Purpose
The Professional Development (PD) Fund’s purpose is to provide full-time staff the opportunity to pursue professional development activities of their choosing, and be reimbursed up to $750 per employee, per fiscal year. The policy is designed to provide guidelines for administering the Professional Development Fund for MSU Denver staff.

Introduction
A commitment to continuous learning and innovation will enhance MSU Denver’s ability to fulfill its mission. In support of that commitment, the University has developed a Professional Development Fund to ensure that the staff continue to grow as professionals.

The focus of an employee’s professional development activity should be guided by University, department, and employee goals and objectives. Conferences, seminars, academic coursework, and work related training opportunities are some of the ways our staff may pursue professional development. While funding is limited, every effort will be made to enhance job skills and job satisfaction for the University’s staff.

In all cases, employees must receive approval from their supervisors before applying to use the Professional Development Fund.

Description
Employees of the University may identify professional development opportunities outside of the normal workshops, seminars, and Tuition Scholarship offered by the University. These opportunities include academic coursework at other institutions of higher education which is not offered at MSU Denver, conferences, seminars, work related training, professional organization memberships, certification study materials, certification exams, among others as determined by Human Resources. Textbooks are not covered by the PD Fund. The monies in this fund are limited and dispersed on a first come, first serve basis. Employees may be reimbursed from the fund up to $750 each fiscal year for qualified professional development activities.

Eligibility
All full-time staff completing at least one year of service to the University are eligible to apply to use the PD Fund. Employees are required to obtain supervisor approval to qualify for this benefit. Faculty and chairs receive professional development funds through their individual departments and are ineligible for the PD Fund.

Release Time
Conferences, seminars, or work related training are generally offered during normal work hours. Hours spent in these activities are considered normal working hours. In the event that the activity takes place after hours, non-exempt employees will be eligible for overtime, comp time, or flex scheduling. All employees (exempt and non-exempt) and supervisors should work together to make appropriate adjustments to determine overtime, comp time, or flex scheduling.

Employees using the fund for academic coursework at other institutions of higher education are expected to take courses at times other than normal work hours. In the event that the course is only offered during work hours,
employees are granted release time for the course, as well as travel time to and from the class. It is recommended that employees may only receive three (3) hours of release time per week per semester for academic courses. If more than three (3) hours is needed, permission and scheduling changes are up to the discretion of the supervisor.

**Authority**
The Office of the President delegates authority to the Vice President of Administration and Finance to oversee compliance with this policy.

Questions regarding this policy, or requests for variances from the policy, should be directed to Human Resources by emailing profdev@msudenver.edu.

**Related Documents and Policies**

**Policy Approved By**

Original: President’s Cabinet on December 8, 2008

**Revision History**

Origination Date: December 8, 2008

Last Amended Data: February 21, 2017
Metropolitan State University of Denver  
Professional Development Fund Procedures for Application  
(Updated February 2017)  

1. Eligible employees can receive a maximum PD award of $750.00 per fiscal year (July 1 to June 30), on a first come, first serve basis, pending available funding. The $750.00 maximum can be attained in one single award or by applying for several smaller awards throughout the year that would collectively total the $750.00 maximum (if receipts substantiate such expense and funding is approved/available). The maximum award of $750.00 can be given for any approved activity in either category A or category B, or a combination of the two categories. Awards will only be issued in the form of reimbursements after proof of pre-payment and after the PD activity has taken place.  

2. Employee Eligibility:  
   a.) Employed full-time at the University for a minimum of one (1) year  
   b.) Current full-time employee status as a staff member (not serving as faculty or department chair)  

