

**OPERATIONAL  
GUIDE**

# **Sponsored Project Closeout: A Strategic Roadmap**

A Practical Operational Guide  
for PIs and Key Personnel

Strategic Project  
Management Series

# The Objective: Why We Meet

Closeout meetings are designed to help PIs avoid last-minute issues and ensure a smooth project end.



## Reporting

Ensure all final technical, financial, and administrative reports are submitted on time.



## Financial Hygiene

Verify financial activity is accurate, allowable, and fully reconciled.



## Subawards

Confirm subaward invoices are final and deliverables are complete.



## Compliance

Ensure documentation meets all sponsor and institutional requirements.

# The Project Team Roster

Successful closeout requires collaboration between facilitators and project stewards.

## Group 1: The Facilitators (Required)

### ORA Post-Award Team

Facilitates the meeting and provides guidance on financial and reporting requirements.

## Group 2: The Project Stewards (Recommended)



**Principal Investigator (PI):**  
Primary project lead.



**Authorized Official (AO):**  
If different from the PI.

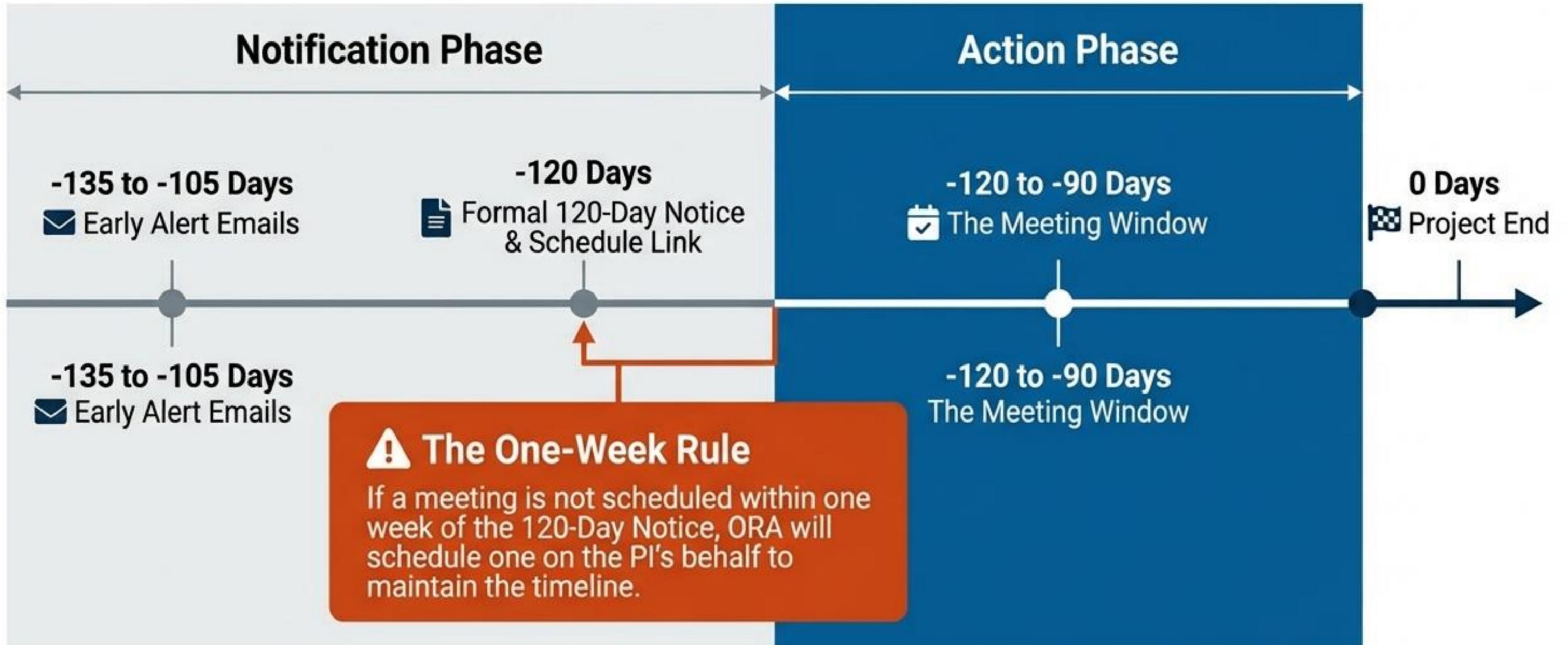


**Key Personnel / Co-PIs:**  
Collaborative research leads.

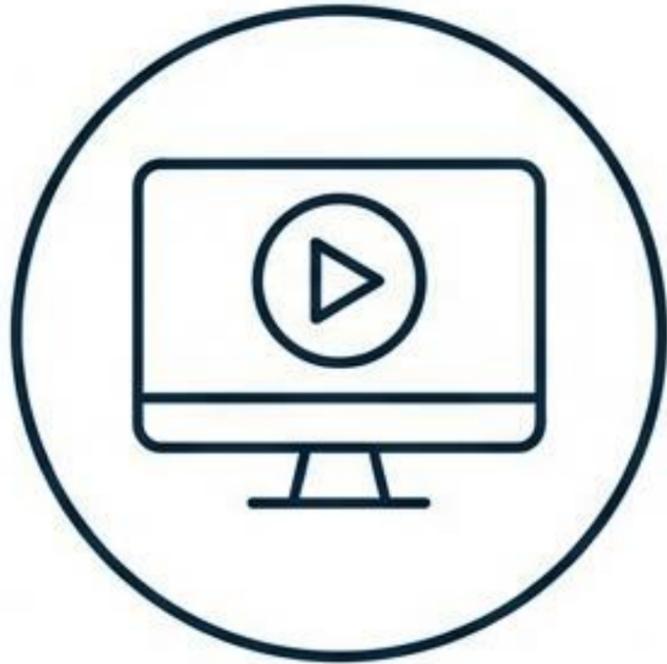


**Administrators:**  
Departmental staff managing payroll, procurement, or subawards.

