



## Travel Awards

### Policies, Procedures and Processes 2024

Updated January 2024

Awards and Professional Development  
Committee

## Conference Registration Scholarship

### Article I. Mission

The Graduate and Professional Student Government (GPSG) Travel Award aims to support professional development and high-impact experience of the graduate and professional students in Texas A&M University. The GPSG Scholarship committee proposed both in-person and virtual conference awards funding.

### Article II. Calendar Structure

2024 Awards and Professional Development Committee Conference Awards – Calendar						
Application Season	If conference is held between this day at 12:00 AM	And ends by this day at 11:59 PM	Must have eligibility by this day	Open application period at 1:00 PM on this day	Close application period at 6:00 PM on this day	Applicant will be notified if they have won a Conference Award
Fall	-	-	-	-	-	-
Winter	-	-	-	-	-	-
Spring	03/01/24	05/31/24	1/31/24	2/02/24	02/16/24	02/23/24
Summer	06/01/24	08/31/24	02/16/24	03/01/24	03/22/24	03/29/24

1. Application periods will open at 1:00 PM of the announced day and close at 6:00 PM on the deadline day as shown above.
2. Conferences held over an interval of time that falls within two Conference Awards periods must apply for the Conference Awards period of the conference start date (the earlier of the two periods).

**Article I. Classifications of Conference Awards**

1. The Graduate and Professional Student Government will issue two (2) classifications of Conference Awards based on the applicant's level of participation at the conference, meeting, etc.:

**Section I. Type I Awards:**

1. Worth a *maximum* of \$350.<sup>00</sup> USD.
2. Available to applicants participating as a **commentator, panel chair, co-author/co-creator, and/or presenter** of at least one of the following: paper, poster, workshop, recital, case competition display, and/or work of art or design.

**Section II. Type II Awards:**

1. Worth a *maximum* of \$250.<sup>00</sup> USD.
2. Available to applicants attending a conference related to their field but not presenting research; attending a career fair; and/or attending an audition.

2. Conference Awards CANNOT be used:

- a. To fund resources that are otherwise provided by the University (e.g., books available through the library, software available through IT).
- b. To finance typing, copying, or binding of theses or dissertations.
- c. To pay individual membership dues for professional organizations or societies.

**Article II. Applying for a Conference Award**

**Section I. Calendar of Events for Applicants**

2024 Awards and Professional Development Committee Conference Awards – Calendar						
Application Season	If conference is held between this day at 12:00 AM	And ends by this day at 11:59 PM	Must have eligibility by this day	Open application period at 1:00 PM on this day	Close application period at 6:00 PM on this day	Applicant will be notified if they have won a Conference Award
Fall	-	-	-	-	-	-
Winter	-	-	-	-	-	-
Spring	03/01/24	05/31/24	1/31/24	2/02/24	02/16/24	02/23/24
Summer	06/01/24	08/31/24	02/16/24	03/01/24	03/22/24	03/29/24

**Section II. Instructions to the Applicant**

1. Applicants will fill out an online application form.
2. Application Materials requirements:
  - a. Resume or CV
  - b. Personal Statement (500 words maximum)
  - c. Abstract (300 words maximum)

**Section III. Materials Requirement:**

- a. Applicants will write a personal statement (PS) of no longer than 500 words addressing the following questions and requirements (the rubrics for the personal statement can be found in Appendix B):
  - i. What are your motivations for attending the event?
  - ii. What are the benefits (tangible or intangible) you expect to receive from participating in said event?
  - iii. How will your participation in said event aid in your professional and/or career development? For example:
    - Improving science communication skills
    - Networking for future career trajectory

- Networking for project collaboration
- iv. Anything else you deem necessary and/or would like to share with the selection committee? For example:
  - Financial need
  - How will Texas A&M University benefit from your participation from said event?
- v. The PS should have a clear, logical organization that is supported with concrete and specific evidence.
- vi. The PS should have proper length and accurate grammar.
- vii. The PS should avoid excessive use of unnecessary identifying information. For example:
  - Lab name
  - Advisor name
  - Center name
- b. Applicants will submit their conference, creative exhibition, career fair, and/or training abstract in no longer than 300 words.
  - i. The selection committee is composed of your peers (GPSG Senators) from a variety of fields and subject areas. It is to your benefit to keep this in mind when crafting your abstracts.**
  - ii. Type I may use presentation abstracts for conference applications.
  - iii. Type II applicants do not need to submit an abstract (please type “Type II application” as your entry).
- c. Applicants will remind references to fill out the reference form online as soon as possible.

