

GUIDE FOR BCCAT CONTRACTORS

INTRODUCTION

The research that contractors carry out on behalf of BCCAT is a key component of BCCAT's support of the BC Transfer System and BC post-secondary education. The purpose of this guide is to familiarize you with BCCAT's policies and procedures around contracted research projects. This guide is intended to supplement calls for proposals and the contract guiding your project.

It is the contractor's responsibility to be familiar with, and to comply with, the terms and requirements of the calls for proposals, and the terms and requirements of the contract that they sign with BCCAT.

If information in this guide conflicts with information in the project contract, the information in the contract will take precedence.

BCCAT assigns a staff member to each contracted research project. The staff member assigned to your project is your primary contact at BCCAT. Feel free to ask them questions about any of the information in this guide, or about anything else during the project process.

STEPS IN THE PROJECT PROCESS

Please note: These are the *general* steps in the project process. The specific process for each project will be defined in the terms of the contract.

- Project proposals are reviewed by BCCAT staff and by members of the BCCAT committee commissioning the project.
- A contractor is selected.
- The contractor and BCCAT agree on contract terms (see "Contract") and the contract is issued and signed.
- The contractor begins work on the project, with BCCAT support.
- The contractor provides project updates as requested, e.g. to inform BCCAT committees of the project's progress.
- BCCAT staff review draft versions of the deliverables and provide feedback.

- An interim payment is usually issued after the first deliverable (e.g. a draft report, a survey instrument, a questionnaire protocol) is approved by BCCAT. Staff may request revisions to the deliverable before payment is issued.
- The contractor submits a draft final deliverable that is reviewed by BCCAT staff and by peer reviewers. BCCAT staff may request revisions before it is submitted for final approval to the BCCAT committee that commissioned the project.
- The revised final deliverable is reviewed by the BCCAT committee that commissioned the project. The committee may choose to receive the deliverable and authorize payment to the contractor without publishing the deliverable (see “Project Dissemination”); approve it for publication and authorize final payment; or authorize final payment subject to satisfactory revisions to the deliverable.
- The final payment is issued to the contractor, and the contract is closed.

CONTRACT

Identifying the Parties to the Contract

BCCAT’s financial transactions are conducted through the BC Institute of Technology (BCIT). BCCAT initiates the process of creating a contract, and BCIT issues the contract. The contract is signed by the contractor and by representatives of BCIT and BCCAT.

Only one individual can be identified as the contractor, and project payments are made only to the contractor named in the contract. (See “Project Payments”.) If there is more than one participant in the contracted project, only one participant is named as the contractor, and that participant will sign the project contract. Even if the participants’ intention is for project payments to be shared among all participants, payments are only made to the identified contractor, who is then responsible for directing reimbursements or payments to the other project participants. The amount of compensation for other participants can be outlined in the project budget, but payment will only be made to the identified contractor.

Sub-contracting of project work is not permitted. When the contractor signs the project contract, they commit to carrying out the project work themselves, or only in collaboration with the participants identified in the project description. If the contractor wishes to sub-contract any project work after the contract is signed, BCCAT must be notified and must approve the sub-contracting before it commences. BCCAT retains the right to deny requests for sub-contracting.

Project Title and BCCAT Org Code

Each contract includes the project title and a six-digit “org code” assigned by BCCAT. Both the title and the org code are used to identify and track the project in BCCAT’s internal records. The project title and the org code must be included on all invoices that the contractor submits to BCCAT for payment (see “Project Payments”).

Contract Length

The “Term” section of the contract includes start and end dates. These dates are mutually agreed upon by the contractor and BCCAT. The contractor is responsible for informing BCCAT of any unexpected circumstances that may delay the project beyond the contract end date, or that may affect the ability of the contractor to produce deliverables by the deadlines stated in the project timeline.

If a contractor feels that a project extension may be necessary, they must notify BCCAT in writing as soon as possible. The notification must include an estimate of the additional time needed to complete the project.

