

RESEARCH FELLOW CONFERENCE TRAVEL & PRESENTATION SUPPORT PROGRAM

Supporting Scientific Excellence • Professional Development • Departmental Visibility

PURPOSE

The Research Fellow Conference Travel & Presentation Support Program is designed to support exceptional lab fellows who make meaningful contributions to departmental research and are selected to present their work at scientific conferences. Participation in a national or international scientific meeting is an important professional distinction. Presenting research provides fellows with an opportunity to represent the laboratory and Department, receive feedback from leaders in the field, establish professional relationships, and advance their scientific careers.

Through this program, the Department seeks to:

- Recognize and reward significant research contributions by fellows
 - Support presentation of high-quality departmental research at prominent scientific meetings
 - Promote professional and career development
 - Increase the visibility and reputation of the Department's research programs
 - Encourage fellows to develop national and international scientific collaborations
 - Ensure responsible, equitable, and strategic use of departmental research funds
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ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for conference travel support, a fellow must:

- Be a full-time laboratory research fellow in good standing
- Be the presenting author of an accepted abstract, either oral or poster
- Have the endorsement of their Principal Investigator (PI)
- Demonstrate that attendance will provide meaningful scientific or professional development opportunities

Conference support is intended for fellows who are actively contributing to the research being presented and who will represent the laboratory and Department at the meeting.

ELIGIBLE MEETINGS

Priority will be given to recognized, high-impact national and international scientific meetings that are directly relevant to the fellow's research and the Department's areas of scientific focus. Examples may include meetings that provide opportunities to:

- Present original research to a national or international audience
- Engage with leaders in the field

- Develop scientific collaborations
- Learn emerging techniques or technologies
- Enhance the fellow's professional visibility

Regional or local meetings may be considered when participation provides a meaningful opportunity for scientific training, presentation of important research, or increased departmental visibility. Attendance is not guaranteed solely on the basis of abstract acceptance. Funding decisions will consider the significance of the meeting, quality and relevance of the research, professional development value, available funds, and the Department's overall research priorities.

FUNDING SUPPORT

Each eligible fellow may receive departmental support for **up to two (2) conferences per academic year**, defined as July 1 through June 30. Depending on available funding and the location of the meeting, support may include:

- Conference registration: early-bird registration rate only
- Airfare or other reasonable travel expenses
- Lodging
- Meals, subject to applicable institutional limits
- Other reasonable meeting-related expenses, as approved

A maximum funding cap will apply based on the meeting location. Fellows are expected to use institutional funds responsibly and select reasonable, cost-conscious travel and lodging options.

Travel Expectations

When departmental funds are used to support attendance, fellows are expected to take advantage of the broader professional opportunities provided by the meeting, including:

- Attending relevant scientific sessions
- Engaging with investigators and potential collaborators
- Participating in networking opportunities
- Attending educational or professional development sessions
- Representing the laboratory and Department in a professional manner

Travel should be booked **at least two weeks before the meeting whenever feasible** to promote responsible use of departmental funds.

EXTERNAL TRAVEL FUNDING

Fellows are strongly encouraged to pursue external travel awards, grants, and meeting-specific funding opportunities whenever available. Departmental support may be used to supplement external funding, subject to program limits and

available departmental resources. Examples of potential external support include AcuMed travel awards, Mentor travel grants, society travel awards, trainee awards, and conference-specific funding opportunities.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Fellows seeking conference travel support must submit a brief online application before making nonrefundable travel arrangements. The application must include:

1. Abstract Acceptance

- Proof of abstract acceptance
- Full abstract citation
- Identification of the presentation format (oral or poster)

2. Estimated Budget

A preliminary estimate of:

- Registration
- Transportation
- Lodging
- Meals
- Other anticipated meeting-related expenses
- Any external funding already received or pending

3. Professional Development Statement

A brief statement describing:

- Why attendance at the meeting is important to the fellow's scientific and professional development
- The significance of the research being presented
- How participation will benefit the laboratory and Department
- Anticipated opportunities for collaboration, mentorship, or career development

4. PI Endorsement

A letter or email from the fellow's PI confirming:

- The fellow's contribution to the research
 - The PI's support for conference attendance
 - The importance of the meeting to the fellow's professional development
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REVIEW & APPROVAL

Applications will be reviewed by the DOPS Grant Review Committee (GRC).

Funding decisions will consider:

1. Quality and significance of the research
 2. Fellow's role in the project and presentation
 3. Scientific reputation and relevance of the meeting
 4. Professional development opportunities
 5. Potential benefit to the Department
 6. Availability of external funding
 7. Previous departmental conference support
 8. Availability of departmental funds
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FELLOW ACCOUNTABILITY

Conference attendance is an investment in both the fellow and the Department. Fellows receiving support are expected to actively participate in the meeting and represent the Department professionally. Within two weeks following the meeting, the fellow must submit a brief Conference Impact Report (approximately one page) summarizing:

- The research presented, Presentation format and audience
- Key scientific feedback received
- New collaborations or professional contacts
- Potential research opportunities generated
- New techniques, knowledge, or training opportunities identified

This report helps the Department assess the impact of its investment in fellow professional development and identify opportunities for future research collaboration.

PROGRAM PRINCIPLES

The Department is committed to providing fellows with meaningful opportunities to develop as independent scientists and future leaders in academic medicine. Conference participation is more than travel; it is an opportunity to present, connect, learn, and represent the Department on a national stage. Fellows selected to present their research are encouraged to approach these opportunities with professionalism, preparation, and enthusiasm, and to maximize the scientific and career-development value of every meeting they attend.
