



## **GRO Conference Grant Program Policy**

**Approved by the GC: 10.11.2021**

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### **1) Purpose and scope**

- a) The Conference Grant Program is designed to assist Homewood campus graduate students in presenting / attending academic and professional conferences and seminars and, if selected from a random lottery, receive funds in the form of a reimbursement.
- b) Each award can cover up to \$500 of eligible conference related expenses. This amount can be spent on transportation, lodging, registration fees, and production expenses related to scholarly participation in the conference (photocopying, poster printing, etc.).

### **2) Conference Grant Committee**

- a) The Conference Grant Committee (“Committee” henceforth) will be in charge of processing conference grant applications, administering the distribution of awards, and maintaining accurate, updated records of conference grant awardees. The Committee will also work with the GRO Treasurer to monitor the timely reimbursement of awards.
- b) The Committee shall consist of at least the GRO Funding and Administration Chair or an appointee elected by a vote of the General Council (GC). Other members of the Committee may also be appointed by a GC vote. In an emergency when there is no Funding and Administration Chair, the Executive Board (E-Board) may appoint an interim chair, who shall serve until the next GC meeting, at which time there will be a vote to confirm this EBoard appointment or appoint a new interim chair and any other members to the Committee they see fit.

### **3) Applicant Eligibility**

- a) Eligible applicants must belong to a department whose Departmental Representative has attended at least half of the GC meetings of the semester prior to the beginning of the application period. To help disseminate this information, the GRO shall maintain an up-to-date list of eligible departments on its website.

- b) No graduate student may receive more than one conference grant per academic year.
- c) Committee members would not be eligible for grants while serving in their positions. Committee members should also disclose to the E-Board any conflicts of interest in relation to any conference grant application and, if deemed necessary, recuse themselves from Committee duties.

#### 4) Application Process

- a) An application shall be made available online on the GRO website and advertised to all Homewood graduate students on a regular basis as seen fit by the Committee. This application shall ask for:
  - i) The applicant's department/program, matriculation year, and department/program administrator contact information
  - ii) The applicant's name, contact information, and resume/CV
  - iii) The name and date of the conference/meeting, the kind of work to be presented (e.g. oral presentation, poster, panel, etc.), and an abstract of the work
  - iv) The date that the applicant expects to know if their submission to the conference has been accepted, if not already
  - v) Information about previous conferences attended during the applicant's graduate career at JHU, as well as any GRO Conference Grant awards received in the same academic year
- b) Any application that is incomplete shall not be considered in the lottery.
- c) All applicants will be informed of their application status (e.g. accepted for an upcoming lottery, rejected, missing information required, etc.) by the Committee up to a month after submitting an application, but no later than one week in advance of the lottery date.

#### 5) Lottery Procedure

- a) Four lotteries will be conducted by the Committee every academic year. The timing of the lotteries will be the following, unless a change is requested by the Funding and Administration Chair and voted on by the GC at any point throughout the academic year:
  - i) Lottery #1: Second week of November, for applications submitted by the end of October.
  - ii) Lottery #2: First week of January, for applications submitted by the end of December.
  - iii) Lottery #3: First week of April, for applications submitted by the end of March.
  - iv) Lottery #4: First week of July, for applications submitted by the end of June.
- b) The Committee will assign each eligible applicant to the earliest lottery period that falls under the same financial year as their conference. See Addendum A for examples.
- c) Each applicant will be given a number of tickets by the following formula: Total tickets =  $1 + [3 \text{ (if applicant has not been to a conference within 365 days prior to the start of the conference/seminar in the application)}]$   
or 6 (if

applicant has never been to a conference/seminar)] + 6 (if applicant is presenting at the conference/seminar) + [3 if applicant is not eligible for any other (federal/state/school/department/lab-sponsored) dedicated conference/professional development funding as of application. The total ticket count (after additions) will be multiplied by 2 if the applicant is in the second half of their expected program duration (MA/MS: completed at least 2 semesters; PhD: completed at least 5 semesters.) See Addendum B for examples.

