GRADUATE STUDENT CONFERENCE FUNDING, 2026-27

The Philosophy Department provides active graduate students with up to $800 in travel funding per academic year, subject to available departmental funds. Funding may be used to support participation in academic conferences, invited talks, and eligible summer school programs.

The funds may be used to cover registration and travel expenses for academic conferences and invited talks. To be eligible for this graduate travel funding, students must be on the conference program as either commentators, presenters, or chairs. Students must be in active student status (not discontinued, graduated, or on leave) at the time of the conference travel.

Students participating in virtual conferences may use travel funds to reimburse registration costs. Support for appropriate domestic or international summer school programs may also be requested and will count toward the same annual $800 limit.

As a guideline, awards are often around $300 for conferences in the U.S. or virtual events and $500 for international events, but students may request alternative funding amounts for eligible activities throughout the year, provided the $800 annual funding limit is not exceeded. For example, a student might request $800 for a single expensive trip, or $200 for a U.S. conference, $550 for an international conference, and $50 for a local or virtual conference registration fee. Students wishing to request funding allocations other than the typical guideline amounts should describe their proposed plan in the comments section of the request form.

Please submit requests for conference or summer school travel funding through the department's online Travel/Conference Funding Request form. Requests should be submitted no later than 14 days prior to the first day of travel. Approval will not be given if a request is submitted after the conference/seminar has begun. Approved funds must be spent in that year and cannot be carried over to the next (any unused funds will be forfeited). The academic year runs September 1 - August 31.

If your request is approved, the Business Administrator will provide details to claim the reimbursement. Reimbursements can only occur after the travel has concluded, per University policy.

Conference funds are dependent on departmental funding, thus subject to change due to budget constraints.

Contact the department's Business Administrator, Ann Kelchner, with questions.

All travelers must adhere to the University's travel guidelines. Note that the government, the University, TGS, and/or the department may need to impose travel and event-related restrictions.

Graduate students traveling outside of the United States must register their trip in the International Travel Registry.

International Students: Check with the Office of International Student and Scholar Services (OISS) *before* attending or presenting at conferences, as CPT authorization may be required. For questions, contact oiss-advising@northwestern.edu.

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Please save all itemized receipts (receipts must show a list of all charges, proof of payment, payment method, and payment date), proof of travel (such as boarding passes), and the conference program (meeting schedule/certificate of completion, etc.). These are necessary for reimbursement. If you have proof of lodging, per diem costs are approvable. https://www.northwestern.edu/procurement/payment/expense-reports-reimbursements/travel.html

Awards are typically combinable. In addition to department funding, students are encouraged to seek funding from other sources, such as hosting institutions and conference organizers. Graduate students may also apply for conference funding from other Northwestern units. If you have been awarded funds from multiple Northwestern units for the same conference, please coordinate your reimbursement between all the units. It's best practice to submit one expense report per trip and split the costs between all funding sources. Department administrators can help you submit an expense report.

Some funding opportunities you may want to explore are detailed below:

The Graduate School's Conference Travel Grant provides up to $800 to eligible graduate students for travel to a conference. CTGs are granted only twice in a student's graduate career, and students are only eligible for one award in an academic year. You must apply for the Conference Travel Grant from The Graduate School - applications are accepted and reviewed on a quarterly basis. (These funds can run out each quarter, so submit your request early.) Only students who have completed at least 3 quarters of full-time, full-tuition registration are eligible to apply. Further details and instructions can be found here: TGS Conference Travel Grant.

Students actively affiliated with the Mellon clusters (such as Classics, Critical Theory, Gender Studies) are eligible to apply for the TGS Interdisciplinary Conference Travel Grants for Mellon-Affiliated Students. More information and application instructions for ICTSs can be found on the TGS website: Interdisciplinary Conference Travel Grants.

(TGS policy is subject to change – the rules posted on their website supersede what's written here and will reflect the most current policy.)