

Policy and Guidelines
for use of Full Time Faculty Professional Development Funds
Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources

Purpose: To clarify allowable uses for full-time faculty professional develop funds.

Background: The intent of the Professional Development fund is described in section 21.1 of the [Full-time Faculty Collective Bargaining Agreement \(CBA\)](#), which states in full that “Faculty members may be permitted sufficient time away from their regular assignments to attend professional meetings or conferences or to otherwise further their research or professional interests through short-term periods of travel upon approval by the Department Chair.”

Section 21.2 further states in part that “Each department shall have a professional development fund to support faculty travel for professional development or for use in other professional development activities.” This section further identifies a specific amount of funding that is available to a faculty member in each year of the contract and indicates that the department (RSENr) may have additional guidelines.

RSENr Guidelines: The guidance provided in the CBA focuses on the use of professional development funds for professional travel but does not explicitly define “other professional activities.” For the purposes of this policy, the RSENr employs the following interpretation of allowable uses:

- Conference/Workshop: registration, travel, and associated costs
- Page charges: for journal articles
- Memberships: in relevant professional organizations
- Professional Resources: e.g., to purchase of professional books
- Software: e.g., specialized software *not covered* by a similar product supported by UVM
- Other: may be justified on a case-by-case basis

There are some restrictions on the use of professional development funds, including:

- Expenditures must follow established University policies and procedures. (Section 21.3).
- In no instance may professional development funds be used for salaries. (Section 21.7)

Faculty should also note the following:

- Requests to use professional development funds should clearly explain how the use of these funds will benefit the individual faculty member’s *personal*, professional development. Requests that benefit other people or organizations will not be accepted.
- The pool of funding available for PD funds replenishes annually but does not carry over; i.e., the funds do not accumulate. However, if unused funds still exist after May 1 each

year, faculty may request additional funds over the standard annual limit, as long as the request is allowable and can be expended or encumbered before 30 June. (Section 21.5)

- If you have externally sponsored awards that could cover a particular professional development expense (e.g., a meeting registration), you are expected to use those funds first before asking for CBA-defined professional development funds. (Section 21.6)
- As part of the annual performance review, faculty shall incorporate into their activity report a description of the activities, accomplishments and outcomes resulting from the use of professional development funds. (Section 21.8)
- The Dean may, at their sole discretion, use other sources of funding – if available and appropriate – to support professional development interests. (Section 21.3)

Process: To request funds from the CBA-defined professional development pool, complete the *****NEW*** on-line**, [Full-Time Faculty Professional Development Funds request form](#) and submit this by email to the Associate Dean for Research and Faculty Development.

Note that there is a separate fund to support *Part Time Faculty* professional development and [a separate process to request that support](#).

Non-standard requests for professional development support should be submitted directly to the Dean.

Last revised: 01/24/2023