

# Postdoctoral Fellows Professional Development Reimbursement Fund: Guidelines

School of Graduate Studies



# Program overview

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The Postdoctoral Fellows Professional Development Reimbursement Fund supports postdoctoral fellows engaging in additional professional development (PD) activities. This fund is available to postdoctoral employees (i.e., employed in the bargaining unit, CUPE 3902 Unit 5) and postdoctoral trainees (i.e., primarily funded through an external award).

This Postdoctoral Fellows Professional Development Reimbursement Fund supports participation in PD activities that postdoctoral fellows identify as opportunities to enhance their professional growth, subject to pre-approval by their Principal Investigator/Supervisor. Approval of such reimbursement shall not be unreasonably withheld.

Additional PD activities are distinct from PD activities that are required/requested by the Principal Investigator/Supervisor which are ineligible for reimbursement through this fund. See Article 27:03 of the [CUPE 3902 Unit 5 Collective Agreement](#) for more information.

# Eligibility criteria

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Costs incurred from participating in additional PD activities that support the enhancement of professional skills and career development must meet the eligibility criteria below to be eligible for reimbursement through the Postdoctoral Fellows Professional Development Reimbursement Fund.

The PD activity must be:

- Requested by the postdoctoral fellow and not the Principal Investigator/Supervisor.
  - See Article 27:02 of the [CUPE 3902 Unit 5 Collective Agreement](#) for more information on reimbursement of costs incurred for PD activities requested by a supervisor.
- Pre-approved by the Principal Investigator/Supervisor. Approval of such reimbursement shall not be unreasonably withheld.
- Occurring between March 3, 2024 (date of ratification) and December 31, 2025.

Postdoctoral fellow must be actively employed in the bargaining unit at the time of completing the PD activity.

Reimbursement for expense(s):

- Must align with the University of Toronto [Guidelines for Travel and Other Reimbursable Expenses](#); and
- Cannot exceed \$500 per postdoctoral fellow per contract year.

# Processing guidelines

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The Postdoctoral Fellows Professional Development Reimbursement Fund is an expense / reimbursement-based program. A request for reimbursement from the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) is to be submitted after the postdoctoral fellow is reimbursed from the account of the Principal Investigator/Supervisor.

The Business Officer / Postdoc Administrator from the unit is responsible for:

- Processing the reimbursement in accordance with established policies and guidelines for travel and other reimbursable expenses.
- Submitting requests to SGS to recoup up to \$500 (per postdoctoral fellow, per contract year and in accordance with eligibility criteria) using the [Postdoctoral Professional Development Reimbursement Fund Form](#).
  - SGS provides reimbursements twice per year, during the last week of March and October. However, Business Officers can submit requests through the Form throughout the year, after the unit has processed the expense reimbursement.
  - Reimbursement requests for PD activities that took place more 12 months before the date of submission will not be accepted.

The postdoctoral fellow is reimbursed after the PD activity and expense(s) processed by the unit's Business Officer / Postdoc Administrator. In alignment with University of Toronto's policies and guidelines for Travel and Other Reimbursable Expenses, an expense reimbursement claim should be submitted to the local Business Officer / Postdoc Administrator as soon as the PD activity is completed, at the latest within three working weeks following completion of the activity for which expenses were incurred.

The following information must be provided when completing the Postdoctoral Professional Development Reimbursement Fund Form:

- Name of postdoc
- Employee number / personnel number
- Postdoc status (i.e., employee, trainee)
- Contract start and end dates
- Type of PD activity
- Principal Investigator/Supervisor name
- Department name
- Amount of reimbursement (must reflect net amount, i.e., amount, less partial HST rebate)
- FIS account information for reimbursement – fund centre, cost centre and fund
- Attestation from the Business Officer / Postdoc Administrator that pre-approval was provided and that costs align with U of T's Guidelines for Travel and Other Reimbursable Expenses