



**OPERATING POLICY OF THE  
GRADUATE & PROFESSIONAL STUDENT ASSOCIATION**

**SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM FOR RESEARCH,  
TRAVEL, AND PROFESSIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT AWARD FUNDING**

UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, LAS VEGAS

## SECTION I. THE GPSA TRAVEL AND RESEARCH SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

### A. MISSION STATEMENT

The GPSA's Research, Travel, and Professional Development Sponsorship Program shall support projects which directly affect a student's degree program or make a considerable contribution to their field of study.

### B. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The GPSA has established a Sponsorship Program which will assist enrolled graduate and professional students to purchase research materials, present their work at national/international conferences, and partake in professional development opportunities that support completion of requirements for their degree program or enrich their educational tenure. The primary purpose of the Sponsorship Program is to support the research, professional development, and creative endeavors of UNLV's graduate and professional students. Preference will be given to students working on projects that will be applied to their final thesis/dissertation manuscript/capstone projects. Applications will be open year-round and reviewed by the Sponsorship Committee on a monthly basis. Applications chosen for GPSA sponsorship shall be funded upon the Committee's decision via grant through the Office of Financial Aid. Award recipients are required to present their funded project at the Annual Graduate & Professional Student Research Forum and complete a program survey at the end of the semester to remain eligible for future funding from any GPSA program.

### C. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION & BUDGET

The GPSA President, with guidance from the GPSA Executive Board and Manager / Advisor, shall present the projected budget allocation to the GPSA Council for approval. Program minimums require \$150,000 be allocated to this program annually for sponsorship. The total monetary and award amounts shall be determined and reevaluated on a yearly basis according to the projected GPSA budget, revenues, and expenditures as well as additional funding sources. Fiscal year allocations shall be published on the sponsorship website in the month of September. The GPSA Research, Travel, and Professional Development Sponsorship Program will be administered in accordance with this policy by the Sponsorship Committee of the Graduate and Professional Student Association.

## SECTION II. ELIGIBILITY, DEADLINES, AND LIMITATIONS

### A. ELIGIBILITY FOR SPONSORSHIP

To qualify for the Sponsorship Program, students must be officially admitted to and currently enrolled in a UNLV graduate and/or professional degree program at the time of award. Students must have completed (or have in progress) at least six graduate/professional credit hours and maintain both enrollment and a 3.0 GPA minimum upon application submission.

### B. APPLICATION DEADLINES

The deadline for submission of all application materials is sixty (60) days prior to the activity start date. The GPSA Sponsorship Committee encourages applicants to submit applications early and recommends students submit their complete applications based on the timeline proposed below:

| Activity Starts in<br>Month of |   | Recommended<br>Application Deadline |
|--------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| November                       | → | August 31                           |
| December                       | → | September 30                        |

|                  |   |             |
|------------------|---|-------------|
| <b>January</b>   | → | October 31  |
| <b>February</b>  | → | November 30 |
| <b>March</b>     | → | December 31 |
| <b>April</b>     | → | January 31  |
| <b>May</b>       | → | February 28 |
| <b>June</b>      | → | March 31    |
| <b>July</b>      | → | April 30    |
| <b>August</b>    | → | May 31      |
| <b>September</b> | → | June 30     |
| <b>October</b>   | → | July 31     |

Note: Students are encouraged to submit applications early. For example, students should submit their application the moment they receive their conference acceptance. Applications should be submitted at least sixty (60) days prior to their activity start date (i.e., project start date, first day of conference, first day of internship, etc.).

### **C. APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED PAST THE DEADLINE**

Late applications will require a brief Sponsorship Program Appeal form which should explain the conditions that delayed or prevented the application from being submitted before the deadline. While students are encouraged to submit their applications as early as possible, funds are available to accommodate applications which demonstrate extenuating circumstances outside of the control of the applicant. Late applications should be submitted through the application portal as normal. The appeal form will be sent automatically to the applicant’s email once the application has been submitted. Appeals are an electronic form and should be completed as quickly as possible, and no later than two (2) business days after application submission. All Sponsorship Program applications are subject to eligibility requirements and funding limitations. The GPSA cannot award activities already in progress or past activities. Appeals for late applications are approved at the discretion of the Committee Chair. As with all applications, preference is given to students working on projects that will be applied to their final thesis/dissertation manuscript/capstone projects. Once a late application appeal has been denied, there is no further appeal opportunity for that application.

