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PGR Travel Award

Guidance

**Covid-19 Information**

Please note that updates to travel guidance and restrictions by the University and Scottish Government due to Covid-19 may necessitate changes to the approval process of the PGR Travel Award throughout the 2021/22 academic year.

Students should familiarise themselves with the latest [Safety, Health & Wellbeing Team Travel Guidance for international travel and travel within the United Kingdom.](https://www.strath.ac.uk/safetyhealthwellbeing/safereturntocampus/covid-19guidance/)Additionally, students are responsible for checking that travel to the destination country is permitted by both the [Scottish Government](https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-international-travel-quarantine/) and the [Foreign and Commonwealth Office](https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice).

Key Points to Consider:

* Students should discuss intention to travel with their supervisors, and, if possible, with the Head of Department/School. Approval for the travel will need to be obtained from the relevant Executive Dean.
* A detailed Risk Assessment will need to be completed and signed off by the Head of Department/School prior to the granting of an Award. This Risk Assessment be submitted to the PGR Funding Team either with the application or by email before the granting of the Award.
* Applicants should also complete the [Post Graduate Student Health Self-Assessment](https://www.strath.ac.uk/media/ps/safetyservices/campusonly/covidrrdg/Covid-19_Individual_Health_Risk_Assessment-Student_v2.0.docx) form. This does not need to be submitted alongside the application.
* To enable the University to support students in an emergency, international travel bookings should always be made through [Key Travel](https://www.strath.ac.uk/studywithus/studyabroad/goingabroad/keytravel/), the University’s Travel Management Company.
* All students travelling outside the United Kingdom on University Business must complete the[travel insurance notification form](https://www.strath.ac.uk/professionalservices/finance/accountingservices/conly/travelcoverage/covid-19universitytraveladvice/) on Pegasus prior to travel.
* Costs for quarantine hotels and tests will be met by the University provided they are agreed in advance when the trip is approved. Please note that this is separate from the PGR Travel Award and should be managed within the Department as part of the approval process.
* Applicants are encouraged to submit applications to the PGR Travel Award as early as possible before the intended travel to avoid delays.

In addition to requests for assistance with travel to in-person conferences, the PGR Travel Award may be awarded to assist with registration fees for online or virtual conferences.

The amount available to request from the PGR Travel Award for this purpose is capped at **£200** and may only be used to cover registration fees.

If an applicant’s first application is for an online/virtual conference, the amount granted will be deducted from the maximum available to the applicant if they apply for a subsequent Award for in-person conference travel. Applications for an online conference after a successful in-person PGR Travel Award has been granted will be considered on a case-by-case basis and are not guaranteed.

**Overview**

The Postgraduate Research (PGR) Travel Award has been set up to provide financial support to doctoral research students travelling to conferences to present research which they have conducted as part of their doctoral research studies.

The PGR Travel Award is available to current, registered doctoral students at the University of Strathclyde, who do not have access to travel funds as part of their research or studentship.

The PGR Travel Award is a limited fund. To ensure that students receive sufficient support with financing their conference travel, the amount requested from the Award must be matched with a contribution from a Department, Graduate School, Faculty, supervisor or an eligible other or external source.

All applications for the Award must be submitted in advance of any intended travel and must be complete. Retrospective or incomplete applications cannot be considered.

Eligible applicants may only be granted the PGR Travel Award once during their doctoral research studies. The only exception to this is participation at online/virtual conferences.

Successful applicants are required to complete and submit a Post Travel Report no later than 30 days after their return from the travel.

**Applicant Eligibility**

In order to receive a PGR Travel Award, applicants must be a full-time or part-time registered doctoral research student at the University of Strathclyde at the time of their intended travel.

Applicants are NOT eligible for the PGR Travel Award if they:

* Have travel funds available to them as part of their studentship;
* Are UKRI-funded, and therefore have access to a Research Training Support Grant (RTSG);
* Are on voluntary suspension;
* Have submitted their thesis; or
* Are a current Masters student.

Eligible applicants may only be granted one PGR Travel Award during their studies. Unsuccessful applicants can reapply to the scheme, if they remain eligible for the Award.

Students in write-up (Completing) are permitted to apply to the Award *only* up to one year after the end of their funding period/ minimum duration end date. Any travel must take place within this one-year period, but prior to submission of the thesis.

**Travel Purpose**

Applicants must have been accepted to present their own doctoral research undertaken at a conference in the form of a paper or a poster in order to be eligible for the PGR Travel Award.

Applicants are required to submit evidence of invitation or acceptance to a conference with their PGR Travel Award application submission, along with any other documentation which may support their application.

The Award may be granted on the condition that the applicant’s paper/poster is accepted. Applications may be submitted prior to acceptance, however the PGR Funding Team must be notified as soon as the paper/poster is accepted. Awards cannot be made, nor funds released, prior to confirmation of acceptance being submitted.

If applicants are unsure if their travel purpose would be eligible, they are encouraged to contact the PGR Funding Team with as much detail as possible about the purpose and nature of the intended travel prior to submitting an application.

**Travel Information and Requirements**

Applicants must provide the start and end dates of their travel, as well as the dates of the conference, in their application. If the applicant has not yet booked their travel, they should provide estimated dates based on the duration of the conference.

Applicants are expected to apply for travel only to the conference and return within a reasonable time. Extended stays should be avoided.

Applicants should use the appropriate section in the application form to detail the nature and purpose of their intended travel, as well as their specific participation in the conference and the research they are presenting. Applicants should also detail the expected personal, academic and career benefits of the intended travel. Any relevant additional information to support their application can also be detailed in this section.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to arrange all necessary insurance, visas, Covid-19 tests, vaccinations, etc. prior to their travel. Presenting doctoral work at a conference would constitute University business and, as such, the applicant must make use of the [travel coverage](https://www.strath.ac.uk/professionalservices/finance/accountingservices/conly/travelcoverage/covid-19universitytraveladvice/) provided by the University.

