Bentley GSA

Professional Development Fund

**Section 1: Professional Development Fund Overview**

**Reimbursements and Financial Support:**

The Bentley Graduate Student Association’s Professional Development Fund (PDF) is available to help all graduate students (both part-time and full-time). It is here to financially support the cost of attending professional development events (Skill building workshops, networking events, education, and professional conferences, etc.) and certifications, projects, or other qualifying professional developmental activities undertaken outside of Bentley University.

Some qualifying professional developmental activities include Virtual and in-person seminars, software tools for skill building, professional networking gatherings, competitions, case studies, etc.

APPLICATIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED PRIOR TO THE PROFESSINAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY!

**Section 2: About the Professional Development Fund**

**About the Bentley GSA Professional Development Fund:**

In keeping with preparing Bentley University students to be ‘A FORCE’ in the world of business and beyond, the Professional Development Fund was created by the Graduate Student Association to help graduate students attain the requisite skills, knowledge, core and distinct competencies, and qualifications they need to claim the career and learning outcomes they so desire. We support these goals by financially supporting a portion of the fees for qualifying professional developmental activities undertaken by Bentley graduate students (if the application is approved).

Graduate students applying for professional development funding have a **limit of $500 per semester.** It is recommended that graduate students apply for professional development funding accordingly and wisely.

Cost that we typical approve or costs covered under professional development funding guidelines include, but are not limited to:

* Certification course fees
* Conference Fees
* Resources and tools that help you to seize professional developmental opportunities like online training modules.

**Section 3: Illegitimate Expenses**

**Illegitimate expenses under the Professional Development Fund guidelines includes, but not limited to:**

* Food and other similar wants that have no correlation with professional development.
* Non-professional development expenditures that do not contribute to professional development or the improvement of skills.
* Personal Entertainment costs (leisure activities, entertainment, and non-professional events.
* Luxury accommodations that exceed customary needs reasonable for a professionally developmentally focused opportunity.
* Tuition or fees for courses, non-profession/educational workshops, or programs that are deemed irrelevant to professional growth.
* Membership fees for organizations or associations that do not align with the individual’s professional goals or industry.
* Purchases of personal items or accessories that do not contribute directly to professional skills enhancement.
* Late fees for missed deadlines for a professional development opportunity.
* Expenditures on materials, resources, or tools that have no relevance to professional developmental opportunity.

**Section 4: How Professional Development Funds are Provided?**

**How professional development funds are provided once approved:**

* Provided to students once all necessary materials are received and the application successfully passes a committee review.
* Students must apply for funding prior to professional development initiatives and in complete awareness of the monthly deadline and decision-turnaround time.
* Professional development funding is capped at $500 per graduate student per Academic term?
* We will support one professional developmental opportunity per academic term.

**Section 5: Eligibility Criteria**

**More information on eligibility requirements for the Graduate Student Association Professional Development Fund:**

* Must be a current degree-seeking, master level graduate student at Bentley University (full-time, part-time, in-person, or virtual).
* Graduate students seeking professional development funding from the Graduate Student Association must be registered in the semester in which they are applying for the Professional Development Fund.
* Must be in good academic and student conduct standing (This will be checked).
* Must not exceed the $500 per academic term and must not have received funding for another opportunity earlier in the same academic term.

**Other require information documents:**

* LinkedIn Profile
* Resume
* Cost Breakdown of opportunity
* Two short essays (Prompts will be included in the application form for the Professional Development Fund).

**Note: Funding is not guaranteed for every application submitted. Funding will be awarded based on the judgement of a dedicated committee and based on funds available for the GSA Professional Development Fund budget at the time your application is submitted.**

**Section 6: Restrictions and non-negotiables**

**Restrictions/non-negotiables on GSA Professional Development Funding:**

While this list is not exclusive, and the ultimate judgment and approval for professional funding will be left to the Professional Development Committee, here are some situations/scenarios that cannot receive Professional Development Funding from the Bentley Graduate Student Association:

* An application asking for support with expenses related to recreational or leisure activities, such as fitness classes, personal vacations, or hobbies, will not be eligible for Professional Development Funding.
* An application for a professional Development opportunity 30 days (about 4 and a half weeks) after the event has passed.
* Any application that correlates with any of the items listed under “Section 3: Illegitimate Expenses.”

**Section 7: Application Process/How to apply?**

**How to apply for the Graduate Student Association Professional Development Fund:**

Link: <https://bentley.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cIkYLd61EZnZyGq>

Things to prepare and have available before applying for the Professional Development Fund:

* All details about the event and a cost breakdown of all the associated costs of attending the event or completing any Professional Development activity.
* The cost breakdown must be clearly and concisely itemized.
* Please make copies of all receipts and have them available to submit if/when requested.
* Please note that graduate students will only be reimbursed for the total amount of the receipts submitted but cannot exceed $500 each academic term.
* The Professional Development Fund approval email will also state the amount that the committee approved and agreed to reimburse or financially support students.
* Receipts for illegitimate expenses as they relate to the Professional Development Fund (i.e. food) must not be submitted and will not be reimbursed.
* Please highlight how much money you plan to contribute.
* Please update your resume and be ready to submit it.

**Section 8: Deadlines and Decision-Turnaround Time**

**Deadlines. Decision-turnaround timeline. And additional rules:**

* Starting February 1, 2024, the application deadline for the Professional Development Fund will be the last Friday of every month.
* Decisions on applications will be approximately 2 weeks after the deadline, giving the committee time to carefully review each application.
* Applicants will be notified of their application status (approved or denied) via email by the Graduate Student Association.
* The Graduate Student Association may contact applicants if there are missing items that are important for the committee to review to ultimately render a decision. This is not guaranteed and may only happen in special cases (i.e. information is unclear, missing important details, or are overall unacceptable).
* Documents over 30 days (about 4 and a half weeks) after the professional development activity was completed will not be accepted or reimbursed.
* If documents are not submitted within the 30 days' timeframe, the professional development application will be terminated and denied.
* It is your responsibility to ensure that all the required information and documents are submitted along with the application.
* Funds cannot and will not be released without the approval of the Graduate Student Association and the Professional Development Committee.
* Decisions for the Professional Development fund rendered by the professional Development Committee are final and cannot be contested.
* You will be required to complete a survey/questionnaire after the professional development opportunity if approved.

**Note: The Professional Development Fund Committee is comprised of Bentley University graduate students, faculty members, and staff members.**

**Section 9: GSA and Professional Development Committee Picks**

**GSA and Professional Development Committee Picks:**

Here is a list of upcoming professional developmental opportunities to consider:

1. <https://odsc.com/boston/?utm_campaign=ODSC%20East&utm_medium=email&_hsmi=287042557&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-_i6hZMDQ1BgpCd0F0fBKg-v-aAKq6hBQGM9HO7rjCmPW240_Mbngu70oqPMiky5e6It--0KBdg7CWQLt3SVE-P92rDcg&utm_content=287042557&utm_source=hs_email>