

Funding Guide for On To the Future Students

Instructions

This guide can be used to help students who have been awarded an [On To the Future](#) (OTF) travel grant find and request additional funding to cover travel expenses to the meeting. OTF provides a partial travel grant and it is the responsibility of the student to find ways to cover the remaining expenses.

Do Some Initial Research

1. Talk with your advisor, mentor, or professor and let them know that you were awarded a partial travel award to attend the meeting and ask for suggestions on where you can find support to cover the remainder of your costs. If you are presenting a poster at the meeting, it is more likely that you will be able to receive funding from your department or university so consider submitting an abstract.
2. Your advisor/mentor may suggest that you approach the department chair or other individual or department to discuss funding options. If so, make sure you are prepared before going into that meeting – see *How to Approach* section below.
3. Other places on campus to request funding include: 1) the dean of your college; 2) the university diversity and inclusion office; 3) the dean or director of the graduate school (yes you can approach even if you are an undergraduate student); and/or 4) the diversity liaison of your college.

How to Approach – Crafting a Letter

It is not uncommon for departments to be approached by students to attend a professional meeting so don't be shy about asking. In many cases your department chair/mentor will be supportive in helping you.

1. Do some initial research on the GSA Annual Meeting and write a short description about the meeting. You may even pull out some specific technical sessions or events that you

are especially keen on attending that may relate to your own academic/career goals.

2. Draft 2-4 examples of goals you have for attending the meeting. How does attending this meeting fit within your broader academic and professional goals? Make sure your goals for attending the meeting are attainable. Explain how support from the institution will help you achieve these goals.
3. Indicate in your letter that you have received a partial travel award to attend. Include the amount awarded and amount you are requesting for additional support. You may also attach your GSA award letter.
4. Include a well-crafted budget that lays out all your expenses for travel to the meeting.
5. Conclude your letter with a respectful request and offer to meet to discuss options.
6. Once you have sent your letter and budget to the appropriate individuals be sure to follow-up if you have not heard back in a reasonable amount of time.
7. Always remain professional even if your request is denied. Follow up with a thank you and request on where else you might be able to seek funding.
8. If you are granted an award make sure you send a thank you card or email and consider writing a short report or sharing your OTF final report after the meeting.

Other Funding Options

GSA Section Travel Awards. GSA Sections offer travel awards to students attending the GSA meeting. Check within your specific section to find eligibility criteria. In most cases you should be a member of that section and be presenting at the meeting. Deadline to apply is usually one month before the meeting. Check the GSA Annual Meeting website for more information.

GSA Divisions Travel Awards. GSA has 21 scientific divisions which may also offer travel awards to students, both graduate and undergraduates to attend the GSA meeting. In most cases you should be a member of that division and be presenting in order to apply.

[Check your specific division](#) website for more information.

Other Ways to Defray Costs

Share Rooms/Rides to Meetings. Sometimes sharing the cost of travel and rooms at a GSA Meeting can save you money that you can spend elsewhere. Check or post information on the

student discussion of the [OTF Member Community](#) website (log in to access) or on the Annual Meeting website, [Roommates & Rides](#) discussion page.

Look at Lodging Options. You are not required to stay in the meeting's host hotels, check out other lodging options such as cheaper hotels and youth hostels.

Funding and Budget Request Template

Dear Dr. INSERT NAME,

I am writing to request partial sponsorship to the Geological Society of America (GSA) [Annual Meeting](#) taking place in Phoenix, Arizona, September 22-25, 2019.

The GSA Annual Meeting supports the global scientific community through its advancement of geosciences research and support of the geoscience profession. The annual scientific meeting is made up of oral and poster sessions (over 4,000 speakers/200 - 300 technical sessions); 250 - 300 exhibit booths; 20 - 30 short courses; 30 - 40 scientific field trips; networking opportunities, business meetings; associated society and committee meetings; and alumni receptions organized over a four-day period. In a typical year, GSA welcomes 6,000 - 6,500 geoscientists from academia, government, and industry to its meeting.

I have been awarded a GSA [On To the Future](#) (OTF) travel grant to attend this meeting. This program provides full meeting registration, membership, career planning advice, mentorship, special sessions, and a travel grant in the amount of \$XXX. I look forward to attending the meeting in order to advance my own academic and career aspirations. EXPLAIN WHY YOU WANT TO ATTEND AND WHAT OUTCOMES YOU HOPE TO ACHIEVE BY ATTENDING. INCLUDE YOUR MAJOR AND EXPECTED GRADUATION.

I respectfully request \$XXX to supplement my partial OTF travel award to attend this important meeting. I have included my budget breakdown below:

GSA Annual Meeting Budget	
22-25 September, Phoenix, Arizona	
Expense	Cost
1. Airfare/Transportation	
2. Lodging (# of days, cost)	
3. Ground Transportation (to/from meeting)	
4. Per diem (food, water, coffee, # of days)	
5. Other costs (baggage, parking etc.)	
Subtotal	
OTF Award Amount	
TOTAL REQUEST	

Thank you for your time and consideration and I look forward to hearing back from you. If you have questions about this request I am very open to meeting with you directly to discuss at your convenience. I can be contacted by email at YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBER.

Sincerely,
YOUR NAME