

Best practices for requesting conference travel funding

Students within the Agricultural and Applied Economics department can request travel funds from the department to attend conferences where they are presenting, depending on funding availability and approval from the Department Head. External funding options should be explored first before requesting departmental funding.

Please submit travel funding requests at least 4-6 weeks before the conference.

Step 1: Identify the Conference and Confirm the Presentation

- Choose the conference you want to attend, and note the **exact dates**.
- Secure official confirmation that your paper/poster has been **accepted for presentation** (email from organizers, acceptance letter, etc.).

Step 2: Ask Your Faculty Advisor

Once you have confirmation of presentation and have applied (or plan to apply) for external awards, request financial support from your advisor or faculty mentor. Make sure you have:

- Conference dates and location
- Summary of external funding (requested/applied/received)
- Estimated budget: registration, travel, lodging, per diem

Step 3: Explore External Funding

Here's where to check:

1. **Conference-organized travel grants** — many conferences offer student awards.
2. **Professional societies** (like AAEA) — e.g., the AAEA Trust offers travel grants for graduate and early-career presenters. Some of these awards require letters of departmental support, check these early to submit before the deadline.
3. **University-level awards**
 - a. GPSS Travel Fund, <https://gpss.vt.edu/programs/ftp.html>
 - b. CALS Student Travel Award - the department must request this award on your behalf. Please reach out to the Graduate Program Coordinator to apply for this funding.
 - i. This award requires matching funds, please make sure you have external funds, advisor funding, or departmental funds before submitting this application.

Step 4: Prepare Departmental Funding Request

After advisor backing, plan your request to the Graduate Program Coordinator. You should include:

- Name of paper you will be presenting
- Detailed cost breakdown (registration, airfare, hotel, meals)
- List of external and advisor funding obtained or pending

Step 5: Pre-Approval & Booking

Contact Pailin Chaiprasertsiti with the following information, so she can submit a travel pre-approval in the system.

- Departing from:
- Destination(s):
- Dates of travel: (if more than 1 location, dates of travel to each location)
- Purpose of travel:
- Name of the conference (if applicable):
- Name of presentation (if applicable):
- Fund number to charge:

Estimated List of Expenses:

- Ground transportation (mileage for personal vehicle, car rental, parking, tolls, gas, etc.)
- Flight (airfare, baggage)
- Meals (cannot be reimbursed for any meals provided by conference or meeting, even if you choose not to participate in conference meals)
- Lodging (hotel, taxes) *NOTE: Please do not charge any expenses to your hotel room (food, etc.)
- Conference dues/fees
- Visas
- Vaccinations
- Travel insurance

ALL TRAVEL REQUIRES AN AUTHORIZATION PRIOR TO TRAVELING. PLEASE SUBMIT THE ABOVE TRAVEL INFORMATION TWO WEEKS BEFORE TRAVELING DOMESTICALLY, AND ONE MONTH BEFORE TRAVELING INTERNATIONALLY.

Below is a helpful travel overview for reimbursement from Virginia Tech:

https://www.controller.vt.edu/content/dam/controller_vt_edu/procedures/travel/20335a.pdf

Step 7: Travel & Post-Conference Reimbursement

- Keep **all itemized receipts** (flights, lodging, meals, registration, taxis).
- You can submit hard copies of receipts or scanned PDFs once you return.