



## The Conference Fund

The SGA Conference Fund is a fund set aside from the SGA operating budget to assist students in need of financial support to pursue outside academic opportunities in the form of conferences. There are limited funds in the Conference Fund and students are expected to exhaust all sources of funding before applying to this fund. The Conference Fund is for individuals; for organizations, there is the subsidiary Organization Conference Fund.

The Organization Conference Fund is a fund for organizations looking to go together to a conference. The limit on the number of people is one SGA van full (7 people, including driver) or 4 people. The org's treasurer would apply for the Conference Fund if the org wants to take a SGA van. Otherwise, members should apply individually.

### *Examples of Conferences funded*

Society of Women Engineers Conference  
The Public Leadership Education Network Conference series  
DePaul Critical Mixed Race Studies Conference  
Asian American Women in Leadership Conference  
East Coast Asian American Student Union Conference  
NSBE Annual Conference

## Funding Policies

### *Overview*

The SGA Conference Fund follows the same general guidelines as the Organization Conference Fund as detailed below, with some exceptions. As of Fall 2017, there are upper limits on how much funding each student can be allocated per conference. Students attending a conference in the U.S. and not presenting will be able to apply for funds up to \$200, students presenting at a conference in the U.S. will be able to apply for funds up to \$400, and students presenting at a conference outside of the U.S. will be able to apply for funds up to \$600. Students will not be funded for attending, but not presenting, at a conference outside of the U.S.

Organization Conference Fund will fund up to one hotel room of students (4) or one SGA Van of students (7), whichever is applicable based on travel needs, for the same conference. Students are limited to using the Conference Fund twice in their four years at Smith and cannot go to more than one conference in the same academic year.

#### I. Conference Fees

- SGA will reimburse Smith Students for conference registration fees. If there is a late fee attached to the registration charge, the SGA will only reimburse for the standard rate without the late fee. Please attach a price quote or payment confirmation to the funding request.

#### II. Transportation

- The SGA will reimburse for travel within the United States and internationally from Smith College to conferences pending approval of the SGA Finance Committee. This includes airfare, train fare, or bus tickets. Please provide 3 price quotes from different companies to show that the rate you obtained is comparable, it is preferable to include different modes of transport in the 3 price quotes.
- Book travel as far in advance as possible to avoid higher costs.
- The SGA will reimburse 57.5 cents for every mile driven in personal cars. A map with mileage must be attached. Only hourly and daily rates for Zipcars will be reimbursed.
- The SGA will fund up to \$100 for travel to and from Bradley International Airport.
- We will not fund for travel at the conference ex. Metrocards, taxi to hotel, etc.
- Limit of \$500 (not including travel to and from airport) for transportation. Students should book tickets, especially, plane tickets, as soon as possible.

#### III. Lodging

- SGA will reimburse students for lodging while attending conference pending approval of the SGA Finance Committee.
- SGA will use the US General Services Administration (GSA) and State Department Per Diem lodging amounts to determine reasonable, pre-tax lodging rates in the city where the conference is being held. Please refer to <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/21287> for domestic rates and [http://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per\\_diem.asp](http://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per_diem.asp) for international rates.
- SGA will reimburse for lodging at a hotel where a conference is being held if staying at that hotel is required to attend the conference. If the student feels that staying at the hotel is an integral part of the conference, please attach an explanation.
- If your lodging rate exceeds the GSA or State Department rate, an attached statement from the traveler briefly explaining the reason for the higher cost (e.g.: most rates were higher that week, reservations made late, etc.) can be submitted for consideration.
- Itemized hotel billing statements must be submitted. SGA will not reimburse for in-room movies or other additional room expenses. Room service and snacks will not be reimbursed.

#### IV. Meals

- The SGA will reimburse students for meals purchased at a conference up to \$40 per day.
- SGA will consider exceeding \$40 in cases where meals are purchased to meet dietary restrictions. Please attach an explanation.
- SGA will not reimburse for alcoholic beverages, regardless of the attendees' age.

