

GUIDE FOR BCCAT CONTRACTORS

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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. This guide is intended to familiarize contractors undertaking BCCAT research projects with BCCAT's policies and procedures around externally contracted research projects. The information in this guide supplements the information in calls for proposals and in the contract guiding each project.

It is the contractor's responsibility to be familiar with, and to comply with, the terms and requirements of calls for proposals, the information in this Guide, and the terms and requirements of the contract signed 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 every contracted research project. This staff member is the contractor's primary contact at BCCAT and can answer 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 “CONTRACTCONTRACT”) and the contract is issued and signed.
- The contractor begins work on the project, with BCCAT support.
- The contractor provides progress 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. The contractor must submit an invoice for payment. BCCAT staff may request revisions to the deliverable before payment is approved.
- The contractor submits a draft final deliverable that is reviewed by BCCAT staff and by peer reviewers. BCCAT staff may request revisions before the deliverable is submitted 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 AND COPYRIGHT”); approve it for publication and authorize final payment; or authorize final payment subject to satisfactory revisions.
- The final payment is issued to the contractor, after the contractor submits an invoice, 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. Project payments are made only to the contractor named in the contract (see PROJECT PAYMENTS).

If there is more than one participant working on the contracted project, only one participant is named as the contractor. That participant signs the project contract. Payments are only made to the identified contractor. If the project payments are shared among all participants, the contractor is responsible for directing reimbursements or payments to the other project participants. The amount of compensation for other participants can be included in the project budget, but payments will only be made to the identified contractor.

Work on a contracted project can only be sub-contracted with BCCAT's knowledge and approval. A contractor who signs the project contract thereby commits to carrying out the project work independently or in collaboration only with 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. Failure to report a sub-contracting arrangement may result in the termination of the contract.** 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. Both the project title and the org code must be included on all invoices that the contractor submits to BCCAT (see PROJECT PAYMENTS).

Contract Length

The "Term" section of the contract includes start and end dates for the project. These dates are mutually agreed upon by the contractor and BCCAT. If any unexpected circumstances may affect the contractor's ability to meet the deadlines stated in the contract, the contractor is responsible for informing BCCAT in writing as soon as possible.

If a contractor feels that an extension to the contract end date may be necessary, the contractor 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 informally extend the contract term for up to six months from the original end date without amending the contract. 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 amendment is required. BCCAT will initiate the process of creating the amendment. The amendment to the agreement is signed by the contractor and by representatives of BCCAT and BCIT.

Informal and formal contract extensions will usually only be granted by BCCAT in the case of unforeseen or extenuating circumstances, and only when the contractor has notified BCCAT in writing as soon as those circumstances occur.

Project Description

The project description in the contract is drafted by BCCAT, based on the description in the project proposal submitted by the contractor. The project description will incorporate 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 the project is available to assist the contractor throughout the work on the project. BCCAT staff members are usually supporting multiple projects at the same time. Staff members will support the contractor's work on the project as thoroughly and efficiently as possible, but their availability may be limited if work is 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 identified as a deliverable in the project contract.

A literature review is not a review of institutional or system policies or practices. It is expected to survey published academic research relating to the topic of the project, summarize the findings from that literature, and indicate how the findings relate to the topic of the project. Generally, the literature review focuses on relevant academic (peer-reviewed) research, but may also include research findings from industry and professional groups.

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 or to other sources.

Initial searches via Google Scholar and Wikipedia may be useful for identifying appropriate literature for the literature review. However, these sources may not supply the full text of the cited research, or may not accurately describe the results of that research. Contractors are strongly encouraged to review the original version of any material cited in either of these sources.

Research Ethics Approval for Projects

Ethics approval may be required for projects involving data collection from individuals or groups affiliated with post-secondary institutions. This approval must be obtained by the contractor before starting work on the data collection.

Generally, ethics approval is granted by the research ethics board (REB) of the contractor's affiliated ("home") institution. In multi-jurisdictional/multi-site projects, approval must be confirmed at each institution where data collection will take place or through a harmonized ethics review (e.g. [Research Ethics BC](#)).

Ethics approval must be obtained specifically for the project that the contractor is conducting for BCCAT. Ethics approval for related projects by the contractor is not transferable to BCCAT-funded projects.

If necessary, BCCAT will work with the contractor to identify the research ethics board(s) with the appropriate jurisdiction to review and approve the project. However, it is the contractor's responsibility to obtain the necessary approval(s) from the appropriate board(s) and to provide BCCAT with copies of all REB approvals. If an application for REB approval is denied, the contractor must inform BCCAT of the reasons for the denial, and BCCAT will work with the contractor to amend an REB application to achieve the approval.

Data Collection and Storage

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 must approve the survey before it is launched.

BCCAT owns all data collected for a commissioned project, unless the contract specifies otherwise. Any BCCAT-owned material, such as data from surveys or interviews, must be stored on servers located in Canada. Google Drive and DropBox are not acceptable for any data storage. OneDrive is acceptable provided it is located in the Canadian Azure cloud.

Typically, the contractor hosts and/or administers an online survey. However, BCCAT has a corporate account with an online survey site, and may be able to host the survey, depending on staff availability.

If a project involves data collection through interviews or focus groups, BCCAT must approve the interview or focus group protocols before any interviews or focus groups are conducted.

For contracts where BCCAT is the owner of the data, raw data from all surveys, interviews, and focus groups must be provided to BCCAT.

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

Contractors wishing to use data from their BCCAT projects, published or unpublished, for another project, must obtain written approval from BCCAT in advance (see "PROJECT DISSEMINATION AND COPYRIGHT"). BCCAT reserves the right to deny requests at its sole discretion.

