
GUIDE FOR UNDERGRADUATE TRAVEL GRANTS

I. Introduction

Undergraduate Travel Grants are designed to support the creative and scholarly activities of ETSU undergraduate students, specifically in terms of defraying all or part of the costs for undergraduates to present their work at meetings, display creative works or perform at exhibitions. Proposals for these grants are accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis in the Fall and Spring semesters as long as funds remain. The grant amount is up to \$500 per student traveling to an academically-oriented event for the purpose of:

- presenting a paper
- presenting a poster,
- presenting a performance
- exhibiting creative works
- participating in a formal competition

An ETSU undergraduate may be awarded a maximum of two travel awards. Award decisions give preference to students who have not previously had a Travel Grant.

Generally, these grants are intended for individual students. Sometimes multiple students can request a grant to help with shared expenses (for example, driving to the conference site in the same vehicle). Proposals for larger grants may be considered from faculty member(s) who will accompany a group of undergraduates, all of whom will be presenting/exhibiting/performing.

II. Understanding Travel Costs

Travel grants can be used to offset one or more of the following items, in total or in part:

- The cost of travel. This could be airfare, bus, or mileage if driving. This could be shuttle, subway, or taxi rides at the conference.
- The cost of accommodation. This would normally be a hotel.
- The cost of meals. This could be a conference banquet, or a per diem cost which relates generally to meals while at a conference.

Students should be aware that travel to events as an ETSU student requires that a Travel Request form be completed. If receiving a Travel Award from the Office of Undergraduate Research & Creative Activities, the Travel Request form should be completed via the Honors College. One exception to this expectation is if the Department or some other ETSU unit is also supplying funds to aid the student.

However, even in this case, the Request form must be signed by the Dean of the Honors College if receiving a Travel Grant from this program.

Very important: students should be aware that Travel Grant funds are typically provided by way of reimbursement of costs after the event. A student will submit a Travel Expense Claim via the Honors College following the conference (although there can be exceptions as noted above). It is possible to receive an advance on a Travel Grant, but (a) the advance is never 100% of the request and (b) the advance will be provided only a few days ahead of the travel dates. These two conditions are pursuant with ETSU travel policies.

III. Elements of the Request

To request a Travel Grant, an undergraduate student should submit the following items:

- A. *Cover Sheet:* The proposer is to produce a single page “cover sheet” that contains the following essential information:
 - a. Title of project
 - b. Name of the student
 - c. Student’s ETSU ID number
 - d. Name of the faculty mentor
 - e. Department of the student’s major
 - f. Conference to be attended, and the dates
 - g. Contact information for the student
 - h. Any other pertinent information
 - i. Student signature
- B. *Copy of the Meeting/Event Announcement*
- C. *Copy of the abstract or description for the performance/competition*
- D. *Letter of acceptance of presentation:* An official verification from a conference/event organizer is required. This could be a letter or an email.
- E. *Letter of recommendation from the faculty sponsor*
- F. *Statement of supplemental funds:* If the student will also be receiving funds from his/her Department, a statement to this effect is needed from the Department Chair. If funds are to be provided by some other unit (e.g., the College level), a statement from that unit’s representative will be needed (e.g., the Dean).
- G. *Itemized Budget:* The specific costs to be covered by the Travel Grant need to be identified. This could be in the form of a spreadsheet, table, or simple listing.

The costs need to be justified. As an example, consider a request to offset the cost of a hotel stay. That item in the budget could be identified as follows,

Hotel: \$140 (2 nights; conference hotel in Memphis; rate of \$70/night)

Specific ETSU requirements for travel budgets are described in the Appendix.

IV. The Submission Process

Travel grant requests are to be submitted electronically ONLY. The request should be a single pdf document sent as email attachment to ignace@etsu.edu.

The Office asks that requests be made at least 3 weeks prior to the first day of travel.

Such a document can be produced by collecting the various elements that comprise the Travel Grant request as outlined in the previous section, and scanning the individual documents to produce the single pdf file for submission.

V. The Review Process

The Director of Undergraduate Research & Creative Activities will review each request to ensure conformance with the requirements described above. The Director may contact the student applicant, or faculty sponsor of the student, to resolve any outstanding questions regarding the application (such as clarification or modification for an item in the budget).

VI. Awardee Responsibilities

If funded, students must report to Ms. D. Bryant in the Honors College at Yoakley Hall. Travel Request and Travel Expense Claim forms will be handled by Ms. Bryant.

All Travel Grant awardees are required to submit a report (not to exceed 1 page) within a month following the conference presentation. The report is simply to describe the main outcomes from the experience.

Finally, this Office requests that an acknowledgement be included in presentations to indicate that the work was supported by the ETSU Honors College and the Office of Research & Sponsored Programs.

Please direct questions to Richard Ignace, Director, by email to ignace@etsu.edu, or by phone at 423 439-6078.

- ◊ **MOTTO:** Pursue your passion.
 - ◊ **MISSION:** To promote and advance the sciences, humanities, and arts by engaging and supporting undergraduates in research.
 - ◊ **VISION:** To make undergraduate research an integral part of the university experience at ETSU.
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Appendix: Pertinent ETSU Travel Policies

- Information about ETSU travel policies is given at:

www.etsu.edu/procurement/travel.aspx

- Forms for Travel Request and Travel Expense Claim can be found at:

www.etsu.edu/fa/fs/forms.aspx#Travel

- To claim for the expense of driving a personal vehicle to a conference, ETSU makes reimbursement based on mileage, currently at some amount per mile. To determine mileage, use the following website for your start and ending locations:

www.randmcnally.com

- To determine the mileage rate for your expense claim, refer to:

www.etsu.edu/fa/fs/finpro/FP_7_Exhibit_F.aspx

- To claim for lodging and per diem (meals and expenses), refer to:

www.etsu.edu/fa/fs/finpro/FP_7_Exhibit_F.aspx

There is a maximum nightly rate allowed for lodging. However, this rate can be exceeded for travelers who stay at a hotel especially arranged for the conference. To obtain this exception, some form of documentation is required in such cases to verify that the hotel was specially arranged for the conference. (Typically, this information can be printed from the conference website.)