

Program of Travel Awards for Graduate Students in Astronomy February 2017

In 2015, the report from the Astronomy Graduate Program Task Force included a recommendation to:

Encourage the department to identify funds that would enable graduate students to attend professional meetings and support their research needs. Specifically, the department should work toward identifying funding to enable each student to attend at least one topical meeting and to present their Ph.D. dissertation talk at an AAS meeting.

In response to this recommendation, we have identified a variety of sources from which we can initiate a program of travel support for graduate students.

Features of the program:

- Every graduate student will be guaranteed support to travel to one meeting during their tenure in the department to present the results of research carried out as a graduate student at IU.
- This meeting may be at the choosing of the student subject to the following guidelines:
 - The student must be presenting either a poster or a talk at the meeting on work that is in the publication process or very close to completion.
 - Students are encouraged to present dissertation research, although presentation of other research will be considered, if suitably justified (see application process below).
 - Students should speak with their advisor in determining whether a specific meeting is the best venue for presenting their research.
 - If an AAS meeting, or more than one student is attending the same meeting, students will be expected to share rooms (at double occupancy) with other graduate or undergraduate students attending to control costs. Students are not expected to share rooms with students of a different gender.
- It is expected that the departmental travel awards will cover the full cost of the meeting, including registration fees, travel to and from the meeting site, accommodations, and per diem during the days of the meeting. Departmental funds are limited, however, and in an effort to maintain this program as long as possible, a maximum amount of funding available from the department for any given trip will be established at the discretion of the chair. It is expected that the maximum amount of funding available would be sufficient to cover the full cost of a typical international meeting or an AAS meeting.
- Students are encouraged to apply to other programs of travel support, including but not limited to the AAS International Travel Grant program, the College of Arts and Sciences Travel Awards, the Provost's Travel Award for Women in Science, and the IU Graduate and Professional Student Government Travel Award. These awards, which often provide only partial funding for a trip, can be supplemented by the departmental travel award.
- Recognizing that the cost of meeting attendance can vary widely, and in fairness of allocation of resources, if a student elects to attend a meeting that is very low cost, the department may contribute to the cost of attending a second meeting, up to a reasonable limit at the discretion of the chair.
- This program is not intended to replace the travel support or opportunities that are provided by individual faculty research grants or other sources. Faculty advisors and students are encouraged to

utilize these additional sources of support to enable more frequent student travel throughout their graduate careers.

Procedure for receiving funds:

- Students identify the meeting they would like to attend on departmental funds.
- Submit an application to the department chair that includes:
 - details on the meeting - title, dates, location
 - details of the paper/talk being presented - title, authors, and summary of project.
 - description of the status of the work - e.g., published, paper under review, submitted, or in near-final draft form
 - a brief justification for the choice of this particular meeting, and how it fits in to plans for presentation of dissertation research
 - an estimate of the total cost of attending the meeting taking into consideration registration fees, travel to and from the meeting, and accommodation and per diem for the length of the meeting.
- On approval by the chair, the student will be notified and the funding codes provided to the travel arranger (Tiffany), who will create a travel authorization.
- Travel awards are available only for use to attend meetings, so students will be reimbursed only for the actual costs of the trip (with receipts). Students are encouraged to talk with Tiffany to explore options for making travel arrangements. Students may arrange travel through the department, allowing direct purchase of airline tickets and payment of registration fees, or may pay for these expenses themselves and be reimbursed after the meeting.