## Application Process

### Universal Funding Application

The application to the Conference Fund is the Universal Funding form. When filling out the application, check the conference fund box.

There are limited funds available for the Conference Fund, and students should exhaust all other sources of funding before applying to the SGA Conference Fund. Students must state whether or not they have applied and successfully received Conference Fund funding previously in the academic year for which they are applying and if they have already received Conference Funding twice in their Smith career.

### Deadline

Applications must be submitted by Monday at 5 p.m. to be heard the Wednesday of that same week. Late applications will be read the following Wednesday.

The SGA VP of Finance will present the request to the Funding Committee for review and will be available for consultation and assistance to students during the entire funding process.

### Documents needed:

- A 250 word description of the conference with documentation of the conference (conference website address, brochure)
- A 300-word statement about how this conference relates to your study, career goals, or interests, and the importance of this conference to you.

### Price Quotes

In the Proposed Budget form, please attach screenshots of at least three prices from different companies for each request to show that the amount you are requesting is reasonable.

### Filling out form when applying or received funding from other sources

If the student has applied to other sources of funding, the student must state the amount they are applying for or have received and what that funding will be going towards in their budget. When filling out the requested budget, only ask for the amount that is not covered by outside funding.

Example:

I have received \$200 from the Dean's Fund, which I will use towards my hotel fee. I am requesting an additional \$100 from the conference fund to cover the \$50 bus ticket to New York.

### **Filling out the form when going with other Smith Students**

Students who want to go to the same conference are suggested to share costs such as hotel rooms when possible. When filling out the application, state the students who will be going to the same conference with you and fees that you are going to split.

Example:

I will be going to the NSBE conference with Susan Smith. We will be staying in the same hotel room at a rate of \$150/night. This means my total cost is \$75/night.

## **The Reimbursement Process**

### **During the Conference**

Save receipts and make sure they are itemized. Expenses will not be reimbursed without a receipt.

## **Other Sources of Funding**

[http://www.smith.edu/doc/funding\\_discretionary.php](http://www.smith.edu/doc/funding_discretionary.php)

### **Class Deans**

The Rothchild Fund is for family emergencies and occasionally for conferences and special studies projects.

### **Office for International Students**

Funding for international students for travel, academic expenses, eyeglasses. Individual or group expenses for trips, graduate school applications and testing expenses, winter recess housing, conferences.

Funding for personal and medical expenses while in the United States.

Contact the Associate Dean for International Students and Scholars in the Global Studies Center

## Dean of the College

Funding for co-curricular events and for some expenses associated with Special Studies work, use the Student Funding Application (PDF). Funds are available to help individual students with the cost of attending academic conferences and symposia, particularly events where students are presenting papers, participating on panels, or otherwise taking an active part in the program. Funding is provided for an individual student only once during her time at Smith.

## Academic Departments

Students are also encourage to ask the applicable academic department to see if funds are available for students to attend a conference.

## FAQs

*Can I turn in a receipt that has an itemized expense for alcohol? I'll just cross that item off and handwrite a new total.*

No, the Controller's Office will not accept any receipts with alcohol on it. It is suggested to ask to put the alcohol on a separate receipt.

*Can I apply for funding after I have already attended a conference?*

Yes, the conference fund can be applied for retroactively; however, there is the risk that it would not be funded fully. It is recommended to apply for funding in advance.

*As an organization looking to take members to a conference, do I apply to the ORC Discretionary Fund or the Organization Conference Fund?*

If the conference is necessary to maintain national affiliation, then apply to the ORC Discretionary Fund. For all other conferences, apply to the Organisation Conference Fund.

*My org wants to bring 20 people to a conference; can we all use the conference fund?*

Like other funding sources, the conference fund has limitations. There is a strict limit to one SGA van full of people (7) or four (4) people if staying overnight. You are encouraged to look at other sources of funding mentioned above.

*Can I go to an international conference?*

The SGA Conference Fund can only be used for international conferences if the student is already studying abroad in that country, be presenting at the conference, or specially invited to attend.