

Information about Gift Cards and other forms of compensation

Researchers intending to compensate their human subjects must describe the planned compensation in their IRB research protocols. Participant compensation may not be coercive and typically must be issued in the form of gift cards not exceeding \$25 per card.

Studies requiring more than \$25 in compensation to individual participants may break the project into milestones that can be compensated up to \$25 each. SPU-funded gift cards may not be grouped in order to award more than \$25 in compensation for any one milestone.

No research participant may receive more than \$599 in compensation in a fiscal year across all projects in which they participate.

Researchers using SPU funds (FRG grants, student research grants, etc.) must consult their award letter for details about how to purchase, distribute, and retain reward records to ensure the expense will be eligible for reimbursement and compliant with university policy.

For student researchers using SPU grant funds to purchase gift cards, the gift card purchase must be approved by the IRB and be detailed in the approved grant budget and award letter. If approved, students must purchase electronic gift cards and distribute them to participants via email. Please make sure participants are aware that by giving their email address, their participation in the research is not anonymous; it can only be held in confidence. The student research and the faculty mentor named on the approved IRB protocol must retain the names and emails of compensated participants for five years.

When seeking reimbursement for approved gift card purchases, students must provide a receipt proving purchase of each gift card and must redact the name/email of each recipient such that it is clear each gift card went to a unique participant **but no identifiable information is provided to anyone not named on the IRB protocol.**

Questions regarding gift cards for human subjects research and grant-funded gift card purchases may be directed to the IRB Chair.