Graduate Student Research Competition Guidelines

Application is open to any graduate student enrolled in a doctoral or master’s program in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences and the School of Engineering. Awards are competitive and decisions are based on the significance of the research to the field and to the applicant’s degree progress; clarity in writing, presentation, and methodology; and clarity and justification of the budget. The maximum award amount is $1,000, and students are limited to one award per academic year. The application form is available online and the proposal requirements are described below. Completed proposals must be submitted electronically by the last Thursday of October for the Fall, and by the last Thursday of March in the Spring. In Academic Year 2017-2018, these dates are:

October 26, 2017 (Fall), March 29, 2018 (Spring)

Graduate Student Research Competition funds are not intended to replace department or grant funds. The objective of this awards process is not only to assist students with their research expenses but also to give students a practice tool to help prepare them for crafting external grant proposals in the future. Proposals will be reviewed by a panel comprised of faculty and graduate students from across disciplines. Recipients of a research award may subsequently be invited to serve on the awards committee and gain experience in reviewing grant proposals. In the event that the committee is unable to award funding for their proposal, students are encouraged to re-apply the subsequent semester.

Funding Categories:

1. **Equipment & Supplies**: Research-related supplies, materials, and equipment which cannot be paid for by a department.

   **NOTE**: Unused supplies, materials, and equipment purchased with any amount of funding from Tufts must be returned to the department at the conclusion of the research project.

2. **Field Study Expenses**: Travel expenses in connection with research to materials or resources which are otherwise unobtainable at Tufts. Requests for travel expenses must include a justification of the need to travel and a day-to-day or week-to-week itinerary of specific research plans in the project proposal (Exhibit B). Priority will be given to requests to do on-site research where the resources of that site are unique.

   **NOTE**: Requests for funds to travel to conferences or professional meetings will not be considered; funds for this purpose must be requested from the Graduate Student Travel Fund.

3. **Participant Compensation**: Any type of compensation for studies involving human subjects (see note below). Funding cannot be used as salary for graduate students, undergraduate research assistants, or others helping with the project.

   **NOTE**: If request is granted and you are using human subjects, funds cannot be disbursed until you have approval of the Institutional Review Board – IRB. If request is granted and you are using laboratory animals, funds cannot be disbursed until you have approval of the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee – IACUC. Confirmation of IRB or IACUC approval must be provided prior to dispersal of funds.

4. **Other**: Any expense not included in the above categories, e.g. funds to acquire methodological skills or research knowledge critical to the success of the research which are inaccessible through the Tufts network.

   If the Graduate Student Research Competition funding will only partially cover these expenses, please explain how the remaining research costs will be funded.

Funding must be used within three semesters of the award date, and prior to the recipient’s graduation from Tufts.
The following documents are required, and comprise a complete proposal:

**Exhibit A: Application Cover Sheet** – Note, if applicable, other sources of funding. If this is a retroactive request, list all expenses requested for reimbursement in the itemized budget and submit the original receipts.

**Exhibit B: Abstract** – In 200 words, summarize your proposed project and its significance to your work and the field as a whole. This must be communicated in a manner that is understandable to scholars in other disciplines. You are proposing for GSRC funding, including an explanation of the significance of the project to both your own work and the field as a whole. Abstracts and project titles may be published online.

**Exhibit C: Project Prospectus** – In 1000 words, describe the project you are proposing for GSRC funding. The text of the prospectus should:

- **Be written in a language comprehensible to colleagues in other disciplines.** Your proposal will be read by individuals outside your field. Please note that overuse of jargon and terminology incomprehensible to colleagues outside of the field of the proposal is the top reason students do not receive GSRC funding.
- Describe as specifically as possible the proposed research, including methodology and procedures to be used.
- Explain the significance of the project to the field and its relationship to your overall scholarly work and degree progress.
- Explain the intended use of the grant money. If applicable, indicate if this project is part of a larger project, and include a statement of existing funding. Explain the consequences of not receiving funding, and, if external funding is being sought, the consequences of not receiving the external funding.
- If applicable, note any progress made with prior GSRC funding.

**Exhibit D: Itemized Budget** – List and justify all items for which GSRC funding is requested. Even if the budget is no more than one or two items, this list must be submitted as a separate Exhibit. Overall budget justification may be included in the prospectus, but Exhibit D must contain justification for each line item as well as the funding category that line item falls under. If other sources of funding are being used, please note this alongside the cost for each line item. If this funding request is retroactive, all expenses requested for reimbursement must be listed in Exhibit D, with original receipts attached for each item.

**Exhibit E: Curriculum Vitae**

**Exhibit F: Letter of Support** – A detailed letter from the applicant’s academic advisor or a faculty member familiar with the project, confirming the need for the support and the significance of the project to the applicant’s individual academic career. The committee recommends the letter be at least one page in length, and should not only praise student character and grades but should contain substantive discussion about the relevance of the research and the need for funding. The letter of support may be sent separately to GSAS@tufts.edu. Please note that while this may be submitted separately, it must be submitted by the stated deadline.

Please submit proposals electronically at: [http://tinyurl.com/gsrc1718](http://tinyurl.com/gsrc1718)

Exhibits A-F may be entered or uploaded via online form. Exhibit F may be sent separately by the advisor to gsas@tufts.edu.

Applicants will receive a response regarding the funding status of their proposal within two to four weeks of the deadline. Applicants whose projects are approved for funding will receive information regarding next steps at this time.

Please direct questions to Ariana Hajmiragha at gsas@tufts.edu or 617.627.4191