



Funding Your Way to a Conference



Need funding to attend a conference?

Use this guide to help you create a budget, find funding support, and save on your own. There are many options to look for funding, and we encourage you to be creative, flexible, and resourceful. Don't be afraid to ask your professors, chapter advisors, or mentors for help!

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If you have any questions/suggestions/additional resources, please contact us at members@sacnas.org

Quick Tips

- » For best rates, register for the conference and book travel as early as you can!
- » Do your research about the conference and all associated costs!
- » Stay committed to your desire to attend the conference!
- » Be flexible! Understand that all the costs may not be covered in full by the sources you're requesting funding from.
- » Make an outline of your request and practice presenting it out loud. You may be asked to prepare a formal proposal for your request.

Estimating Costs

There are 5 main areas to consider when creating your budget:



Airfare

Keep in mind, costs will vary depending on departure city and day of travel.



Lodging

Consider cutting down on this cost by finding a roommate for your stay.



Registration

Check the conference website for any special rates or discounts! (visit sacnas.org/conference for current pricing)



Ground transportation

Look into ridesharing or public transportation.



Meals

Although some meals might be provided at the conference, you will still be responsible for some meals and snacks.



Creating Your Budget

When creating a budget for yourself and/or to include in a request for support, consider the following tips from SACNAS members and advisors:

- » Do the work to determine the cost of the specific areas you need funding for, so that when you are requesting financial support you have a concrete amount of how much you will need.
- » You can **ask for a range of amounts** in your request – let the source you are requesting funds from know if you anticipate any fluctuation.
- » **Create a document** to explicitly detail the categories and costs you are requesting (make a table that lists each category you're budgeting for and the specific costs per category, including any specific notes).
- » Creating a document and table lets those you are requesting funding from know that you have taken the time and understand the costs involved in getting you to the conference.
- » **Consider cushioning your budget by** ~\$100 in case there are any “surprise” expenses (i.e., you need to purchase toiletries when you get to the conference, food options are pricier than anticipated, etc.)
- » Put your name next to costs in the table you're willing to fund on your own – this **shows your commitment and willingness to invest** in yourself.

Preparing a Written Proposal

When preparing a written proposal to request support, consider the following:

- » Do your **research** – provide background about the conference you wish to attend.
- » Has your institution been involved with this conference before? If so, what has their involvement been like?
- » What is the conference agenda going to look like? What sessions do you wish to attend? **Be specific about how the conference will help you achieve your goals, and how this learning will benefit your institution.**
- » What are you hoping to gain from these sessions? Share the professional development, networking, etc. you wish to experience at the conference.
- » Be **transparent** in your needs.
- » **Include if you will be presenting your own research.** Detail if you have already applied for other scholarships or funding opportunities, and what your funding status is.
- » Consider **requesting a letter of support from your PI or mentor.**
- » Have someone **proofread!**
- » Be **flexible** – understand that your entire trip may not be fully funded.

Download a template Letter of Funding Support [here](#) (scroll down to the Preparing a Written Proposal section.)

Making The Ask

Your Department

- » Does your institution or department have funds allocated for students to travel and attend conferences? Is there funding for students who will be presenting research at a conference?
- » Does your institution have any specific associations that can help with funding?
- » Some institutions have associations that can help fund students' conference travel.
- » See if your institution has services for transfer/re-entry students.
- » Check if your institution has any university clubs or ethnic resource centers that may have funding.
- » Reach out to other students who may have secured funding for their conference expenses.
- » Look into any other scholarships your institution may offer!

Your Advisor, Mentor, or PI

Seek out mentors, advisors, or PIs who have supported you throughout your academic career. They may know or be connected to faculty or other resources that can support and encourage students' attendance at conferences.

Crowdfunding & Online Fundraisers

Whether or not you're successful in getting funding support from your institution or employer, you may want to consider additional methods to ensure you can cover all costs related to the conference. When creating a GoFundMe (or other crowdfunding tool), consider the following tips from SACNAS members:

- » Be **transparent** in your campaign about what the funds will be used for.
- » Get potential donors excited about your interests! **Share a picture** of you presenting research, working in a lab, etc.
- » Explain how you will be **personally impacted** by attending the conference.
- » Consider sharing how others have benefited from attending the conference or how the conference has helped them achieve their goals.
- » Ask family members or friends to consider donating.
- » **Share on social media** – the sooner the better! (For SACNAS conferences, be sure to tag @sacnas and use the appropriate conference hashtag.)



Fundraising as a Group

If you are part of a SACNAS chapter, ERG, or other group, consider pooling your resources together to fundraise via an online fundraiser or in-person events. SACNAS chapter members shared these tips for fundraising:

- » If you are part of a club or chapter, consider creating a fundraiser at local establishments, via bake sales, events at your institution, etc.
- » Create flyers and advertise your fundraising event!
- » Use the conference hashtag to amplify your campaign on social media.

Looking for your SACNAS chapter?
Use the [**Chapter Directory**](#) to connect.

Final Tips from SACNAS Members

- » Stay committed to your fundraising goals.
- » Get people excited to support you!
- » Show that you've been working toward research. You may even consider presenting your research to those you're seeking funding from, or share a picture of you presenting your research.
- » You got this! Share your success stories or additional tips with us by tagging @sacnas on social media or emailing members@sacnas.org

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