#### **Section IV. Application Materials Eligibility**

1. To ensure a complete review of the application, applicants will follow these instructions in regard to their Application Materials:
  - a. Avoid excessive unnecessary use of any identifiable information from Personal Statement and Abstract, including, but not limited to:
    - i. Name.
    - ii. Laboratory, Center, or Institute’s name, department.

- iii. Mentor, principal investigator, and/or faculty advisor's name and/or title.
2. In the event that online applications are not working, please email application materials in this format to [gpsg.awards@tamu.edu](mailto:gpsg.awards@tamu.edu).
  - a. Double-spaced, Times New Roman 12-point font, one-inch margin.
  - b. PDF file format
3. Applications that fail to follow the above requirements will be deemed “*non-responsive application*.”

## **Section V. Application Resources**

1. The following is a list of resources that applicants may benefit from to enhance the quality of their application. All resources listed here are free of charge.
  - a. University Writing Center (<http://writingcenter.tamu.edu>)
  - b. POWER Writing Support Services (<http://power.tamu.edu>)

## **Section VI. Applicant Eligibility**

1. To apply and receive a Conference Award from the Graduate and Professional Student Government, the applicant and the applicant's department, program, and/or organization under which the applicant is claiming eligibility must meet the following eligibility requirements:
  - a. Applicant:
    - i. Be enrolled in a graduate or professional degree program at Texas A&M University, including all branch campuses and satellite campuses (Texas A&M University at Galveston, Texas A&M University at Qatar, School of Law, School of Dentistry, all School of Medicine campuses).
    - ii. Be in good standing with the University and its academic department.
    - iii. Have a GPA greater than or equal to 3.00.
  - b. Applicant's department, program, and/or organization to which the applicant is claiming eligibility must:
    - i. Be recognized by and represented within the Graduate and Professional Student Government Senate.
    - ii. Have eligibility (voting senate status) within the Graduate and Professional Student Government before the opening of the Conference Awards period.
    - iii. For cycle 1, there must already be a senate for the following year.

2. It is the responsibility of the applicant to check if they and their department, program, and/or organization to which they are claiming eligibility under are eligible before the submission of a Conference Award application.
  - a. Eligibility questions can be directed to the Vice President of Finance at [gpsg.vpf@tamu.edu](mailto:gpsg.vpf@tamu.edu) and/or Vice President of Information at [gpsg.vpi@tamu.edu](mailto:gpsg.vpi@tamu.edu).

## **Section VII. Applicants' Right to Privacy**

1. Applicants will be required to submit an application with pertinent personal and Texas A&M University Student Directory Information including, but not limited to:
  - a. Name.
  - b. Address.
  - c. UIN.
  - d. Telephone number.
  - e. Academic department.
  - f. GPA
  - g. Funding and Assistantships
2. The Awards and Professional Development Committee Chair will be the only person to see both the applicants' names and UINs together and does not evaluate applications.

## **Article III. Winning Applicants: Requirements and Policies**

### **Section I. Award Disbursement**

1. In order for the winning applicants to receive their awarded funds, they must understand, accept, and complete the following:
  - a. Attend a senate meeting to officially receive the Conference Awards and discuss their intended conference participation.
  - b. Review and sign relevant paperwork assigned by the Graduate and Professional Student Government Advisor.
  - c. Keep the itemized receipts during the award period for the reimbursement of the Conference registration expenses, if applicable.
  - d. Meet with Student Business Services to review and sign any relevant paperwork.
2. Conference Awards will be disbursed by reimbursed payment for conference registration.
3. Applicants will be notified about two weeks after the last day of the application period as to whether they were selected as a winner of a 2024 Conference Awards Award.  
*\*Check the calendar to make sure as this may not always be true.*

## **Section II. Reporting Requirements**

1. In the event of winning and subsequent acceptance of a 2024 Conference Award, the winner understands and accepts that within 30 days of 2024 conference participation, the following may be required:
  - a. Complete a summary review document provided by the Awards and Professional Development Committee Chair.
  - b. Provide proof of acceptance and/or attendance to the conference, creative exhibition, career fair, and/or training.
  - c. Provide a picture or screenshot of your participation in the 2024 conference, possibly with the 2024 conference logo.
  - d. Respond to the Post Participation Form (see Appendix E).

