

## Texas A&M Chapter of *Sigma Xi* Travel Award

### PURPOSE

The *Sigma Xi* Travel Award is supported by the Texas A&M Chapter of *Sigma Xi* and by funds provided by Texas A&M University. The purpose of the travel award is to support graduate and undergraduate student travel to make a presentation of original scientific research at a professional conference, meeting, or summit by reimbursing students for some of the eligible expenses incurred.

### TRAVEL AWARD DEADLINES

There will be two deadlines for travel award funding each year.

The deadline for fall semester travel award applications is November 4, by 5 pm. This application travel period is for students traveling between January 1, and June 30.

The deadline for spring semester travel award applications is May 5, by 5 pm. This application travel period is for students traveling between July 1, and December 31.

Late applications will not be eligible.

### ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

1. The applicant is presenting the results of their research at a state, national or international scientific meeting.
2. The applicant must be enrolled in a graduate or undergraduate degree program at Texas A&M University – College Station during the semester in which he/she applies and attends the conference.
3. Graduate student applicants must be an active *Sigma Xi* member/associate member with dues paid. An active member has participated in two or more *Sigma Xi* annual sponsored events (e.g., Grand Challenges in Science Symposium, Undergraduate Faculty Research Expo) during the two semester leading up to the travel period applied for. It is the applicant's responsibility to interact and register attendance with a *Sigma Xi* representative or committee chair. Undergraduates must be engaged in research in the laboratory of an active *Sigma Xi* member.
4. The applicant must be in good standing within his/her department, with a 3.0 or higher GPA.
5. A student is limited to one travel award per academic/fiscal year.
6. Only domestic travel is eligible.
7. The application must be complete and submitted prior to the deadline.
8. Priority will be given to first-time applicants over previous *Sigma Xi* travel award winners.

## APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS & PACKET

Submit complete application with requested documents in a sealed envelope to the President of the Texas A&M Chapter. This person's name, address and email can be found on our site (<http://sigmaxi.tamu.edu/>).

- Signature Sheet: Print and sign your name on the signature sheet. Include UIN and *Sigma Xi* member number of graduate student or of the mentor for an undergraduate student. The signature sheet will be the first page of the application packet. Include your name on the signature sheet only. For all other parts of the application, use only your UIN in the headers of the documents to ensure anonymity during the review process. We recommend submitting your application packet, by hand or by campus mail, a few days before the application deadline. *Sigma Xi* is not responsible for lost or misdirected mail.
- Essay: In 500 words or less, tell us your motivation for attending this conference, as well as the benefits you expect to receive from your attendance. The merit of the application depends very strongly **on the quality of your essay**. Consider using the University Writing Center services for proper writing techniques.
- Abstract: Include your submitted conference abstract, not full paper publications.
- Transcript: Attach an unofficial transcript. This must include grades from the preceding semester. Unofficial transcripts can be printed off of [howdy.tamu.edu](http://howdy.tamu.edu) -> My Record -> Grades and Transcripts.
- Conference Brochure: Attach a brochure or webpage printout that includes as introduction to the conference, a URL will not suffice. The brochure or webpage printout must include the date of the conference. Do not print the entire schedule of the conference.
- Abstract Acceptance: Include an email or web printout that shows your abstract has been accepted. If your conference provides acceptance notification after the relevant travel award application deadline, include the date you expect to receive notification. **If meeting the deadline means you will not have evidence of an accepted abstract yet:** submit your application with evidence of abstract submission and indicate in the comments section of the application when you expect acceptance notification. You will be required to submit evidence of acceptance as soon as it becomes available. If you are selected to receive an award you will not be given any funds until we have been given evidence of your abstract's acceptance.
- Proposed Budget: Budget should be brief, but must list the specific items (breakdown of proposed expenses of travel, lodging, and expenses, etc.) for which support is being requested, giving evidence that the requested amount is realistic and the result of thoughtful planning. The applicant should not simply list a convenient figure or an overestimate; such budgets do not enhance the chances for favorable consideration and can cause an application to be disqualified.

### **Late applications will not be considered.**

In order to be compensated for travel during any one-travel period, a complete application must be submitted before 5:00 pm on the date listed for that travel period (see above). Students traveling over an interval of time that falls within two travel periods must apply for the travel period of the Travel Begin Date – that is the earlier of the two.

## BUDGET GUIDELINES AND INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

### Reimbursement Procedures ...

- Awards are given for registration, transportation, and lodging.
- If sharing a room, the applicant must include only his/her portion.
- The award may not be used to cover individual membership dues for professional organizations or societies.
- If you receive additional funds for travel to the same meeting, these funds do not need to be applied first to your travel awards. Applying for/receiving additional travel awards will not affect the review or judging of your *Sigma Xi* Travel Award application.
- Funds awarded will be expended by the date noted in the award letter or they will revert back to the Texas A&M Chapter of *Sigma Xi*.
- Applicants will be informed of award status seven days following the deadline for application. No awards will be given retroactively (i.e., after you have traveled).

### Ineligible Budget Expenses

1. Awards may not be used for resources that are otherwise provided for free by the university's various services (e.g., books available through the library or software available through the IT store).
2. Awards may not be used to finance typing, Xeroxing, or binding theses or dissertations.
3. Awards may not be used to finance travel for personal use. Approved travel is not considered travel for personal use.

### Obligation of Accepting a *Sigma Xi* Travel Award

1. In accepting a *Sigma Xi* Travel Award, you are required to present your work to the *Sigma Xi* Spring Research Symposium following your conference/meeting.
2. Your poster or platform presentation should include an acknowledgement of the Texas A&M University Chapter of *Sigma Xi* for the travel award.
3. Funds awarded must be expended by the date noted in the award letter, or they will revert to the Texas A&M Chapter of *Sigma Xi*.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

*I do not have an abstract while submitting the travel award application.*

- We strongly encourage applicants to include an abstract even if the final research results are not available. If you do not have your abstract ready, submit your completed application with credible supplementary information. For example, including an email or link to the official conference page indicating there is reasonably sufficient time to submit an abstract is expected. An abstract and evidence of its acceptance is required before any funds are released for your travel.

*I have submitted an abstract but it has not been accepted yet.*

- Submit the completed application with proof that your abstract has been submitted. An abstract and evidence of its acceptance is required before any funds are released for your travel.

*I am traveling to a conference, summit, or meeting outside of the United States. Am I eligible for the travel award?*

- No. International travel is not currently eligible for *Sigma Xi* travel award funds.  
*I am an international and/or sponsored student, am I eligible for the travel award?*
- No, only citizens or lawful, permanent residents of the United States are eligible.  
Graduate and undergraduate students in Interdisciplinary programs are eligible to apply as long as the applicant is a currently, registered, fee-paying student in a graduate or undergraduate program at Texas A&M University-College Station in good academic standing.  
*My professor is presenting at a meeting and I am a co-author for this presentation. Can I apply for a travel award?*
- Travel awards are available only if the applicant is presenting.