

Staff Professional Development Fund

Purpose

The College of Liberal Arts Dean's Office recognizes the many valuable and varied contributions that CoLA staff make to support and enhance CoLA's mission to prepare our students to think critically and independently in the world beyond campus, as well as to support CoLA faculty in their commitment to teaching and cutting-edge research. CoLA staff are the foundation upon which many of these objectives are achieved, and a continued investment in the professional development of our staff will deepen the College's ability to achieve its core missions, while also significantly enhancing the personal and professional lives of the staff who serve the College. The SPDF is designed to provide staff with funding for professional and personal development opportunities directly related to their current and/or anticipated roles within the College.

Eligibility

All full-time administrative and professional and classified staff who have completed at least six months of uninterrupted service to the College, and who are not on any performance improvement plans, may apply. Applications must have the written support of the applicant's direct supervisor, which must include a statement of how the activity directly relates to the applicant's current and/or anticipated role within the College.

Funding Philosophy

The SPDF has been established to provide monetary support to CoLA staff as they seek to develop and expand professionally in areas directly relating to their current and/or anticipated roles within the College. Through awards made by this fund, the College seeks to encourage learning and professional development in the form of training, training materials, professional conference participation, and professional certification programs. Because funding resources are limited, this fund is not designed to be the sole source of funding, but can instead be used to supplement other funding options, including departmentally approved resources, and the applicant's personal funds.

Funding can support professional development in the following areas:

- Workshops/training programs
- Conference attendance
- Professional presentations and/or publications
- Service in professional associations and organizations
- Continuing education as required to obtain or maintain licenses as required for employment

Acceptable fund uses include but are not limited to:

- Registration fees
- Registration dues
- Study materials
- Travel, within existing UT/CoLA guidelines, associated with professional presentations or conference attendance

Unacceptable fund uses include but are not limited to:

- Any expense that does not support the mission of the University of Texas at Austin or the College of Liberal Arts
- Any expense or activity that is prohibited by UT Austin or CoLA policies and procedures
- Expenses that are not directly related to current and/or anticipated roles within the College
- Payments to obtain certificates/diplomas/degrees; payments for testing fees and/or travel to testing sites
- Any request not supported by the applicant's supervisor (make a note that staff should see us if there are any issues)

Application Guidelines

[Applications for funding may be submitted online](#) and on a rolling basis; all applications must be received **at least 45 days before the proposed activity start date**; at no time will applications for past activities be considered for funding.

Application Review Process

All applications will be considered for funding by the College Dean's Office Committee on Staff Organizational Culture and Climate. Awards will be based on the following:

- How the proposed request will directly impact the applicant's professional development as it relates to their current and/or anticipated role within the College.
- The supervisor's statement of support, including how any impact of time-away from work will be mitigated.
- Number of prior awards made to the applicant, with preference given to first-time applicants.
- Availability of funds in the SPDF account.

Award Decisions and Distribution of Funds

All awards are dependent on funds availability, complete and timely application submissions, and a review by the award committee. The submission of an application does not imply any guarantee of funding. Funds will be disbursed as either a reimbursement (once evidence of activity completion has been submitted), or as a cash-advance when appropriate. Applicant is responsible for showing evidence of successful completion of the proposed activity in order for funds to be disbursed; failure to show evidence of successful completion will result in the cancellation of the award and or the expected immediate repayment of any cash advances made in relation to the award.