



## RESEARCH TRAVEL GRANT GUIDELINES

Greetings from GAPSA Research! Below you will find guidelines for the **GAPSA Research Travel Grant Applications**. (last updated: May 2017)

GAPSA Research has some funding available for doctoral students to help defray a portion of travel expenses to academic conferences and meetings. Due to the large number of applications we receive, there is no guarantee that you will receive funding. However, we hope that the information presented here will help you submit a strong application.

In each grant cycle, applications are accepted for conferences that take place in the time window indicated on the website for that particular cycle. (ex. between June 1<sup>st</sup> and August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017 for Summer 2017.) If you are presenting your research, you should have proof that your abstract has been accepted by the application deadline. Applicants are expected to consider other possible funding options before pursuing funding through this individual travel grant. In addition, students attending international conferences or high impact conferences with large estimated budgets (greater than \$1,000) are encouraged to apply for the President Gutmann Leadership Award as well. In the event that an applicant is awarded both awards, (s)he will be allowed to accept only one of the awards.

Research Travel Grants work on a post-travel reimbursement basis. Therefore, **please do not be concerned if the application time window and/or the award decision date is after your chosen dates of travel**. Grants are awarded according to the following eligibility criteria (*subject to change each cycle, at the discretion of the Chair for Research Students*):

### Who is eligible for a Research Student Travel Grant?

You are eligible if you:

- 1) Are enrolled in a full-time research program at the University of Pennsylvania. This definition includes Ph.D. (doctoral), A.M. (Master of Arts), and M.S. (Master of Science) degrees. This does NOT include Ed.D. or any other master of science degrees with extra letters. If you are not in one of the eligible degree programs listed, please apply for travel grant funding through the Professional Council.
- 2) Will not receive your degree before the conference indicated in the application.
- 3) Will be **presenting** research or **attending** a conference.
- 4) Have not received reimbursement from GAPSA for a conference that took place in the same semester.

**What is the most amount of money that I can get from GAPSA Research?**

Applicants who are selected for this award are eligible for reimbursement of \$800 **maximum**. GAPSA Research may offer applicants an award **up to** this amount based on merit.

**What are eligible expenses?**

Eligible expenses include transportation, lodging, conference registration, and membership fees if required for attendance. Food and alcohol are not considered eligible expenses.

**What is the application process?**

Complete an electronic application via JotForm. The link to the form is available on our website.

**How should letters of recommendation be submitted?**

We no longer require letters of recommendation. Instead, your faculty recommender will be e-mailed a form to fill out. The form consists of three drop down menus that verify that the conference is relevant to your research and will be beneficial to your professional development.

There is a section in the application form requiring contact information for your faculty recommender. The form, when submitted, will automatically send an email from GAPSA Research to your recommender with a link to the recommendation form. You should inform your chosen recommender that you plan to list them as your recommender **before** you submit the application.

**It is YOUR responsibility to ensure that the form is submitted on your behalf.** Check with your recommender to make sure they submit the form on time.

**What is the review process like?**

All completed applications received will be reviewed after the posted deadline. Applications are scored by two volunteers who are members of GAPSA Research Council. The applications are awarded based on the average score. All applicants will be notified of the decision on their application via email by the date indicated on the website. Due to the large volume of applications that are received, the review process takes some time, so please be patient. Your application will NOT be reviewed if it does not meet eligibility criteria, if your recommendation form is missing, or if you have not submitted acceptable proof that your abstract has been accepted to the conference (if you indicate that you will be presenting your research).

### **What does a successful application generally look like?**

A successful application generally is one that:

- is complete, including a recommendation form;
- abides by all listed eligibility criterion;
- is handed in **before** midnight of the deadline date;
- has a compelling and clearly written case as to why it was/is important for the applicant to attend the conference. Make sure that you explain why *this* conference is important to your professional development. Vague explanations that can apply equally to any conference will hurt your application.
- explains **in detail** the steps and effort the applicant has taken to reduce costs (i.e. volunteering at the conference to reduce costs/ taking a bus to a neighboring state instead of more expensive options such as flying/ sharing a room with other attendees, etc.); and
- explains how the applicant has sought funding elsewhere or gives a clear explanation as to why the applicant is ineligible for alternate funding sources.

*These are the criteria that are used to score your application!*

### **What if my application is not successful? Can I re-apply?**

If your conference dates fall within the eligibility window, you may choose to re-apply in the next application round.

### **What is the reimbursement process like?**

For applicants who are awarded a travel grant, they will receive instructions in their award letter as to how to claim reimbursement for their eligible costs. Awards must be accepted within **30 days** of receiving the award letter. Do NOT submit reimbursement for ineligible expenses such as food! Do NOT submit your reimbursement forms to GAPSA Research – that will not get your costs reimbursed! The process may change from cycle to cycle, so make sure to check the updated guidelines in the award letter and on the website before you submit your reimbursement.

**You will need to save your receipts in order to be reimbursed!** Reimbursements go through Angela Reason in the Office of Student Affairs ([areason@upenn.edu](mailto:areason@upenn.edu)).

Further information can be found on the Office of Student Affairs website, Policies and Forms page: <http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/osa/policies.php>

This website includes directions for student expense reporting: <http://cms.business-services.upenn.edu/penntavel/images/stories/tem-training-docs/cncrtr%20-%20exp%20rpt%20for%20students.pdf>