

Academic Staff Professional Development Grants FAQs

The FAQs below will hopefully address many of your questions. Please note that there are additional questions related to the COVID-19 pandemic that are at the end of this document.

Deadlines and Eligibility

Q: When must my activity occur for this round of Professional Development grants?

A: The professional development activity for which you are applying must begin between January 1, 2021 – June 30, 2021.

Q: By what time on the day of the deadline does my application need to be submitted or approved by the department chair or dean-level approver?

A: Grant submissions and approvals must be done by 11:59pm on the day of the deadline. Deadlines for this cycle of grants are as follows:

- Friday, October 23, 2020: Applicant submits application in electronic system.
- Friday, October 30, 2020: Department chair or unit head approves applications in electronic system.
- Friday, November 13, 2020: School/College/Division Dean/Director approves applications in electronic system.
- Friday, November 13, 2020: School/College/Division Dean/Director or designated approver emails ranked list of applications to the Secretary of the Academic Staff Office (if applicable).

Q: I'm a postdoc; am I eligible for these grants?

A: No. The following individuals are eligible:

- Academic staff
- Limited appointees with academic staff backup positions
- Limited appointees with university staff backup positions
- Limited appointees with no backup position

The following are examples of those who are ineligible:

- Postdocs and other employees-in-training
- Teaching/research assistants
- Student help
- University staff
- Faculty
- Limited appointees with faculty backup positions
- Emeritus faculty

Q: Am I still eligible to apply if I have a split appointment?

A: Yes, so long as the total of your Academic Staff appointment is at least 50%.

Q: How much money can I apply for?

A: You can apply for up to 50% of the total cost of your activity. There is no upper limit for your request, although typical requests range from \$1,600-\$2,000 for the total cost of the activity. The average award for a successful proposal is \$800-\$1,000.

Q: If I received an Executive Education Grant last spring, am I still eligible to apply for a PD Grant?

A: Yes.

Submitting Your Application

Q: How do I submit my application?

A: All application information is now directly collected in the online application system, which can be found at <https://apps.ohr.wisc.edu/staffdev/>.

Q: What type of PDFs or documents do I need to upload into the proposal?

A: There are several PDFs that need to be uploaded into the form. Save each of the following as individual PDFs:

- Letter from your supervisor
- Documentation about the proposed professional development activity
- Short CV/Resume as it relates to activity (no more than 2 pages in length)
- Documentation regarding expenses.
 - Each section of the budget where you will have an expense requires documentation as a **separate** pdf file.

Q: If I am proposing to bring in a speaker, do I submit the speaker's CV/resume? My own? Both?

A: You only need to submit the speaker's CV/resume.

Q: Are there any questions I need to answer in the application?

A: There are four questions that will be answered directly in the application. They are as follows:

- Brief summary of proposed activity
- Why are you interested in pursuing this professional development experience?
- How do you plan to use and share the information you learn from this professional development experience?

- How will participating in this professional development activity benefit or enhance the effectiveness of your program, your unit, and the university?

Q: There are other people in my department/unit applying to attend the same conference. Can we use the same application form?

A: No. Each individual must submit a distinct application. While travel estimates and some supporting materials (e.g. conference brochure) may be the same, letters of support and answers to application questions should be unique to the applicant. Please note that, due to the committee's commitment to award grant funds as broadly as possible, it is unlikely that all of those applying for the same activity will be awarded funds.

Q: The application asks for an account number for transfer of grant funds. What does this refer to and how do I find out what it is?

A: Awarded funds can only be transferred into 101 accounts. The department ID (formerly UDDS) is a 6-digit code that indicates your school/college/division and your departmental affiliation. The program code is a 1-digit code. These must be correctly completed in order to receive funding. Confirm with your unit's finance person what funding string should be used before submitting your application.

Q: The system timed out before I saved my responses, and now they're gone. Can you retrieve them for me?

A: Unfortunately not. One way to ensure this doesn't happen is to write the answers to these questions in a separate document and then cut and paste them into the response fields when you're ready, so that the system doesn't time out.

Routing, Approvals and Letters of Support

Q: To whom should my letter of support be addressed?

A: The letter can be addressed to the Professional Development and Recognition Committee. There is no accompanying postal address, but you can add the e-mail address pdrc@soas.wisc.edu.

Q: Who do I route my proposal to when I have completed my application?

A: Send your completed application to your Department Chair/Unit Director by typing his/her name in the approval box.

Q: If I do not know who my Department Chair is, what should I do?