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.

Professional Editing

Contractors will generally be required to include a line item in project budgets for professional editing of reports. Editing usually occurs after the contractor has completed the full draft of the final report, and before the full draft is submitted to BCCAT.

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

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

Referencing

BCCAT reports and publications use APA (American Psychological Association) 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, the in-text citation must include the page or paragraph number for the quoted material.
- For sources with more than one author, all authors’ names should be listed in the in-text citation the first time the source is referenced.
- References and citations should be formatted as plain text. Auto-formatted references, or references formatted with fields, make it difficult for reviewers to add edits or comments.

- In-text citations and entries in reference lists must contain all necessary information, in APA formatting, including the following:
 - correctly spelled author names
 - publication dates
 - journal or book name
 - publisher name and publisher's city/state or province (for books)
 - volume and edition numbers (for journals)
 - starting and ending page numbers (for journal articles).

A DOI (digital object identifier) 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. It is the contractor's responsibility to ensure that links included in the reference list are active links.

BCCAT will not re-format reports that do not follow APA formatting. Reports that are not appropriately formatted will be returned to the contractor with a request for revisions. The contractor is responsible for ensuring that APA formatting is used consistently and correctly throughout the report.

Tables and Figures

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

Tables and figures in the report must be editable. If tables and figures are generated in Excel or other programs, the tables and figures should contain embedded source data. If this is not feasible, the contractor may be asked to provide BCCAT with the source data in a separate file.

Figures or tables formatted as images will be returned to the contractor with a request for an editable format. Images cannot be edited and may cause formatting problems during the layout of the finalized report.

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

Revisions

BCCAT will provide feedback, including feedback on content and formatting, on draft and final versions of reports. 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 ensuring that this work is completed. BCCAT is not responsible for any additional costs the contractor may incur in addressing feedback provided by BCCAT staff or peer reviewers.

PROJECT DEADLINES

A timeline for the project is included in the contract. If the contractor needs additional time to complete the project, due to unforeseen or extenuating circumstances, BCCAT may grant a contract extension (see “Contract Length”). Final reports are evaluated and approved by the BCCAT committee that commissioned the project, at one of the committee’s regular meetings. Generally, BCCAT staff will not send a final report to a committee for approval until the report is satisfactory in content and format.

BCCAT committee 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 committee meetings to allow BCCAT staff to provide feedback on the report and request revisions, and to ensure that the contractor can complete revisions in time for the report to be included in the meeting’s agenda package. BCCAT recommends that contractors submit reports at least one month before a committee’s meeting date.

If a contractor submits a final report prior to a meeting without enough time for BCCAT staff to review it and suggest revisions, 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 and the deliverables that will be required for each payment are outlined 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).

BCCAT cannot initiate a payment until it receives an invoice from the contractor.

Interim Payment

When a draft deliverable is submitted to BCCAT, it is reviewed by the BCCAT staff member assigned to the project. The deliverable may also be sent to peer reviewers. The contractor may be asked to revise the deliverable based on staff and reviewer feedback.

When BCCAT staff are satisfied with the content and format of the deliverable, including the contractor’s responses to feedback, they will ask the contractor to submit an invoice to BCCAT.

The invoice must include the following information:

- 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 on the contract)
- 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)

Project expenses will only be reimbursed when an expense budget is explicitly included in the contract, and only after receipts are submitted to BCCAT to verify expenditures. BCCAT procedures for expense reimbursement, and a list of the types of 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 will not be reimbursed if receipts are not provided by the contractor.

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. The possibility of issuing payments via different methods can be discussed.

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 staff and peer reviewers' comments, the deliverable is submitted to the committee that commissioned the project. At its next meeting, the committee must approve the final deliverable before a 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, the final payment will not be initiated until BCCAT staff are satisfied that the requested changes have been made.

If a final deliverable is submitted in between scheduled meetings of the committee, approval of the deliverable and authorization of the final payment may be delayed until the committee's next meeting. BCCAT reserves the right to have final deliverables approved at the next committee meeting, rather than within the interim. While in some cases committee members can be asked in between meetings, via email, to approve deliverables, contractors are strongly encouraged to submit final deliverables in time for committees to review and discuss the deliverable at their scheduled meetings.

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

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

PROJECT DISSEMINATION AND COPYRIGHT

BCCAT generally posts completed reports or other deliverables on its website. It also publicizes publications in its *Engage* newsletter and its annual review, as well as in the news section of its website, and sends publication notifications to its institutional and professional contacts. Links to completed reports on the BCCAT website are also usually posted on social media.

BCCAT reserves the right to select how or where it will disseminate final approved deliverables. Dissemination includes formal design and publication of the deliverable, either in print or on the web, and notifications distributed by BCCAT. BCCAT and its committees may approve final payment for a completed project but choose not to publish or disseminate the project and/or deliverables related to the project.

If a contractor is undertaking a different project and wishes to use data or content from a published or unpublished BCCAT report, or from a deliverable that has not been distributed, the contractor must submit a written request to BCCAT and receive approval in advance. This approval must also be requested if the researcher intends to use the data or content from a BCCAT project as part of another externally or internally funded project or commission. The written request must specify the intended use of the data or content, and the context (e.g. conference where the research will be presented, journal where a research article will be published) in which the data or content will be used. BCCAT reserves the right to deny requests at its own discretion.

BCCAT retains copyright to all material (e.g., data collected in any form) and deliverables for projects it commissions, including unpublished reports or any other final products, unless specified otherwise in the project contract.