# The Critical Path to Zero



# Logistics & Location



## **Primary Mode: Microsoft Teams**

Most meetings are held virtually using the link provided in the scheduling notice.



## **Secondary Mode: In-Person**

Available upon specific request.

The process is designed for minimal friction and maximum accessibility.

# The Meeting Agenda

We focus on four pillars of closure to ensure a clean exit.

## 01

### **Financial Review**

Balances, expenditures, and procurement.

## 02

### **Administrative Requirements**

Reporting, personnel, and recurring charges.

## 03

### **Subaward Management**

Invoices and external deliverables.

## 04

### **No-Cost Extension (NCE)**

Time vs. Money analysis.

# Pillar 1: Financial Stewardship

## Budget Reconciliation Status

- ✓ Review of current budget balances
- ✓ Analysis of remaining or anticipated final expenditures
- ✓ Status of outstanding payment requests
- ✓ Review of pending CataMart and PCard transactions
- ✓ Creation of a spending plan for remainder of project

**Goal:** Zero unallowable costs and a balanced ledger.

# Pillar 2: Administrative Requirements

## Paperwork



## Reporting

Confirm all required final reporting (technical, financial, equipment).

## People



## People Personnel & Services

- ✓ Determine personnel and payroll end dates or transitions.
- ✓ Plan for ending/transferring recurring charges (phones, PawPrint accounts, PCard access).

# Pillar 3: Subaward Management

Applicable only to projects with subrecipients.

