

For Travel Grant:

1. How do I apply for the grant? How do I get started?

We advise you to make a checklist of the items as you get started. The applicant should:

- Download the “Travel Grant Application” form from the GSA website and complete all the required fields.
- Type all responses in the downloaded application form.
- Provide handwritten signatures and the signatures of your academic advisor.
- Provide a single page tabular estimated budget for the entire trip. Budgets must closely follow the format and layout of the [Example Budget](#) (available on the website).
- Provide a detailed budget with the sources for the price quotes.
- Indicate the items funded by the GSA grant. Also, any funding from other sources should be noted in the budget.
- Provide documentation of acceptance to present at the specified conference or to attend the specified seminar/workshop.
- Submit the required documents electronically to gsa.esf@gmail.com.

2. How do I know if I have been awarded a travel grant?

Once the travel grants have been decided, the applicants will be notified via email whether they have been awarded the grant or not.

3. What is the difference between GSA travel and research grant?

The GSA travel grant is intended to support students who are seeking funding from the GSA to present original work through participation in conferences/seminars. Whereas GSA research grant is intended to support students who are doing original research and seeking funding either to present their research work or to meet project-related expenses. More so, the Travel Grant is awarded for a maximum of \$250, whereas Research Grants for a maximum of \$500.

4. How many travel grants a student can receive while at ESF?

Ph.D. Students may receive up to three travel grants whereas master's students may receive up to two travel grants while at ESF. However, students can only receive funding from the GSA once per academic year.

5. Is there any publicly available rubric or guideline to prepare the travel grant application?

There is no publicly available rubric. We encourage you to read the guidelines for the travel grant that would help prepare your application. Moreover, we suggest you consider including a concise description of your work, professional development aspect, the rationale, and a clear description of your funding and the budget estimates.

6. I don't have a proof of acceptance to the conference. Am I still eligible to apply?

If official acceptance has not yet been received by the deadline, the applicant can still submit the grant application. However, funding will not be dispensed until documentation is provided.

7. Are conferences or seminars evaluated for the merit?

The Committee does not evaluate conferences or seminars for merit.

8. If awarded, how do I get the reimbursement? How do I receive my grant?

The GSA Travel Grants are awarded as soon as possible following the notification of the award via email. To get the reimbursement, the applicant should provide the required documents including:

- a final report
- proof of travel documents such as original receipts for the airfare, accommodation etc.
- mileage reported by submitting a copy of the conference or meeting agenda and a State Travel Expense Worksheet found at the ESF Office of Business Affairs (<http://www.esf.edu/business/travel.htm>).

The applicant will receive reimbursement via check from the business office. The check can be either collected from the business office or mailed to the applicant on the provided address. However, we recommend picking up from the office as it takes less time.

9. What are the requirements for the final report?

The final report for reimbursement should include:

- A cover-page.
- A brief report detailing the conference, seminar, or workshop and how this experience benefited the recipient professionally (1-page maximum).
- A complete tabulated final budget (using example budget format) for the actual cost of travel. This should include:
 - ✓ how GSA money was spent;
 - ✓ other sources of funding that were utilized;
 - ✓ how much out of pocket expenses were incurred.

10. When should I submit the required documents for the reimbursement? Is it required to submit both paper and electronic copy?

Each recipient must submit the required documents with original receipts both electronically to gsa.esf@gmail.com and a paper copy to the GSA mailbox (located just next to the [Treehouse café](#) in the basement of Marshall Hall, [GSA mailbox # 15](#)) as soon as their travel is complete.

11. I don't have the money to book a flight? Can you send me my funds ahead of time?

No, we cannot send you funds unless proof of travel expenses is provided.

12. What happens if I don't have electronic receipts or they're not enough?

We highly recommend keeping track of all the original receipts to provide proof of your travel expenses. If they are not enough, any other supporting documents that could be scanned and submitted for the reimbursement would be equally helpful.

13. How applications are reviewed? Why did I get less than I requested?

The GSA Grant committee thoroughly reviews all applications to ensure they are complete, follow the guidelines outlined for submission, and are for appropriate travel expenses (not overly estimated). Generally, the selected recipients are awarded the maximum amount (\$250) they requested. However, due to the high volume of applications, the selection becomes more competitive. As GSA's budget is limited, we have to allocate funds very wisely until available funding is exhausted.

14. What if I do not have a paper to present at a conference? Am I still eligible to apply?

Unfortunately, we are unable to consider an applicant in that case. The GSA travel grant is only available to provide support for student's travel who are presenting their original work. The applicant must be presenting original research/work either as a poster or oral presentation with such travel.

15. I am unable to find the GSA mailbox. Is there any other location to submit the final report?

We don't accept final reports at any other location. All final documents must be submitted to GSA mailbox (located just next to the Treehouse café in the basement of Marshall Hall, GSA mailbox # 15). If you are still unable to find it, please contact the committee chair at gsa.esf@gmail.com.

