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THE LEARNED SOCIETY OF WALES

Early Career Researchers Network

Travel and Expenses Bursaries Policy

1. Introduction

Our Travel and Expenses bursaries offer essential support for Early Career Researchers (ECRs) to attend engagement activities. These activities are crucial for knowledge exchange, enhancing research profiles, and expanding professional networks. Given the current financial climate, many ECRs are no longer able to access funds for this. By providing support to ECRs through this fund, we aim to remove barriers for researchers facing financial constraints, allowing them to gain recognition and progress in their careers.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a fair and equitable framework for awarding travel and expenses bursaries to researchers attending engagement activities. It has been developed in agreement with the [Learned Society of Wales' Advisory Group for Researcher Development](#).

2. Scope

This policy applies to travel and expenses bursaries awarded for attendance at external activities- that is, activities not organised by the Learned Society of Wales (LSW). A separate bursary policy for events organised by LSW will be released at a later date.

3. Available Funding

The bursaries are supported through the generous contributions of Fellows of the Learned Society of Wales. These contributions may also be supplemented by the Learned Society of Wales using core funding.

All funding is intended to be allocated and used within the same Society year in which it is collected. Unspent funds may be carried over to the following year only in exceptional circumstances.

Funding levels may vary from year to year, depending on the level of contributions and available resources. The Society reserves the right to review and adjust the total funding allocation annually. As a result, the number of available bursaries will be determined annually, depending on the total funds available that year.

4. Eligibility Criteria

To be considered for a travel and expenses bursary, applicants must satisfy the following criteria:

- Be an 'Early Career Researcher', defined as a researcher who has not yet achieved significant research independence, working in any discipline. Applicants must explain in their application why they consider themselves to be an Early Career Researcher.
- Be working as a researcher in Wales. This includes those employed in a contracted research role (full or part-time) at a recognised organisation in Wales OR freelance, independent and non-contracted researchers who are resident in Wales and can demonstrate active, ongoing research work.
- Be a member of the LSW Early Career Researchers Network.
- Be required to confirm that they have explored other options and are either ineligible or have been unsuccessful.
- Be able to demonstrate the value and relevance of attending the conference for their career development (see assessment and selection criteria for further information).

The event must:

- Be an external conference or event (not organised by the Learned Society of Wales).
- Be an opportunity for the applicant to build their research profile, disseminate research findings, build new networks, and/or expand their professional networks. This may include, but is not limited to, conferences, panels, roundtables, forums, and research visits.

If potential applicants are unsure if their planned activity falls within the scope of this scheme, they can email the Researcher Development team at researcherdevelopment@lsw.wales.ac.uk.

In addition, the Learned Society of Wales is committed to embedding Sustainable Development Goals into our operations and limiting unnecessary travel. We strongly encourage applicants to consider low-carbon travel options. Applicants must therefore clearly justify the necessity of their travel and demonstrate that it cannot be reasonably replaced by alternative means, such as virtual participation.

The eligibility criteria have been designed to reflect the competitive nature of this bursary scheme and to ensure that the limited funding is awarded to those who will benefit most. Meeting the eligibility criteria does not guarantee funding, and applications will be assessed based on merit and alignment with the aims of the scheme.

5. Covered Costs

Applicants may claim between £100 and £1000. Bursaries may cover full or partial costs, depending on the availability of funding and assessment of need.

Costs covered

- Travel should normally be by public transport (standard/economy class fares)
- Reasonable standard accommodation for the night before and/or after the event (if travel times require it)
- Conference or event registration fees
- Reasonable subsistence (please refer to [HMRC Guidance](#) to calculate your daily allowance for subsistence when travelling overseas)

Costs not covered

- Training
- First-class or business travel
- Personal travel or accommodation before/after the event for leisure
- Alcohol or minibar expenses
- Conference social events or dinners
- Professional membership fees
- Equipment purchases (e.g. laptops, headphones)
- Wi-Fi and telephone contracts
- Costs already covered by another funding source or institution

6. Application Process

Applications will open in January of each year and run for a duration of six weeks. Promotion of the scheme will be carried out through our ECR Network Newsletter, Learned Society of Wales Newsletter, on our website, as well as our social media accounts. Late applications will not be considered. If all funds are not awarded in the initial round, a second call for applications will open by the end of March.

All applicants must ensure they meet the criteria outlined in section 4 of this policy before making an application. Applications that do not meet this criterion will be immediately rejected.

Incomplete applications will not be considered.

7. Assessment and Selection Criteria

Applications which meet the eligibility criteria (section 4) will be reviewed by a designated panel comprising members of the [LSW Advisory Group for Researcher](#)

Development, who will assess each application and consider the value of the proposed activity, its relevance to the applicants research or career development, the potential impact of attendance on the applicants work or institution, and whether it represents value for money and appropriate sustainability. Priority will be given to applicants who:

- Have been invited to speak, present or participate in a formal capacity
- Outline specific professional development or networking opportunities that can help them to achieve longer-term research impact goals
- Show clear alignment between the event and their current research trajectory
- Applicants who have not previously received an LSW travel and expense bursary to attend an external event

The panel will also take into account the overall availability of funds and may adjust individual award amounts to ensure fair distribution. The panel's decision is final.

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application via email. Notifications will be sent within 6 weeks of the application deadline.

8. Payment and Reimbursement

Recipients are responsible for booking their own travel. The Learned Society of Wales cannot make travel or accommodation bookings on behalf of the applicant.

Payments will normally be made directly to the successful applicant's host organisation. LSW will issue a purchase order for the researcher to share with their finance department. The host organisation will be responsible for reimbursing costs through its normal reimbursement and financial processes. All travel, risk assessment, insurance, and other approvals required by the host organisation must be complied with.

Before reimbursement can be made, the host organisation must submit an invoice to LSW, quoting the relevant purchase order number. Researchers will need to provide itemised receipts or copies of the expenses claimed to LSW so that the payment can be authorised.

In exceptional circumstances, such as when a researcher is not affiliated with an organisation or when the value of the grant is minimal, direct payments to the researcher may be considered. In such cases, the researcher must provide itemised receipts and evidence for all incurred costs.

The Learned Society of Wales will not be responsible for any travel or accommodation arrangements and will only reimburse expenses once they have been incurred (please note that payment can only be made by transfer into a UK bank account in GBP).

All travel and expenses must be approved by the Learned Society of Wales before any costs are incurred.

9. Reporting Requirements

Recipients of travel and expenses bursaries exceeding £250 are required to submit a final report within one month of returning from the conference or event. The recipient will receive a template document for reporting, which will include a summary of the event and the recipient's participation, as well as an explanation of how attending the event contributed to their research, career development, and professional growth.

All recipients are expected to acknowledge the support of the Learned Society of Wales in any social media posts, blogs, or other communications related to the event. This includes acknowledging the Society on any presentation slides or research posters displayed during the event.

10. Responsibility

Responsibility for the Learned Society of Wales Travel and Expenses Bursaries Scheme sits with the Researcher Development Team, who will be responsible for the management and oversight of the scheme.