Graduate Student Organization (GSO) Grants and Awards Program
Policies and Application Instructions

Graduate Student Organization (GSO) Grants and Awards support:
1. Professional Development (i.e. research expenses)
2. Conference Travel & Fees

Graduate Student Organization (GSO) Grants and Awards do not support:
1. Per Diem
2. Food
3. Ground Transportation
4. Personal Expenditures

Grants and Award Policies:
1. Any applicant who pays the Graduate Student Organization (GSO) Student Fee is eligible for funding. Please view this link for eligible departments.
2. Applicants must adhere to the University of Hawaii at Manoa Student Code of Conduct.
3. Applicants may ask for funding up to 6 months prior and/or 6 months post dates of travel or research project. Applicants can only be funded once per conference/travel expense or professional development project.
4. Applications are reviewed every month during the Fall and Spring semesters. Applications can be submitted during the summer and will be reviewed the following Fall semester.
5. The color groups’ decision for each application is final and there is no appeal process.
6. Applications are due two weeks prior to the GSO General Assembly meeting. Missing documents and letters of recommendation are due one week prior to the meeting for the application to be eligible for review. If the documents are not submitted by this date, the application will be reviewed at a subsequent meeting once the requirements have been met. Applicants with missing required application documents and/or letters of recommendation will be automatically declined within one week after the last meeting of the semester in which the application was submitted.
7. In 2006, the GSO Assembly adopted a “no representative, no review” policy: for an application to be reviewed, the representative of the program to which the applicant belongs must be present. If an application has not been reviewed because of the absence of a representative, the application is held until the next review session and will not be reviewed until the representative of the program the application was submitted from attends the review session.
8. Each graduate student may only apply for and receive no more than one grant per academic semester.
9. For graduate students who are near graduation, applications will be considered only if they are received at least two months prior to graduation and for conferences that take place within a month after graduation.
10. The GSO Grants & Awards fund should only be one of the sources of funding to students; applicants are encouraged to seek complementary funding for their project elsewhere.

11. The GSO Assembly peer-review committees shall fund meritorious proposals a minimum of $250 for domestic projects or $500 for international projects, unless the total requested is under the minimum, and a maximum of $1000 for domestic projects and $2000 for international projects. The peer-review committees may partially fund meritorious proposals as long as there is no partially funding of a subtotal section on the Itemized Budget Form, unless fully funding the subtotal would exceed the maximum funding cap. If no meritorious proposals are forthcoming for a given month, peer-review committees may choose not to award funding.

12. Applicant’s budget form may request up to the maximum amount allowed for funding, $1000 for domestic projects and $2000 for international projects. Budget’s allocating amounts more than this will be rejected. There are no minimum request limits.

13. The amount of funding for each color group is determined based on the fraction of students in each department and the fraction of demand.

14. The applicant, if s/he receives funding from the G&A program, should acknowledge the Graduate Student Organization (GSO) during his/her presentation and/or in any paper s/he publishes.

15. Applicants are notified by email about the status of their application within 2 weeks of the review. Awarded applicants will receive an email containing the reimbursement packet and their awarded budget. Grantees will receive their reimbursement within 10-12 weeks from the date they submitted their completed reimbursement packet.

16. Applicants are required to submit all reimbursement documents within three months after date of travel or awarded date (whichever comes last). Applicants that miss this reimbursement deadline are not eligible to reapply for the same awarded expenses ("awarded" defined as “approved for funding”).

17. GSO grants are reimbursements; awardees are reimbursed for the actual amount they spent on travel or research materials after the travel or research occurs. If the actual amount you spent is less than the awarded amount, you will receive the actual amount only.

18. If requesting funds for conference attendance, applicants will only be reimbursed up to one day before and/or after conference dates. If flight occurs outside of these dates, the applicant is required to provide a cost comparison demonstrating that this flight was less expensive than a flight within these dates. If the flight was more expensive, the applicant will be reimbursed the lesser amount.

19. You do not need to include receipts, boarding passes, hotel folios, nametags, and portions of the conference brochures in your grant application. But, these documents are necessary for your reimbursement, i.e. after you have been awarded funding. You should keep all boarding passes, receipts, credit card or bank statements, and conference documents that are relevant to your application.

20. Amounts for funded items are not transferable. If you want to reallocate amounts or change items in the original grant (ex. dates of travel), you must submit a reallocation proposal which goes through the review process. Applications for reallocation have to be submitted before the reimbursement deadline passes.

21. As of March 2015, federal and state taxes will not apply for awarded US citizens. Both
federal and state taxes still apply to GSO grants for international students awarded, this tax can be as much as 14%.

22. A student can only receive partial funding if they request funding for multiple line items (ex. request funding for flight and hotel and registration). If they requested multiple items, then the reviewers can choose to partially fund the grant by funding one of the items and not all of them. However, if an applicant only applies for one item (ex. flight), then the reviewers only have the choice of fully funding or declining the grant.

Required materials for online application:
1. A signed and completed funding agreement found on the online application;
2. A cover letter (no more than 1 page) detailing the following aspects of your research/travel: 1) The professional and scientific benefit gained through the completion of these activities, 2) How this will advance you towards your Masters or PhD degree, and 3) If you will be seeking an award during the conference;
3. A technical summary of no more than 300 words; if you are presenting at a conference, this should be the abstract that you submitted to present. If you are not presenting, this should be a technical summary of your overall project written for a specialist in your field of study;
4. A non-technical Summary that emphasizes the importance of the research (no more than 300 words) and use language directed towards non-specialists;
5. An itemized budget with sub-totals, the total amount requested from the G&A program, and the amount of money received or expected from other sources (mention the source) to complete the travel or research; Fill out the itemized budget for all items for which you are requesting funding. If you are asking for more than one item in each category, please list each item separately in the space provided or on a separate sheet of paper if there is not enough space;
6. A budget justification (no more than 100 words) where the applicant details and explains the use and necessity of the items listed in the budget;
7. Two letters of recommendation, which should emphasize the importance of the research or travel and past achievements that make his/her application outstanding. Once the online application is submitted the recommender will receive an email from STAR asking them to address the following statements:
   1. An assessment of the proposed project and its importance or relevance to the University of Hawaii, the applicants department, the applicants academic or professional field, society, and the applicants professional or academic development.
   2. A description about how the applicant is prepared to successfully complete the proposed project.
   3. A statement explaining the capacity and the length of time the recommender has known the applicant.
   4. For a travel grant, please rate the quality/appropriateness of the applicant’s conference or research opportunity (1 being not appropriate; 5 being very appropriate).
8. Conference letter of acceptance, if attending a conference;
9. Any additional supporting documents (e.g. additional budget forms, flight and hotel comparisons, currency converter documentation, conference registration receipt, etc.). Please attach two copies of each additional document, one that includes the applicant's
name and one that is anonymous.

Reminders:
- For Anonymous items (letter of recommendations, additional supporting documents, etc.) refer to the person submitting the grant request as the applicant, the candidate, etc.
- Ask your professors early for a letter of recommendation.
- Ideally, ask a professor you have a relationship with, can vouch for you and you are not afraid to approach.
- Have a fellow graduate/professor review your application before submission.
- Double Check: all fields are complete, signature on the Funding Agreement, name removed from all anonymous documents, all items on budget are accounted for, GSO budget request matches requested quote on application, and that the budget adds up.