Funds awarded through the PGR Travel Award can only be used for the purposes under which they were applied for. Should the detailed travel not take place for any reason, the applicant is required to inform the PGR Funding Team of this as soon as possible. Decisions on reimbursement of awarded funds will be made on a case-by-case basis, depending on the reason for cancellation and any costs already incurred.

**Applicants travelling outside the United Kingdom are responsible for ensuring that they are not travelling against the advice provided by the** [**Foreign & Commonwealth Office**](https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice)**.**

**Estimated Expenses**

Applicants should detail all applicable expected expenses they would incur on undertaking the intended travel in the application form. This should include travel to the conference, transportation within the destination country, accommodation, and conference fees.

The PGR Travel Award can be used to cover most travel related expenses. This includes:

* Round-trip transportation to the destination city/town (plane, train, car rental, etc.);
* Accommodation;
* Transportation to and from the airport/train station;
* In-country travel to and from the conference venue;
* Visa and permit fees; and
* Conference fees.

The PGR Travel Award does not cover expenses above and beyond normal expenses which the applicant would feasibly expect to incur during their studies.

The PGR Travel Award is not intended to cover all the costs of undertaking the travel, but to help contribute towards the cost of the travel. No expense reports or receipts are required to be submitted.

The estimated expenses should be equal to or greater than the total amount requested from the PGR Travel Award and the associated matched contribution(s). The requested Award may not be granted in full if the total matched and requested is in excess of the estimated expenses. Should the estimated expenses be substantially higher than the combined matched and requested contribution, the applicant should detail how they are intending on covering the excess expenses (e.g. personal funds, etc.). Please note that personal funds cannot be considered as the matched contribution.

**Funding**

The maximum amount available to request from the PGR Travel Award Fund is dependent on the destination country:

* For travel within the **United Kingdom** (Scotland, England, Wales, Northern Ireland, Isle of Man, Channel Islands), the maximum that may be requested is **£60.**
* For travel within **Europe** (not including the United Kingdom), the maximum amount that may be requested is **£480**.
* For travel to the **Rest of the World** (outside of Europe), the maximum that may be requested is **£840**.
* If the applicant is applying for assistance with online/virtual conference participation, the maximum that may be requested is **£200**.

**Matched Contribution Requirement**

All applications to the PGR Travel Award require a matched contribution to the funding requested from the Award. The matched contribution must be greater than or equal to the contribution requested from the Award. Applications without a matched contribution cannot be considered.

The matched contribution may come from one or more of the following sources:

* University Department, HASS Graduate School, Research Group or Faculty;
* Supervisor Funds;
* An external travel award from a funding body, organisation or charity;
* An industrial organisation aligned with the applicant’s research area;
* A Government award;
* An award from the conference organiser or host institution.

To confirm a matched contribution from an external source, applicants are required to provide either a letter or email from the external organisation, confirming the amount being granted for the purpose of the travel.

The matched contribution may not come from the following sources:

* Personal loan, personal funds or stipend;
* Family or friends, or organisations associated with the applicant’s family or friends;
* RTSG funds from the applicant’s studentship; or
* Existing travel funds associated with the applicant’s studentship.

If a potential source of matched funding being considered does not fall into the above listed categories, please contact the PGR Funding Team to discuss the eligibility of the source.

**Signatures**

All applications must be signed by the applicant and contributor(s) to the matched funding prior to submission. The “contributor” is the person authorising the matched contribution.

Please note that we cannot process applications that are missing the relevant signatures. If the applicant is unable to secure the required Departmental contributor signature(s) in time, they should contact their Departmental Administrator for advice and assistance.

The contributor, Head of Department, and/or supervisor(s) of an applicant can provide comments at the end of the application in support of the application. Any such comments will be taken into consideration when the application is reviewed.

**Submitting**

Once the application is completed and signed, the form should be sent to the PGR Funding Team, along with evidence of the applicant’s acceptance to present at the conference. Any further supporting documentation should be emailed alongside the submission. Applications must be submitted by email.

The PGR Travel Award is currently an ongoing fund and runs throughout the calendar year. Applicants may apply at any time of the year, provided that the application is submitted before the intended travel. It is recommended that applications are submitted as early as possible to allow sufficient time for review, approval and payment.

All applications for the PGR Travel Award must be submitted prior to the start of the intended travel. Retrospective applications cannot not be considered.

**Outcomes and Payment of Award**

Applications will be processed as soon as possible upon receipt. If an application is incomplete, or clarification is required on aspects of the application or on the eligibility of the applicant, there may be some delay.

Applicants will be contacted about the outcome of their application via their University of Strathclyde email address as soon as possible after the application has been processed and a decision has been reached.

If successful, payment will be organised through the University’s Finance Office. To allow payment of an Award, up-to-date bank details for students must be held on the University’s finance system.

If the applicant’s bank account details are not yet on the University’s Finance system, they should complete the [Student Bank Account Form](https://www.strath.ac.uk/professionalservices/media/ps/finance/forms/Student_Bank_Account_Form.docx) and submit it to the Finance Office. Once the form has been sent to the Finance Office, students should notify the PGR Funding Team that is has been submitted.

Bank details should ***not*** be provided in the application form or in any correspondence with the PGR Funding Team. These details are held solely by the Finance Office for data protection purposes.

If payment has not been received within two weeks of receiving notification of the Award, please contact the PGR Funding Team.

**Questions**

If you have any questions about eligibility or the wider scheme and application form, please contact the PGR Funding Team as early as possible before the intended conference travel.