After the project is underway, BCCAT can extend the contract term for up to six months from the original end date without a formal contract extension. BCCAT will require the contractor to agree in writing to the extended term, to ensure that there is a record of the informal extension.

If the project work is likely to continue for longer than six months beyond the contract’s end date, a formal contract extension is required. Informal and formal contract extensions will usually only be granted by BCCAT in the case of unforeseen or extenuating circumstances.

BCCAT will initiate the process of creating the formal contract extension. The extension agreement is signed by the contractor and by representatives of BCCAT and BCIT.

Project Description

The project description in the contract is drafted by BCCAT, based on the description in the project proposal, and incorporating any changes requested by BCCAT or its committees. The contractor and BCCAT will mutually agree on the final version of the project description to be included in the contract.

The project description in the contract includes:

- A list of project objectives, shown in the “Objectives” section
- An itemized budget for the project, shown in the “Value of Contract” section of the contract

- A description of the project tasks and a timeline for completing the tasks and the overall project, shown in the “Outputs, Timeframe and Payment Schedule” section of the contract
- The names of any other participants in the project, shown in the “Outputs, Timeframe and Payment Schedule” section of the contract
- Estimated dates when deliverables will be submitted to BCCAT, shown in the “Outputs, Timeframe and Payment Schedule” section of the contract

The BCCAT staff member supporting the project is identified in the “Outputs, Reporting and Payment Schedule” section of the contract.

PROJECT SUPPORT

The BCCAT staff member assigned to your project is available to assist you throughout your work on the project. Feel free to contact your assigned staff member at any time, but please remember that BCCAT staff members are usually supporting multiple projects. Staff members will support your work on your project as thoroughly and efficiently as possible, but at times staff members’ availability may be limited because of work being carried out on other projects.

PROJECT COMPONENTS

Literature Review

Some projects incorporate a review of published relevant literature. If a literature review is required, this is stated as a deliverable in the project contract. Generally, the literature review focuses on relevant academic (peer-reviewed) research, but may also include research findings from industry and professional groups.

A literature review is not a review of institutional or system policies or practices. It is expected to survey published research relating to the topic of the project, and summarize the findings from that literature with indications of how the findings relate to the project.

The contractor is expected to ensure that the literature review includes credible, accurate, relevant, and up-to-date information.

It is the researcher’s responsibility to arrange access to appropriate sources of literature. BCCAT cannot provide access to online academic databases.

While Google Scholar and Wikipedia may be useful in identifying appropriate literature for the literature review, these sources may not supply the full text of the cited research, and may not

accurately describe results from that research. Contractors are strongly encouraged to review the original version of any material cited in either of these sources.

Data Collection

If a project involves data collection from individuals or groups affiliated with post-secondary institutions, ethical approval may be necessary before work on the project can begin. Generally, ethical approval is granted by the research ethics board of every institution where data collection will take place.

If necessary, BCCAT will work with the contractor to identify the research ethics board(s) with the appropriate jurisdiction to review and approve the research. However, it is the contractor's responsibility to obtain the necessary approval(s). The contractor is required to provide BCCAT with a copy of the notice of ethical approval from each participating research site.

BCCAT may require standardized wording on data privacy and informed consent to be included in any survey instrument or interview protocol. BCCAT will supply this wording to the contractor.

If a project involves data collection through an online survey, the contractor is responsible for creating the survey questions and response formats. BCCAT staff may suggest revisions to wording or formatting to make the survey instrument more effective. BCCAT has a corporate account with an online survey site, and may be able to format and host the survey, depending on staff availability.

If the contractor hosts or administers an online survey themselves, BCCAT approval is required before the survey is launched. The raw data from the survey must be provided to BCCAT.

BCCAT owns all data collected for a commissioned project, unless the contract specifies otherwise.

BCCAT does not distribute survey links to its own mailing lists, or to mailing lists that it participates in. BCCAT staff will, whenever possible, work with the contractor to assist them in identifying or compiling mailing lists for survey distribution.

