

Memo: Grad Student Travel & Research Support

Updated: 8/8/2025

Overview: The Department has limited funds to support student travel for conferences or research. These funds can be combined with other sources, including the Graduate School, the College, and OISS for international events. We must cap PLS support at a *maximum* of \$1,000 for conference travel and \$2,000 for research experiences. Additional funding must come from other MSU or outside sources. Furthermore, as funds are limited, we will consider your prior support when evaluating future funding. We will prioritize broad access over individual asks.

Before we can provide travel support, you must create a profile in MSU's "Concur" system. We strongly advise you to create one now if you don't already have a profile. Complete all applications and paperwork **well before** travel. Give us – and the MSU bureaucracy – time to work.

PLS Support

PLS receives Graduate School funds (GOF) that can be used for conference travel, specialized training, data collection, or other similar career enhancing experiences that will require travel. The Department also has limited funds for these activities and major professors are often asked to contribute as well.

We ask that you seek support from a variety of sources. Currently, the Department can provide **at most \$1,000 for conference travel**. Similarly, we can provide **at most \$2,000 in research support**. Plan accordingly. The rest will have to come from other sources, such as matching funds from the college, a professor, a center, or the Graduate School. We simply cannot authorize more from PLS as this will reduce the total number of students that we can support. Keep costs as low as you can when you plan to travel. Share rooms, don't travel first class, and don't book a longer stay than you really need.

Beyond the Department, seek additional funds from a) your main advisor, b) the conference/program itself, c) the Graduate School, d) small grants (internal or external). Saving money in this way will allow us to fund more students and larger projects than we otherwise could afford.

NOTE:

- Funds are more likely to be in the form of reimbursement rather than pre-payment!
- With limited funds, we may not be able to fund all students or all projects. Seek outside funds!
- We will consider past funding for each student when prioritizing future support.
- International students should consult with OISS before considering international travel.

Graduate School Support

The Graduate School provides a travel fellowship to enrolled students, but it is limited to \$600. This money can be combined with other sources. Once you have used your \$600, you will not get more. Another limitation is that funds can only go to students that are presenting at a conference as the first author of a piece. To apply, you must first submit your application materials to the Graduate Program Coordinator who will route them to the Graduate School. See: <https://grad.msu.edu/travel/>.

Check the Graduate School's webpage for additional opportunities (<https://grad.msu.edu/fellowships>).

Concur

Every student who wishes travel support must create a profile in Concur. You can begin this process by logging into the EBS system at ebs.msu.edu. This is the same place where you choose benefits. When creating your profile, remember to make the Graduate Program Coordinator your “delegate” in Concur so that they can provide assistance and potentially allow for the payment of a flight before a trip. If you are having trouble creating a Concur profile, consult the following URLs and/or join us at a future paperwork workshop.

Travel URLs: <https://travel.msu.edu/>

Concur FAQ: <https://travel.msu.edu/education/concur-faq>