## **Section III. Photo Release for Marketing**

1. To ensure continued and additional funding for future Conference Awards, to fulfill reporting requirements, and to retain materials to use for Graduate and Professional Student Government marketing purposes, it is required for Conference Award winners to submit photos of their experiences while participating in the conference.
2. In compliance with policies set forth by Texas A&M University and the Division of Student Activities, winners will sign a Photo Release for Organization Marketing Purposes Form when meeting with the Graduate and Professional Student Government Advisor.

## **Article IV. Awards and Professional Development Committee Members' Duties and Expectations**

### **Section I. Leadership**

- (a) **The officers of the Graduate and Professional Student Government will interview and appoint the Awards and Professional Development Committee Chair.**
- (b) **The Awards and Professional Development Committee Chair will be responsible for:**
  1. Overseeing the Awards and Professional Development Committee and Professional Development members and their review of Travel Award/Conference Awards applications.
  2. Collecting and organizing applications for Travel Awards / Conference Awards.
  3. Collecting awards evaluations from Awards and Professional Development Committee members.



4. Attending the Graduate and Professional Students Government Governance Board and Senate meetings.
5. Reporting the status and proceedings of the Awards and Professional Development Committee to the Graduate and Professional Student Government Advisor, Governance Board, and Senate.
6. Executing the duties and responsibilities of the Awards and Professional Development Committee Chair in an ethical and moral manner compliant with the Aggie Honor Code, *“An Aggie does not lie, cheat, or steal, nor tolerate those who do.”*

## **Section II. Membership of the Awards and Professional Development Committee**

1. Members of the Awards and Professional Development Committee will be decided upon by the Vice President for University Affairs.
2. A member may be removed from the Awards and Professional Development Committee for any of the following reasons:
  - a. Delinquency and/or failure to execute member duties.
  - b. Violating the Code of Conduct and Expectations.
  - c. As deemed appropriate by the Awards and Professional Development Committee Chair, as per the By-Laws.
3. Members of the Awards and Professional Development Committee will perform and be responsible for the following duties:
  - a. Attend all Awards and Professional Development Committee meetings.
  - b. Perform all application evaluations in an expedient and timely manner.
  - c. Voice constructive questions, comments, and/or concerns with respect to any aspect of the proceeding, policies, and/or review of the Awards and Professional Development Committee and the Awards and Professional Development Committee Chair.
  - d. Notify the Awards and Professional Development Committee Chair at least three days ahead of the due date if they are unable to execute their responsibilities.
  - e. Notify the Awards and Professional Development Committee Chair if they are aware of a conflict of interest between themselves and the applicant whose application they are evaluating.

## **Section III. Awards and Professional Development Committee Member Code of Conduct and Expectations**

1. Members will carry themselves in accordance with the values and ethics of the Graduate and Professional Student Government and the greater Texas A&M University community outlined in the Aggie Honor Code, *“An Aggie does not lie, cheat, or steal nor tolerate those who do.”*

2. Members will not evaluate applications for the same application period in which they have submitted an application for consideration.
  - a. Members must notify the Awards and Professional Development Committee Chair of such a conflict of interest before they submit an application for consideration.
  - b. Failure to notify the Awards and Professional Development Committee Chair upon submission of an application for consideration will result in the member's application being deemed "*non-responsive application*."
3. Members will not discuss any application outside of committee meetings or official Awards and Professional Development Committee correspondence with the Awards and Professional Development Committee Chair.
4. Members will not send, transmit, or communicate applicants' UINs and/or applications in part or full to anyone but the Awards and Professional Development Committee Chair.
5. If any member is found to be in violation of this *Code of Conduct and Expectations*, they will be removed from the committee and will face disciplinary review by the Graduate and Professional Student Government and, possibly, Texas A&M University.
6. Member will sign a statement acknowledging and agreeing to the above *Code and Conduct of Expectations*