For Research Grant:

1. How do I apply for the Research Grant?

We encourage you to make a checklist of the items as you get started. The applicant should:

- Download the "Research_Grant_Proposal_Application" from the GSA website and fill in the template with your proposal.
- Delete instruction paragraphs and add your information.
- Formatting should be Times New Roman font, 12pt, 1" margins, double-spaced with page numbers. See the Research Grant Proposal Guidelines document on the GSA website for additional information.

2. How do I determine if I am eligible to submit an application?

The research grant is open to all students who are enrolled in a graduate program at SUNY-ESF. However, students are only eligible to apply for the GSA Research Grant between the timeframe applications are called for the semester.

3. I need to travel to do my research. Which grant will allow this? To what extent?

The GSA Research Grant Program provides research support to the students to fund research and/or project related expenses. These may include materials, travel expenses lodging, flight tickets, etc. for current or new projects conducted by graduate students at SUNY-ESF. A graduate student may only receive 1 research grant, a maximum of \$500 from the GSA during their academic career at ESF. This grant cannot be used for expenses related to conferences, meetings, or professional development (See GSA Travel Grants).

4. How long should be a research proposal? Is there any page limit?

Yes, the page limit varies through different sections in the proposal. Make sure that your proposal is not exceeding:

- ✓ Abstract (250 words limit)
- ✓ Project description (4-pages limit)
- ✓ Budget (1-page)
- ✓ Budget Justification (2-page limit)
- ✓ Timeline (1-page limit)
- ✓ Curriculum Vitae (5-page limit)
- ✓ Glossary (2-page limit)

Whereas Appendix, Literature Cited, and Resubmission with Reviewer Comments and Summary Statement have no page limit.

5. Does my research have to be connected to my field of study? What is covered under this grant?

Yes, because the GSA Research Grants are meant to cover original research or project-related expenses, including equipment and supplies that can't be procured at ESF. It also covers travel to conduct the research.

6. Do I need to be nominated by my advisor to submit an application?

No, you do not need to be nominated in order to submit an application. You need only the documents requested on the application form, including a formal research proposal.

7. Can I submit a paper application?

No, we do not need paper applications at this stage. All the applications must be submitted electronically as a single pdf to gsa.esf@gmail.com.

8. What about figures, tables, graph, diagrams, pictures included in my Research Plan? Are they included in the page limit or can they be included separately?

We encourage that the proposal includes figures, tables, graph, diagrams, and pictures in an Appendix as additional information related to the project. Other appropriate appendix items may include but are not limited to:

- Study area maps
- Designs for artwork
- Letters of collaboration or support

- Permission letters for access to data
- Questionnaires approved by IRB (Institutional Review Board)

As mentioned before, there is no page limit for an appendix.

9. Can I change my proposal once submitted?

If you find that the submitted proposal is missing any required information, we can accept provided “a valid reason for change” is indicated in the description. However, we will not accept any change in the submission after the deadline.

10. How long does it take to review the application? When should we expect to receive the notification of approval/disapproval?

It typically takes 2 weeks to review the applications. The applicants are notified within 15 days by email either for approval or disapproval.

11. When should we submit the final documents for reimbursement? What should be included in a final report?

Recipients should submit their documents as soon as possible after the research or project outlined in the proposal is completed to expedite the refund process. Each recipient must submit a final report with their reimbursement request. Refund requests lacking a final report will not be processed. The report should include:

- A cover page
- A concise and informative section outlining the outcome of the research at the time of submission of the Final Report. The description can be found in the guidelines.
- A complete budget for the actual cost of the project (see guidelines).
- A report on the dissemination of results.

12. What happens to the grants that are not claimed before the deadline?

Awards not claimed within 6 months of the due date (between the timeframe applications are called) will be forfeited.

13. How many research grants a student can receive while at ESF?

A graduate student may only receive 1 research grant for a maximum of \$500 from the GSA program during their academic career at ESF.

14. My proposal was denied twice in the previous semesters? Am I still eligible to apply? What are the requirements? How can I improve it?

Yes, you can re-apply. Here are some specific insights to note:

- If an applicant (Principal Investigator aka PI) is denied funding, the Grant Committee will provide a copy of the comments from the reviewers to PI. This document will comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the proposal. Since the composition of the review committee changes every semester, PIs **must** include a copy of these comments when re-submitting a proposal.
- If the PI has more than one resubmission, they must include copies of ALL comments received from each review in subsequent submissions. If a copy of the comments is not included, the re-submitted proposal will be considered non-compliant and removed from the review process.
- PIs can improve their proposals by revising and addressing the concerns of the review committee before re-submission. PIs are expected to include a statement summarizing how the concerns were addressed and responses to the comments if no changes were made. Because the amount of feedback provided by the reviewers can vary, there is no page limit for this statement.