

University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa Graduate Student Organization (GSO) Grants and Awards (G&A) Program Policies

I. Application Policies

1. Applicants must adhere to the [University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa Student Code of Conduct](#).
2. Any applicant who pays the Graduate Student Organization (GSO) Student Fee is eligible for funding. Please view this [link](#) for eligible programs.
3. Applications must be submitted electronically [here](#).
4. There are ten application deadlines/funding cycles during the academic year from August to May. Each graduate student may only apply for and receive one award per academic semester. Applications are accepted during the summer; however, they will not be reviewed until the first General Assembly meeting of the following Fall semester.
5. Applicants may submit an application up to six months before and/or six months after the dates of the proposed activity.
6. Applicant’s budget form may request up to \$1000 for domestic projects and \$2000 for international projects. Budget’s allocating amounts more will be rejected. Applicants may request funding to support:
 - a. Professional conference travel and attendance, including airfare, accommodations, and registration fees
 - b. Professional development, i.e. workshop or special course attendance
 - c. Research travel and materials
7. Applicants may **not** request funding to support:
 - a. Per Diem
 - b. Food
 - c. Ground Transportation
 - d. Personal Expenditures
8. Required materials for online application:
 1. An anonymous cover letter (1 page) detailing the following aspects of the proposed activity: 1) The professional and scientific benefit gained through the completion of the activity, 2) the contribution to the applicant’s degree progression, and 3) if the applicant will be seeking an award during the conference, if applicable;
 2. An anonymous technical abstract (<300 words): If presenting at a conference, this should be the abstract submitted to present. If not presenting, this should be a technical summary of the overall proposed project written for a specialist in the field of study;
 3. An anonymous non-technical abstract (<300 words): summary that emphasizes the importance of the research using language directed towards non-specialists;
 4. An anonymous, 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 to complete the travel or research. If requesting funding for more than one item in each category (i.e. Airfare, Accommodations, Research Materials, etc.), please list each item separately in the space provided or on a second copy of the Budget Form, if needed;
 5. An anonymous budget justification (<100 words) detailing and explaining the use and necessity of the items listed in the budget;
 6. Two anonymous letters of recommendation; once the online application is submitted the recommender will receive an email from JotForm asking them to address the following statements:

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- a. An assessment of the proposed project and its importance or relevance to the applicant’s academic or professional field, society, and the applicant’s professional or academic development.
 - b. A description about how the applicant is prepared to successfully complete the proposed project.
 - c. A statement explaining the capacity and the length of time the recommender has known the applicant.
 - d. 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).
7. A redacted (i.e. anonymous) conference letter of acceptance, if applicable;
 8. 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.
9. Applications are due two weeks prior to each GSO General Assembly meeting by 11:59pm Hawai‘i Standard Time. Due dates can be found and downloaded [here](#). Corrections, 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 received in accordance with these deadlines, the application will be reviewed at a subsequent meeting once the application is complete. 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.
10. Applicants do not need to include receipts, boarding passes, hotel folios, nametags, and portions of the conference brochures in their application. However, these documents are necessary for reimbursement. Applicants should keep all boarding passes, receipts, credit card or bank statements, and conference documents that are relevant to their proposed activity.
11. For graduate students who are in their semester of graduation, applications will only be considered if they are received at least two months prior to graduation and for conferences that will take place within a month after graduation.
12. If requesting funds for travel, applicants will only be reimbursed for travel up to one day before and/or after conference dates. If travel occurs outside of these dates, the applicant is required to provide a cost comparison demonstrating the travel was equal to or less than travel within those dates. If the travel was more expensive, the applicant will be reimbursed the lesser amount.

II. Application Review Policies

1. Applications are reviewed by members of the General Assembly and GSO G&A Committee, which is composed of elected graduate students serving as their program representatives. Program representatives are clustered into Color Groups based on general overlap and similarity of program focus to most effectively review applications.
2. Applications are reviewed at monthly General Assembly meetings during the Fall and Spring semesters, for a total of ten review sessions from August to May.
3. A quorum of four (4) Program Representatives within a Color Group must be present for any applications from programs within that Color Group to be reviewed. If quorum is not

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met, the Grants and Awards Chair and/or non-elected GSO Executive Council Members enrolled in programs outside of that Color Group may join the Color Group, and therefore allow application review to occur.

4. Each application is reviewed by at least three (3) Program Representatives. The applicant's Program Representative cannot review the application, only advocate on its behalf to the other Color Group members.
5. 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 will be held until the next review session and will not be reviewed until the program representative attends the review session.
6. The Color Groups' decisions for each application are final and there is no appeal process.
7. The GSO Color Groups shall fund approved 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 Color Groups may partially fund approved proposals as long as there is no partially funding of a Category on the Itemized Budget Form, unless fully funding the subtotal would exceed the Color Group's available funds for the academic year. If no meritorious proposals are forthcoming for a given month, Color Groups may choose not to award funding.
8. Color Groups' allocated funds are calculated each semester, and is based on the average fraction of students enrolled in each program and of the fraction requested funding from the previous academic year.

III. Applicant Notification and Reimbursement Policies

1. Applicants are notified by email about the status of their application within two weeks of review. Awarded applicants will receive an email containing the reimbursement packet and their awarded budget. Awarded applicants will receive their reimbursement approximately 10-12 weeks from the date they submitted their completed reimbursement packet.
2. Applicants are required to submit all reimbursement documents within three months after date of travel or awarded date (whichever comes last).
3. GSO grants are reimbursements; awardees are reimbursed for the actual amount they spend on travel or research materials after the travel or research occurs. If the actual amount spent is less than the awarded amount, the applicant will only receive the amount spent.
4. Amounts for funded items are non-transferable, i.e. funds can only be used for the exact subcategories and items listed in their approved budget. If an applicant wants to reallocate amounts or change items in the original grant, they must submit a reallocation application which goes through the review process. Applications for reallocation must be submitted to the [G&A Manager](#) before the reimbursement deadline passes.
5. A student can only receive partial funding if they request funding in multiple Categories. If there is a request for funding of multiple categories, the Color Group can choose to partially fund the application by funding one of the items and not all of them. However, if an applicant only applies for funding of one Category, then the Color Group can only fully fund or decline the application.

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6. As of March 2015, federal and state taxes will not apply to awarded US citizens. However, both federal and state taxes still apply to GSO G&A grant monies grants awarded to international students, and this tax can be as much as 14%.
7. The awardee must acknowledge the GSO in his/her presentation and/or in any resulting publications.