

PhD Professional Development Fund

Criteria for Eligibility and Award Information

The PhD Professional Development (PD) Fund supports PhD students at the LBJ School in pursuing their professional goals via educational and professional development opportunities.

Criteria

To be considered for funding, requests must be for educational and professional development activities such as travel to present original research, attend a conference, conduct field research, participate in relevant training; professional association membership fees; journal submission fees; data. Other eligible expenses include headshots, business cards, and statistical or other software for research. Funding may not be used for the purchase of hardware.

Eligibility

- For expenses incurred during a long semester, the applicant must be registered for a full-time course load during that long semester. For expenses incurred over the summer, the applicant must be registered for a full-time course load in the prior spring long semester or for three credit hours in the summer.
- Applicant must maintain at least a 3.0 grade point average and cannot be on academic probation.

Awards

An eligible applicant may receive up to \$1,500.00 towards qualifying expenses each academic year. Applications are considered on an on-going basis until the budgeted funds are exhausted. The amount of budgeted funds for PD awards varies from academic year (September 1 – August 31) to year.

How to Apply

Complete the PhD Professional Development application including the required narrative and budget. Include in your budget all estimated expenses. For travel, this likely includes economy class airfare or estimated mileage, ground transportation, conference registration fee, per diem for meals, and hotel or lodging expenses. Attach appropriate documentation in support of the amount requested such as a copy of the economy class airfare from a travel website, a printout of the hotel rate, estimates of per diem expenses for meals, estimates of ground transportation (e.g., public transportation, taxi, rideshare) and all receipts or basis for estimates of expenses. Submit the completed application to lbjfellows@utexas.edu.

Incomplete applications will be returned for completion and will not be considered until resubmitted. Students should expect notification of the decision on their request of funds no earlier than two weeks after the submission of the completed application.

Funding is not guaranteed and the payment process may take several weeks, so students should keep that in mind when applying.

Whenever possible, applications for PD Funds should be completed, submitted, and approved prior to the date you have listed as the start of the professional development event or expense. Applications submitted after the student has incurred the expense(s) will be considered, but there is no guarantee that expenses previously incurred will be approved.

Note: If you are requesting funding for travel to present original research at a meeting or conference, please complete the Application for Graduate Student Professional Development Award in addition to the PhD Professional Development/Dissertation Support application.

Fellowship Funding Options

Funding can be disbursed through these different options:

- Applicant can pay for their expenses out-of-pocket and submit receipts for reimbursement.
- Applicant can request the funds in advance to pay their expenses and then submit proof of payment or receipts.
- Hybrid option: Applicant may request some funding in advance while paying for other estimated expenses out-of-pocket and then submit proof of payment or receipts for reimbursement after the expenses are incurred.

Documentation Required for Funding

Receipts are required to support all funds requested, with the exception of meals and mileage, which are paid as noted under the Rules and Regulations for Expenses below.

Examples of supporting documentation:

- Airline receipts or estimates
- Lodging receipts or estimates
- Gasoline receipts
- Ground transportation receipts or fares
- Itemized meal receipts
- Registration receipts

Documentation of Expenses

Expenses are reimbursable only to the amount approved on your application. All receipts must be submitted within two weeks of the date the expense was incurred, or your application may no longer be considered valid for reimbursement. In special circumstances, you may seek pre-approval from the Committee to provide proof of payment at an agreed upon time. Fellowships awarded without receipts that are not provided within two weeks of the expense being incurred may result in a non-financial administrative bar and/or a request for the fellowship monies to be returned.

Submit all final (actual) expense receipts for reconciliation to lbjfellows@austin.utexas.edu.

Rules and Regulations for Expenses

The rules and regulations covering travel reimbursement come from several sources. The University of Texas is governed by the State of Texas Travel Regulations Act, the General Appropriations Act, Rules and Regulations of the University of Texas System Board of Regents, and official interpretations of the Travel Act as made by the State Comptroller of Public Accounts.

For in-state and out-of-state meals and lodging, please refer to the GSA's Federal Domestic Maximum Per Diem Rates for your destination (<https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>). This is the maximum daily reimbursement for meals and lodging. You can elect to pay more without expectation of reimbursement.

When using your own personal vehicle for trips that originate in Austin and require travel to another city, mileage is reimbursable at the current State of Texas rate. See <https://fmxcpa.texas.gov/fmx/travel/texttravel/rates/current.php>. For official point- to-point mileage you may use odometer readings or mileage computed by an online mapping tool. Provide printout of mileage calculation from Google Maps, Mapquest, etc.

Note: If you are traveling outside of the United States, you must adhere to the [University of Texas policies for international travel](#).

Receiving Your Fellowship Award

You must set up a direct deposit account to receive your award. This should be done prior to submitting your application to ensure the transaction is processed properly. You may sign up for direct deposit online at https://utdirect.utexas.edu/acct/rec/webft/webEFT_info.WBX.

International Students: Please note that there is a mandatory 14 percent federal tax withheld from payments made to nonresident students. Please keep that in mind when preparing your budget. You may be able to get a tax refund if your home country has a tax treaty with the United States. For more information, visit this link: https://austin-utexas.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/133/.