Preparation of Draft and Final Reports

BCCAT expects reports and publications to be logically structured, consistently formatted, and clearly written. Reports are expected to include an executive summary, a table of contents, and if applicable, a list of figures and/or tables in the section including the table of contents. Contractors should follow the guidelines in the [BCCAT Style Guide](#) when preparing reports.

Copy Editing

Contractors may be required to include a line item in project budgets for professional copy editing of reports. Generally, the editing occurs when the full draft of the final report is complete, but before the full draft is submitted to BCCAT.

The copy editor is expected to review the draft report for accuracy, consistency, and readability. Ideally, the copy editor will also provide feedback in areas such as structure, word choice, and topic sequencing. The copy editor should ensure that the report uses APA formatting (see “Referencing” below).

The contractor is responsible for identifying, hiring and paying a qualified copy editor. BCCAT does not provide recommendations for editors. The Editors’ Association of Canada website (<https://www.editors.ca/>) includes an online directory of copy editors that are available for freelance work.

Referencing

BCCAT reports and publications use APA formatting for citations and references. A guide to APA formatting is included in the [BCCAT Style Guide](#). Additional detailed information is available at https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.html

- If there is a direct quote from a source in the body of the paper, the in-text citation must include the page or paragraph number for the quoted material.
- For sources with more than one author, list all authors’ names in the first citation of the source.
- Please format references as plain text. Auto-formatted references, or references formatted with fields, make it difficult for reviewers to add edits or comments.
- Ensure that in-text citations and entries in reference lists contain all necessary information, in APA formatting. This includes correctly spelled author names, publication dates, journal or book name, publisher and city/state or province (for books), volume and edition numbers (for journals), and the starting and ending page numbers (for journal articles). A DOI for an article or publication may also be included.
- If a cited document is available online, please include a link to the document at the end of the reference entry.

BCCAT will not re-format content in reports that does not follow APA style. The report will be returned to the contractor with a request to revise the content appropriately. The contractor is responsible for ensuring that APA style is used consistently and correctly throughout the report.

Formatting

Please ensure that the formatting of tables and figures is consistent throughout the document (e.g. font type, size, and colours; capitalization in titles, captions, and row or column headings).

If inserting tables and figures generated in Excel or other programs, please ensure that the tables and figures are editable. The figures should either contain embedded source data or be accompanied by the source data in a separate file. Please do *not* format figures as images, because these cannot be edited, and may cause formatting problems during the layout of the finalized report.

If the report includes appendices, please give each appendix its own number and title (e.g. Appendix I: List of Participants) and start each appendix on a new page. Appendices must be referenced in the text of the report.

Revisions

BCCAT will provide feedback, including feedback on content and formatting, on draft and final versions of reports. However, the contractor is responsible for producing a final version of the report that is acceptable to BCCAT and to its committees. Contractors should allocate time in their schedules for revisions and editing after draft and final reports are submitted to BCCAT.

If a report needs extensive revisions or rewriting, the contractor is responsible for that work, including the cost of a professional editor if necessary. BCCAT is not responsible for any additional costs for revisions based on feedback provided by BCCAT or by peer reviewers.

PROJECT DEADLINES

A proposed timeline for the project is included in the contract. If the overall project needs additional time to be completed, BCCAT may grant a contract extension in the case of unforeseen or extenuating circumstances (see “Contract Length”).

Final reports are evaluated and approved by the BCCAT committee that commissioned the project. Generally, BCCAT staff will not send a final report to a committee until the report is satisfactory in content and format.

Each committee’s meeting dates are listed here: <https://www.bccat.ca/about/committees>

Contractors should submit reports to BCCAT staff well in advance of the agenda deadline for the committee meeting, so that BCCAT can provide feedback and request revisions, and so that the revised report can be completed in time to be included in the agenda package. Generally,

BCCAT recommends that contractors submit reports at least a month prior to the committee's meeting date.

