal Year 2018 (July 1, 2017 – May 31, 2018):

There are two important dates to be aware of:

May 1, 2018 is the last day to:

*Activate your FRAP funds for 2017-2018. To activate your FRAP funds, you must do the following:

- Submit a blanket FRAP Form
- Pick up FRAP Card (this applies to new cards and lost cards)
- Submit any outstanding receipts from FRAP years prior to 2017-2018

*Request all exceptions/extensions

*Submit computer replacement forms to Arts & Sciences, if using FRAP funds

-Note: Computer replacement forms are accepted year round, but if you want to use FRAP funds to augment the computer replacement purchase, the form must be submitted by this date.

May 31, 2018 is the last day to:

*Charge the FRAP card for purchases

-Note: the card will reject charges that are processed after this date. Check with the vendor to make sure your purchase will be charged to the card on or before May 31st. We will not be able to reimburse faculty from their FRAP funds for charges charged after May 31st, even if the item was ordered before the deadline. See the FRAP Card User Information section above for more information.

*Submit the receipts and TBER for Out-of Pocket Reimbursements to Arts & Sciences

*Submit departmental transfers of FRAP funds to Arts & Sciences

Important Contact Information

- Bank of America, 1-888-449-2273
- Arts & Sciences FRAP program, located in Watson Hall – 612 West 115th Street Room 710 (Between Broadway and Riverside Drive)

⇒ FRAP@columbia.edu for:
Receipt submission

⇒ Kathy Maqsudi, 212-854-9855, km3052@columbia.edu, for:
Lost card notification
Questions regarding eligibility of purchases
Requests for non-standard FRAP purchases
Requests for extensions and exceptions
FRAP Application questions
FRAP Balance requests
Questions regarding receipts
Requests for additional FRAP Receipt Envelopes
Notification of departmental FRAP expenses

Important Links:

- University P-Card Policies and Procedures
<http://finance.columbia.edu/procurement/p-card>
- Travel & Business Expense Forms and Worksheets
<http://finance.columbia.edu/forms-library>

FAQs

How will I know if my purchase with the card is FRAP-eligible? The FRAP Card will be pre-set with codes that, in most instances, will block ineligible purchases, such as food expenses. However, the codes are not foolproof. If you are ever unsure if your purchase is acceptable, you are strongly encouraged to call Arts & Sciences before making a purchase. See Attachment A.

What if my purchase exceeds the funds available on my FRAP Card? If funds on the FRAP Card are insufficient to cover the full price of a purchase, we recommend that faculty pay out-of-pocket for the expense and get reimbursed up to the balance of their FRAP allocation. Due to IRS regulations, equipment purchases cannot be combined with personal funds. However, for equipment purchases you may combine FRAP funds with other university funds, except for restricted funds, that are available to you (such as a research or set-up account). You will need to ask your academic departmental administrator to assist you with this purchase, as the equipment should be purchased through the department.

What happens if I purchase an item with the FRAP Card that is not FRAP-eligible? There may be instances when the FRAP Card will allow a purchase that is not eligible under the FRAP program. Although the charge will go through, the Arts & Sciences will not approve the purchase. You will either be asked to return the item or reimburse the Arts & Sciences for the purchase.

Can I use the FRAP Card for all FRAP expenses? There will still be expenses that require the faculty member to lay out funds and be reimbursed. Hotel bills, for instance, cannot be charged to the FRAP Card, since they often include meals and other in-room expenses that are not FRAP-eligible. Similarly, expenses incurred by the department on behalf of the faculty member, such as wages for a secretarial or research assistant, cannot be charged to the FRAP card. **The cost of any FRAP purchases made out-of-pocket or by the department on behalf of the faculty member will be deducted from that faculty member's FRAP Card allocation.**

Can I pay for editorial services or research assistant directly? You cannot be reimbursed for payments made directly to an individual for research work or editorial services due to some strict IRS regulations. Editorial services or research assistance must be paid directly by the department. Please contact your academic departmental administrator for more information.

What information will I have to provide when calling the Bank directly for any inquiries? Your name as it appears on your FRAP Card, your account activation code (00000MMDD of your birth date), billing address & phone number: Columbia University, 105 Low Library, MC4302; 535 West 116th Street, New York, NY 10027 * 212-854-6080.

FY 17-18 Blanket Faculty Research Allocation Program (FRAP) Application

- Tenured Professor Non-Tenured, Associate or Assistant Professor Lecturer, 1 year appointment, Visitor

| |
|---|
| Project Title/ Research Description: |
| |

Please fill in all expected FRAP expenditures for the current academic year **July 01, 2017 – May 31st, 2018:**

Section I: Travel Expenses (select all that apply)



- Conference Meeting(s) Research

Please identify conference or organization: _____

Section II: Manuscript Preparation (select all that apply)



- Books Office Supplies Membership fees Shipping
 Publication Research Assistant Printing Services Copyright
 Other

Section III: Equipment Purchases (select all that apply)

(One-year appointments are not eligible for equipment purchases)



- Computer Printer Computer desk/ chair Peripherals
 Other

NOTE: IN ORDER TO CONFORM TO IRS POLICY, ALL EQUIPMENT PURCHASED IS CONSIDERED UNIVERSITY PROPERTY.

Section IV: Other Expected Research Related Purchases (Please specify)



Departmental Signatures:

| | | |
|--|---------------------|-------------------|
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| Faculty Signature | Printed Name | Date |
| <i>By signing this document, I endorse this request and certify that I have read the FRAP PCARD guidelines. These expenses will be strictly related to research and in accordance with the policies of this program.</i> | | |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| Department Chair's Signature (Not required for Tenured Faculty) | Date | Department |

Arts & Sciences Approval: _____