

Revised School Policy for Conference Attendance Guidelines: April 2022

In March 2022, the Directors of Research and Knowledge Exchange submitted a paper to the School Research Committee to revise and update the policy on financial support for conference attendance (the Conference Fund), addressing (a) level of financial support, (b) support for faculty on Research Fellow and T&S contracts, and (c) use of research grant and devolved (PA Account) funds. The proposed approach was consistent with our research strategy and the now-completed project on research fellows, emphasising support for their career development, and is in line with the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers. The policy is also designed to clarify the expectation that support for RF and ECRs' career development linked to a grant is an appropriate use of devolved accounts. Once finalised and agreed, it will be shared on our internal research web pages, during induction of new staff and in the Research Fellows handbook.

The proposed policy was unanimously approved by the Research Committee.

The new Terms of Reference for the ESW Conference Attendance Fund are:

1. The Conference Attendance Fund will support up to £650 per person per year (pro rata for part-time staff), in line with the principles set out in this policy.
2. The Fund is available to all staff on T&R, T&S, and RF contracts.
3. Approval for all funding applications will be dependent on budget availability and is at the discretion of the relevant Head of Department, against the criteria set out in this policy.
4. Prioritisation will be based on the following criteria:
 - No alternative funds available (in line with principles set out below)
 - Active participation in an event (e.g., giving a presentation) or a clear case for its importance in the development of the member of staff's research or scholarship;
5. No rollover of funding from one year to the next.
6. When conference attendance relates to funded activity:
 - Internal or external research grant funding linked to the activity, or devolved (PA) account monies, should be used instead of School Conference Funds. This applies to principal investigators *and* those funded (T&R or T&S faculty with workload allocation) or employed through research grants (Research Fellows at all Grades).
 - If costs *cannot* be funded through a relevant research grant or the PI's PA (devolved) account, then the member of staff may apply to use the Conference Fund.
7. When conference attendance does not relate to funded activity:
 - If the applicant has devolved (PA Account) funds available, these should be used instead of the Conference Fund.

- If no alternative funds (e.g., devolved accounts) are available, the member of staff should apply to the Conference Fund.
 - This support is available to staff on Research Fellow contracts in cases where conference attendance is not specific to the project on which they are employed, but supports their broader career development (e.g., is linked to their PhD).
8. Applicants to the Conference Fund must provide their HOD with a short summary, including the aims and costs of conference attendance and confirming that alternative funding sources are not available, as a basis for decision making in line with this policy. The claim form can be found on the School's internal web pages [<https://www.sussex.ac.uk/esw/internal/forstaff>] under 'FORMS: General'.

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ESW Directors of Research and Knowledge Exchange
20 April 2022