

STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

FUND GUIDELINES

I. Funding Purpose

The SAC Professional Development Fund is a program to support in-depth, job-specific, and domain-specific professional development opportunities for UNO staff not available through other programs (Re-Imagining U, Employee Tuition Scholarship) or departmental funds. Applications will be considered from eligible staff in the amount of up to \$2,000 each academic year. Each employee can only be awarded one professional development grant per academic year.

Types of Professional Development Opportunities Funded

Professional development activities are not required to be related to the employee's current job responsibilities and duties. The goal is to increase the employee's job skills and productivity, or in another way enhance the employee's value or contribution to the department or campus community.

Examples include, but are not limited to, the following, where the opportunity is not available at UNO or via NU distance education class offerings:

- Conference costs (registration fee, lodging, transportation to out-of-town conference locations)
- Professional certification exam costs, including test preparation classes
- Continuing education class requirements (post-certification)
- Nebraska Business Development Center (NBDC) courses
- CPR/AED first aid training
- Tuition for courses at local community colleges for a specific job skill (e.g., creating dashboards, data analysis, etc.)
- Other job-related or domain-specific opportunities

Note: Individuals may submit requests for multiple trainings in a single application if they are related to the same activity (e.g., multiple courses for a single certification). Each employee can only be awarded one professional development grant per academic year. If application is denied, a new application may be submitted for a different opportunity.

Types of Opportunities NOT Funded

- Duplications of trainings already offered through other UNO initiatives (e.g., Re-Imagining U, tuition for NU institution courses in a degreed program (NU employee scholarship)).
- Compliance training for staff that can be reasonably covered by applicant's department.
- Books, equipment, and non-tuition costs for NU institution courses or community college courses.
- Books, equipment, and supplies for conferences.
- Costs for travel to training that can be reasonably obtained locally or online.
- Meals, local ground transportation, parking fees for conferences and training events.
- Training or travel already completed before the award date.

II. Funding Cycle

Funding cycle runs July 1 to June 30.

III. Eligibility

- 50% FTE or benefits-eligible employees classified as Office/Service, Managerial/Professional, or Non-academic Administrators. This includes NU employees housed at UNO who spend over 50% of their work time for UNO.
- Employee must be past the initial UNO probationary period (first 180 days) in their employment with the University and in current good standing with the University (i.e not under any written disciplinary action within the last 12 months).
- Past awardees applying for funds must have completed the past award's final reporting requirement.
- Each employee can only be awarded one professional development grant per academic year.

IV. Procedures

- Applications are accepted as long as funds are available. Applications are reviewed monthly. The program seeks to provide funding to a mix of staff by department, position, and job classification.
- Award procedures are reviewed annually, including award amount levels and limits.
- Employees must fully complete the online application to be considered for funding. The employee's supervisor must indicate approval of the request and verify that the staff member meets the program eligibility requirements as listed under Section III.
- Awardees are required to abide by all University policies, travel procedures and guidelines.
- Expense processing will be the responsibility of the awardee's department. Expenses will be charged directly to the SAC WBS (Cost Center) whenever possible.
- Only individual applications will be accepted. Group requests (e.g., 2+ employees in a department attending the same training) will not be accepted as a single request.
- Awardees are required to complete a program survey to SAC within 30 days of the funded training activity.

V. Funding Amounts Awarded

- Applications will be funded up to \$2,000 per year, based on the amount of funds available for the program each year.
 - Funds will be awarded before the training activity when necessary.
 - Travel funds will be reimbursed after travel has occurred and documentation is entered in the NU Concur system and approved. Any travel expenses over the awarded amount will need to be reimbursed by the staff member's department or paid by the individual.
- Each employee can only be awarded one professional development grant per academic year.
- Funds awarded are available until the end of the fiscal year the application is approved.
- Funds awarded may impact an individual's current/future tax situation. If awardee has questions about the tax ramifications of their award, the awardee should consult their accountant or financial planning representative.

VI. Selection of Awardees

- Applications will be reviewed on a monthly basis by the Selection Committee.
- The Selection Committee will consist of:
 - SAC PD Committee members
 - One UNO Human Resources representative in a non-voting, advisory role
 - One UNO Business and Finance representative in a non-voting, advisory role

- The Selection Committee must have a minimum of five voting members present to review applications at the meeting.
- Selection Committee members will abstain from voting on their own funding applications.
- All employees and their immediate supervisor will be notified by e-mail of the committee's decision.
- All award decisions are final; there is no appeal process on unfunded applications.
- The Selection Committee will provide feedback to applicants that are not funded.
- Employees with unfunded applications can re-apply for funding at subsequent award cycles.
- Applications will be reviewed based on 1) adherence to eligibility criteria; 2) how it increases the employee's job skills and productivity, or in another way enhance the employee's value or contribution to the department or campus community.
- The University of Nebraska does not discriminate based on race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, relation, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, and/or political affiliation in its programs, activities, or employment.
- Program guidelines and award terms may be subject to change. If any changes do occur, they will be posted on the SAC PD Fund webpage, with a timestamp included. Applications must abide by the terms most recently listed on the webpage at the time the application is submitted.

VII. Reporting/Outcomes

- Awardees are required to complete a program survey to SAC within 30 days of the funded training activity.
- Metrics to measure program success
 - All available funds awarded by the end of the fiscal year.
 - All funded awards will align with one or more UNO Strategic Planning areas (Student-Centeredness, Academic Excellence, Community Engagement, Institutional Quality) and strategies (e.g., 2.6, 3.3, 4.1, 4.4, 4.8) under the strategic framework of Access & Affordability, Quality, Statewide Engagement, Workforce & Economic Development.
- Data collection for outcomes
 - Qualitative metrics include:
 - Awardee: skills/knowledge learned; actionable benefits to the awardee, their department, UNO, and students; how the awardee found out about the PD Fund opportunity, and how knowledge obtained from the PD activity will be shared.
 - Supervisor: value added/ROI to the awardee and the department; alignment of PD activity to UNO Core Values and strategic plan.
 - Quantitative metrics include the number of funding requests submitted, number of requests funded, average amount of funded requests, number of awards not used, an aggregate list of requests funded by department and by funding type. Additional awardee demographic metrics (e.g., average number of University years of service, job classification) may be collected.
 - Additional metrics from UCOMM (e.g., number of MavDaily runs, page views, time on page) may be collected.
 - Collect based on fiscal year.
- Aggregate program outcomes will be disseminated to the UNO community and NU leadership annually.