3. Activity Eligibility:  
   a.) Eligible activities:  
      i. Academic coursework at other institutions of higher education (undergraduate coursework not offered at MSU Denver), conferences, seminars, work related trainings, professional organization memberships, certification study materials, and certification exam fees.  
      ii. Graduate coursework is eligible for this educational assistance benefit (up to $750 per eligible employee, per fiscal year). Additional funding may be available through your department. Tax Impact: Reimbursement for graduate academic coursework is tax exempt under the IRS Educational Assistance program up to $5,250 per calendar year. Expenses in excess of $5,250 will be reimbursed through Payroll as compensation and reportable on Form W-2.  
      iii. Activities that do not fall into these categories will be assessed by Human Resources on a case by case basis.  
   b.) Ineligible activities:  
      i. Undergraduate coursework completed at MSU Denver is NOT eligible for Professional Development funds; the Employee Undergraduate Tuition Scholarship covers a portion of MSU Denver undergraduate coursework.  
      ii. Undergraduate coursework that is taken elsewhere but is offered at MSU Denver  
      iii. Textbooks  
      iv. Student fees  

4. All PD applications must be submitted electronically. See instructions in the “How to Apply” sections that follow.  

5. Submit one PD Fund application for each PD activity.  

6. There are two categories of professional development (PD) activities that are eligible for funding:  
   **Category A) Employee Reimbursement**  
   **Category B) Department Reimbursement**  

5. Human Resources and the University’s Accounting Department collaboratively coordinate employee/departmental reimbursements and manage the PD Fund. Thus, the following instructions outline procedures to be done simultaneously in order to obtain PD funding and reimbursement from the University’s Accounting Department. Please adhere to these procedures to ensure a timely response to your requests.
6. There is a limited amount of PD funds allocated annually. Once these funds are fully exhausted within a fiscal year, applicants will be notified through an email communication that no additional PD funding can occur until the beginning of the next fiscal year.

7. Applications are processed upon receipt and are funded on a first-come, first-served basis, until all PD resources are allocated. A confirmation email message is sent to the applicant indicating approval and next steps.

8. In order to fairly distribute PD funds throughout the University, no more than four (4) employees from the same department will be awarded PD funds for attending the same PD activity. In this case, no more than four (4) PD applications should be submitted.

9. PD applications can be submitted up to 60 days prior to the PD activity and must be submitted a minimum of two (2) weeks before the PD activity. **NOTE: No PD applications will be accepted/approved after the event has taken place. All late submissions will be assessed by Human Resources.**

10. All PD applications must be received by May 1 of each fiscal year, since all reimbursements must be fully processed by June 15 annually.

HOW TO APPLY...

First determine whether you are applying for PD funding under A or B below and then proceed accordingly. Please note: all PD activity should be purchased using a corporate credit card whenever possible.

A. If PD application is for an activity where an employee would be directly reimbursed: Follow procedures for “Category A” below.

B. If PD application is for an activity where the department account would be directly reimbursed: Follow procedures for “Category B” below.

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**Category A Procedure - Employee Reimbursement (rare circumstances)**

Usually coursework and other PD activities that the department doesn't approve to cover from their budget. The Employee covers upfront costs.

**Note:** It is the responsibility of the employee to make all arrangements for travel, hotel, registration, etc., to any seminar or conference. If registration must be expedited, please alert Accounts Payable at accounts payable@msudenver.edu.

**How to Access the Professional Development Fund Application**

1. Go to the Human Resources website: [http://msudenver.edu/hr/](http://msudenver.edu/hr/).
2. Click on “Professional Development & Trainings” on the left menu.
3. Under the “Recommended Professional Development & Trainings” section, click the “Professional Development” box to expand that section.
4. Click on “Professional Development Fund Application.”
5. Complete the application.
6. Send to supervisor to sign.
   i. Include all 4 components of the FOAP - a FOAP is needed for tracking purposes, and the employee would still get reimbursed.
7. Attach the completed PD application and additional supporting documentation as one PDF to an email titled, “PD Application for applicant name” to Human Resources at ProfDev@msudenver.edu.
8. Human Resources will email the applicant and supervisor acknowledging receipt of the application and initial approval (final approval is contingent on receipts and supporting documentation) or denial of the request along with instructions on next steps.
9. After the PD activity is completed, employee follows instructions to submit remaining documentation to Accounts Payable for final reimbursement - this reimbursement occurs after the employee has paid up-front for the PD activity. Send the following documentation to Accounts Payable at accountspayable@msudenver.edu:
   ✓ Copy of your award email stating you were approved for reimbursement
   ✓ All receipts
   ✓ Check request form
      (https://www.msudenver.edu/controller/resources/forms/accountspayablepurchasing/)
      ➢ Put your department FOAP information on the check request form for tracking purposes, but use the PD Fund #: 100010.
   ✓ Travel Authorization (TA) form (if travel was involved)
10. After all documentation is submitted, Accounts Payable will process reimbursement from the check request form.

