

GPSS Travel Fund Program (TFP) Application Instructions

Eligibility Requirements

Who can apply?

All graduate students registered full-time at Virginia Tech are eligible to apply. Students must attend a conference in which they are presenting scholarly research that was conducted at Virginia Tech. Due to the high number of applicants, a graduate student may not receive more than one TFP award per academic year. Assistance through the TFP is not merit-based and is awarded based on a review process to help ensure complete and accurate applications.

What can be reimbursed?

The TFP is a refund based program, so receipts must be submitted to receive the award. Costs that are eligible for reimbursement include conference registration, abstract fees, and costs associated with travel.

Examples of travel expenses that may be reimbursed include plane tickets, mileage used on personal vehicles, lodging and per diem as established by the government.

If a student's expenses were purchased by their department, the TFP can refund the department for travel expenses (as long as receipts are provided).

Award amounts

Funding for registration, abstract fees, and travel to conferences are provided with priority given to students based on financial need. Awards are in the following amounts:

Tiers	Award amount
Virtual attendance only	200
In-person Tier 1	300
In-person Tier 2	500
In-person Tier 3	750

Award criteria

A student may only receive a TFP award once per academic year. Students who are first-author presenters of original research will be prioritized in the funding allocation process over secondary presenters and presenters of literature reviews.

Applicants will be funded in descending order of financial need, where the financial need formula is as follows: Total conference expenses-Total guaranteed external funding.

Total conference expenses are calculated primarily based on location using government reimbursement rates for travel.

The total conference expense formula is: M&IE rate * Conference days + Lodging rate for month in which travel starts * (Conference days-1) + Abstract fees + Registration fee + Miles driving personal vehicle * \$0.585 (if driving) + Airfare/rideshare (if flying)

GPSS Programs takes fraudulent applications very seriously. Any applicant caught falsifying information to increase chances of receiving money will be disqualified from receiving TFP grants on a permanent basis.

Who is NOT fundable?

For the Winter 2023 Cycle, we cannot fund conferences that begin outside of the time period from January 1, 2023 to March 31, 2023.

We cannot fund more than one conference per academic year. Submission of an application after you have been awarded a TFP for the 2022-2023 academic year or applying for more than one conference in the same application will disqualify your application.

Remember that only one conference may be applied for at any time. Applying for more than one conference in the same application will disqualify your application.

We cannot fund students attending conferences as a volunteer or participant (who are not presenting their research). Please work with your relevant student organization to apply for funding through the Student Budget Board (SBB).

We cannot fund students attending workshops to gain research skills in which they are not presenting their research.

We cannot fund course or workshop fees.

Application Instructions

Your total application will consist of the following parts:

- Agreement to terms and conditions
- Information and materials

Online Application

The online application can be found here: <https://forms.gle/qws7oaVoatF9TPpc7>

The application will open October 14, 2022 and close November 15, 2022.

When the application is open, you will be redirected to take a survey. Please have all required information on hand prior to filling the form.

Inquiries regarding receipt of individual applications WILL NOT BE ANSWERED. Look for a confirmation e-mail within a week of the application deadline.

Personal Information Questions

First Name

First name as registered with Virginia Tech

Example: Harry

Last Name

Last name as registered with Virginia Tech

Example: Potter

Virginia Tech PID

Please submit your Virginia Tech PID, which should be your e-mail minus “(at) vt.edu.” All communication will be conducted through your email.

Example: harrypotter (if full e-mail is “harrypotter (at) vt.edu”)

Last Four (4) Digits of Hokie Passport Number

- Please type the last four digits of your Hokie Passport number without any punctuation.
- Please do not submit your entire Hokie Passport Number.

Example: 6789 (Full Hokie Passport Number is 123456789, so last four digits are 6789)

Anticipated Degree Level

Master's (MS, MFA, Meng, etc.)

- If you are working on a Master's level degree, please select this option

Doctoral (PhD, DVM, EdD, etc.)

- If you are working on a Doctoral level degree, please select this option. If you are working on multiple degrees, please select the higher level.

Virginia Tech Academic Department

- Enter the abbreviation and full name of your academic department affiliation

Example: ENT – Entomology

Conference Information Questions

Conference Dates

- Please verify, for our records, that the conference falls between the dates of January 1, 2023 to March 31, 2023.
- If it does not, your application will not be considered.
- If you click “Yes”, and your conference does not fall between these dates, you will be excluded from consideration for any TFP award for the 2022-2023 academic year.

Name of Conference

Please submit the full name of the conference you are presenting at. THIS SHOULD NOT BE THE NAME OF THE APPLICANT.

Example: The 7th Annual Harry Potter Conference

Conference Website

Please submit the website URL of the conference you are presenting at.

Example: <http://www.harrypotterconference.com/>

Virtual or In-Person Attendance

Virtual presenters are eligible to receive TFP funds if all presenters with greater financial needs have received grants.

Conference City

Please submit the city in which the conference is being held.

Conference State

Complete this field only for conferences held within the United States. Please write out the complete name of the state.