#### **Section IV. Office and Correspondence**

*Office hours by appointment.*

Graduate and Professional Student Government

Advisor: Robert McCaffery

Phone (Office) : (979) 862-5840

Website:

<http://gpsg.tamu.edu/>

Awards and Professional development Committee Co-Chair email:

[gpsg.vpf@tamu.edu](mailto:gpsg.vpf@tamu.edu)

Appendix A: Awards and Professional Development Committee Member Code of Conduct and Expectations

**Graduate and Professional Student Government  
Awards and Professional development Committee  
Code of Conduct and Expectations**

1. Members will carry themselves in accordance with the values and ethics of the Graduate and Professional Student Government and the greater Texas A&M University community outlined in the Aggie Honor Code, “*An Aggie does not lie, cheat, or steal nor tolerate those who do.*”
2. Members will not evaluate applications for the same application period in which they have submitted an application for consideration.
  - a. Members must notify the Awards and Professional development Committee Chair of such a conflict of interest before they submit an application for consideration.
  - b. Failure to notify the Awards and Professional development Committee Chair upon submission of an application for consideration will result in the member’s application being deemed “*Ineligible for Consideration.*”
3. Members will not discuss any application outside of committee meetings or official Awards and Professional development Committee correspondence with the Awards and Professional development Committee Chair.
4. Members will not send, transmit, or communicate applicants’ UINs and/or applications in part or full to anyone but the Awards and Professional development Committee Chair.
5. If any member is found to be in violation of this *Code of Conduct and Expectations*, they will be removed from the committee and will face disciplinary review by the Graduate and Professional Student Government and, possibly, Texas A&M University.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read, understand, and accept the above *Code of Conduct and Expectations* for my position on the Awards and Professional development Committee for the Graduate and Professional Student Government of Texas A&M University. I also understand that if I am found in violation of any part of this document, I can be removed from the committee. I affirm that I am of sound mind and sign this of my own free will.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Committee Member’s Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
VP of Finance Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Graduate and Professional Student Government  
Awards Committee  
Personal Statement Rubric**

*Applicants will write an essay of no more than 500 words addressing the following questions:*

- (1 point) What are your motivations for attending the event?
- (1 point) What are the benefits (tangible or intangible) you expect to receive from participating in said event?
- (2 points) How will your participation in said event aid in your professional and/or career development? For example:
  - Improving science communication skills
  - Networking for future career trajectory
  - Networking for project collaboration
- (1 point) Anything else you deem necessary and/or would like to share with the selection committee? For example:
  - Academic and/or research excellence
  - Financial need
  - How will Texas A&M University benefit from your participation from said event?

*The 5-point essay:*

- Has a strong central idea (thesis) that is related to the questions outlined in the instructions.
- Provides compelling support to the thesis topic.
- Has a clear, logical organization with well developed major points that are supported with concrete and specific evidence.
- Uses effective transitions between ideas.
- Uses appropriate words composing sophisticated sentences.
- Expresses ideas freshly and vividly.
- Is free of mechanical, grammatical, and spelling errors.
- Is not more or less than required page length.

*The 4-point essay:*

- Has a strong central idea that is related to the questions outlined in the instructions.
- Has a clear, logical organization with developed major points, but the supporting evidence may not be especially vivid or thoughtful.
- Uses appropriate words accurately, but seldom exhibits an admirable style while the sentences tend to be less sophisticated.
- Has one or two mechanical, grammatical, and spelling errors that do not distract

from the overall message.

- Is slightly more or less than required page length.

***The 3-point essay:***

- Not quite a 4-point essay, but better than a 2-point essay.
- Mildly addresses questions outlined in the instructions.
- Has three to six mechanical, grammatical, and spelling errors that mildly distract from the overall message.
- Is substantially more or less than required page length.

***The 2-point essay:***

- Makes allusions to the questions outlined in the instructions.
- Has a central idea that is presented in such a way that the reader understands the writer's purpose.
- Has an organization that reveals a plan, but the evidence tends to be general rather than specific or concrete.
- Uses common words accurately, but sentences tend to be simplistic and unsophisticated.
- Has seven to eight severe mechanical, grammatical, or spelling errors.
- Is grossly more or less than required page length.