A: Department chairs or unit directors are the first step in the approval process. If you do not know the name of this person, please ask your direct supervisor for this information.

Q: I can't find my Department Chair in the lookup tool. What do I do?

A: Try again, typing only the first few letters of the person's name. The system typically requires a few seconds to respond. If the system responds but still doesn't offer the right name, contact Jake Smith (pdrc@soas.wisc.edu or 263-2985) for further assistance.

Q: Once my Department Chair approves my application electronically, to whom should she/he send my application for final approval?

A: Once your Department Chair approves your application, she/he must route the proposal to the Dean/Director's office for final approval.

Q: I work in a center. Would my center director approve my proposal at the Department Chair level or at the Dean/Director level?

A: Center Directors should be considered Department Chairs for the purposes of the application system.

Q: The person for Dean/Director auto-populates, is there any way to change this?

A: For routing, the person approving applications at the Dean's level will be prepopulated in the routing form in most instances. This assignment will be made based on an employee's appointment. If it is incorrect, please contact the Secretary of the Academic Staff office, pdrc@soas.wisc.edu or 263-2985.

Q: How do I know who my Dean/Director is?

A: For routing purposes, the person approving applications at the Dean's level will be prepopulated in the routing form in most instances. This means that the name of the Dean/Director should appear automatically. This assignment will be made based on the employee's appointment. If it is incorrect, please contact the Secretary of the Academic Staff office, pdrc@soas.wisc.edu or 263-2985.

Q: If I have a split appointment, who writes my letter of support and approves my application?

A: In the first screen of the application, use the dropdown menu to select the appointment that the Professional Development grant is most applicable to and that is providing the matching funds. Have the supervisor for that appointment write your letter of support and route it through that unit. The grant funds will also be transferred to that unit. If the professional development grant supports more than one of your appointments and matching funding is coming from more than one unit, the letter of support should be co-signed by the supervisors involved. The routing function in the online system will only accommodate one set of approvals, so please negotiate with the units involved to decide which one will process the application and receive the funding for the grant. Double check the application as it moves forward to ensure approvals are going to the correct person.

What Happens Next?

Q: How do I know my proposal has been submitted successfully?

A: You will receive an email message from the application system indicating that your proposal has been submitted.

Q: How can I track the status of my application?

A: Go to the online submission system (<http://apps.ohr.wisc.edu/staffdev/>) and click on “My Proposals.” It is your responsibility to track the status of your application, including following up on department chair and dean/director approvals as needed. Applications without approvals in the electronic application system by the established deadlines will not be considered for funding.

Q: I submitted a proposal before the deadline, but now that all the deadlines have passed, I can't find my proposal when I log into the system. Why is this?

A: If you cannot find your proposal in the system after the deadline for final approval, it is because it has been removed due to ineligibility. Common reasons for this include:

- No approvals received from department chair/dean/director
- Application was not completed

Q: My application was not funded. Can I get feedback on my application?

A: Unfortunately, this is not possible. The committee volunteers its time to review dozens of applications every semester and is unable to provide individualized feedback.

Q: I started a draft of an application but won't be able to get matching funding for my activity this cycle. However, I'll be able to for the next cycle. Can I leave my draft in the system and resume filling out my application when the next cycle is announced?

A: No, applications are tied to a particular grant competition, so you will need to fill out a new application once the next cycle is open.

Q: Can I resubmit an application when I didn't win?

A: You can certainly reapply for the same activity, but your application should be updated not just with updated budget figures but also new letters of support as well.

COVID-19

Q: Is university-sponsored travel still restricted?

A: Yes, university-sponsored travel outside of Wisconsin or by air within the state remains cancelled until further notice. For more details, please go to <https://news.wisc.edu/university-sponsored-travel-restrictions-extended-until-further-notice/>.

Q: If I receive a grant and my event is cancelled, what happens?

A: Contact the Secretary of the Academic Staff Office (pdrc@soas.wisc.edu or 263-2985) to discuss your options.

Q: If I receive a grant and my activity shifts platforms (e.g. from in-person to virtual), what happens?

A: The grant is for half of the total cost of the activity. If the cost of the activity changes for any reason, please notify the Secretary of the Academic Staff Office with the changed amount. If the cost is reduced, the award will be adjusted to reflect 50% of the new total cost.

Q: If I accept a grant at a lower amount than I originally requested, does that impact my eligibility for the next two cycles?

A: It does not; if you are awarded and accept grant funding—regardless of the amount—you will not be eligible to receive another grant for 2 competition cycles.