**IF APPLICABLE**



## Financial Verification

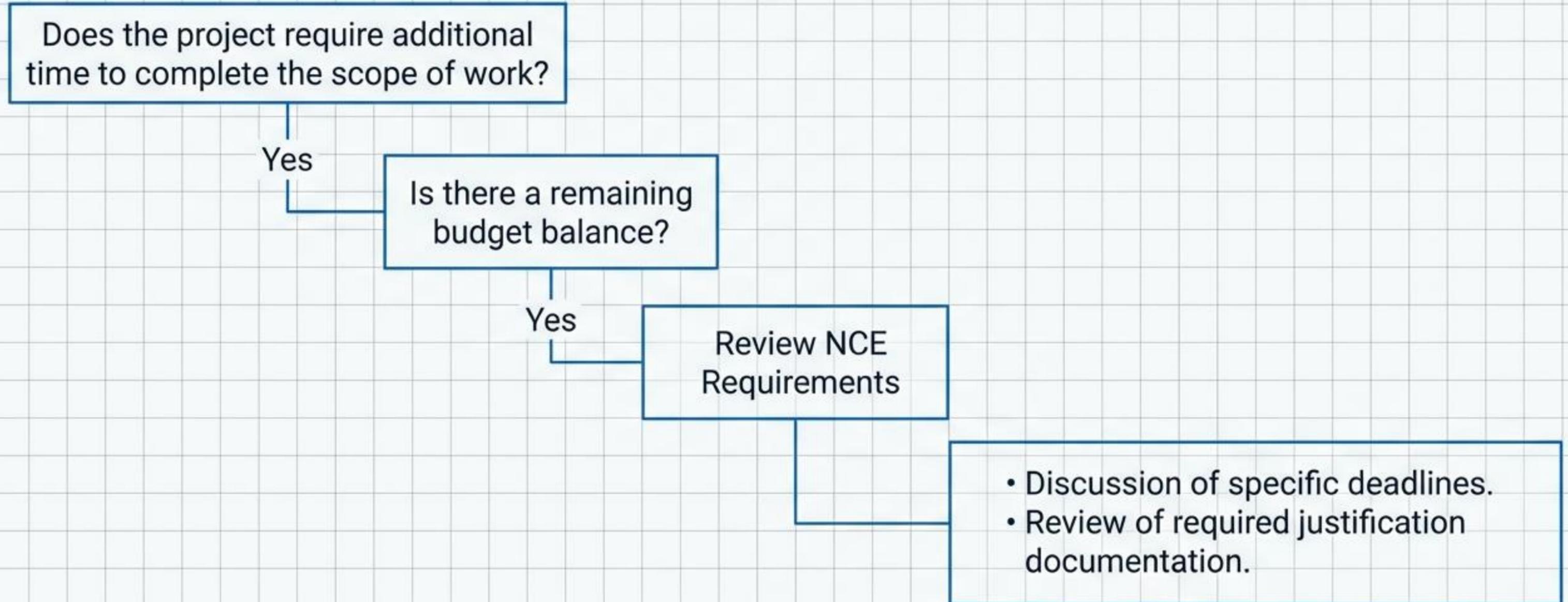
- Confirmation of final invoices from subrecipients.

## Operational Verification

- Verification that all subrecipient deliverables have been received.