Example: Virginia (not VA)

Conference Country

Complete this field only for conferences held outside the United States.

Example: United Kingdom, South Korea

Conference County

Complete this field only for conferences held within the United States. Do not include the word "county" in your answer.

Example: Montgomery (not Montgomery County OR Montgomery Co.)

Type of Presentation

Please select the type of presentation you will be giving. You may only select one option.

1. Oral Presentation
2. Poster Presentation
3. Leading a Workshop
4. Oral and poster presentation

5. Other (please provide details)

You may or may not be eligible for funding to lead a workshop or serve as a panelist. The workshop or panel discussion must involve presentation of your research in some form. A skills-based workshop (i.e. "Introduction to GIS for water resources") does not qualify.

Title of Presentation

Please submit the title of your presentation.

Example: Science Behind the Magic of Harry Potter

Proof of abstract acceptance OR submission

- You are still eligible to apply for a TFP grant even if your abstract has not been officially accepted
- If your abstract has been accepted, please submit proof of acceptance in the form of a document.
- Otherwise, submit a document verifying submission of your abstract to the conference.
- The confirmation document must be official correspondence from the conference organizers or the online management system for your conference. A full-text of your abstract, e-mails to the conference organizers, etc. are NOT acceptable. All confirmation documents must include your name and abstract title.
- Example: conference program including your presentation, receipt for payment of abstract fees, copy of confirmation e-mail from conference

Cost of Registration (in number format, with no currency sign)

- Respond to the following with your cost of registration. This must be the graduate student/trainee rate - member or non-member is acceptable.
- Please note that some registration costs may vary whether you are attending in person or virtually.
- Please provide only a numeric value in U.S. dollars.

Example: If your registration is \$200, type your response as: 200

Abstract Fees (if applicable)

- Abstract fees are eligible for reimbursement through the TFP.
- Not all conferences require abstract fees, so if this does not apply to you, please write "0" in the blank.

How many miles will you drive your personal vehicle?

Number only, please!

Overall cost of transportation related to attending your conference - excluding costs of driving personal vehicle.

This includes...

1. The cost of your airfare, train, or bus tickets
2. Car rental
3. The cost of parking during your conference travel
4. Rideshares

If you have not booked these items yet, please make a best estimate!

Duration of your conference (in days)

- How many days was your conference in session?
- For example: If the first day of your conference was August 5th and the last day was the 8th, please respond “4” in the response section.

(optional question) Are there any anticipated travel expenses that were not included in this application? If so, what are they? Are there any notes you would like to share on your application? For example: “Meals and lodging are covered in the registration fee” or “My abstract has not been officially accepted”

What non-TFP sources of funding do you have available for travel? Include funds from your department, advisor, professional societies, etc. List both the grant source and amount in U.S. dollars.

- Information on your funding situation will determine your financial need. Applicants with greater amounts of financial need are prioritized when making funding decisions.
- Include whether your advisor, department or other party have paid your registration, abstract fees or other expenses in advance.
- Example: Department grant - 300, Travel scholarship from Professional Society - 500

Faculty Advisor

Advisor Name

Please submit your primary academic advisor. If you have co-advisors, you do not need to list them both, please select one for the purposes of this application. If your advisor will not be available to certify your information, please provide the name of one of your advising committee members or your department head. Example: Albus Dumbledore

Advisor Email Address

Please submit your academic advisor’s Virginia Tech email address (or the VT email address of the person named above). Example: dumbledore (at) vt.edu (replace “at” with symbol)

Advisor approval letter

- This document is available on gpss.vt.edu/programs/tfp.

- Submit a completed PDF with your application, including signatures from you and an eligible faculty member.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Who is eligible for TFP funding?

All graduate students at Virginia Tech who are enrolled full time are eligible to apply. The TFP is only for students who are attending a conference to present scholarly research that was conducted at Virginia Tech.

2. When does the TFP application window open for Winter 2023?

The Winter 2023 Cycle is open from October 14, 2022 to November 15, 2022 at 11:59 pm. The Winter 2023 Cycle will cover conferences that begin any time from January 1, 2023 to March 31, 2023.

3. Can I apply for a conference outside of the Winter 2023 funding cycle?

No, the Winter 2023 Cycle of the TFP will only cover conferences that begin any time from January 1, 2023 to March 31, 2023.

4. My conference begins before/after the application cycle, am I still eligible to apply?

As long as your conference begins any time between from January 1, 2023 to March 31, 2023, you are eligible to apply for the Winter 2023 Cycle of TFP.

5. Where can I find the application form?

The TFP application form can be found here: <https://forms.gle/qws7oaVoatF9TPpc7>

We recommend you read the Application Instructions first!

6. What do I need to submit for the TFP application?

You will need to complete the online application (see Online Application section for full details). Be sure to notify your advisor that he/she needs to complete an additional verification on your behalf.

7. Do I need to save my receipts?

Yes, please save all receipts and documentation related to the conference. Virginia Tech requires receipts for reimbursement. Although the TFP does not require receipts for the application, you will need to submit receipts to your department.