- d) Each lottery will be carried out by random selection from a pool containing the total number of tickets per eligible applicant. A number of applicants equal to the number of available grants for that lottery will be drawn and given immediate use of conference grant funds via the reimbursement guidelines outlined below. Then, an equal number of applicants is drawn, and those applicants will be placed on a waiting list. If someone who received a conference grant does not wish to utilize the grant, becomes ineligible, fails to provide reimbursement documentation, etc., the first name on the waiting list will be given this conference grant. This procedure will be repeated for any number of unused conference grants, going down the waiting list in the order that the list was drawn.
- e) The awardees and waitlisted applicants will be reported to the E-Board after each lottery.

#### **6) General Reimbursement Guidelines**

- a) Eligible expenses that can be reimbursed with a conference grant include transportation, lodging, registration fees, and production expenses related to scholarly participation in the conference (photocopying, posters, etc.). There is no provision for food or other per diem costs. Applicants cannot be reimbursed for expenses relating to job applications or job interviews.
- b) Awardees must provide receipts and proof of purchase via credit/debit card statements for all eligible expenses in order to be reimbursed. Eligible expenses not documented cannot be reimbursed.
- c) Awardees must submit receipts and any other supporting documents within 30 days after the last day of the conference but no later than the end of the GRO financial year (consult with the GRO Treasurer for more details).
- d) The Funding and Administration Chair (or interim chair) will send detailed reimbursement instructions to each awardee, including a deadline, when they are informed of their award.

#### **7) Annual Approval of Grant Amounts**

- a) At the third to last GC meeting of the academic year, the Funding and Administration Chair (or interim chair) shall propose the number and amounts of conference grants that will be distributed in the following academic year, including how many per lottery, to be passed if approved by a GC majority vote.
- b) This proposal should be informed by the usage of funds throughout the year, as well as the requested Conference Grant Program allocation in the GRO budget for the following academic year.
- c) The number of awards granted during the past academic year's application cycles will be publicly available on the conference grant program website at the beginning of the year. The total number of applicants for each cycle will also be made publicly available.

### ***Addendum A. Assignment to a lottery period***

Below we present examples on how applicants are assigned to a lottery period. Note that for these examples we assume that the financial year for GRO ends in mid-June.

- Example 1: An application is submitted in August 2021 for a conference that will be held in March 2022. The assigned lottery period should be Lottery 1 of the 2021-2022 academic year since it is the first lottery within the same financial year as the conference.
- Example 2: An application is submitted in February 2022 for a conference that will be held in August 2022. The assigned lottery period should be Lottery 1 of the 2022-2023 academic year since it is the first lottery within the same financial year as the conference.

### ***Addendum B. Sample Conference Grant lottery***

Below is an example of how the revised conference grant lottery should be carried out:

1. There are three applicants with the following traits: a) Anne, a 1st year student who has never been to a conference and is planning on giving a talk for the conference, and is not eligible for any other funding. b) Bill, a 2nd year Ph.D. student who has completed their 5th semester, not been to a conference within a year prior to the one for which he is applying, is giving a poster presentation, and has been awarded the NSF GRFP.) Chris, a 5th year Ph.D. student who has been to a conference last year, is giving an oral presentation, and has not applied to any other funding.
2. Lottery tickets are assigned to each candidate, according to the new formula:
  - a) Anne, 1st year MA/MS student:  $1 + 6$  (has never been to a conference)  $+ 6$  (is presenting at the conference)  $+ 3$  (not eligible for any federal/state/school/department/lab funding) = 16 tickets.
  - b) Bill, 2nd year Ph.D student:  $1 + 3$  (no conference in the past year)  $+ 6$  (is presenting at the conference) = 10 tickets.
  - c) Chris, 5th year Ph.D student:  $[1 + 0$  (went to a conference in the past year)  $+ 6$  (is presenting at the conference)  $+ 3$  (federal/state/school/department/lab funding)]  $\times 2$  (in 2nd half of program) = 20 tickets.
3. A list is now created that has 19 instances of Anne, 11 instances of Bill, and 22 instances of Chris. A random sampling algorithm selects a name from the list and adds that name to the list of awardees. That applicant's name is then completely removed from the list, and the same process is repeated for the remaining awards and waitlist—e.g., a position in the list is randomly chosen, and that name turns out to be Bill, who is added to the list of awardees, and the remaining 10 instances of his name are removed from the original list. There is only one more grant available, so one more position is selected; this time, it's Chris, whose name is added to the list of awardees, and Anne, the last person remaining, goes into the waitlist.