GSAS Student Council (GSC)

Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GSAS)

Harvard University

GSC Conference Grants & GSC Summer Research Grants

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Updated: July 2019

GSC Conference Grants

The GSC awards Conference Grants up to **$750.00** to eligible GSAS students 3 times per year.

Eligibility

In order to apply for a GSC Conference Grant, the

- Applicant must be a GSAS student enrolled full-time in a degree-granting program
- Conference attended must be in the applicant's academic field, or in a closely related field
- Applicant must have paid the GSAS Student Council fee

Selection Criteria and Accountable Expenses

The selection committee's primary consideration in awarding Conference Grants is the importance of the conference to the student's degree or career. An ideal applicant is presenting dissertation research at a venue where they can receive substantive feedback that will help them advance their research and/or apply for jobs. While the committee takes into account the stage of research a student has reached, there are often good reasons for earlier-stage students to apply, including the development of a dissertation topic, which may come out of research done in the first two to three years.

The selection committee also takes into account the conference's significance. As mentioned above, the venue should be one where the student can improve their research and/or prepare for the job market. Disciplinary association conferences are of obvious significance, but so are specialized conferences. A conference in another discipline, or one that draws an interdisciplinary audience, may be appropriate if the student's research incorporates elements or methodologies from another field.

Finally, applications should demonstrate a strong need for funding. Because we receive more worthy applications than we can fund, we prioritize applicants who lack other resources. Please list the sources of conference funding that might reasonably be available to you, and explain why they cannot meet your needs. Typical sources of funding include a student's department, advisor, research institute, external fellowship, GSAS, and the conference or professional association. If you are eligible for the GSAS Professional Development Fund, please describe in your application how you plan to use that money. Information about the Professional Development Fund can be found here.

It is important to describe your research and its importance clearly; please avoid overly technical descriptions.

Conferences for academic or professional development (presenting or attending), internships (unpaid and preferably NGOs), networking events (outside Boston), and special courses or skill development (not available at Harvard or MIT) are also considered.

Fundable expenses are listed below:

- Transportation (by the most economical means possible)
- Lodging (excluding food)
- Registration fees
- Photocopying for papers being presented (but not for resumes)

Please note: **Funds for Conference Grants are issued as a stipend check and are eligible to be taxed. They will be subject to tax withholding for international students.**

Deadlines

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. Applications will be reviewed and awardees selected on the three following dates:

- Fall: October 11, 2019
- Winter: February 7, 2020
- Spring: April 10, 2020

Note: Applicants must submit their application either before the conference takes place or within 60 days after the start of the conference.

Important: All 2019-2020 grant recipients must submit their Funding Request Form through Engage by **June 21, 2020**.

Apply

A complete application comprises the following items:

1. A completed application. The application can be found here.
2. One letter of recommendation from a Harvard faculty member which refers specifically to the relevance of the conference or research project for the applicant's academic progress and career. Please direct your faculty recommender to the GSC Conference Grant and GSC Summer Research Grant: Faculty Recommendation Form.

For Awardees: Receive Your Funding

Once your grant has been awarded, you must submit the Funding Request Form by **June 21, 2020** in order to receive your award. Please be prepared to upload proof of conference registration (e.g. receipt for registration, conference program listing your presentation/poster, etc.) as a single .pdf in this form.

The GSC Treasurer will process your form, and you will receive a check in the mail 4-6 weeks from when the Treasurer processes your form. Thus, if you submit your application early enough, you could ideally receive funding before you have to pay for conference expenses. Please direct related questions to the GSC Treasurer (gsctreasurer@fas.harvard.edu).

FAQ

1. Am I eligible to apply?
Yes, if you are a GSAS student enrolled full-time in a degree-granting program and you paid the GSC fee this semester.

2. Can more than one student from a single department receive a grant?
Yes, but no more than three students from a single department may receive awards for GSC Conference Grants in a single academic year. Only one student per department may receive a GSC Summer Research Grant.

3. Can conference funds be received in advance of attending the conference?
Yes. If a student is awarded a GSC Conference Grant in advance of their conference, they may submit proof of conference registration through Engage on the Funding Request Form.

4. Can a student apply for reimbursement after attending a conference?
Yes. A student may apply for funding either before the conference takes place or after the conference has taken place within 60 days of the beginning of the conference. The GSC strongly encourages applicants to plan ahead and to try to secure funding in advance of their conference.

5. Who chooses the grant recipients?
The selection committee is co-chaired by the GSC Vice President (gscvicepresident@fas.harvard.edu) and Secretary (gscsecretary@fas.harvard.edu) and additionally comprises two GSAS deans, one faculty member, and one Council member at large. The members of the committee may vary from round to round.

6. When will I hear about decisions?
The GSC Conference and Research Grant Selection Committee meets within 2-3 weeks of the application deadline to award grants. Applicants are generally notified of the decisions of the committee immediately after the committee has met.

7. I am a Master's student. How can I apply?
GSC Conference Grants will now include conferences, events, and courses that work to improve academic and professional development for Masters students. Fundable activities include unpaid internships (preferably NGOs), conferences (presenting or attending), networking events, workshops or special courses (not offered at Harvard or MIT).