### **D. FUNDING LIMITATIONS – INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP APPLICATIONS**

Individual students are eligible for funding at limits corresponding to their degree. The funding limitations are as follows:

- Master’s and professional-level students will be eligible to receive up to \$2,500 during their tenure at UNLV.
  - If a master’s or professional student were to later enroll as a doctoral student at UNLV, they would be eligible for an additional \$2,500 in sponsorship funding (total \$5,000).
- Doctoral-level students will be eligible to receive up to \$5,000 during their tenure at UNLV and may request up to a maximum of \$2,500 annually.
  - JD and MFA students are considered to be at the Doctoral level due to these degrees being terminal in their respective fields.
- Non-degree seeking students are not eligible for GPSA sponsorship funding.
- Group applications may have up to ten (10) eligible students; each student is considered on an individual basis (but one application may be submitted for a group activity). Group applicants are encouraged to cut costs and to demonstrate this in the shared budget.

## **SECTION III. APPLICATION GUIDELINES & PROCEDURES**

### **A. APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS & STRUCTURE**

Applicant must complete the submission form, consisting of identifying information and attachments, in its entirety. Sample applications can be found in the Appendix section of this document. Failure to adhere to the pre-established

standards will result in rejection of application. Completed applications must be submitted electronically using the form link by 11:59 PM on the application deadline. Emailed applications will not be considered. Incomplete applications will be disqualified, and late applications will not be accepted without an approved Sponsorship Program Appeal form.

## **B. FUNDING PRIORITY**

Owing to the competitive nature of the Sponsorship program, and to augment project support, applications are considered based the following priority levels:

- *Tier 1 Activities.* Any research, project, creative activity, and/or academic travel expense (i.e., research or conference presentation purposes) that is required for the completion of a graduate or professional degree program. Program requirements must be demonstrated, such as a screen capture from the degree handbook or a written statement from your advisor stating your graduation depends on this specific activity.
- *Tier 2 Activities.* Any research, project, creative activity, and/or academic travel expense that is not required for, but supplements, the completion of a graduate degree program.
  - Tier 2 sponsorship activities typically refer to: (a) projects outside of the student's professional paper/thesis/dissertation; (b) conference travel for an accepted abstract in which the sponsorship applicant is presenting; (c) an internship or third-party course not required by your program but supplements your degree progression.
- *Tier 3 Activities.* Networking or attendance at a conference/performance or professional development event with no presentation.

## **C. FORMATTING REQUIREMENTS**

All submitted application materials must adhere to the following format requirements. Each of the three required, student-provided application materials (explanation of activities, budget, and supporting documentation) will be evaluated for formatting requirements and will be deducted 1 point for failure to adhere to the requirements, for a possible total deduction of 3 points. The formatting requirements for all materials are as follows:

- 12 point font
- Times New Roman or Arial typeface
- Single-spaced
- 1-inch margins
- Portrait orientation
- Provided in PDF format with the following file names: "YOUR LAST NAME\_Explanation of activities.pdf", "YOUR LAST NAME\_Budget.pdf", "YOUR LAST NAME\_Supporting documentation.pdf"

Each of the application materials has specific formatting requirements in addition to the ones detailed above. The specific formatting requirements are detailed in the corresponding subsections below.

## **D. APPLICATION MATERIALS**

Applications for sponsorship shall consist of:

- Identifying information
- Faculty endorsement
- Explanation of activities
- Detailed and justified budget
- Supporting documentation (budget comparisons, documents which support the explanation of activities, other documents which may strengthen your overall application such as a conference acceptance letter, etc.)

Identifying information and faculty endorsement are handled by online form and automatic email, respectively. The explanation of activities, budget, and supporting documentation are to be provided by the student in PDF format in the application portal with the file names detailed above in Section III.C. Any additional files not part of the three delineated here will be disregarded in the review process. Incomplete applications will be disqualified. Sponsorship applications shall be reviewed on a monthly basis per the application deadlines and decided by the GPSA Sponsorship Committee.

