



Provision of support to assist with Carers' expenses for conference attendance

Attendance at conferences is seen as a key academic activity and one which is formative in developing one's career, yet it can impose additional burdens on staff with parental or other caring responsibilities. While this may be a particular barrier for women and EMCRs, the policy applies equally to all staff and DPhil students attending conferences, regardless of gender.

1. Purpose

To provide small awards, up to £500, to contribute towards the additional costs of care for staff and DPhil students of the department attending conferences or other work-related training.

(There is also the possibility to extend to also consider non-members of the department to support such costs that would facilitate attendance at an activity/event organised from within the department - e.g. for those visiting us to speak at a seminar or conference.)

We recognise that formal caring responsibility is not limited to childcare. Other needs should be presented as part of the request for support and considered case by case.

2. Conditions

The policy applies to everyone who attends conferences for 'work-related training' and/or to present research undertaken whilst employed or studying in the Department and includes all individuals employed by the department (academic, clinical, research and professional support) and DPhil students. Applications from students must have the support of their supervisor.

Applications must be made by email to the Head of Administration and will be considered on a rolling basis until the funds are exhausted (up to a maximum annual budget of £10k which would equate to supporting 20 individuals at the £500 level). Applicants must give details of the event (what, where, when, and their contribution), why they have a need for additional expenses, and the amount and nature of the costs to be incurred. The normal expectation is that applications will be made before the conference/event. Funding may then be confirmed in advance. However, retrospective applications will also be considered, so long as these are submitted within 6 weeks.

The maximum award will be £500 per conference/event.

Once an application has been approved, claims may be made for additional expenses of care, against original receipts and within the university's financial regulations, on the standard process.

The funds will be disbursed on a first-come, first-served basis until exhausted, provided the criteria set out below have been satisfied.



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The criteria for award are:

- priority to those without funding from elsewhere
- priority to early career applicants
- normally limited to one per year per person (funds permitting, to be kept under review).
- Applications will be assessed by a sub-group of the People and Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee.

Please note that the University has established a fund to support those who have taken a break for caring responsibilities to re-establish their research careers. More information about applying for the Returning Carers Fund can be found on the University's Equality and Diversity Unit website: [here](#).

Policy agreed 14/08/2025. For review September 2028.