



Research Investigator's Handbook

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MTI Background

The Mineta Transportation Institute (MTI) was established by Congress in 1991 as part of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and was reauthorized in 1998. MTI conducts research, education, and information and technology transfer, specializing in transportation policy and management. Funding comes from Congress through the U.S. Department of Transportation's Research and Innovative Technology Administration, from the California Legislature through the Department of Transportation, and from private grants and donations.

MTI was selected as a national Center of Excellence by the U.S. Department of Transportation through a competitive process in 2002. The Institute is also a Tier-1 University Transportation Center (UTC).

The Institute is unique in that it receives oversight from a Board of Trustees whose internationally-respected members represent all major surface transportation modes. MTI's focus on policy and management came from a board assessment of the industry's unmet needs. This led directly to selecting the San José State University College of Business as the Institute's home. The board provides policy direction, assists with needs assessment and connects the institute and its programs with the international transportation community.

The mission of the UTC program, and MTI, is to advance US technology and expertise in the many disciplines comprising transportation through the mechanisms of education, research and technology transfer at university-based centers of excellence. As part of fulfilling this mission, MTI selects research projects for funding based on the advice of the Research Associates Policy Oversight Committee (RAPOC), Caltrans and representatives of US DOT.

This handbook identifies MTI research project requirements and reporting responsibilities. Should you have any questions, please contact:

Karen E. Philbrick, Ph.D.

Director of Research
Mineta Transportation Institute
210 North 4th Street, 4th Floor
San José, CA 95112

408.924.7562

email: philbrick@mti.sjsu.edu

Once again, we wish to congratulate you on receiving an MTI award!

MTI Research Project Requirements

Several key deliverables are required for MTI sponsored research projects, each of which will be discussed. On page 9, Table 1 “at a glance” depicts MTI requirements and the individual responsible for completion and submission of each requirement.

Please note that all forms referenced within this document can be downloaded from the MTI website: http://www.transweb.sjsu.edu/MTIportal/research/ra_forms.html

On time performance and completion of grant requirements will be monitored closely and will factor into future funding decisions. Only in rare cases, and with justifiable cause and professional pre-planning, will no cost extensions be granted.

Contracts

MTI must have a valid contract on file for each PI, project team member, and student assistant. This requirement must be fulfilled for project related work to commence and for the processing of reimbursements, timesheets, and invoice detail sheets. There are four different contract forms, these are:

1. **Faculty Appointment Form**: If you are a CSU employee, you must complete this contract, a W4, an I9, and confidential employee sheet.
2. **Non-Academic Appointment Form**: If you are a student at a university in California, you must complete this contract, a W4, an I9, and a confidential employee sheet.
3. **Independent Contractor (IC) Agreement**: If you are employed outside of the CSU system or if you are a student at a University in a state other than California, you must complete this agreement (e.g., DOT employee, University employee outside of the CSU system, a student in Colorado).
4. **Subcontracts**: If a subcontract is being issued for the MTI project, personnel from the SJSU Foundation Office of Sponsored Programs, in conjunction with the contracting university/agency, will be responsible for contract administration and all related paperwork.

The MTI research team will either send you your contract electronically or via US mail. Please complete the highlighted portion, sign and return it promptly for processing. Contracts are valid for a maximum of 12 months.

Research Project Description

MTI is required by the United States Department of Transportation Research and Innovative Technology Administration (RITA) to submit a description for each project to the Transportation Research Board’s Research in Progress (RiP) database. The project description will also be posted on the MTI website. The PI is required to submit a project description to the Director of Research within one month of signing the project contract. The following information should be presented in a word document:

- Title
- MTI Project Number
- Project Timeframe (start and end dates)
- Principal Investigator
- Team Member(s)
- Student Assistant(s)
- Project Objective
- Project Abstract
- Task Description
 - Either broken down by task (e.g., task 1, task 2, etc or a paragraph of information)
- Technology Transfer
 - Technology transfer example: At least one paper will be prepared and submitted to a refereed conference, such as the TRB Annual Meeting. Similarly, a minimum of one paper will be submitted to appropriate transportation journals, such as the *Transportation Research Record: Journal of the Transportation Research Board*. Results of the project will also be disseminated through the MTI website where those interested will be able to access the final report.
- Potential Benefits of Project
- Project Funding

MTI Monthly Status Reports

In order to ensure that MTI funded projects are progressing as planned, the PI is required to complete a monthly project status report. The form can be accessed on line at: http://www.transweb.sjsu.edu/MTIportal/research/ra_forms.html and must be submitted to the Director of Research at philbrick@mti.sjsu.edu no later than the last business day of each month.

Reimbursement requests and invoice detail sheets *will not* be processed if a monthly report has not been submitted.

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) Quarterly Reports

Caltrans is instituting a new Quarterly Reporting System for University Transportation Centers. Reports are due once a quarter and you will receive a reminder from MTI when these are due.

The form is accessible on-line and must be completed by the project Principal Investigator (PI). The PI needs to fill out the form in one sitting, as the information cannot be saved and reopened. The completed forms will be submitted automatically to the Director of Research and to Caltrans.

At the same time that you receive a reminder of the due date, you will also receive other required information including the contract number, fiscal year, quarter, and budget information.

MTI Budget

The San Jose State University Foundation provides MTI with a statement the 15th of every month that reflects the charges against the grant for the prior month. This statement is called the “Summary of Account Status”. Once this is received, the information is added to Quick Books (MTI’s accounting tool) so that MTI knows, on a project by project basis, the balance of each account. In practice here is what it looks like: The Foundation provides the “Summary of Account Status” on the 15th – this information is processed and a “Budget vs. Actual” report is created for each project by the 30th or 31st of the month. At that point, expenditures through the end of the prior month are reported. For the project then, the most recent "Quick Books" report information available reflects charges through the end of the *prior* month.

Budget updates will be provided quarterly. If, at any other time, you have a budget related question or require an immediate update, contact the Director of Research at philbrick@mti.sjsu.edu.

MTI Final Reports

MTI publishes the results and final report once successful peer review and editing have occurred. Fifteen percent of the Research Associates’ fees will be held pending acceptance of the final edited report, unless otherwise instructed by the SJSU Foundation.

MTI must be credited as the sponsoring entity on all presentations, publications, and correspondence related to the research project. All finance research projects should be credited to MTI’s National Transportation Finance Center (MTI NTFC).

All original documents, surveys, interview results, promotional material, working papers and reports generated, conducted under MTI auspices, shall be the joint property of MTI and the Research Project Team Members, to be retained by the Principal Investigator and made available upon request by MTI or the Federal Government for a period of three years following publication of the final report.

Refer to the “MTI Report Guide for Authors” when writing the final report. This document provides guidance for project team members who are preparing content for a research report draft. It includes information about required report elements, handling specifics like figures and tables, and other topics. Authors will find a list of helpful resources and a checklist to assist in preparing and submitting the research report draft. Check periodically for updates and changes, especially before submitting the report.

MTI Research Brief

Once the final report is submitted, MTI requests that the Principal Investigator submit content for a one page, double-sided, research brief. These will be used to promote the research project through wide spread distribution at conferences and meetings. The link to the full report will appear at the bottom so that, free of charge, the report can be downloaded.

Reimbursements and Payment for Services

Invoice Detail Sheet: Reimbursement

Please download this document from:

http://www.transweb.sjsu.edu/MTIportal/research/ra_forms.html

The invoice detail sheet must be completed by all persons, including principal investigators, project team members, student assistants, and editors requesting reimbursement from MTI. This document may be used for reimbursement of expenses as well as documentation for services rendered.

To prevent payment delay, complete the invoice detail sheet in its entirety, and mail the form and original receipts to:

**MINETA TRANSPORTATION INSTITUTE
210 North 4th Street
Fourth Floor
San Jose, CA 95112
Attention: Meg Fitts, Research Support Manager**

Please note that reimbursement payments *will not* be processed unless the PI of the project has submitted a monthly status report.

Travel Reimbursement

If you travel for an MTI research project, you must submit a “Travel Authorization and Requisition of Funds Form” along with the original receipts.

Each reimbursement request will be reviewed for accuracy and legitimacy of expenditures. Charges for alcohol and entertainment will not be reimbursed. Examples of non-allowable costs include, but are not limited to: movies and/or games, newspapers and/or magazines, travel agent booking fees, taxis if a car has been rented, laundry and/or dry cleaning.

Itemized receipts are required. If alcohol is purchased at a meal, the total amount, including tax and tip, must be removed from the bill.

The standard mileage reimbursement rate is 55 cents per mile, effective January 1, 2009.

Timesheet

All CSU employees and CSU students must complete a timesheet for payment of services rendered. An original, signed timesheet is required. Timesheets must be submitted to Meg Fitts, MTI Research Support Manager, at the above address, and must have the MTI project number noted at the top. **DO NOT** submit this form directly to the San Jose State University Foundation as this will result in payment delay.

Paychecks are only issued twice a month, on approximately the 10th and the 26th. To have your paycheck electronically deposited, complete the form titled “Direct Deposit Enrollment Authorization” and submit to the Human Resources Department.

If timesheets are submitted more than one pay period behind, a written explanation documenting the reason for the delay must be submitted with the timesheet.

Invoice Detail Sheet: Payment for Services Rendered

Non-CSU employees and independent contractors (including students from universities outside of California) submit an invoice detail sheet for payment of services rendered. Invoice detail sheets may be submitted to Meg Fitts, MTI Research Support Manager, electronically at fitts@mti.sjsu.edu. DO NOT submit this form directly to the San Jose State University Foundation as this will result in payment delay.

Checks are issued approximately two to three weeks after the invoice detail sheet is submitted.

Journal Publication Incentive Program

MTI supports the publication of MTI research in refereed journals. To encourage researchers to undertake the additional work required to have an article published, MTI provides an incentive award to authors of MTI research.

Award: \$1500, to be split equally among the authors of the article, unless the PI or first author notifies MTI and all other authors that another division is appropriate. MTI will require confirmation from multiple authors that they agree to the split.

Timing: Authors may claim the award once the MTI final report has been submitted and sufficient evidence of publication is provided to MTI. This can include an email from the publisher citing the specific edition for the publication, a pre-publication proof, a copy of the actual article or journal with the article or similar, etc.

Process: Each individual seeking payment should provide the evidence of publication specified above to the MTI Research Director who will send an award letter. The awardee completes the required information and returns it to the Research Director who will submit the requisition for payment to the SJSU Foundation. The Foundation will mail the check. Award payments are subject to taxes. The SJSU Foundation will provide a 1099 tax form for that purpose.

Limitations: The incentive applies only to the first paper based on the related MTI report.

Post Research Conference Travel and Technology Transfer

MTI supports the presentation of MTI research at scientific conferences – an activity that is considered “technology transfer” by the US DOT RITA. MTI provides conference travel support to authors of MTI research.

Award: \$1500. Original receipts must be submitted for conference travel. The incentive applies until funds are depleted.

Timing: Authors may claim the reimbursement once the MTI final report has been submitted and sufficient evidence of presentation is provided to MTI. This can include a copy of the conference proceedings, etc.

Table 1: MTI Requirements and Individual Responsible for Completion and Submission

MTI Requirements	CSU Faculty	Non-CSU Faculty	Student Assistants Located in CA	Student Assistants Outside of CA	Principal Investigator
Contract: Faculty Appointment Form *Researcher must also complete a W4, I9, and confidential employee sheet	X				
Contract: Non-Academic Appointment Form *Researcher must also complete a W4, I9, and confidential employee sheet			X		
Contract: Independent Contractor (IC) Agreement		X			
Contract: Independent Contractor (IC) Agreement				X	
Payment: Invoice Detail Sheet		X		X	
Payment: Timesheet	X		X		
Payment: Travel Authorization and Requisition	X	X	X	X	
Reporting: Caltrans Quarterly Report					X
Reporting: Monthly Status Report					X
Reporting: Research Final Report*					X
Reporting: Research Brief*					X
Reporting: Research Project Description*					X

*Project team members may contribute, however, PI is responsible for final submission