## I. IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

An electronic form shall be used to collect student information from an active UNLV directory, not limited to name, contact information, department, advisor information.

## II. FACULTY ENDORSEMENT

Only a current UNLV faculty member may endorse a Sponsorship Program application. An endorsement link will be immediately emailed to the faculty advisor, program director, or graduate coordinator provided by the student in their application upon submission. It is expected that applicants shall have the support of a faculty member, preferably within the student's committee, for the proposed activity.

## III. EXPLANATION OF ACTIVITIES

A strong explanation of activities must succinctly describe the applicant's involvement with the proposed activities, describe the applicant's project (if applicable), and address the significance (significance to the applicant, to GPSA, and to UNLV) of the activity being attended. This document must adhere to the formatting requirements detailed above in Section III.C and must adhere to page requirements based on the type of application: individual applications must not exceed one page in length, and group applications must not exceed two pages in length. Explanation of activities that exceed the page limit will be deducted the 1 point for failure to adhere to formatting requirements, and reviewers will not consider any text past the page limit during the scoring process. It is important to keep in mind that the reviewers who will be evaluating the explanation of activities will likely not be familiar with the discipline-specific knowledge of applications. However, it is an important skill to be able to communicate expert knowledge to non-experts in many domains outside of the university system. The explanation of activities should be written in such a way as to be clearly understood by non-experts. The explanation of activities should include and will be evaluated for the following information:

- *Significance of Activity/Research.* Provides relevant background information about the applicant's research, creative activity, purpose of activity attendance, and/or field of study in general terms. In narrative form, a description of the methods and specific aims or objectives of the research, creative activity, or attendance is provided. Examples include the current understanding of the research problem, identification of the gap(s) in the science, professional enrichment or development, and/or a brief description of the study's novelty or innovation, importance of the creative work, travel, etc.
- *Activity Summary.* Provides an overview of the proposed activity including, but not limited to, role in (e.g., contribution to research or presentation) and the purpose of the activity. A description of the purpose of the activity being conducted, significance to degree progression and completion, and implications to the applicant's field of study. Provides a discussion of how this activity will contribute to and benefit degree progression, the GPSA, and the UNLV community.
- *Intended Use of Funds.* Explicitly states intended use of the sponsorship funds and why the project should be funded.
- *Timeline & Future Work.* Provides information about the expected timeline. If proposing research, provide details on project completion steps. If proposing travel, include a brief discussion of planned activities. If proposing a creative work, provide a timeline for completion.

Note: For collaborative projects or group travel, applicants should consider submitting a Group Sponsorship Application, (e.g., budget, supporting materials, approval forms) but the explanation of activities should address each individual's role in the project.

## IV. BUDGET

The budget shall outline the costs of the proposed activities to be covered by the GPSA (such as conference registration fees, supplies for research or creative projects, etc.). Do not include budget line items if you are not requesting GPSA to provide funding for that item. Budgets that include items not being requested for funding from GPSA will lose 1 point for failure to adhere to formatting guidelines. The applicant request no more than the maximum eligible amount outlined in

Section II.C. Budgets shall be provided in table format with the same formatting requirements as detailed in Section III.C above. Tables shall be provided with five columns: Name of item, Description of item, Unit cost, Total cost, Amount request from GPSA. Tables will be followed by a total amount requested from GPSA. The budget table must be followed by an explanation of costs that provides a justification narrative which explains the costs for each item in the budget table. Each item in the budget table must be supported by three comparisons including the requested item (for example, screenshots of a requested Southwest flight, a comparative Allegiant flight, and a comparative Alaskan flight). The comparison documentation shall be included in the supporting documentation. The budget should include and will be evaluated for the following information:

- *Itemized.* Break down items requested by item name, unit price, number of units, and total price for each item in a budget table.
- *Detailed.* Short description of each item (e.g., "Roundtrip airfare from Las Vegas, NV to San Francisco, CA on Southwest Airlines").
- *Justified.* Explain why item was chosen and how the price was determined (e.g., a hotel chosen using various travel websites, was the least expensive, close proximity to the conference, hotel recommended by conference organizers but comparisons still provided). Include description of how each item will be used in the proposed activity. Preference is given to least expensive items or provides justification as to why the cheapest option is not chosen.