# Pillar 4: No-Cost Extensions (NCE)

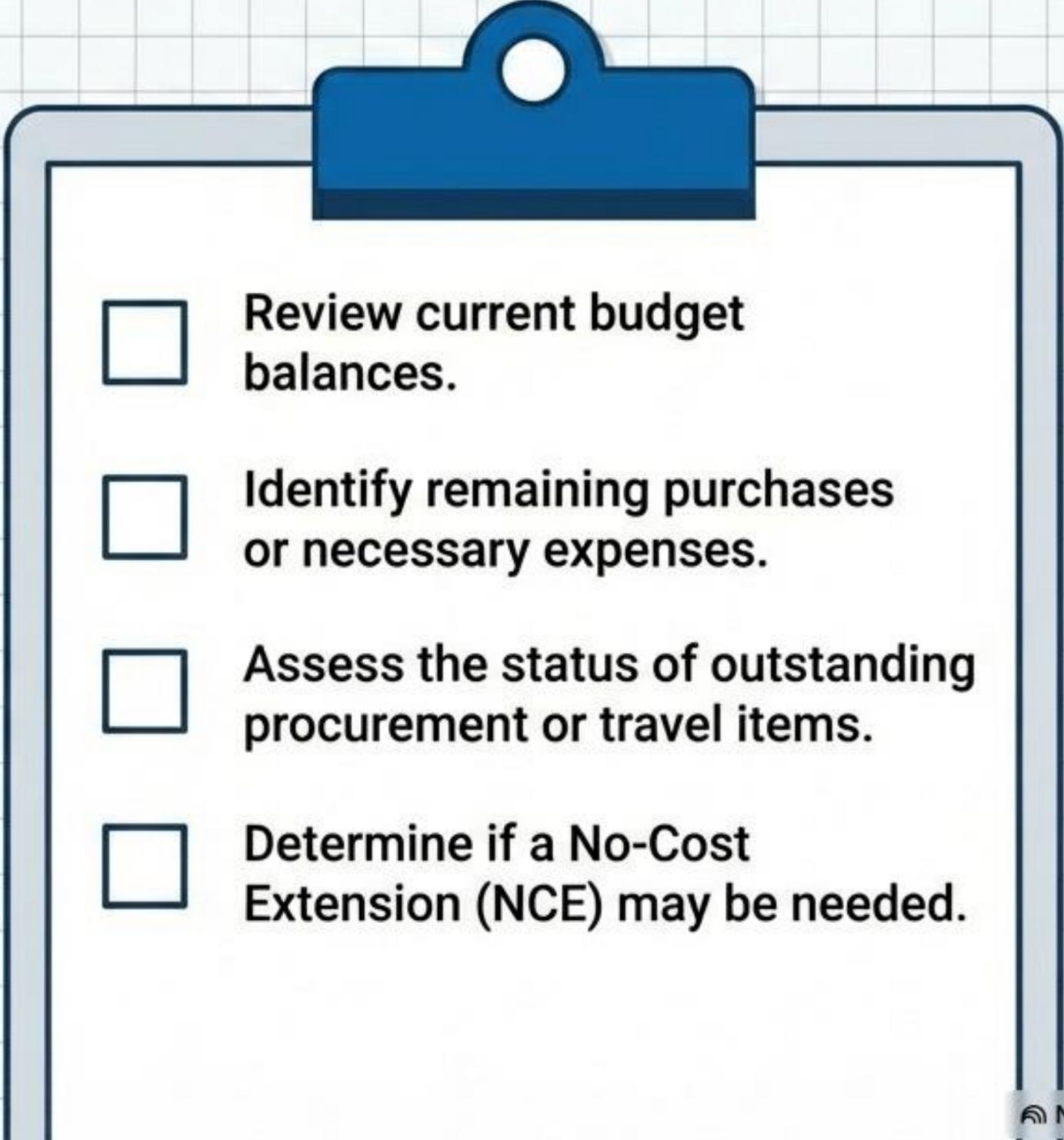
Do you need more time without more money?



