

## **GRO Travel Grant Policy**

**(a) Purpose.** The purpose of the Travel Grant Administration is to award grants to assist graduate students in presenting their work at academic conferences. Graduate students apply for an award, and then receive funds in the form of a reimbursement after eligible expenses have been incurred and properly documented.

### **(b) Travel Grant Administration Membership.**

(i) The Travel Grant Administration (termed “Administration” for the remainder of this section) shall consist of at least a Travel Grant Administration Chair. Members of the Administration shall be appointed by vote in the General Council with the exception of the Travel Grant Administration Chair as detailed in part (ii) below.

(ii) The Travel Grant Administration Chair (termed “Chair” for remainder of this section) shall be the Executive Board’s *Funding and Administration Chair* OR an appointee elected by the vote of the General Council.

(iii) In an emergency, the Executive Board may appoint an interim Chair. This Chair shall serve till the next meeting of the General Council, at which time the General Council will vote to approve the decision of the Executive Board or appoint a new Chair and any other members to the Administration they see fit.

(iv) The Administration will be in charge of distributing the travel grant awards (though the Executive Board’s Treasurer shall be in charge of disbursement of the travel grant awards) via the mechanism detailed in section (d) parts (iii) and maintaining an accurate, updated record of travel grant awardees. The Administration will work together with the Executive Board’s Treasurer to monitor the reimbursement of awardees.

### **(c) Eligibility.**

(i) As stated in the GRO Constitution, to be eligible to receive grant money, the applicant must belong to a department whose Departmental Representative or Alternate has attended at least half of the General Council meetings of the semester previous to the beginning of the application period.

(ii) The GRO website shall maintain an up-to-date list of eligible departments.

(iii) Members of the Travel Grant Administration may not apply for grants while serving on the Administration.

(iv) Members should disclose to the Travel Grant Administration any conflicts of interest in relation to any application and, if deemed necessary, recuse themselves from the selection process.

**(d) Applications.**

(i) Eligible applicants will be selected randomly by lottery executed by the Travel Grant Administration Chair. For an example of how tickets will be assigned and drawn, see the addendum at the bottom of this document.

(ii) A number of applicants equal to the number of grants shall be drawn and given immediate use of travel grant funds.

(iii) A number of applicants equal to half the number of available grants and not awarded a travel grant in the session under consideration will be drawn and placed on a waiting list. If someone who received a travel grant (e.g. an applicant from part (ii) above) does not utilize the grant, then the first name drawn that appears on the waiting list will be given the surplus travel grant. This procedure will be repeated for any number of unused travel grants, going down the waiting list in the order that the list was drawn.

(iv) The number of ballots or tickets each applicant is assigned for the random lottery will be determined by the following formula:

$2x$  (the number of years applicant has been in their program) + 6 (only if student has been in program for  $\geq 3$  years and never been to a conference) + 3 (only if applicant has been in program for  $\geq 3$  years and did not attend a conference the previous year) + 2 (only if student is giving an oral presentation at the conference; this does not include poster presentations)

(v) No single criterion above automatically qualifies or disqualifies an application, except that no graduate student may receive more than one travel grant per academic year (defined for these purposes as any one of the periods determined by the Travel Grant Administration Chair as per Section (f), part (i)).

(vi) The first part of the application will ask for:

- a) The graduate student's name, department, year in program, type of program (i.e. doctoral or terminal masters) and contact information.
- b) The name for their advisor and department administrator.
- c) The name, date, and location of the conference.
- d) An abstract of the applicant's paper, poster, or other participation.
- e) The conference program, if available, or invitation from the conference as soon as it is available. If the graduate students do not know if their abstract will be accepted, they should provide an estimated date by when they will receive a response. Please note that graduate students can apply for GRO travel awards as soon as they submit an abstract to a conference, even before acceptance but they have to notify GRO if they have been accepted as soon as they hear back from the conference's organizing committee.
- f) The nature of the applicant's participation in the conference (paper, poster, roundtable, etc.) and the title of their work.
- g) Information about GRO Travel Grant applications and awards received in the same academic year.
- h) Applicant's CV

(vii) Applicants are strongly encouraged to check with their advisor and department administrator about travel funding available to them before applying for a GRO Travel Grant.

**(e) Grant Amounts.**

(i) The GRO website shall maintain an up to date announcement of the number and maximum amount of awards available for the current application cycle.

(ii) Eligible expenses are transportation, lodging, registration fees, and production expenses related to scholarly participation in the conference (photocopying, posters, etc.).

(iii) There is no provision for food or other per diem costs.

(iv) Applicants cannot be reimbursed for expenses relating to job applications or job interviews.

(v) Applicants must provide receipts for all eligible expenses in order to be reimbursed. Eligible expenses not documented with a receipt cannot be reimbursed.

(vi) Awardees must submit receipts and any other supporting documents promptly after attending the conference before a deadline set by the GRO Admin and Funding Chair and the GRO Treasurer in a manner outlined in section (g).

(vii) Recipients of awards may be asked to volunteer up to five hours of their time to the GRO. Declining these requests will disqualify the recipient from future awards.

**(f) Scheduling.**

(i) Four lotteries will be conducted by the Travel Grant Administration Chair every academic year. The timing of the lotteries will be voted by the General Council or the following timing will be used:

(1) Lottery 1: should be conducted by the end of the first week of June considering all eligible applications GRO has received by the end of May.

(2) Lottery 2: should be conducted by the end of the first week of September considering all eligible applications GRO has received by the end of August.

(3) Lottery 3: should be conducted by the end of the first week of December considering all eligible applications GRO has received by the end of November.

(4) Lottery 4: should be conducted by the end of the first week of March considering all eligible applications GRO has received by the end of February.

The Travel Grant Administration Chair will be responsible for publishing (using at least the GRO's website) the approximate day of the lottery (note that the date can be approximate but the week has to be accurately communicated) no later than one week in advance of the lottery date (voted on in GC for 4 periods, same basic idea as emails).

(ii) All participants of the Travel Grant application process will be informed of the status (accepted, rejected) of their application no later than one week after the date of the lottery they have been assigned to. The Travel Grant Administration will inform rejected applicants of the reason for their rejection (e.g. an incorrectly crafted application).

(iii) Graduate students willing to participate in the process should submit an application anytime between their initial submission to the conference and the conference date. The Chair of the Travel Grant Committee will assign them to the earliest lottery period that falls under the same financial year as their conference (see examples in the Addendum(b)).

In other words the lottery period the application will be assigned is the latest of the two:

1. immediate lottery period after application submission
2. first lottery period within same financial year as the conference

(iv) The Chair of the Travel Grant Committee shall report to the Executive Board the list of awardees.

(v) The first week of each month, the GRO Admin and Funding Chair should contact all applicants who submitted applications during the past calendar month to inform them about the lottery period they have been assigned to.

**(g) *Reimbursement procedure.***

The Chair of the Travel Grant Committee will send detailed reimbursement instructions in the same e-mail where the applicants are informed about the status of their application. See reimbursement instructions sent during academic year 2017-2018 in the Addendum (c ). GRO might change them without notice within an academic year to better manage GRO financial procedures.

**Addendum**

**a) *Sample Travel Grant lottery***

(i) Assuming there are three applicants with the following traits:

Person 1: 1st year doctoral student who has never been to a conference but is planning on giving a talk for the conference for which they sought a travel grant

Person 2: 3rd year masters student who has been to a conference, but not last year, and is giving a poster presentation

Person 3: 5th year doctoral student who has been to a conference last year and is giving an oral presentation of their work

(ii) Calculating the lottery tickets assigned to each candidate (please refer to section (d) part (iii) for the formula used to generate the number of tickets):

Person 1:  $2 \times (1 \text{ year in program}) + 6 \times (0, \text{ since applicant does not have } \geq 3 \text{ years in program}) + 3 \times (0, \text{ since applicant does not have } \geq 3 \text{ years in program}) + 2 \times (1, \text{ since student is giving oral presentation}) = 4 \text{ tickets}$

Person 2:  $2 \times (3 \text{ years in program}) + 6 \times (0, \text{ since applicant has been to a conference some time during their degree}) + 3 \times (1, \text{ since applicant did not attend a conference the preceding year}) + 2 \times (0, \text{ since student is not giving a talk/oral presentation of their work}) = 9 \text{ tickets}$