Category B Procedures - Departmental Reimbursement

If the department agrees to cover initial costs and/or the amount the PD Fund doesn’t cover (if the PD activity costs more than $750).

Note: It is the responsibility of the employee to make all arrangements for travel, hotel, registration, etc., to any seminar or conference. If registration must be expedited, please alert Accounts Payable at accountspayable@msudenver.edu. Departments will initially expend funds from their departmental accounts for employee travel, hotel, registrations, etc. Once valid expenses are incurred, Accounting Services will transfer approved PD funds back to the department’s account that was originally debited.

How to Access the Professional Development Fund Application

1. Go to the Human Resources website: http://msudenver.edu/hr/.
2. Click on “Professional Development & Trainings” on the left menu.
3. Under the “Recommended Professional Development & Trainings” section, click the “Professional Development” box to expand that section.
4. Click on “Professional Development Fund Application.”
5. Complete the application.
6. Send to supervisor to sign.
i. Include all 4 components of the FOAP, which is required for “category B” PD. This FOAP must be the FOAP you will use for the conference/seminar expenses.

7. Attach the completed PD application and additional supporting documentation as one PDF to an email titled, “PD Application for applicant name” to Human Resources at ProfDev@msudenver.edu.

8. Human Resources will email the applicant and supervisor acknowledging receipt of the application and initial approval (final approval is contingent on receipts and supporting documentation) or denial of the request along with instructions on next steps.

9. After the PD activity is completed, employee follows instructions to submit all remaining documentation to Accounts Payable for final reimbursement - this reimbursement occurs after the department has paid up-front (via P-card) for the PD activity. Send the following documentation to Accounts Payable at accountspayable@msudenver.edu:
   ✓ Copy of your award email stating you were approved for reimbursement
   ✓ All receipts
   ✓ Travel Authorization (TA) form (if travel was involved)

10. After all documentation is submitted, Accounts Payable will process reimbursement in the form of an expense transfer.

11. Note: when you reallocate this P-card expense, keep the department Fund, Organization, and Program codes the same, but change the Account code appropriately (i.e. 6629 for conference registration fees).

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For Category B Out-of-State Events or In-State Over-Night Events

Prior to travel, the employee completes the “pre-travel estimates” of the Travel Authorization (TA) Form with appropriate signatures and submits to Accounts Payable. After travel, the employee completes the “actual expenses” segments with appropriate signatures and submits to Accounts Payable. The TA form is located on the Accounting Services website.

How to Access the TA form:

1. Go to the Accounting Services website: http://www.msudenver.edu/controller/
2. Click on “Resources” on the left hand side of the page
3. Click on “Travel”
4. Click on “Travel Authorization Form”
5. Do a “Save As” and save the TA form to your computer
6. Type in the appropriate blanks on the TA form
   a. Type your department’s FOAP in the upper right corner
   b. Type the words “Professional Development” in the upper left corner
   c. Fill in the “estimate” section
7. Print a hard copy of this form once completed
8. Obtain your Supervisor’s signature (and Account Custodian’s, if other than the Supervisor) in the Pre-Travel Approvals box (lower left corner of the TA form)
9. Make a copy of this estimated form for your records
10. **Send** the “estimated TA” to Accounts Payable at accountspayable@msudenver.edu
11. Within 30 days of the conclusion of the seminar/conference, you must send the "finalized TA" (using the copy of the original estimated TA) and all receipts to Accounts Payable at accountspayable@msudenver.edu. Include:
   a. Post-travel TA form completed with actual expense updates and signatures
   b. All receipts
   c. Professional development application
   d. Email stating the PD funds were approved

12. **Note:** Submit all paperwork as soon as possible. No PD reimbursements/transfers will be processed after 30 days from the end of the seminar/conference.