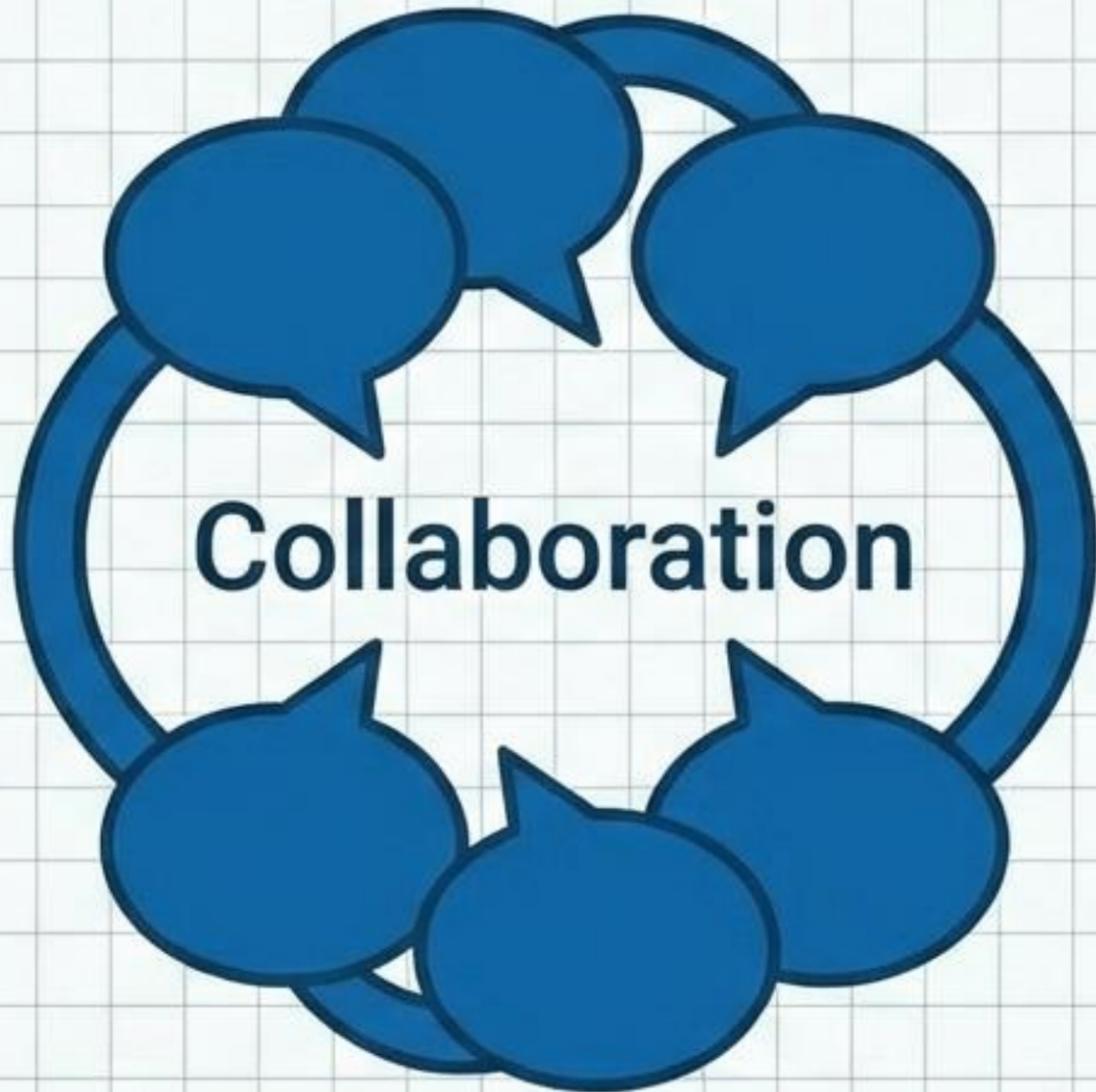
# Action Plan: Pre-Meeting



**Preparation**

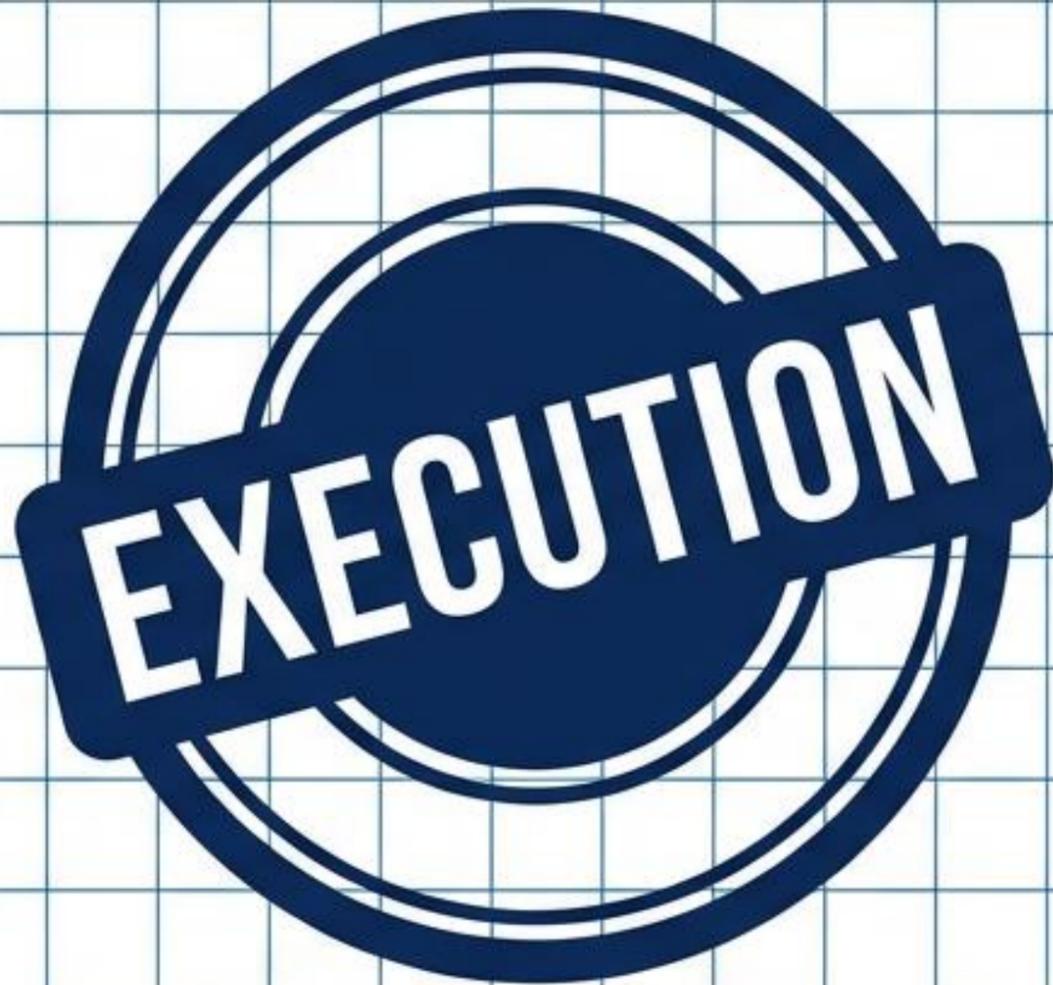
- 
- Review current budget balances.
  - Identify remaining purchases or necessary expenses.
  - Assess the status of outstanding procurement or travel items.
  - Determine if a No-Cost Extension (NCE) may be needed.

# Action Plan: During the Meeting



- Confirm all final reporting requirements.
- Review personnel transitions and payroll ending dates.
- Confirm status of subaward final invoices and deliverables.
- Clarify any concerns regarding expenditures or documentation.

# Action Plan: Post-Meeting



- Submit all final purchases promptly.
- End payroll and recurring service charges as agreed.
- Finalize subaward closeouts.
- Prepare and submit required final reports.
- Communicate any new changes or arising issues to ORA immediately.

# Value Realization

Closeout meetings drive efficiency, accuracy, and compliance.

## Burden Reduction

Provides timely reminders and reduces urgent, last-minute requests.

## Strategic Spending

Allows the PI a formal venue to explain and justify late-period expenditures.

## Clean Closure

Ensures smooth, compliant project closure.



# Ensuring a Smooth Transition

A successful closeout means a clean slate for your next grant. Communicate any changes to ORA promptly to keep the process on track.

## Contact ORA Post-Award Team

Ben Peters, Post Award Manager – [bpeters@wcu.edu](mailto:bpeters@wcu.edu)

Cameron Lopez, Grant Specialist – [clopez@wcu.edu](mailto:clopez@wcu.edu)

Thank you for your partnership in research excellence.