Person 3:  $2 \times (5 \text{ years in program}) + 6 \times (0, \text{ since applicant has been to a conference some time during their degree}) + 3 \times (0, \text{ since applicant attended a conference the preceding year}) + 2 \times (1, \text{ since student is not giving a talk/oral presentation of their work}) = 12 \text{ tickets}$

(iii) A list is now created that has 4 instances of Person 1, 9 instances of Person 2, and 12 instances of Person 3. A random number generator samples the range of numbers from the list and adds that name to the list of awardees. That applicants name is then completely removed from the list and the same process is repeated. Here is a brief example:

Our previous list had 25 names; 4 from Person 1, 9 from Person 2, and 12 from Person 3. A position in the list, 3 for example, is randomly chosen and that name turns out to be Person 1. Person 1 is added to the list of awardees and the remaining 3 instances of their name are removed from the original list. There is only one more grant available, so one more position is selected; this time, it's Person 2 whose name is chosen. Person 2 is added to the list of awardees and Person 3, the only person remaining, goes onto the wait list.

#### ***b) Assignment to a lottery period***

Below we present some examples on the lottery period the applicants will be assigned. Please note that for these examples we assume that the financial year for GRO ends in Mid-May.

Example 1: Applicant 1 submits an application in June 2018 for a conference that will be held in March 2019. The Funding Chair will assign the applicant to the earliest lottery period within the same financial year.

According to the definition provided in section f(iii), the lottery period should be lottery 2 of academic year 2018-2019 since:

- immediate lottery period after application submission: lottery 2 (first week of September 2018)
- first lottery period within same financial year as the conference: lottery 1 (first week of June 2018)

Example 2: Applicant submits an application in February 2019 for a conference that will be held in August 2019. The Funding Chair will assign the applicant to the earliest lottery period within the same financial year.

According to the definition provided in section f(iii), the lottery period should be lottery 1 of academic year 2019-2020 since:

- immediate lottery period after application submission: lottery 4 (first week of March 2019)
- first lottery period within same financial year as the conference: lottery 1 (first week of June 2019)

**c) Sample reimbursement instructions**

Gather up the following paperwork and submit a paper copy, PAPER CLIPPED documents to [indicated address]. We would appreciate if you could also e-mail scanned copies of the paperwork to [treasurer.gro@gmail.com](mailto:treasurer.gro@gmail.com) and [funding.gro@gmail.com](mailto:funding.gro@gmail.com).

- Proof of approval: [..]
- Proof of attendance: A page or two from the conference program, preferably a part of the program with your abstract/talk/poster listed
- Itemized Receipt: transportation costs, lodging costs, conference costs (registration or print-out costs), food and drink (Note that we do not reimburse food and drink! So, you should not submit receipts from restaurants etc. but we want itemized receipts to make sure that we do not reimburse for those e.g. through a hotel or a conference receipt). GRO does not reimburse for sale tax, so do not include these costs in your total.
- Proof of purchase: Copy of credit/debit card statement with the transaction details. Due to university policy, we do not reimburse students for transactions in cash. For the credit card statement copy, the only things you need to show are the account (last four digits of credit card number associated with purchase or acct number for checks) and the purchases you are seeking reimbursement for, all other items may be blacked out if you wish.
- Travel mode: receipts from purchased mode of transportation, ticket that proves you were on the trip (e-ticket, boarding pass) and the **credit card statement with ticket purchases highlighted.**
  - Form [...] for reimbursement to individuals or form [...] for reimbursement to department (in case your trip was subsidized by your dept.)
  - Incurred expenses (total, including expenses not covered by GRO) by category. For each category, please indicate funding sources available to you. You should fill in a table similar to the one below:

Type	Amount	Funding Source
Registration fee		
Lodging		
Travel		
Production (poster, flyers etc.)		
<b>Total</b>		

**PLEASE have your reimbursements turned in within two weeks from the end date of your conference. The GRO wants to fund all reimbursements, but we cannot make any exceptions for reimbursements turned in later than the aforementioned deadline.**

