SSF FAQ

Who is eligible?

All graduate employees at the University of Massachusetts Boston who are dues-paying members of the Graduate Employee Organization, UAW local 1596, **at the time of application**. In order to be eligible, you **must** be a dues-paying member **before** you apply.

"How do I know if I am a dues-paying member?"

If you are unsure whether or not you are a dues-paying member, fill out the GEO Membership Form found here: https://tempgeouaw.wordpress.com/become-a-member/ **.** This is a form-fillable PDF that you can email to GEO. We will inform you by email once we have received your membership form. Filling it out more than once will not affect your membership status, nor cause any other changes, but it will help ensure you are in our system. The GEO dues deduction form is usually completed in the pre-employment paperwork submitted by graduate assistants to the office of Graduate Studies.

You can, however, check your pay-stub to see if you are a dues-paying member. To find your pay-stub:
1. Go to UMB's website at umb.edu
2. Click on the *MyUMass* tab and then on *HR Direct*
3. Log in with your UMB credentials
4. Click on *Payroll*
5. Select the latest pay period
6. Under After Tax Deductions you should see Boston GEO dues listed with a total dollar amount next to it
7. If your pay-stub does not list this fee, that means you are not a dues-paying member, and must fill out a new membership form.

How many grants can be awarded to an individual applicant?

Although SSF is split into two rounds of funding per academic year, only one grant per academic year is allowed per applicant. Applicants may receive the SSF multiple times during their academic career, provided the conferences for which they are applying occur in different academic years, detailed below. For the purposes of SSF, an academic year ends on April 15th. This date is due to the university's pay schedule.

"How do I apply?"

When do applications open?

The online application opens on the first day of the Fall and Spring semesters at 8am and are open for seven days. Applications in the Fall semester cover conferences attended in the Summer and Fall Semesters. For the purposes of SSF, this period begins on April 16th, and goes to the last day of the Fall semester. Applications in the Spring semester covers conferences attended in

the Winter and Spring semesters, which begins the last day of the Fall semester and goes until April 15th. For the purposes of SSF, the first day of the Fall and Spring semester, and the last day of Fall semester, are defined on the UMass Boston Academic Calendar.

If conference days fall within both rounds of funding, e.g., a conference begins April 13th and ends April 18th, applicants will mark the first day of the conference they are attending to know which SSF round their conference falls into. That April 13th to April 18th example would be a Spring conference.

Applicants may turn in applications for conferences they have not attended yet, depending on the date the conference takes place.

Although we do not accept applications early, a list of questions and materials you will need to fill out the application will be made available on our website under Scholarly Support Fund. You can prepare your application using this material. Applications will only be accepted through an online form that will open on the first day of the Fall and Spring semesters at 8:00am. **Applications dropped off in person, or submitted through email, will not be accepted.** The application form will be open for 7 days, closing at 8:00am on the 8th day of the semester. After that, the application form will be closed until the next round of funding. After the application period is closed, applicants will receive an email confirming the receipt of their application.

Before you apply…
- Make sure you're applying for the correct round of funding. If your conference begins anywhere between April 16th and the final day of Fall Semester, it's a Fall conference, and you will want to apply at 8am on the first day of the Fall semester.
- If the conference falls anywhere between the day after Fall semester ends, and April 15th, it is a Spring conference, and you will want to apply at 8am on the first day of the Spring semester.
- Make sure you are a member! If you are not a member, or just want to be safe, please email a new GEO membership form to the GEO email account.
- Remember: **applications will not be accepted in hard-copy, or by email. Only applications completed through our website will be considered for SSF.**
- Download the questions and list of materials or information needed from our website before the first day of the semester. That way, you'll know what you need to fill out the form and apply.

How are SSF recipients selected?

The Scholarly Support Fund is a first come-first serve award. Therefore, as long as all requirements are met, funds will be awarded to applicants in the order by which GEO received their application. These timestamps are automatically generated by our website when the form is submitted. We will move from the first awardee down the line until all funds are distributed. If remaining funds for the last awardee total to less than their requested amount, then partial funding will be awarded to that awardee. After all funds have been distributed, a waiting list will be created of any applicants who have not been awarded funding or have received only partial funding. In case of any applicant who has been awarded the SSF are unable to finish the process

for SSF - including, but not limited to, being unable to attend their conference, or being unable to prove costs or supply receipts - the award will be given to the first person on the waiting list, continuing on a first come-first serve basis. Once awardees are selected, applicants will be notified of the status of their application. All applications will be kept on file by GEO.

"I've been selected as an awardee. What happens now?"

