
SLHRD Research Incentive Program – Dissertation Support Award

The intent of the Dissertation Support Award is to help doctoral students gain access to data samples, equipment, and analytic resources that will assist them in carrying out high quality dissertation research projects. Please consider the list of acceptable and unacceptable uses of the Dissertation Support Award.

Eligibility & Requirements

- Actively enrolled LHRD Doctoral graduate students who have successfully proposed their dissertation projects are eligible to apply for the dissertation support award.
- Students who have defended their dissertations but who have not yet graduated are eligible to apply for the award. (All purchases must be pre-authorized.)
- Students may submit more than one award application but can only receive one Dissertation Support Award.
- The student’s Dissertation chair must support the request for funding for it to be considered for approval.
- Students must submit a budget detailing how the funds will be used.
- Students who benefit from the award will be required to send a thank-you note to the donor-contributor who subsidized funding for the award (more information provided upon receipt of the award).

Award Disbursement Options

Award recipients shall choose one of the following methods for the disbursement and utilization of their award funds. In all cases, any funds not expended in accordance with the approved budget shall **not** be retained by the student. For cash payouts, any unused funds **must** be returned to the School.

1. Vendor-Purchase Method

Recipients opting for this method will use LSU-approved vendors to make purchases and fund research project activities. The student is required to coordinate all transactions with the SLHRD Finance Manager to ensure that payments and related processes adhere to institutional policies and proper financial oversight. Any funds that remain unspent after the completion of the project must be returned to the School and cannot be retained by the student.

2. Cash Payout Method

Recipients selecting the cash payout option will receive funds directly, subject to the following conditions:

- Payout Calculation: The cash payout shall be the lesser of (a) the total award amount, or (b) the sum of the approved itemized budget submitted by the student.
- Budget Requirement: The student must provide a detailed, itemized budget outlining the intended use of the funds.
- Post-Expenditure Documentation: Upon exhausting the awarded funds, the student must submit proof of proper fund utilization to the School in accordance with established procedures.
- Unused Funds: Any funds that remain unspent must be returned to the School.

These options are designed to provide flexibility in the management and use of award funds while ensuring accountability and adherence to LSU policies.

Award Utilization

Please consider the list of acceptable and unacceptable uses of the Dissertation Support Award.

Acceptable Uses (not exhaustive):

- Participant incentives
- Marketplace sample access (e.g., Prolific, MTurk)
- Purchase of secondary data sources (e.g., American Hospitals Association data)
- Analytic software licenses/subscriptions
- Travel support to access specialized libraries for archival data
- Travel support to access specialized populations
- Transcription services
- Training costs associated with building specialized skills that cannot be met at LSU

Uses that will NOT be supported:

- Proof-reading services
- Consulting or statistician fees
- Laptop or computer
- Personal software licenses already available through LSU Tigerware
- Travel support for presenting research at meetings and conferences
 - *Exception:* in cases where the conference attendance itself is integral to the research project. This includes instances where attendance is necessary for engaging in networking opportunities that directly benefit the project or when specific research project activities are scheduled to occur during the conference.
- Salary or time buy-outs for conducting dissertation research

Award Levels

- **Small Nudge** (4) - <\$100
- **Hand-up** (2) – up to \$500
- **Big Lift** (1) - \$1,000

Award Criteria

- **Resource criticality.** The dissertation project cannot be achieved without funding. (e.g., Purchase of a required software that a student does not have access to is considered a critical resource need. Purchase of a home license to a software accessible on campus is NOT a critical resource need.)
- **Research rigor.** The rigor of the project would be exponentially advanced by funding. (e.g., Access to a specific sample may be achieved remotely, but the ethnographic features and qualities of the context cannot be captured without physical access.)
- **LHRD benefit.** Ideally, the financial investment should benefit the research program of both students AND faculty. (e.g., The purchased software will also benefit LHRD faculty who plan to use it as well. Or the data collected will support faculty publication in addition to the student dissertation—i.e., more than one scholarly product.)

Application Process and Dissertation Advisor Consent

Award applications will be accepted on a rolling basis starting in the Fall semester until funds for the year are depleted. Students may resubmit applications the following year so long as they are still actively enrolled as an LHRD doctoral student (post-grads cannot apply for this award).

Applications will be reviewed by the LHRD Awards and Scholarships committee. Applications can be submitted through the online portal here: https://lsu.formstack.com/forms/slhrd_dissertation_support_award.

The following materials are required for submission:

- Cover letter detailing the requested award level (Small Nudge, Hand-up, Big Lift), how the award money will be used (i.e., what equipment, resource, or service will be purchased), the timeline for dissertation project complete, and an explanation for how the award will benefit the rigor and completion of the dissertation project.
- A detailed, itemized budget outlining all anticipated research-related expenditures.
- Itemized receipts of any purchases already made towards the dissertation that a student wishes to have reimbursed through the Dissertation Support Award. (submission does not guarantee reimbursement)
- Complete, approved dissertation proposal document
- Letter of support from the student's dissertation chair that confirms:
 - what the award money will be used for in support of the dissertation project,
 - that the dissertation proposal has been successfully vetted and approved by the student's dissertation committee, and
 - acceptance of the responsibility to oversee appropriate use of award funds and ensure the student provides a thank-you note to the donor-contributor.