8. How will I receive the award money?

Once the final decision has been made, an email will be sent to successful applicants with instructions on how to claim the award. You will be required to submit documentation of conference information and travel expenses (receipts) to your department, along with your

award letter. The money will flow from the Graduate School, to your department, and then back to you.

9. Is there still a difference in maximum claims between Master's/Ph.D. and domestic/international?

There is no difference in maximum claims between Master's and Ph.D. students, or domestic and international travel.

10. What is the maximum amount I can claim for my travel?

See "Award Amounts" table for each funding tier. Awards amounts are distributed based on financial need and conference format, regardless of location.

11. Can I receive more money than the amount I was awarded?

The TFP is a highly popular program with a very limited budget, granted to us through the Virginia Tech Graduate School. It is the intention of the GPSS to award as many deserving applicants as possible with a reasonable amount of money to help toward the cost of travel. It is not intended to be your sole source of funding, so please try to seek other forms of funding. The GPSS encourages you to discuss external funding sources with your advisor and departmental/college contacts. We do not provide any information on external sources of travel or research grants.

12. Am I still eligible to apply for TFP if I conducted my research offsite (not at Virginia Tech or a satellite campus)?

If you conducted research for your current program at Virginia Tech at an offsite location, you are eligible. If you conducted research as part of another degree or professional program at another institution or corporation, you are not eligible. Please email the TFP chair if you are concerned that your presentation may not qualify.

13. Can I use TFP funds to attend a conference as a volunteer/attend a workshop/to pay for course fees?

No. We have limited funds to share with students and this money is given to us by the Office of the Provost to further facilitate sharing the research that Virginia Tech produces with the world. Thus, funds from the Travel Fund Program are limited to students presenting the work done while a graduate student of the university.

14. If I have more than one advisor, do they all need to approve my application to the TFP?

No, only one of your advisors needs to submit their verification and approval.

15. What should I do if my advisor cannot complete the verification before the submission deadline?

If they are unable to reply by the deadline, you may submit the email of a member of your academic committee or, alternatively, your department head.

16. Can I submit the application through email?

No. Submissions through email will not be accepted. All applications have to be submitted through the online application. No applications will be considered if submitted otherwise.

17. I received a letter of funding for the Winter 2023 Cycle but have decided I do not want it or would rather receive funds for future travel. Can I forfeit my Winter 2023 funding in order to be eligible to apply later in the year?

We do realize that sometimes plans and requirements change. Please email the TFP Chair if you feel that you must cancel your acceptance of Winter 2023 funding. These requests will be handled on a case by case basis. We will, however, endeavor to avoid penalizing you if circumstances change. The TFP Chair will do their best to work with you – please remember that the TFP Chair is also a VT graduate student and is also subject to deadlines and academic commitments.

18. How am I evaluated?

Every application is carefully reviewed by the TFP Chair - the GPSS Director of Programs - and two graduate student reviewers. Reviewers will check your application for completeness, and that your conference falls within the funding cycle (from January 1, 2023 to March 31, 2023 for the Winter 2023 Cycle), that you provided correct information on the conference, and that your advisor or committee member has indicated their approval of your application. Applicants with greater financial need will receive priority in funding allocation decisions.

19. For what reasons can my application be rejected?

Your application may be rejected for the following reasons (this list is not exhaustive, and the GPSS reserves the right to add to this list):

1. An incomplete application
2. No confirmation from advisor
3. Providing false information
4. Not applying for a trip within the proper funding window from January 1, 2023 to March 31, 2023
5. Applying for conference attendance without actually presenting research
6. Other applicants demonstrated greater financial need

20. How do I know the current status of the application process?

The status of each individual application will not be revealed until all final decisions are made, which will be as soon as possible after the close of the Cycle, and no later than December 5, 2022.

21. I submitted an abstract to a conference, but I have not received an official acceptance from the organizers. May I still apply for funding?

You are eligible to apply for a TFP grant. However, if your abstract is rejected, you may not use TFP funds to attend the conference. Please let the GPSS Director of Programs know if you receive a grant, and your abstract is rejected at a later date. It is in your interests to decline a grant if you will not present - otherwise, you lose eligibility for TFP cycles later in the year.

22. I already have funding available to partly cover the expenses of attending my conference. I am only interested in receiving a grant to cover one or two items in my expense list. Do I still need to fill out the entire form?

Yes, you should still fill out the application in its entirety. Please indicate in the “notes” if you are only seeking a reimbursement for lodging, registration, etc.

23. My funding application was rejected, but I disagree with the reviewers’ decision. Can I appeal the decision?

You may appeal your decision by e-mailing the GPSS Director of Programs AND [gpss\(at\)vt.edu](mailto:gpss(at)vt.edu) (replace “at” with symbol). Your appeal will be voted on by the GPSS Executive Board, and reversed by a majority vote. Situations meriting a reversal include: extraordinary hardships not reflected on the TFP application, misapplication of the TFP rules by reviewers.