

How do I apply for Travel Funding? [updated: 3/20/2024]

Information

The philosophy department, in connection with CAL and the GradSchool, has a limited amount of travel funds for graduate students available every year. The general rule is that PHL matches \$250 for national and \$350 for international travel that CAL gives once every year. In addition, graduate students can tap into a \$600 fund of the GradSchool (for the span of their entire career at MSU).

Depending [1] on the amount of travel requests, [2] on the date requested, and [3] on the amount that is requested, PHL can distribute more money in certain years. The annual fund amount fluctuates. The fund is supposed to be an operation budget for the graduate program; i.e., it cannot be predicted how much money is or remains in the fund. Students who travel internationally, for example, need more than someone who travels to a local workshop. Sometimes funds are needed for something else. Sometimes less travel funding requests are submitted than expected (for example, during Covid). Again, there is no general rule, except that PHL matches the minimum CAL amount. In recent years, we were able to disburse more than the minimum.

Types of Travel

The travel funding request can

- be used for research related travel (for example, for doing archival research)
- be used for online workshop fees
- only in exceptional cases used for taking or travelling to language courses

Distribution

Funds are distributed on a first come first served base; i.e., they are distributed cautiously and conservatively during fall and can, depending on what remains in the fund and what is needed, go up towards the end of spring semesters. Note that spending is discretionary.

Reimbursement

Travel expenses can also be reimbursed (for example, in fall for the preceding summer). In this case matching receipts and a professional budget must be submitted for every item for which reimbursement is requested. Distribution of funds before travel is easier for all sides involved.

Forms needed:

- Travel Funding Form (can be downloaded from the PHL folder system in Sharepoint and from the GradSchool webpage); check the information here: <https://grad.msu.edu/travel> (please submit the current form, as it gets updated)
- Abstract of paper & information of conference, including dates of the conference, travel dates & location
- Detailed budget

- make yourself familiar with the professional rates granted for mileage and per diem, etc.; check <https://ctrl.msu.edu/COTravelNew/>
- flights should be quoted from Google Flights or similar pages
- hotels, airbnb, etc. should be quoted with some reference
- the cheapest costs need to be quoted
- Confirmation of acceptance (this is important, without this document funds will not be disbursed)

Form Information

- Students need to ask their guidance committee chair to fill out the upper part (confirming proper progress in the program)
- NOTE: The major professor needs to sign in the table in the lower part of the form, even if the amount provided is zero (write a dissertation about this practice); the GradSchool rejects forms that are not signed by your major professor in the table.
- NOTE: Adobe produces problems if forms are modified after they are digitally signed. So, let your main advisor know that they need to sign before anything else is typed in.
- Students do not need to fill out the table with the amounts requested, unless GradSchool funds are requested.
- The GradDirector will fill out the table in the lower portion of the form.

TEMPLATE

Name
 Address
 Email
 Phone

CONFERENCE TRAVEL SUPPORT REQUEST

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is NAME, PID, and I am a PhD student in the Philosophy Department requesting travel funding support for a conference presentation. The conference to which my work has been accepted is the DETAILED CONFERENCE INFORMATION. This year’s conference theme INFO. MY PAPER INFO. I confirm that I am the sole author of this work.

The expenses involved with travel to this conference are as follows.

Estimated Budget

Flight: AMOUNT (checked DATE, Google Flights)
 Lodging: AMOUNT (checked, HOTEL PAGE, AIRBNB, etc.)
 Food: AMOUNT (CONUS per diem x 4 days, LINK to TRAVEL at MSU)
 Registration Fee: AMOUNT
 Estimated Total: SUM

Thank you for your consideration!

Sincerely,

NAME

Next page(s): confirmation or other documentation