Once you are notified that you've been selected to receive SSF, you will need to turn in your receipts, as well as a copy of your UMass Boston travel registry confirmation. You can find the travel registry here: https://travelregistry.umasscs.net/ **.** The Travel Registry is a required process for any university-funded travel by students, faculty, and staff. SSF funding covers all registration fees, lodging (if the conference is outside of Boston), meals, and travel costs.

Within 30 days of the last day of the conference, you must submit, by email:
- Your scanned in receipts you wish to have reimbursed by the SSF.
  - These receipts can be for airfare, bus fare, registration, lodging, and meals.
  - These receipts **can be** submitted before the conference occurs, if it meets the total amount you are requesting.
- Your travel registry confirmation.
  - A screen-capture of the registration page, emailed to the GEO account, is best practice.

Once GEO has all necessary documentation, your application will be turned in to the Office of Graduate Studies (OGS) for processing. After your supporting documentation is submitted to OGS, and everything is in order on the application, you should see the reimbursement through direct deposit within two pay-periods (four weeks) on your account. If an applicant is unable to turn in receipts and travel registry confirmation within 30 days of the last day of the conference they attended, funding may be awarded to the next applicant on the waiting list. GEO may request additional documentation to ensure reimbursements happen on a timely basis.

"What do I need to do before I go to the conference?"

Before attending the conference, you must complete UMass Boston's Travel Registry, which can be found here: https://travelregistry.umasscs.net/ **.** Once completed, please take a screen-cap of your receipt and email it to the GEO. If you've booked your lodging and/or travel before the conference date or have a registration fee and these add up to your requested amount, you can turn these receipts in to GEO before attending the conference to ensure a quick reimbursement.

"What do I need to do while I am at the conference?"

While you're at the conference, make sure you save every receipt for which you wish to be reimbursed. SSF covers all registration fees, lodging (if the conference is outside of Boston), meals, and travel (this includes taxis, rideshare services and public transportation as well as airplane and train travel). **Make sure all these receipts are legible and have a clear total listed.** Electronic receipts are accepted. Before submitting your receipts, please create a summary

sheet of all costs. If you need help, send us an email at geo@umb.edu or drop by the office during our office hours.

"What do I need to do when I return from the conference?"

Applicants have 30 days from the last day of the conference to turn in Travel Registry confirmation and their receipts. Once you have all your receipts scanned and the registry confirmation ready, email them to GEO. You will receive an email confirming the receipt of your supporting documentation.

In order to ensure you have all of your receipts ready to turn in, you should collect them as you return home, and compile them in a single folder or location. This way, you will be able to scan them in and email them to GEO quickly, and run a lesser risk of losing any.

Other Questions

How much money does GEO have and how much is allotted for each round of applications?

As of Fall 2018, GEO has a total of $12,500 in SSF for each academic year. These funds are split into $6,250 for Summer/Fall and $6,250 for Winter/Spring. For each round of funding, funds will be awarded to as many applicants as can be covered by the $6,250. Candidates may apply for partial funding if their expenses do not add up to the $500 or $250 allotments. Any spare funding will be passed down to the next applicant on the line, until that applicant's requested funding amount is reached, and then the process will repeat to the next applicant. In instances that the entire allotment of funding is not spent, funds may be rolled over from the Summer/Fall round of funding unto the Winter/Spring. Unfortunately, funds cannot be rolled over from Summer/Fall unto the following academic year. This means all funds for the academic year must be allotted by the Winter/Spring round or they will be lost.

What if I'm attending a conference late into the semester?

You may turn in receipts before attending your conference. If expenses before the conference, such as travel and hotel bookings or conference registration fees, total the request amount, you can submit those in advance to ensure funds are reimbursed in a timely manner.

What if I spent less than the requested $500 or $250?

If the total receipts turned in by an applicant total an amount that is less than the requested amount, the remaining funds will go to the next unfulfilled funding request.

What if I also got funding from the Graduate Student Assembly or any other internal UMass Boston source?

SSF can be used in conjunction with other sources of internal funding. **However**, SSF funds must be used for expenses that are not already covered by any other source of funding. For example, if an applicant spends $250 on a hotel, $500 on travel, and $150 on registration, they could use the SSF award money to pay for their travel costs, and other grants to cover their registry and hotel fees. Any combination works, but funding cannot overlap. For example, if the total an applicant spent is $500, they cannot receive $500 in SSF funding and $400 in other internal UMB funds. The university controller's office keeps track of all internal funding granted to students and will let GEO know if there are any issues with misappropriated funds.

What if I received funding from other sources outside of UMass Boston?

The same rule applies, SSF will not cover any monies already covered by other sources of funding. We hope applicants disclose all of their funding sources to ensure funds can be fairly distributed across our members.

Does the SSF ever change how it works?
GEO may adjust how the SSF is distributed and administered in the Fall of 2020. For Spring 2019, follow this document.