Note: Funding requests for non-covered items will not be approved and will be deducted from the overall requested amount.

## V. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

The supporting documentation shall include all relevant documents not included in the explanation of activities and budget. Supporting documentation must include screenshots of all budget item comparisons; hyperlinks are not accepted and will be disregarded during the review process, resulting in a deduction of points. As stated above, each requested item must include three comparisons including the requested item (for example, screenshots of a requested Southwest flight, a comparative Allegiant flight, and a comparative Alaskan flight). Projects which require approvals from a governing body (such as an IRB, IACUC, FDA, etc.) must include proof that approval is being pursued. This may come in the form of a screenshot of an email showing approval being submitted/accepted, a screenshot of an approval in progress in Cayuse, etc. Any additional materials must be relevant to the explanation of activities and provide meaningful context for the application's merit. Such examples include conference acceptance letters, pictures of creative activities, testimonials for professional development opportunities, etc. Any additional materials must be followed by an explanation as to their relevance. The supporting documentation shall include and will be evaluated for the following information:

- *Budget Comparisons.* Includes screenshots of budget item comparisons; hyperlinks not accepted. All requested items must have three comparisons, including the chosen item. If no comparisons can be given for an item, provide a justification for why no comparison can be given in the budget justification narrative. Items with no comparisons and no justification indicating why are not eligible for funding.
- *Supplemental Materials.* Included If applicable. Screenshots or documents providing relevant and meaningful context to the explanation of activities or budget. All included supplemental materials must be followed by an explanation as to their relevance.

## VI. BUDGET COMPARISONS

This section provides examples of expected budget comparisons for some of the most common funding requests. As stated previously, all requested items in the budget must have three comparisons including the chosen item (meaning documentation for the requested item, and a piece of documentation each for two comparable items). Requested items that are cheaper among provided comparisons are preferred, but justification can be provided to explain why the cheapest option is not requested (eg. A more expensive hotel closer to a conference venue is chosen rather than a more distant, cheaper one). The following examples are common kinds of comparisons applicants provide, but is in no way exhaustive:

- *Transportation (Airfare).* Provide screenshots of ticket prices for three different airlines such as Alaskan, Allegiant, and Southwest.

- *Hotels/Lodging.* Provide screenshots of room prices from three different hotels or lodging providers such as a Hilton, Doubletree, and an Airbnb room.
- *Rental Cars, Taxis, Public Transportation, and Personal Vehicles.* Provide screenshots of rental car estimates from three different companies such as Enterprise, Hertz, and Alamo. Provide screenshots of taxi trip estimates from three different companies such as Uber, Lyft, and a local Metro system. Use of personal vehicles may provide estimated mileage and Google Maps screenshots of proposed routes (see Section IV.E.III for details on mileage reimbursement). Applicants may compare all of these options in proposed budgets (eg. One rental car estimate, two tax trip estimates from Uber and Lyft).

## **VII. APPLICANT CERTIFICATION**

Submission of a Sponsorship Program application is an acknowledgement and acceptance of this operating policy, all application requirements, and eligibility. Applicants will be required to indicate their having read this document in its entirety before the submission of an application in the online portal.

## **E. DUPLICATE, REPEAT, AND/OR FRAUDULENT DOCUMENT SUBMISSION**

Applications must be the original work of the applicant; for collaborative projects or group travel, while applications may be similar in nature (i.e., budget, supporting materials, etc.), the explanation of activities must be written in the applicant's own words. Applicants in these circumstances may want to consider the Group Sponsorship Application. Applications for the same activity will be denied if any GPSA Sponsorship Program funding was already provided. Subsequent applications for the same project may be considered if funding is requested for a new activity, new project phase, or for a change in the project's direction. Presentation of documents that are duplicates, fraudulent, or otherwise purposely incorrect will result in the disqualification of the application, suspension of future funding eligibility from any GPSA program for a specific period or indefinitely (at discretion of the Committee), and/or require the immediate repayment of any disbursed funds. Further, the student(s) will be referred to their department's Graduate Coordinator and/or the Office of Student Conduct for further consideration.

## **SECTION IV. SPONSORSHIP AWARD SELECTION AND DISBURSEMENT**

### **A. REVIEW CRITERIA AND SCORING**

Award recipients will be determined based on completed applications from qualified applicants. The selection procedure will be guided by the sponsorship application scoring rubric. Partial points may be awarded. Applications that receive 80% or greater of the possible points shall be funded at 100% of the eligible requested amount. Applications that receive less than 80% of the possible points, but greater than 50% of possible points, shall be rejected with possibility of appeal. Applications that receive 50% or less of possible points shall be rejected without possibility of appeal. Further information about the appeal process is detailed below in Section IV.D. The rubric for application scoring may be found in the Appendix of this document as well as the GPSA website.

### **B. DECISION NOTIFICATION**

This is a competitive program. The GPSA Sponsorship Committee receives a large volume of Sponsorship Program applications. To allow enough time for the thorough review of all applications and supporting materials, applicants will be notified of a decision approximately four to six (4 to 6) weeks after the application deadline.

### **C. CONDITIONAL APPROVAL OF APPLICATIONS**

Applications may be granted a temporary approval when the applicant cannot provide the required documentary proof prior to the qualifying event or activity start date, including instances of emergency. Applications missing required

materials beyond the applicant's control but have otherwise demonstrated alignment to all appropriate standards and expectations of the sponsorship funding program shall be considered for conditional approval; approval will be forthcoming upon satisfaction of certain specified conditions. The applicant will be informed of their conditional approval status via a sponsorship decision letter that will outline the requirements for full approval. Any funds awarded to the application will be withheld until the applicant provides proof that all conditions have been satisfied. Applicants will have thirty (30) days after the activity start date to provide this proof, otherwise, their application status will change to "denied" and the awarded funds will go back into the sponsorship funding pool.

### **I. Early Applications and Conditional Approvals**

All sponsorship applications are due at least sixty (60) days prior to the activity start date. However, students may apply much earlier for sponsorship funding as soon as they know the plans for their activity. For those planning to present at a conference or awaiting other required site approvals for their activity and wish to apply early (several months prior to the activity start date):

- Apply early under medium/tier 2 priority without a conference acceptance letter or site approval. If the application is funded, it will receive a conditional approval (and funds will be withheld) until the applicant meets the condition of providing proof of conference acceptance and/ or site approvals. If the applicant cannot meet the conditions (the conference does not accept their abstract/presentation or site approvals are not granted), funding will be denied.
- Apply early under low/tier 3 priority as an attendee (non-presenter), or for networking purposes, to the conference or activity site. The applicant should explain they intend to present if their abstract or presentation is accepted, or carry out their research activity if approvals are granted. However, the conference acceptance letter and/or site approvals will no longer be a required application material (only the conference registration if applicable). If the application is funded, it will receive full approval and funds shall be disbursed as normal.

### **D. SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM APPEAL PROCESSES**

Applicants may appeal rejections if one of the following is true:

- *Deadline Appeal.* An application was submitted past the sixty (60) day deadline prior to the activity start date. Please see Section 2.C for details on applications submitted past the deadline.
- *Decision Appeal.* An application was reviewed and rejected with a score of less than 80% of possible points, but greater than 50% of possible points.

All appeals are considered on a case-by-case basis. Students must submit documented proof of their circumstances explained in the appeal. Students should redact any information they are uncomfortable sharing with the Sponsorship Committee, the GPSA Executive Board, and the GPSA professional staff.

#### **I. DEADLINE APPEAL PROCESS**

Deadline appeals are an electronic form accessed through the same platform that hosts the application forms and should be completed as quickly as possible, no later than two (2) business days after application submission. Deadline appeals will be reviewed by the chair and/or vice chair of the Sponsorship Committee and applications will be reviewed at the discretion of the GPSA Sponsorship Committee. The GPSA cannot award activities already in progress or past activities.

#### **II. DECISION APPEAL PROCESS**

An applicant may appeal a decision from the Sponsorship Committee if they are rejected with an application score of less than 80% of possible points but greater than 50% of possible points. The electronic appeal form shall be submitted within no more than ten (10) days explaining the appellant's argument in response to the Committee's decision to deny or limit funding. Appealed applications will be evaluated by a new set of Sponsorship Committee reviewers. No additional supplemental materials shall be considered; only the appeal letter and application in its original form will be evaluated utilizing the Sponsorship Program application rubric. Decisions will be final, and no further appeal process shall be permitted in the case of a second rejection.



## **E. AWARD MODIFICATION PROCESS**

The purpose of a modification is to request that a sponsorship award be applied to a different scholarly activity and/or to modify the research/travel itemized budget. A one-time amendment to an approved award when travels or research plans have changed due to force majeure (an event or effect that cannot be reasonably anticipated or controlled) affecting the funded activity (e.g., research materials needed for the proposed activity were modified, conference/research location or dates changed, pandemic, problems with visas or project approvals, access to population for research, etc.) may be permitted. New projects, changes in location and dates, changes to budget and requested funded amount may require a new sponsorship program application. Requests for modification are reviewed and decided by the Committee Chair.

## **III. MODIFICATION PROCEDURE**

Upon knowledge of the change to the original activity, the sponsorship award recipient may request an amendment, in writing, to the Committee Chair by submitting an electronic modification request as soon as possible explaining the alterations in the activity. The following items are mandatory for consideration of modification requests:

- *Explanation of Modification.* Applicant must present a statement describing the proposed activity and/or budget modifications. Explanation should outline the reason(s) for the proposed changes.
- *Explanation of Activities (Revised).* Applicant must submit a revised explanation of activities for consideration.
- *Budget (Revised).* Applicant must submit a revised budget with revised justifications and supporting documentation (and cost comparisons) for consideration.
- *Conference Acceptance.* If applicable, it is mandatory that a conference registration and acceptance be included for consideration.

## **IV. ADDITIONAL NOTES**

Failure to notify the GPSA Vice President of a needed amendment to a funded application may result in the negation or repayment of the entire award. Award recipients are responsible for informing the GPSA of changes to their funded activity. Sponsorship modification applications shall be reviewed monthly on a case-by-case basis and at the discretion of the GPSA Vice President. Incomplete modification requests will not be considered. If changes to the award amount are made, a new award letter must be provided to the applicant and filed with the GPSA Secretary. Modifications shall not increase the initially approved award amount (a funding increase will require a new application reviewed by the Sponsorship Committee) nor fund previously denied items.

## **F. DISBURSAL OF GPSA SPONSORSHIP GRANTS**

Sponsorship recipients must be enrolled in the semester for which they are receiving the award. Disbursement of funds is dependent on eligibility requirements. Sponsorship awards not claimed by the end of the semester will be forfeited and funds will be returned to the general GPSA account.

## **I. RESEARCH MATERIALS FUNDING NOTES**

Material purchases (goods or services) made through the student's department using a departmental purchasing card (PCard) or purchase order (PO) must remain within the department for future use per university policy.

Note: Departments should be aware that any items purchased using a student's personal card must be reimbursed to the student via a scholarship roster. Additionally, departments should request a journal voucher (JV) from the GPSA for the cost of materials purchased. Departments should reconcile their PCard/PO against their own account number and request a journal voucher (JV) from GPSA's account, PG00614 with activity code AC01581. Please attach the student's award letter to the JV in Workday. Departments should request the full award amount only if the full award will be applied to material project costs (even those spread throughout the year). Any remaining funds not spent on materials should be disbursed to the student via a scholarship roster.

## **II. TRAVEL FUNDING NOTES**

Departments should not purchase student travel. Conference travel is not considered university business and therefore departments cannot purchase travel on behalf of students per Accounts Payable. Additionally, this award cannot be applied to an expense report. Travel expenses should be incurred using a personal card and “reimbursed” to the student via a scholarship roster. The GPSA should be informed if a portion of the student’s grant will go to material purchases (goods or services) made by their department so that amount can be sent directly to the student’s department. The remaining awarded amount will be disbursed directly to the student so they can make other purchases as they see fit in pursuit of the funded activity. Students are responsible for booking their own travel activities.

