

Frequently Asked Questions – UT Staff Council Professional Development Grant

Q: Who is eligible for the Professional Development Grant?

A: Any University of Texas at Austin staff member who is a constituent of UT Staff Council. UTSC constituents include non-probationary staff who are state benefits-eligible employees in Classified and Administrative & Professional job families. Excluded from UTSC representation are positions that meet one or more of the following criteria: 1) employment dependent upon the incumbent's status as a currently enrolled student, 2) represented by Faculty Council, 3) certain university administrative leadership positions, and 4) all UTemp positions.

Q: How do I know whether I am represented by UT Staff Council?

A: [Click here](#) for the "Who is My Representative" page. If you are represented by Staff Council, your representative(s) will be displayed. If you are not represented by Staff Council, the page will indicate as much.

Q: Can I use the Professional Development Grant for job training?

A: No. The Professional Development Grant is intended only for professional development opportunities and not activities that would be considered job training. Professional development is strategic and teaches people to excel in areas beyond the status quo. Training is operational and teaches people how to be competent in their jobs. Any knowledge, skill, or ability required to meet the current primary objectives of a position or unit are acquired through training. Professional development goes well beyond those fundamentals.

For more clarity, please reference [an article by Emil Kresl, Director of Learning and Development](#).

Q: What is the purpose for the open-ended questions on the Professional Development Grant application?

A: Open-ended questions seek information—in the applicant's own words—about their proposed professional development opportunity. This is the applicant's opportunity to express to the committee why the proposed professional development opportunity would benefit the applicant and the university. The details provided in the response will enable the committee to make a more informed evaluation of the request for funding.

Q: Does my supervisor need to complete the approval portion of my Professional Development Grant application before the application deadline?

A: Yes. An application is not complete until both the applicant and the applicant's supervisor have completed their respective portions by the application deadline. It is the responsibility of the applicant to communicate with their supervisor about the supervisor's need to complete their portion of the application.

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Q: I have more than one supervisor. Which supervisor should provide approval of my application for grant funding?

A: The Professional Development Grant application form is designed to accommodate the approval of only one supervisor. It is recommended that the applicant list the individual who is recognized by the university as their primary supervisor within the “My Org Chart” function of Workday. This can be accessed within Workday by clicking on “My Team” in the “Applications” box. On the “My Team” page, “My Org Chart” is available as the top item in the “View” box.

Q: If I am selected as a recipient for the UT Staff Council Professional Development Grant, do I have to use the funding for the activity that I listed in my application?

A: Yes. The Professional Development Committee evaluates each application holistically based on the professional development activity proposed in the application. Grant recipients are required to use the awarded funds for the activity described in the application. If a recipient is selected and is unable to participate in the activity for which the funds were awarded, the funds will need to be declined.

Q: If I am selected as a recipient of the Professional Development Grant, what is the process for funding the approved professional development activity?

A: The awarded funds will be transferred to the awardee’s local department or unit via Interdepartmental Transfer (IDT) by the university’s Business and Financial Services. The number of the account to which the funds are transferred is specified by the recipient’s supervisor.

Q: I am a supervisor and my employee has asked for my approval on their UT Staff Council Professional Development Grant application. What does my approval mean?

A: Your approval allows your employee to apply for the Professional Development Grant and indicates your support for them to participate in the proposed activity. If your employee is selected as a Professional Development Grant recipient, you will be requested to approve your employee’s participation in the activity as part of their grant acceptance process, including an account to which the award funds will be IDT’d by Business and Financial Services. Please be aware that in some cases the grant may not cover the entire cost of the activity for which the employee has applied for support.

Q: When will the next grant funding cycle open?

A: The application period typically opens in September. Information about the application period, deadline, and award timeline for the upcoming cycle will be reflected on Staff Council’s [Professional Development Grant Program webpage](#) once the dates are established by members of the Professional Development Committee.