***The 1-point essay:***

- Lacks a central idea (no thesis).
- Lacks clear organization.
- Does not address questions outlined in the instructions.
- Fails to develop main points, or develops them in a repetitious or illogical way.
- Fails to use common words accurately.
- Uses a limited vocabulary in that chosen words fail to serve the writer's purpose.
- Has ten or more mechanical, grammatical, or spelling errors.

## **Appendix C: Samples**

### **5' Personal Statement**

**Word count 475 words**

When I attended last year's Annual Society of American Foresters National Convention, I expected to enhance my professional network, scout job prospects and further my knowledge on important issues related to my field. The experience exceeded all my expectations and that is why I am looking to return to this year's national convention on November 3-7, held in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The conference theme-Recreating Forestry: The Confluence of Science, Society, and Technology - will attract forestry and natural resources professionals from across the country to discuss contemporary forest resource management issues and examine the trends and technologies shaping the profession in the 21st century. As a student in the department of Ecosystem Science and Management (ESSM), I am excited by this unique opportunity to present my research, expand my knowledge on current forestry topics and to network with peers and potential employers.

This conference presents me with my first opportunity to deliver a formal presentation amongst peers and professionals. As part of a second-day session discussing international forestry, I have been approved to present my research, Principal Abiotic Factors Influencing the Structure and Function of the Mature Pine Forests in Israel. This is a valuable opportunity to expose my research and gain valuable comments and feedback, as well as provide me with needed experience in planning and executing a formal presentation before a scholarly audience. Texas A&M will benefit from this presentation by associating the department of ESSM in an international context as faculty from the department are working in collaboration with Israel's Ministry of Agriculture and the Israel Forest Service.

Society of American Foresters is the nationally recognized professional organization representing the forestry profession within the U.S. While there are not many A&M students in this field, I hope that through presenting and networking at the convention (and participating in the annual quiz bowl where I will represent A&M with pride) I will help make A&M's name more prominent in the forest research and industry fields.

On the third day of the conference a career fair will be held with representatives from leading organizations from the private sector, academia, state, and federal government. Like last year, I plan to take full advantage of this opportunity and reconnect with those networks I previously established and express continued interest for employment, as well reach out to other potential employers.

This travel grant will ease the financial burden associated with convention attendance and enable me to take full advantage of this priceless opportunity to enhance my network and job prospects, to widen my perspective on important forestry issues, and to represent A&M in a field in which it is currently underrepresented. For me, the opportunities found at this convention represent the beginnings of my transition to the professional world and I will uphold and represent the values of professionalism important to Texas A&M going forward.

### **3' Personal Statement**

**231 words**

I aim to attend the WiMob 2015 conference (The 11th IEEE International Conference on Wireless and Mobile Computing, Networking and Communications) to present my paper “An Efficient Pairwise Key Establishment Scheme for Ad-hoc Mobile Clouds”. This paper is a part of my Ph.D. research for securing wireless communications.

It would be a good opportunity for me to attend WiMob 2015, which is a decent conference in my research area. Attending the presentation of the accepted papers would help me improve my knowledge in the area, learn new research problems and how to solve them, have a look on the state of the art problems that others work on, and discuss many research problems with the attendees. Attending WiMob would also allow me to build new personal relations with other researchers in my area and to involve them in my future publications. Moreover, presenting my paper would improve my presentation skills by defending my accepted paper in a short time and by learning how others present their work.

Even though my paper is accepted in WiMob, it is required to attend the conference and present the paper in order to be published by IEEE Xplore Digital Library. We aim at improving our research lab and TAMU’s reputation by publishing our research paper in WiMob. We would appreciate having the travel grant award to cover the cost of my travel to WiMob.

## **Abstract samples 6'**

### **Abstract**

#### **238 words**

Mediterranean forests are water limited systems. While understanding that the growth and survival of these systems are strongly influenced by water-availability, the interactive effects of precipitation and other edaphic and topographic factors on forest performance and the importance of these environmental abiotic factors in light of heavy human influence, is less clear. Our aim was to assess how abiotic factors – precipitation, elevation, bedrock, and slope aspect – affect the structure and function of Mediterranean coniferous forests. We hypothesized that the studied abiotic factors will influence forest structure and function through their effects on soil water-availability and that interactions between them will reflect variation in the importance of water availability across the studied geoclimatic range. We analyzed inventory data of 132 mature *Pinus halepensis* stands planted throughout Israel along a wide precipitation gradient. Individual tree - height (H) and stem diameter (DBH) - and stand level characteristics – stem density (D), basal area (BA), and Landsat NDVI – were analyzed. Precipitation was the strongest predictor of forest performance with a significant positive effect throughout the entire geoclimatic range. Bedrock and aspect interacted with precipitation on forest performance while elevation showed contrasting effects on stand vs. tree level parameters. We concluded that water-availability is the major factor driving forest performance throughout the studied precipitation gradient but highlighted the importance of abiotic interactions and human influence for understanding forest function in water limited environments.

#### **4' abstract**

#### **193 words**

An Ad-hoc Mobile Cloud (AMC) is a new computing model that allows sharing computing power of multiple mobile devices. For a diverse group of individuals that employ such a computing model, in an ad-hoc manner, secure peer-to-peer communication becomes very important. Using private or pairwise keys to secure such communication is preferable to public-keys because of computation and energy requirements. With the advent of sensor enabled mobile devices, a protocol (SekGens) that uses sensor data to generate pairwise keys on demand has been proposed. To work successfully SekGens requires devices to be closely located and becomes infeasible for devices situated multiple hops away. SekGens is also expensive in computation and slow in key generation. In this paper, we investigate how to enable devices in an AMC to establish pairwise keys. We propose an efficient solution which tries to reduce the number of executions of SekGens in the AMC, and establishes pairwise keys between nodes multiple hops away by distributing parts of the key on multiple routing paths. Our results show a reduction of up to 75% in the number of SekGens required to establish keys in an AMC, when compared to a naive approach.



**1' Abstract****73 words**

I am presenting a paper at the annual conference for the Association for the Study of African-American Life and History in Atlanta in September. My paper examines the origins of Federal policy toward contraband slaves in the Mississippi River Valley during the Civil War. Contraband issues are a major factor in my continuing research. This conference will give me the opportunity to learn more about these issues and make connections with other scholars

## Appendix D: 2022-2023 Conference Awards Application Checklist

This document is intended for use by 2024 conference awards applicants as a checklist to ensure that they have all the proper materials assembled for submission. **Do not submit this form with your application.** See instructions for formatting guidelines. Remember, no late submissions will be accepted.

### **Application Materials – Packet 1**

- Online Application Form
- Personal Statement (can NOT include any personal information, see Page 3)
- Abstract (can NOT include any personal information, see Page 3)
- Proper Formatting
- Proper File Name Format

### **Application Materials – Packet 2**

- Résumé or Curriculum vitæ (CAN include your name and personal information)
- Screenshot of event website outlining nature of event
- Proper Formatting
- Proper File Name Format



## Appendix E: Post Participation Form

Complete and submit this form to the GPSG VP of Finance, Nicolas Kipreos, at [gpsg.vpf@tamu.edu](mailto:gpsg.vpf@tamu.edu) or the GPSG Advisor, Robert McCaffery, at [rmccaffery@studentlife.tamu.edu](mailto:rmccaffery@studentlife.tamu.edu) within 30 days of the trip.

Awardee's Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

College: \_\_\_\_\_ Department: \_\_\_\_\_

1. How did you hear about the 2024 Conference Awards?

\_\_\_\_ I am a GPSG Delegate or Representative

\_\_\_\_ My department's GPSG Delegate or Representative made me aware of the awards

\_\_\_\_ I saw the application on the GPSG Website or GPSG Facebook page

\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

2. How long did it take you to complete the application?

\_\_\_\_ < 30 minutes

\_\_\_\_ 30-60 minutes

\_\_\_\_ > 60 minutes

3. Specify the name of the 2024 conference and total registration fee ?

4. What impact did the 2024 Conference Award have on your research, presentation opportunities, or other professional development as a graduate student at Texas A&M University?

5. Are you planning for a second 2024 conference? If Yes, Please provide the details and expected registration fee.

6. Do you have any feedback regarding the 2024 Conference Award application process?

Signature:

Date: