



NOSMU

Student Council

Student Travel Fund Allocation Committee Terms of Reference & Protocol

The Northern Ontario School of Medicine University (NOSMU) and Northern Ontario School of Medicine University Student Council (NOSMUSC) recognize the importance of networking and professional development, both for the personal growth of students and for the school's continued growth. Students are encouraged to participate in provincial and national conferences/events where other Canadian medical schools are in attendance, to learn and to represent NOSMU. The Student Travel Fund has been established to assist students with costs incurred to attend these events.

The Student Conference Travel Funding Allocation Committee ("The Committee") has primary responsibility to establish the criteria and adjudicate applications for the Student Travel Fund. The Committee will review student conference travel applications and allocate funding, as per the Committee protocol and in accordance with NOSMUSC and NOSMU policies and protocols.

Functions

The Committee will be responsible to:

- Review and approve applications for funding to attend conferences and workshops made by registered students in accordance with the stated Committee protocols.
- Ensure that the available funding is administered fairly and in accordance with NOSMUSC and NOSMU policies and protocols.
- Monitor and make improvements to the protocol as required.

Membership

- Chair – NOSMU Student Council Vice President of Finance Sr
- Chair – NOSMU Student Council Vice President of Finance Jr
- 1 student representative from the East
- 1 student representative from the West
- 1 representative from Learner Support Services
- 1 representative from Finance
- 1 representative from the Faculty

The non-student positions may carry over each year.

Protocol Statement/Rationale

This protocol establishes guidelines for a fair process in determining eligibility for funding and that any expenses incurred while attending the event are in adherence with established financial procedures at NOSMU.

Applicability

This protocol applies to all students registered in the undergraduate medical education program.

Eligible conferences would include both in person and virtual:

- 1) Representation at provincial and national medical organizations
- 2) Education seminars
- 3) Research and / or academic conferences
- 4) Could include academic-related social activities aimed at creating a working relationship between schools

Responsibilities

- The allocation of funds to students will be by a Student Travel Funding Allocation Committee ('the Committee') whose membership is determined by the Student Travel Fund Allocation Committee terms of reference.
- The Chair and student representative positions will be 1-year terms. The non-student members of the committee may carry over each year.
- For all meetings of the Committee, a quorum for discussions and funding allocation decisions will be considered to be **four** of seven members. In the case of Conflicts of Interest (as defined below), quorum will be reduced such that for any application with a declared Conflict of Interest, quorum will be **three** members.
- The Committee will review applications 3 times per fiscal year (as defined below).
- Voting via email will be conducted for issues requiring approval for funding deadlines that could not be completed at scheduled meetings, or which the Chair feels would require resolution before the next scheduled Committee meeting. A written record of the vote shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
- Funding payment is administered by the NOSMUSC VP Finance. Funds are provided by NOSMU to the NOSMUSC for distribution. Approved applications and receipts will be submitted to the Director of Learner Support Services for review of compliance with NOSMU protocol. Once approved, the Director of Learner Support

Services will forward the information to NOSMU Finance for transfer of funds to the NOSMUSC.

- Students are responsible for sharing new skills and knowledge learned at the conference/event with others at NOSMU.

Forms

- Student Travel Funding Application; online form available on the NOSMUSC website or by direct email to students from the NOSMUSC VP Finance.

Procedure

Students must complete the online application form “Student Travel Funding Application”, available at the NOSMUSC website or emailed to them by the NOSMUSC VP Finance. This form and accompanying receipts must be completed and submitted within 30 days of attending a conference. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Applications should not be submitted before attending the conference with the exception of conferences occurring in April where applications will be accepted with estimates of claims. Students applying outside of the above parameters may not be considered for funding at the discretion of the Committee.

Conferences must have been attended within the fiscal year to which the applicant is applying, which runs May 1-April 30 of each year.

Following completion of the online form, an automated email will be sent to the student indicating required receipts and where to send receipts. Receipts must be received electronically or in hardcopy by the NOSMUSC VP Finance within 30 days of attending a conference.

Applications will be compiled and blinded by the NOSMUSC VP Finance. The blinded compilation will then be provided to the Committee for consideration.

If approved for funding, receipts must be received before any funds will be distributed.

Reimbursement

- All students must be registered NOSMU students during the period of travel in order to be reimbursed.
- Electronic or original hard copy receipts must be received by the NOSMUSC VP Finance no later than 30 days after the conference, but prior to April 30 of the fiscal year.

- When meals are included in the conference fee, the meal claims should be reduced accordingly. All meal claims must be accompanied by an itemized receipt. Meal claims cannot include alcohol and are reimbursed at the rate as determined by NOSMU.
- Requests for funding cannot be considered if the student receives academic credit (this includes electives), a wage, or honorarium for attending. However, awards received while attending a conference (for a research submission, for example) will not affect a student's funding request.
- Students have a professional responsibility to be fiscally responsible with their expenses. Where a personal vehicle is the method of travel, the standard mileage will be reimbursed only to the owner of the vehicle, if driving is shared. Students are required to attach a KM calculation from a map website (Example: MapQuest or Google Maps). The rate at which KM will be reimbursed is \$0.42/KM.

