



GRADUATE
STUDENTS'
ASSOCIATION
UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

University of Calgary Graduate Students' Association
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GSA Professional Development Grant

2026 – 2027 Academic Year

Fall Intake Period: October 5 – October 19, 2026

Intake Deadline: **Monday, October 19, 2026, 11:59 PM MT**

Winter Intake Period: February 8 – February 22, 2027

Intake Deadline: **Monday, February 22, 2027, 11:59 PM TM**

[Submit applications online](#)

Applications and/or letter of reference received outside of the intake period will **NOT** be evaluated. Late applications and incomplete applications will **NOT** be evaluated. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that their application, including all required references, is complete.

This document and application link are available on the GSA's [website](#). Questions regarding this application should be directed to the GSA Awards Committee Chair or Vice Chair at awards.gsa@ucalgary.ca.

This information is collected following the standards set by the Personal Information and Privacy Act (PIPA). It is required to determine your eligibility for the award and may be used for research and statistical analysis. If you have any questions about the collection or use of this information, please contact the Awards Committee Chair at awards.gsa@ucalgary.ca.

Purpose

Professional Development Grants (PDGs), funded by the Graduate Students' Association (GSA) at the University of Calgary, support academic pursuits that are not directly tied to degree requirements but contribute to graduate students' academic careers and enrich the intellectual life of the University of Calgary community.

Value

Up to \$750 CDN per approved application. Applicants are not able to receive more than paid cost of Professional Development activity.

Eligibility

To be eligible for this grant:

1. Be an Active Member of the GSA (currently enrolled graduate student at the University of Calgary) during the academic year of application.
2. The applicant shall not have previously received a PDG within the same academic year as the current application.
3. The applicant shall not have previously received a PDG for the same professional development activity.
4. The professional development activity must have been completed before the intake deadline. Applications for activities taking place after the intake deadline will not be considered.

5. Each application shall pertain to one professional development activity.

Eligible Professional Development Activities

The following list provides examples of professional development activities that may be eligible for funding under the Professional Development Grant (PDG). This list is illustrative and not exhaustive. Applicants are encouraged to contact the Awards Committee Chair at awards.gsa@ucalgary.ca to confirm the eligibility of specific activities prior to submission.

Fundable professional development activities include (but are not limited to):

1. Academic and Professional Events

- Travel to present research at a specialized conference or invited talk.
- Attendance at a workshop, seminar, or other academic event (including online events).
- Participation in academic competitions, performances, or similar scholarly forums.

2. Published a manuscript or book

- Payment of journal submission or publishing fees.
- Payment of book publishing or self-publishing fees related to scholarly work.

3. Professional and other skills development

- Enrollment in a course, training, or certification program that enhances professional and/or academic development.
- Where the activity overlaps with graduate degree or thesis requirements, applicants must explicitly demonstrate how the skills acquired extend beyond their program requirements and contribute to broader professional growth. For instance, if you conducted a data collection activity in a community for your thesis, you should be able to explain how that activity improves your professional skills.

Activity Exclusions

The Professional Development Grant (PDG) is not intended to fund the following activities or expenses:

1. **Incomplete Activities:** Activities that have not yet been completed at the time of application.
2. **Degree Requirements:** Any activity or expense directly tied to fulfilling program or degree requirements, including (but not limited to); travel for data or sample collection, purchase of equipment, books, or supplies required for coursework or thesis projects.
3. **Research-Related Activities:** Professional development activities undertaken in the capacity of a Research Assistant (RA). Travel for data or sample collection, or meetings with research collaborators. Expenses related to the completion of research projects (e.g., supplies, field costs, or other research-related expenditures).

Eligible Expenses (Must be in Canadian dollars)

Expenses which may be covered by the PDG include, but are not limited to:

- Activity registration and associated materials costs (workshop/course/conference fees, book purchase, etc)

- Travel (airfare/bus/train/ride costs)
- Visa fees
- Accommodation (up to \$125 CAD per night)
- Meals (up to \$65 CAD per day and must provide receipts)
- Publication fees

Ineligible Expenses

Expenses that will not be covered by the PDG include, but are not limited to:

- Items without receipt;
- Course or certification fees if the student does not successfully pass the required examination;
- Alcohol;
- Personal travel, accommodations, or activities beyond the proposed project period, including optional short courses.

Documents Required

Applications should be completed online on the [GSA awards website](#) (click “Submit Application” to access the application portal) using a University of Calgary email address and consist of:

1. Upload proof of enrollment.
2. Receipts for ALL claimed expenses.
3. If applicable, proof of currency conversion (bank statement or online conversion calculator provided on application).
4. Proof of activity completion/ proof of activity attendance (i.e., certification of completion, photo at event, conference/workshop/course badge, etc.)
5. Answer all Personal Statement questions.

Please note: Incomplete applications (missing information, missing receipt(s) for a claimed expense, extra information/documents and incorrectly filled out) or applications received after the intake deadline will NOT be considered.

Application Specifications

1. Confirmation of enrollment
 - Log into your UofC Student Portal – MyUCalgary (<https://my.ucalgary.ca/>).
 - In the white side banner click “Program and Advising Info”.
 - Screenshot this page including your current program information: your name, year of program, degree stream, area of study, and academic load.
 - Attach this screenshot as proof of enrollment for the 2026-27 academic year.
2. **Single Submission:** Applicants may submit only one (1) PDG application per intake period.
3. **Retroactive Applications:** Only retroactive applications will be considered. Funding is provided solely for professional development activities that have already been completed.
4. **Completion Window:** Applications will not be accepted for activities completed prior to the opening date of the previous year’s Fall intake period. For example, for the intake deadline of **October 19, 2026**, eligible professional development activities must have been completed between **November 15, 2025, and October 19, 2026**.

5. The inclusion of any extra documents or material will not be evaluated as part of the adjudication process.

Adjudication Criteria

Applicants must meet eligibility and submission requirements as described above. All eligible applications will be assessed using the following criteria:

- **Relevance and Impact** – How effectively the proposed activity contributes to the applicant's academic, professional, or career growth beyond degree requirements, demonstrating a clear link to long-term goals and the ability to apply acquired skills to their field or community.
- **Quality and Clarity of Statement** – The coherence, organization, and persuasiveness of the written benefit statement, showing clear purpose, logical structure, and thoughtful reflection on professional development.
- **Completeness and Compliance** – The accuracy, thoroughness, and adherence to application requirements, including submission of all required documents and compliance with stated guidelines and deadlines.
- **Budget and Cost Effectiveness** – The feasibility and justification of the proposed budget, with reasonable, clearly itemized costs and demonstrated cost-consciousness through efforts such as securing other funding, sharing expenses, or selecting economical options.

Additional Regulations

- All application information will be restricted to the Awards Committee and the GSA;
- The Professional Development Grants are evaluated by the Awards Committee under the supervision of the GSA Officer At-Large assigned by the GSA Council to be Chair;
 - As the number of applicants far surpasses the number of available spots, we are unable to award all graduate students who apply
- Questions about the application process must be directed to the Awards Committee Chair and Vice Chairs at awards.gsa@ucalgary.ca;
 - The Awards Committee Chair is committed to answering questions regarding this award when possible. Questions that arrive less than 72 hours before the intake deadline may not be answered.
- The Awards Committee will evaluate all application packages based on the adjudication criteria stated above.
- PDG decisions will be within 12 weeks from the intake deadline and application feedback will not be provided.
- Award recipients are responsible for ensuring tax compliance with Canadian tax laws.
- Applications must be written in English.

Committee Approval Date: 9-Aug-2026

Elected Council Approval Date: 9-Sep-2026

Revised Date: