

**M.A. Program GOF Travel Fellowship Funding Process**  
**Department of Media and Information**  
**College of Communication Arts & Sciences**  
**Michigan State University**  
**(updated fall 2024)**

The following outlines the process to be applied by the Department of Media and Information (MI) when reviewing applications for travel fellowships.

Funding is guaranteed for each graduate student to attend each desired conference or professional event in the following minimum amounts:

- o Domestic Conference attendance, non-presenting: \$250
- o Domestic Conference attendance, Presenting: \$500
- o International Conference attendance, Presenting: \$1,000

Beyond the above minimum guaranteed funding for each travel fellowship application, funding is discretionary and subject to the following factors:

- Level of study (i.e., MA vs. PHD)
- Location of Conference (i.e., San Francisco vs. Chicago or International)
- Purpose of event (i.e., Presenting vs. Non-presenting)
- Contribution (i.e., First author vs. Co-author)
- Award amount requested
  - o Including: Event registration fee, Transportation costs, Lodging, Meals, Incidentals - which are considered in that sequence. MI aims to award sufficient funds to minimally cover the costs associated with registration, transportation, and lodging, after the above guaranteed award levels have been assured for all graduate student applications.
- Total award funds received in the last 2 years
  - o MI aims to award an equitable level of funding support for all students by level of study, considering among others the following two dimensions:
- Number of events attended and travel fellowships received
- Total amount of travel fellowships awarded over the past 2 years.

If Department awards fall short of the requested budget amounts, a request for additional support may be sent to the Graduate School. Example: *if a student applies for a travel fellowship to present a paper at an international conference, estimated at \$2,000, beyond the \$7,000 of a guaranteed travel fellowship award, MI may be able to secure additional funds for that specific application.*

Each travel fellowship application is considered independently. This implies that it is possible for two graduate students applying for the same event to receive different award amounts. However, the total amounts awarded to the two students presenting conference papers at a comparable level will be similar across a two-year period.

## REQUIREMENTS

The following items are required when a graduate student applies for a Travel Fellowship (note: failure to complete all items below may affect the application review decision):

1. Completion of the Department's 'Request for Graduate Office Scholarships Travel Funding' (<https://gradstudies.mi.msu.edu/required-forms-and-procedures/>). A detailed budget in tabular format must be attached listing the following:
  - a. Name, dates, city and country, and website of event
  - b. Event registration fee
  - c. Itemized transportation costs
  - d. Itemized lodging
2. Completion of the Graduate School's 'Travel Funding Form' application available on <https://grad.msu.edu/travel>
  - a. The form must be signed by your lead professor and indicate whether or not they are able to provide you funding to support your travel.
    - i. You must also include the required letter to the Grad School formally requesting travel support.
  - b. Students are eligible to receive up to \$600 for travel during their graduate program from the Graduate School. Additional requests may be submitted but are not guaranteed, and rarely approved.
  - c. If travel is international, the form will also be sent to International Studies and Program Office to be reviewed for funding. Those awards are limited to \$500 for the duration of a student's graduate program.
3. Completed and signed 'GOF Payback Agreement Form' available on: <https://gradstudies.mi.msu.edu/required-forms-and-procedures/>
  - a. By signing the form, the student agrees to reimburse Michigan State University the award amount paid if they leave the University during the period of the award or otherwise fail to meet any requirements of the award (e.g., fail to complete the travel for which the funds were awarded).
  - b. The form is found about two thirds down the page.
4. The completed application packet should be submitted via email prior to the conference or professional event to the MI Graduate Academic Program Coordinator: [leadbet2@msu.edu](mailto:leadbet2@msu.edu).
  - Travel fellowship applications for past events will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Funding for past events is not guaranteed, and rarely approved.

## THINGS TO REMEMBER

- 1) All students regardless of their funding requests are required to complete 'Travel Authorization Forms'. Once you know travel to a conference is going to occur, you must meet with staff in Accounting and Research Team (ART) office in 209 Com Arts (CAS) to initiate the form. This should happen at least two (2) weeks in advance of your travel.
- 2) Travel Fellowship funds are deposited into your student receivables account. You can monitor the disbursement of the award by tracking your Student Receivables Account in the Student Information System (SIS).
  - a. Any funds you owe the University will be deducted from that award first.
  - b. If you have electronic deposit set-up through SIS, the remaining amount will be direct-deposited to your bank account.
  - c. These awards are considered taxable income. Hence, an award of \$500 will **not** show up in your checking account as the full \$500 amount.
  - d. Contact the MI department if you are receiving financial aid. The MI department will inform the Student Account's Office of the travel award.
  - e. Contact John Garcia after you are contacted with your award amount to determine if it will affect your Cost of Attendance.
- 3) Funds received from International Studies and Programs (ISP) Department or grant accounts will be disbursed via a Travel Reimbursement Form after travel has been completed. Please note:
  - a. You will need to save all original receipts from your travel. Once your travel is complete, turn the forms into the ART office (209 CAS).
  - b. An ART staff member will complete the reimbursement form and the funds will be disbursed.
- 4) Once funds are awarded, should you decide to alter your plans and not complete the travel, you must contact the Graduate Studies Office and your Academic Program Coordinator Immediately.

