The Travel Fund Program (TFP) is administered by the Virginia Tech Graduate and Professional Student Senate (GPSS) to provide monetary support for degree-contingent research conducted by Virginia Tech graduate students. This funding opportunity is offered thrice a year for each academic year, but applicants may only receive an award once in an academic year.

The Spring 2022 application cycle is open from March 14, 2022 to April 4, 2022 11:59 PM EST and covers conferences that have the starting date any time between March 1, 2022 to June 30, 2022. The exact application date for the Fall cycle (July 1, 2022 to October 30, 2022) will be announced later.

Complete Guide to TFP

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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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Award Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Virtual Attendance only</td>
<td>up to $200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Person Tier 1</td>
<td>$300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Person Tier 2</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Award criteria

● A student may only receive a TFP award once per academic year.

Who is NOT fundable?

● For the 2022 Spring Cycle, we cannot fund conferences that begin outside of the time period between March 01, 2022, and June 30, 2022.

● We cannot fund more than one conference per academic year. Submission of an application after you have been awarded a TFP for the 2021-2022 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:

- Online Application
  - Personal Information
  - Conference Information

Online Application

The online application can be found here: [TFP Application](#).

The application will open March 14th, 2022 and close April 4th, 2022. When the application is open, you will be redirected to Qualtrics to take a survey. The application can be saved and retrieved at a later date during the submission period. Once the submission period has closed, you will no longer have access to the application.

NOTE: If you wish to save and return to the application at a different time, you MUST use the same computer and the same internet browser to make sure your responses are recorded.

Once the application is completed, please take a print or screenshot of the confirmation screen of submission for your records.
Personal Information Questions

Name
First Name
• First name as registered with Virginia Tech
  Example: Harry
Last Name
• Last name as registered with Virginia Tech
  Example: Potter
Virginia Tech Email Address
• Please submit your Virginia Tech email address. All communication will be conducted through your email.
  Example: harrypotter@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
Masters (MS, MFA, Meng, etc.)
• If you are working on a Masters 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
• Using the drop-down menu, please select 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 March 1, 2022 and June 30, 2022.
  - 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 2021-2022 academic year.

Name of Conference
- Please submit the full name of the conference you are presenting at.
  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 presentations will have a subset of TFP funds available for the reimbursement of registration and abstract fees.

International or Domestic?
- International and Domestic travel are not factored into determining application eligibility. The TFP for Spring 2022 is entirely based on financial need, and is not using travel distance as a metric for determining reimbursement amounts.

Conference Location
- Please submit the location in which the conference is being held. If the conference is domestic, submit as City, State. If the conference is international, please submit as City, Country.
  Examples: Washington, DC; Seoul, South Korea

Type of Presentation
- Please select the type of presentation you will be giving. You may only select one option.
  - Oral Presentation
  - Poster Presentation
  - Leading a Workshop
  - Other (please provide details)
Title of Presentation
- Please submit the title of your presentation.
  Example: Science Behind the Magic of Harry Potter

Cost of Registration
- Respond to the following with your cost of registration.
- Please note that some registration costs may vary whether you are attending in person or virtually.
- Please provide your response as only numeric value.
  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 leave this response blank.

How Many miles did you use your personal vehicle
- This can be applicable whether you drove to the conference, or to an airport for your flight.
- This only applies to your personal vehicle, not a Virginia Tech owned fleet vehicle or rideshare (Uber/Lyft)

Overall cost of transportation related to attending your conference.
This includes...
- The cost of your airfare, train, or bus tickets
- Car rental
- The cost of parking during your conference travel

Cost of lodging
- Please provide the total cost of your lodging for the duration of your conference.

Duration of your conference (in days)
- How many days made up the duration that your conference was 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.
Meals and Incidentals (M&IE) Rate (as determined by the procedures detailed in the Application Materials -- in number format, with no currency sign)

- Per Diem Rates for your destination can be found here: https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates
- Please note that M&IE is separate than lodging rates.
- Please respond with the M&IE total as seen in the “breakdown” table
- Please provide your response as only numeric value.

Example: For a conference located in Denver, CO … The applicant would enter “66” in this response section.

To summarize responses answered in the prior section...

How much of your overall cost of conference travel is eligible for reimbursement as described in TFP application instructions?

- Please provide an estimate of the cumulative costs associated with your conference travel that you would like to request reimbursement for through the TFP. This includes costs such as airfare, meals, lodging, parking, rideshare, etc.
- Please include costs that were covered by your department that are eligible for reimbursement. If your department purchased your plane ticket and a receipt is available, this can be included.
- Please keep in mind that we can only reimburse expenses that have an associated receipt provided. For example, If you are unable to provide a receipt for the cost of your airfare, then this cost is not eligible for reimbursement.
Are there any travel expenses that you experienced that were not included in this application? If so, what were they?

**Faculty Advisor**

**Advisor Name**
- Please submit your primary academic advisor. This advisor should be 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@vt.edu
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 the Spring Cycle of 2022?

The 2022 Spring Cycle is open from March 14 to April 4 at 11:59 pm. The Spring Cycle will cover conferences that begin any time between March 1\textsuperscript{st} 2022 and June 30\textsuperscript{th}, 2022.

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

No, the 2022 Spring Cycle of the TFP will only cover conferences that begin any time between March 1\textsuperscript{st} 2022 and June 30\textsuperscript{th}, 2022.

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

As long as your conference begins any time between March 1\textsuperscript{st} 2022 and June 30\textsuperscript{th}, 2022, you are eligible to apply for the 2022 Spring Cycle of TFP.

5. Where can I find the application form?

The TFP application form can be found here: [TFP Application](#), but 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).

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 your award, as well as the appropriate forms. You will be required to submit documentation of conference information and travel expenses (receipts) to your department, along with your award letter, which will be the email in which you are notified of your award. 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 Masters/Ph.D. and domestic/international?

There is no difference in maximum claims between Masters and Ph.D. students. Additional funding will be given to international travel claims.

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

The TFP makes every effort to provide each student with the most funds to cover their conference expenses. We are uncertain of the number of applicants and the amount that each applicant will request therefore, we cannot say how much we will be able to award.

11. I am attending two conferences. How can I apply for both?

Yes, given that students will likely be paying less for conference this year due to conferences going virtual, we are allowing students to apply for more than one TFP award. We cannot guarantee that we can fund multiple award requests as the number of applicants is hard to gauge in the current environment.

12. 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 GSA 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 GSA 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.

17. 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.

18. 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.

19. 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.

20. What should I do if my advisor cannot reply to the email sent to them by the system 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.

21. 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.
22. I received a letter of funding for the Winter Cycle but have decided I do not want it or would rather receive funds for future travel in the Spring. Can I forfeit my Winter funding in order to be eligible to apply in the Spring?

We do realize that sometimes plans and requirements change. Please email the TFP Chair if you feel that you must cancel your acceptance of the Winter Cycle 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.

23. How am I evaluated?

Every application is carefully reviewed by the TFP Chair, the GSA Director of Programs. Reviewers will check your application for completeness, and that your conference falls within the funding cycle (March 1st, 2022 and June 30th, 2022 for the Spring Cycle), that you provided correct information on the conference, and that your advisor or committee member has indicated their approval of your application.

24. For what reasons can my application be rejected?

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

- An incomplete application
- No email reply from advisor
- Providing false information
- Not applying for a trip within the proper funding window of March 1st, 2022 and June 30th, 2022.
- Applying for attending a conference and not actually presenting research

25. 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 the last day of classes of the current semester.