If a contractor submits a final report without enough time for BCCAT staff to review or to suggest revisions before the deadline for the agenda package, BCCAT retains the right to postpone submission of the report to the committee for approval until the report has been adequately reviewed and, if necessary, revised.

PROJECT PAYMENTS

Generally, BCCAT issues payments for projects at multiple points in the project process. The payment schedule will be defined in the "Reporting and Payment Schedule" section of the contract.

The contractor and BCCAT will mutually agree on the percentage of total fees that will be paid at specific points in the project process (e.g. 50% upon approval of the draft report and 50% upon approval of the final report).

Interim Payment

When a draft deliverable is submitted to BCCAT, it is reviewed by the BCCAT staff member assigned to the project. The staff member will give feedback to the contractor on the deliverable, and may request edits or revisions. The deliverables will also be sent to peer reviewers.

When the BCCAT staff member is satisfied with the content and format of the deliverable, including the contractor's responses to peer reviewers' comments, they will ask the contractor to submit an invoice to BCCAT for the amount of payment specified in the contract. **BCCAT cannot initiate a payment until it receives an invoice from the contractor.**

The invoice must include:

- The date the invoice was issued
- The name and contact information of the contractor
- The address where the payment should be sent (if this is different from the contractor's address)
- The name of the project and the BCCAT org code for the project, as shown in the contract
- The reason for the payment (e.g. "completion of draft report")
- The amount of the payment, with each component identified separately (e.g. contractor fee, GST, expenses)

If the contractor has incurred expenses related to the project, these will only be reimbursed if an expense budget is explicitly included in the contract, and if receipts are submitted to verify the expenditures. BCCAT procedures for expense reimbursement, and expenses that are eligible for reimbursement, are outlined here: <http://www.bccat.ca/about/travel>

Even if expenses are part of the project budget in the contract, expenses cannot be reimbursed without receipts.

When the invoice and documentation have been received and approved, BCCAT submits a cheque requisition to BCIT. Cheques are usually issued between two and four weeks after BCIT receives the requisition, but may take up to eight weeks, depending on BCIT staff workload and the time of year.

Final Payment

The final deliverable is reviewed by the BCCAT staff member assigned to the project. The staff member may request revisions or edits. The deliverable will also be sent to peer reviewers.

When the BCCAT staff member is satisfied with the content and format of the final product, including the contractor's responses to peer reviewers' comments, the deliverable is submitted to the committee that commissioned the project. The committee must approve the final deliverable before the final payment on the contract can be authorized. The committee may approve final payment subject to changes and edits being made to the deliverable. In this case, final payment will not be initiated until the requested changes are made.

If a final deliverable is submitted between committee meetings, approval of the deliverable and authorization of the final payment may be delayed until the committee's next meeting. In some cases, committees can be asked to approve deliverables via email electronically; however, it is preferable to submit final deliverables in time for review and discussion at scheduled meetings.

Once the final payment has been authorized, the contractor issues an invoice to BCCAT. Any expenses incurred by the contractor since the previous invoice was issued must also be submitted with documentation. When the invoice and documentation have been received and approved, BCCAT will submit a cheque requisition to BCIT.

If total project expenses are less than the budgeted amount in the contract, the difference cannot be used to increase payment for professional services or contractor fees.

PROJECT DISSEMINATION AND COPYRIGHT

BCCAT generally posts completed reports or other deliverables on its website. It also publicizes new publications in its *Engage* newsletter and its annual review, as well as in the news section of its website, and to its institutional and professional contacts.

BCCAT reserves the right to select how or where it will disseminate the final approved deliverable. This may include formal design and publication, either in print or on the web, and communications distributed through BCCAT's network.

BCCAT and its committees may approve full payment for a completed project but choose not to publish or disseminate the final version of the deliverable. If the contractor is undertaking another project (e.g. a conference presentation or academic article) and wishes to use data or text from an unpublished BCCAT report, or a deliverable that has not been distributed, they must submit a written request to BCCAT and receive approval before commencing the project.

BCCAT retains copyright to all deliverables for the project it commissions, including unpublished reports or other final products.