

Travel Bursary Policy and Procedure

Introduction

The *Future Agricultural Researchers PhD Conference* is organised by the Agricultural Universities Council UK, and sponsored by BBSRC. The AUC and BBSRC are committed to inclusivity and removing barriers for student attendance, so has provided a comprehensive travel bursary support for all eligible students. This policy sets out the reimbursement offer and procedure.

Eligibility

Students are eligible for travel support where:

- The student is currently enrolled on a PhD.
- Standard/economy travel (and recommended accommodation if required, see below) for the purposes of attending the conference are claimed.
- Only travel and accommodation are claimed for. This bursary does not include refreshments, meals or the conference ticket. Note that the student conference ticket includes all refreshments indicated in the conference details for the 14th November (and the evening meal on the 13th November, if requested).
- There are very limited or no funds available within the student's host Department or studentship grant for conference attendance. The student must indicate in advance through the booking form of their need for a bursary and detail their justification.
- The student attends the conference.

Reimbursement procedure

The students must first discuss their expenses and intention to attend the conference with their supervisors. The students submit their expenses through their own universities' internal expenses procedure, ensuring that where possible, costs are within the reimbursement limits and conditions set out in this policy. Please indicate clearly on the expense claim that it is for the 'AUC PhD Conference' to enable university finance departments to track the expenditure easily.

The universities will be reimbursed in one lump sum payment for all their students awarded bursaries. The students concerned will be detailed in advance of the conference by letter to the universities' relevant finance departments.

Recommended accommodation

If students are travelling the day before due to distance, the recommended hotel is the nearby *Travelodge Exeter M5* and can be fully reimbursed for a standard room. It is a short walk (15-18 minutes) to the conference centre. For students who have specific access requirements, there is the *Courtyard Hotel* next to the conference centre. Should this option be required, students should



speak to their supervisor who will need to contact the organisers to request that this additional cost can be met by a bursary top-up.

Information for University finance departments

The AUC organisers will confirm in writing with all universities of students attending that have applied for bursaries, detailing which student has a travel bursary, what funding is predicted (see the [Predicted payment bands](#) section), and what details to include for invoicing. The organisers will set up a PO and this should be used for invoicing, to the addressed details provided in the letter, including a covering letter listing each students' expenses (individual receipts are not required). Please indicate if the costs include public transport, mileage and/or hotel. The universities and institutions can invoice after the conference from the 14th November.

In exceptional circumstances, the universities can request additional funds (particularly for students who require complex accommodation needs or more expensive travel arrangements) that are higher than the predicted payment bands. The supervisor of the student requiring additional support should contact kate.pressland@rau.ac.uk as soon as possible, with the details of any such requests.

Predicted payment bands

Average train fare and mileage from the institutions to the venue have been calculated (see [Appendix](#)) and banded according to distance and estimated price. These bands will be used to notify the universities of the predicted bursary ahead of receiving the final expenses invoice.

Band	Mileage per student	Public transport	Hotel rate (1 night)
1	£70	£100	£50
2	£85	£200	£50
3	£100-200	£250	£50
4	N/A (other transport required)	£400 (on demand)	£100 (2 nights expected)

Policy updated 30 October 2023



Appendix

Estimated travel costs per institution*

Band	University	Distance (Approx. miles)	Train cost [‡]	Mileage 45p/mile
1	Hartpury University	133	£50-100	£59
1	University of Plymouth	45	£25	£20
1	University of West of England	83	£35-40	£37
1	Royal Agricultural University	115	£90-£100	£52
2	University of Reading	156	£100-£140	£70
2	University of Warwick	172	£160-£200	£78
1	University College London	180	£100	£81
1	City University London	185	£100	£83
2	Harper Adams University	190	£150-200	£86
2	Rothamsted Research (Herts.)	200	£155.00	£90
2	University of Hertfordshire	205	£70-£170	£92
1	University of Aberystwyth	211	£85-£100	£95
2	University of Nottingham	216	£145-£200	£98
2	Writtle University College	239	£155	£107
2	University of Manchester	240	160-200	£108
2	University of Lincoln	253	£192-£200)	£114
3	University of Leeds	278	£250-£270	£125
3	Newcastle University	386	£178- 200	£174
3	University of Edinburgh	492	£276-£300	£122
3	SRUC	495	£280-£300	£222
4	Queens University Belfast	498	N/A alternative transport needed	£224

* List identified from bookings and will be updated where new institutions are involved. Travel from institution registered address to Sandy Park Conference Centre, Exeter.

[‡] Train fare search with *Trainline.com* to Exeter, open off peak return, out 13th November.