Accommodations

- Accommodations should be selected based on the most economical and reasonable options available. Accommodation should be based on single occupancy. In situations where there are additional occupants, a list of names must be provided.
- Hotels / Motels
 - Cancellation of reservations must be made as soon as possible when travel plans change to avoid "no-show" charges. Penalties incurred for non-cancellation of guaranteed hotel reservations are the individual's responsibility and may not be eligible for reimbursement.
 - The standard for accommodation is a single room with a private bath in a business class hotel.
 - Internet access is an allowable expense while traveling on behalf of NOSMU; one personal telephone call per night traveling is an allowable expense.
- Private Residence
 - Private stays with friends or family are acceptable, and a cash payment or gift may be provided to the friends or family.
 - A maximum of \$30 per night is allowed for accommodation including meals with friends or family, in lieu of commercial accommodation. Instead of a receipt, you must submit a written explanation describing the purpose of the trip, identifying the host and number of days you stayed. This must be accompanied by written confirmation from the host.
 - The \$30 value may be given in the form of a small gift (which must be accompanied by a receipt) or by cash or cheque and including proof of payment with submission.

Meals

- The daily maximum allowable per diem meal rate is \$65.00/day. This rate is based on the following amounts:

Breakfast	\$17
Lunch	\$17
Dinner	\$31

- Claimants are expected to pay for their own meals and cannot claim per diem amounts for other individuals. Group meals or hospitality expenses should be claimed separately and not included on an individual's travel expense claim.
- No per diem amounts should be claimed for meals at home prior to departure or upon return.

Non-reimbursable Expenses

- No per diem amounts should be claimed for meals at home prior to departure or upon return.
- Cost of alcohol
- Interest charges
- Personal expenses
- Parking and traffic fines
- Expenses for failure to cancel transportation or hotel reservations
- Late fees

Application Review

The committee will meet up to three times a year to consider new applications, as follows:

- In the fall term, after the NOSMUSC Fall Elections, to consider all applications submitted at that time for travel between the start of the fiscal year (i.e., May 1) and the time of the meeting. At this meeting, the Committee will preliminarily approve applications.
- In the winter term, to consider all applications submitted between the time of the previous meeting to the time of the current meeting. At this meeting, the Committee will preliminarily approve applications.
- The final meeting, in May following the end of the NOSMU fiscal year, to consider all remaining applications. All applications for the fiscal year, including the ones

provisionally approved, will be re-reviewed and all remaining funds will be considered for allocation.

- Under exceptional circumstances, where an application is received after the final meeting, a fourth meeting may be arranged to review this application before all approved applications are paid out after April 30th. Should this meeting be held, changes to the amount of funding provided to each students will be decided if required.

The Committee will consider a greater amount of funding for applicants who were active participants in a scholarly and/or professional conference (e.g. presenting a paper; chairing a session; being a discussant)

Fund allocation of remaining funds at the final meeting will be made based on the following priority:

1. A student presenting at a provincial or national conference, who is incompletely subsidized for the trip.
2. A student attending an academic conference, who is otherwise not fully reimbursed for the trip.

So as to encourage financial accountability and to maximize the number of students to which funding can be allocated, travel will not be fully funded. Funding for domestic events will be at a maximum level of 70% of the requested amount. Funding for international events will be at a maximum level of 50% of the requested amount, supporting NOSMU's mandate for northern and rural medicine in Canada.

Conflict of Interest

This policy is intended to ensure the highest business and ethical standards and the protection of the integrity of the members of this Committee. Members owe a fiduciary duty to NOSMU and the Committee. Included in that duty is the requirement to avoid conflicts of interest. The term "conflict of interest" refers to a situation where financial, professional or other personal considerations may compromise, or have the appearance of compromising, a Committee member's judgment in carrying out his or her fiduciary duties. All members must understand their duties when a conflict of interest arises.

Examples of Conflict of Interest: Situations where a conflict of interest might arise cannot be set out exhaustively. Conflicts of interest generally arise when a member is directly or indirectly interested in a funding application made to the Committee and as such, may be compelled to act in self-interest for a collateral purpose, or when a member and his or her family will gain or be affected by the decision of the Committee.

Special Considerations: The Committee's structure creates automatic potential conflicts, especially given the student roles on the Committee. These structural conflicts

need not be a bar to participation in discussions. In these circumstances the members are aware of the potential for conflict of interest and as a practical matter, it should not be necessary to make note of the potential conflict in regular meetings. Where the potential for conflict might not be obvious, the potential conflict of interest should be declared and recorded in the minutes so that all members are aware. This places an extra burden on members to be acutely aware of when their actions and/or other responsibilities might create a conflict and follow the procedures in this Policy to protect themselves and the best interests of NOSMU and the NOSMUSC.

Process: All members must follow the conflict of interest process. Conflicts of Interest must be self-identified. In these circumstances if the member has a real, potential or perceived conflict, the member will disclose the conflict at the earliest opportunity.

Failure to Disclose: If a member knowingly fails to disclose a conflict of interest as required by this Policy, the member may be asked to resign or may be subject to removal from office. A member's failure to comply with this Policy does not, in or of itself, invalidate any decision made by the Committee.

Minutes: The Committee will record every disclosure of conflicts of interest in the minutes.

Related Policies

See FN2.0 - Travel Management and General Expenses for the protocol on justifiable travel expenses, authorizations of travel expenses and reimbursement protocol.

Appeal Process for Funding Allocation Decisions

A student wishing to appeal his/her allocation can first submit a written complaint to the Chair of the Student Travel Funding Allocation Committee. The Committee will decide within 14 days if a reversal of their decision is appropriate. If there is no change in the Committee's decision, the student may approach the Director of Learner Support Services, who will rule on the matter.

Adopted by: NOSMUSC Executive Group
Adopted on: October 3rd 2022

Adopted by: Learner Support Services Subcommittee
Adopted on: January 12th 2023