8. I am a traveling scholar, can I apply?
Yes, the GSC often receives applications from traveling scholars. However, we require all applicants to pay the GSC fee regardless of whether they are awarded a grant. When submitting your application, you will be prompted to confirm your willingness to pay the GSC fee.

9. How competitive are the Conference and Summer Research Grants?
The number of applicants varies year to year and cycle to cycle. In general, we receive the most applicants during the spring round and the fewest applicants in the fall. For 2017 - 2018, we received between 30 and 60 applications for each round, for a success rate ranging between 1:3 and 1:5. It is important to consider popular times for conferences in your field and to afford plenty of time to secure funding.

Questions should be directed to the GSC Vice President (gscvicepresident@fas.harvard.edu) and Secretary (gscsecretary@fas.harvard.edu).

GSC Summer Research Grants

The GSC awards Summer Research Grants of up to **$1000.00** to eligible GSAS students once per year.

Eligibility

In order to apply for a GSC Summer Research Grant, the

- Applicant must be a GSAS student enrolled full-time in a degree-granting program
- Conference attended must be in the applicant's academic field, or in a closely related field
- Applicant must have paid the GSAS Student Council fee

Selection Criteria and Accountable Expenses

The primary consideration in awarding Summer Research Grants is the importance of the research to the student's degree or career. An ideal applicant will be conducting research that will help them to complete/advance their research or to go on the job market. There are also good reasons for earlier-stage students to apply, including the development of a dissertation topic.

The committee also takes into account the significance of the research opportunity. Research conducted in a discipline outside the applicant's can be rationalized (i.e. if the research involves novel/unfamiliar methods).

Finally, applications should demonstrate a strong need for funding. Because we receive many more worthy applications than we can fund, we give priority to applicants who lack other resources. Please list the sources of research funding that might reasonably be available to you, and explain why they cannot meet your needs. Typical sources of funding include a student's department, advisor or PI, research institute, external fellowship, GSAS, and/or a professional association. If you are eligible for the GSAS Professional Development Fund, please describe in your application how you plan to use that money. Information about the Professional Development Fund can be found here.

The committee considers applications from many disciplines. While it is important to describe your research and its importance clearly, avoid overly technical descriptions.

Any research expense that is related to a degree requirement is an allowable expense for Summer Research Grant applicants. This includes language training that is unavailable at Harvard but is critical to the student's research. For research grants, two types of expenses explicitly not covered by the GSC are human subjects compensation (e.g. for psychology experiments or ethnographic data collection) and laboratory equipment (e.g. consumables like test tubes).

Please note: Funds for Conference Grants are issued as a stipend check and are eligible to be taxed. They will be subject to tax withholding for international students.

Deadlines

The deadline for applying for a Summer 2020 Summer Research Grant is **April 10, 2020.**
All application materials are due at **11:00PM**. Deadline extensions are not allowed.

Important: All 2019-2020 grant recipients must submit their Funding Request Form by **June 21, 2020**.

Apply

The entire application process takes place on the Engage platform. A complete application comprises the following items:

3. A completed application. The application can be found here.
4. One letter of recommendation from a Harvard faculty member which refers specifically to the relevance of the conference or research project for the applicant's academic progress and career. Please direct your faculty recommender to the GSC Conference Grant and GSC Summer Research Grant: Faculty Recommendation Form.

For Awardees: Receive Your Funding

Once your grant has been awarded, you must submit the Funding Request Form by **June 21, 2020** in order to receive your award. Summer research grants are given as a stipend and do not require receipts. The GSC Treasurer will process your form, and you will receive a check in the mail 4-6 weeks from when the Treasurer processes your form.

FAQ

1. Can more than one student from a single department receive a grant?
Yes. But no more than three students from a single department may receive awards for Conference and Research Grants in a single academic year. Only one Summer Research Grant will be awarded to a student from each department.

2. Can summer grant funds be received in advance of the research experience?
Yes. Award recipients will receive a check in the mail 4-6 weeks from the date on which they submit their Funding Request Form.

3. Can a student apply for reimbursement after a summer research experience?
No.

4. Who chooses the grant recipients?
The selection committee is co-chaired by the GSC Vice President (gscvicepresident@fas.harvard.edu) and Secretary (gscsecretary@fas.harvard.edu) and additionally comprises two GSAS deans, one faculty member, and one Council member at large. The members of the committee may vary from round to round.

5. When will I hear about decisions?
The GSC Research Grant Selection Committee meets within 2-3 weeks of the application deadline to award grants.

6. I am a traveling scholar, can I apply?
Yes, the GSC often receives applications from traveling scholars. However, we require all applicants to pay the GSC fee regardless of whether they are awarded a grant. When submitting your application, you must indicate your willingness to pay the GSC fee.

7. How competitive are Summer Research Grants?
Number of applicants varies year to year. In the 2018 cycle, we reviewed 37 applications for 9 Summer Research Grants.

Questions should be directed to the GSC Vice President (gscvicepresident@fas.harvard.edu) and Secretary (gscsecretary@fas.harvard.edu).