


MEMORANDUM

TO: Academic Deans, Department Chairs, Vice Provosts, and College/Support Division Financial Leads

FROM: Heather Shipley, Ph.D.
Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs 

Brian McNamara
Assistant Vice President for Academic Resource Management

SUBJECT: 2025 UTSA's National Impact Travel Awards

DATE: August 26, 2024

Objective

Academic Affairs is committed to continuing its partnerships with colleges and support divisions through the [UTSA National Impact Travel Awards \(NITA\)](#) program. This program's objectives remain steadfast in 1) supporting professional development for our talented faculty and staff, and 2) supporting faculty travel that showcases UTSA's contributions to scholarly knowledge and brings visibility to the university. One significant change to the NITA Program for FY25, based on feedback from faculty and staff, is that **funding awards will be requested and approved pre-travel authorization** in FY25 as opposed to post-travel. Please refer to the Request and Review Processes below for more detail.

It is important to remember that this program is designed to be an incentive for faculty and staff to participate in best practices presentations in their fields; this program should not be used as a budget supplement mechanism. Awards will be granted on a first-come, first-serve basis until available funds are exhausted.

Acceptable Travel Award Requests

Full-time Faculty (Tenured/Tenure-Track and Fixed-Term Track):

- Must be 1) presenting at a major national or international conference (pending acceptance at time of request is not permitted), or 2) attending a leading conference in one's field to directly improve teaching methods and the impact on students.

Full-time Staff:

- Must be presenting at a national meeting or conference. Presentations should reflect empirical results stemming from evaluations or implementations of UTSA programs that have advanced the mission or have led to the creation of valuable best practices. Pending acceptance at time of request is not permitted.

Important Programmatic Travel Elements to Consider

- Attendance should be targeted to conferences in one's field that are accepted as prominent by peers. Attendance at government agency sponsored events can be permitted.
- Not eligible for program funding:

- Roles such as moderators, session chairs, grant reviewers, lecture series attendance, or specially-called meeting/interest group attendance.
- Invited presentations to other universities, job talks, community organizations, museums, or a similar institution.
- State and local meetings, conferences, etc. (unless national organization conferences or meetings are hosted locally).
- Virtual meeting attendance.
- For staff, presenting best practices at a conference qualifies for funding support, although conference attendance only does not.

Programmatic Criteria

- Travel expenses such as airfare, lodging, registration, meals, and mileage are acceptable.
- Fixed-Term Faculty could receive up to a **\$2,000** maximum award with no funding match requirement.
- Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty could receive up to a **\$2,000** maximum award with a 2:1 match requirement (i.e. \$1,000 from unit).
- Staff could receive up to a **\$1,500** maximum award with a 2:1 match requirement (i.e. \$750 from unit).
- Only one award for one trip per FY is permitted. Multiple requests to reach the maximum award will not be permitted.

Request Process

- Traveling faculty and staff will need to request awards directly through this Academic Affairs Smartsheet link – [FY25 NITA Award Application](#). Requests should be submitted directly by the traveler – no proxy submissions.
- Travel must not begin before September 1, 2024, and must be completed by August 31, 2025.
- Requests should be submitted by the 1st of every month via the Smartsheet link above. Requests may be submitted early, well in advance of a trip, for early review.
- Requests should be for upcoming travel and not for travel that has already occurred. Requests for trips that have already occurred will not be reviewed.

Review and Award Process

- AA will review award requests monthly. The requestor and their BSC Unit or Financial Lead will be notified of an approval or denial by the seventh business day of the month.
- Awards will be given prior to the trip, not retroactively.
- All participating academic units should have their own internal review process for deciding which faculty and staff should submit for an award request.

cc: JoAnn Browning, Interim Vice President, The Office of Research