## **III. TIMELINE FOR DISBURSAL OF FUNDS**

Grants are processed through the Office of Financial Aid following the Sponsorship Committee’s decision. Award amounts may take up to eight (8) weeks to appear in the student’s MyUNLV account. Applicants should seek to apply early to avoid any issues that come from the disbursement timeframe.

## **IV. FUNDS FOR AUTOMOBILE USE**

In accordance with the policy of the UNLV Office of the Controller, GPSA funds personal and rental automobile use by estimated mileage at 50% of the current standard mileage reimbursement rate determined by the IRS. These rates change every January and can be found on the IRS website. Budgets should provide documentation estimating the number of miles driven during the activity and use the current standard mileage reimbursement rates to calculate requested funds.

## **G. TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF ACCEPTANCE**

Sponsorship Program recipients agree to complete award requirements upon notification of award letter. The recipient shall be responsible for ensuring that funds are used according to the accepted budget. Slight budget adjustments are expected and do not need to be approved by the GPSA Sponsorship Committee. Major adjustments should be directed to the GPSA Vice President. Failure to comply with any eligibility requirement or expectation of this award shall result in suspension of current funding and/or the forfeiture of any future GPSA funding. Award recipients may be featured in GPSA promotional material and/or additional UNLV/NSHE communications.

## **I. GPSA RESEARCH FORUM ATTENDANCE**

As a stipulation to accepting a Sponsorship Program grant, you are required to participate (through a poster or podium presentation) in the next Graduate & Professional Student Research Forum (<https://www.unlv.edu/gpsa/forum>), which will be held during the Spring semester. While recipients are responsible for ensuring they register for Forum and submit an abstract by the deadline, additional information regarding this event will be accessible to the student body as details become available. Additionally, recipients must complete a Sponsorship Program Evaluation Survey at the end of the semester. Failure to comply with the above requirements will result in suspension of any further GPSA funding and/or a freeze on any existing GPSA award.

## **II. GPSA RESEARCH FORUM AND VOLUNTEERING**

The Research Forum is hosted by the GPSA with support from the university and the Graduate College. This event is held annually in the spring semester. Sponsorship award recipients are required to submit an abstract and present (in poster or podium format) their research at the Research Forum. Students who have received GPSA sponsorship funding and do not present at the Research Forum are ineligible for funding from GPSA until the Forum requirement has been fulfilled. If students do not have a presentable project, they may discuss other ways to fulfill this requirement with the GPSA Executive Board. Other ways to meet this requirement are limited but may include volunteering for the Research Forum Planning Committee or volunteering for other GPSA events on a case-by-case basis.

### III. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Any and all presentations, reports, papers, articles, and books resulting from the applicant's funded project should include an acknowledgement to the Graduate & Professional Student Association.

### H. DISCLAIMER & IMPORTANT NOTES

All requests are reviewed on a case-by-case basis and approvals/rejections for the Sponsorship Program are at the discretion of the Sponsorship Committee. The Committee is not held to a uniform standard of award (i.e., there is no guarantee that a previously funded activity/item will be funded again). If applications exceed available funds, complete applications will be prioritized at the discretion of the Committee based on, but not limited to, application completeness and merit. Awards must be utilized as approved by the Committee unless an activity modification request is approved. Failure to amend a funded application may result in the negation of entire award. Dishonesty during/after the application process is cause for loss of eligibility and/or conduct referrals.

### I. NOTES ON COMMON REQUESTS

- *Travel Expenses.* Comparisons and justifications should consider third-party websites/apps.
- *Lodging.* Describe your decision to select lodging type (e.g., hotel vs. conference hotel, Airbnb, VRBO, etc.).
- *Transportation.* Describe transportation to activity location (e.g., flight, bus, train) and ground transportation within the location (e.g., public transportation, car rental, personal car, etc.). If utilizing Uber/Lyft, be sure to compare both platforms and justify over other public transportation methods.
- *Conference Registration.* Only student registration is eligible for funding; if your registration receipt does not show the fee paid is a "student registration", provide a printout of the conference fee schedule.
- *Laboratory Materials.* Routine materials (e.g., cell culturing, cleaning, etc.) are generally not funded. However, laboratory equipment and/or project specific materials are eligible for funding provided justifications describe their use and need.

### II. NON-COVERED ITEMS

Compensation (salaries, wages, honorarium, tuition, etc.), routine supplies, professional organization membership, per diem, conference presentation posters, research participants (GPSA cannot fund cash incentives or gift cards, GPSA can fund material incentives such as phone cards or swag), nor thesis/dissertation copies as they are not permissible and, therefore, are considered non-covered items.

## SECTION V. THE GPSA SPONSORSHIP COMMITTEE

### A. MISSION STATEMENT

The GPSA Sponsorship Committee shall support projects which directly affect a student's degree program and make a considerable contribution to their field of study.

### B. COMMITTEE SCOPE OF PRACTICE

The GPSA Sponsorship Committee shall be responsible for the disbursement of the GPSA Research, Travel, and Professional Development Sponsorship Program budget. The Committee shall be tasked with, not inclusive, of the following:

- Review all Sponsorship Program funding applications submitted to the GPSA and recommend approval or rejection of funds, according to the merit of proposed fundable activities.
- Maintain an updated report on requests for Sponsorship Program funding for presentation to the GPSA Council. Submit a zero-deficit annual report to the GPSA President and GPSA Council no later than seven days prior to the first Council Meeting of the fiscal year (i.e., July meeting).

- Make recommendations on operating procedures and guidelines to the GPSA President and Executive Board for further review and action.

## **C. COMMITTEE COMPOSITION AND STRUCTURE**

The Sponsorship Program budget shall be managed by the GPSA Sponsorship Committee. As per the GPSA Bylaws, the GPSA Vice President shall chair the Committee and shall only vote in the event of a tie. The Committee shall be comprised of at least six (6) voting members (appointed Council Representative or member-at-large) with no more than one representative appointed from a single department and no more than three (3) representatives from the same college. The Committee may take additional members from the same department/college if Committee membership is low and no other parties are interested in serving on the Committee. The opportunity to join the Committee must be made public through the GPSA Council at least ten (10) business days prior to this exception. Committee ex-officio members shall include the remaining members of the GPSA Executive Board and a GPSA full-time employee. The GPSA Executive Board, the Committee chair, and/or members of the Committee shall have the power to recommend and adopt policy changes to this operating policy as necessary, with the exception of appointment capabilities which remain with the GPSA President (as per the GPSA Constitution and Bylaws). All chair and member expectations and responsibilities are subject to modification as necessary to reflect Committee development.

### **I. CHAIR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The duties of the Committee Chair include presiding over official meetings, maintaining Committee meeting agendas and minutes, recording attendance of Committee members, organizing and reviewing all submitted applications, delegating roles within the Committee as necessary, submitting decision letters to the GPSA full-time employee, maintaining a running total of Committee approved awards.

### **II. COMMITTEE MEMBER DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

A ranking member may be appointed by the Committee Chair or elected by Committee members at the first meeting of each academic year and/or in the case of vacancy. The duties of the Vice Chair include:

- Maintaining minutes of official meetings.
- Assisting in the maintenance of budgets to reflect approved amounts.
- Acting as interim chair in the case of the permanent absence of the chair.

All committee members will be expected to:

- Attend all scheduled meetings; provide notice if absence is necessary.
- Review applications prior to committee meetings.
- Maintain notes on each committee meeting.
- Complete assigned tasks in a timely manner.

## **SECTION VI. PROGRAM QUESTIONS & CONTACT INFORMATION**

Questions about the GPSA Research, Travel, and Professional Development Sponsorship Program may be directed to the GPSA Offices, CBC-C 111 or LLB 2141 or [gpsa@unlv.edu](mailto:gpsa@unlv.edu). Application materials and abbreviated information regarding this program can be found on the GPSA website ([unlv.edu/gpsa](http://unlv.edu/gpsa)).