College of Human Sciences & Education

School of Leadership & Human Resource Development

SLHRD POLICY: FIN 5
Dissertation Support Award

Initially Issued: August 22, 2021
Revised: September 3, 2025

I: Purpose

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.

II: 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).

III: Award Disbursement

Dissertation award funds shall be expended in accordance with the budget approved at the time of application. Any modifications to the approved budget must receive prior written approval from the SLHRD Director before any related expenditures are incurred. Expenditures made outside of the approved budget without such prior authorization shall be deemed unallowable and will not be reimbursed.

Reimbursement will be issued after the student has incurred and documented the approved expenses in accordance with the following conditions:

- Vendor Registration: Upon initial approval of the award, the student must register as a vendor with the LSU Foundation in order to receive reimbursement. Click here for vendor form.

- **Eligible Expenses:** Only costs specifically listed in the original, itemized budget submitted with the award application are eligible for reimbursement.
- **Documentation Requirement:** Students must provide original receipts or other official proof of payment for each expense in order to receive reimbursement.
- **Final Submission Deadline:** The final reimbursement request, including all receipts and documentation, must be submitted no later than 10 calendar days following the completion of the funded activity.
- **Fiscal Year Requirement:** Reimbursement must be processed within the same fiscal year as the application. Expenses not submitted in time to meet this requirement will not be reimbursed.
- **Maximum Reimbursement:** The reimbursement amount shall not exceed the lesser of (a) the total award amount, or (b) the sum of the approved itemized budget.
- **Unused Funds:** Any award amount not used toward eligible expenses will not be reimbursed to the student and shall remain with the School.

IV: Award Utilization

Please consider the list of acceptable and unacceptable uses of the 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

Unacceptable
- 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*: when conference attendance is integral to the research project, including required networking or scheduled project activities
- Salary or time buy-outs for conducting dissertation research

V: Award Levels

The School offers tiered award levels designed to support projects of varying scope and need. These levels ensure that funding opportunities are accessible for small, moderate, and larger initiatives, while maintaining fairness and transparency in how resources are distributed.

Level	Number of Awards	Maximum Amount per
Small Nudge	Up to 4	Less than $100
Hand-Up	Up to 2	Up to $500
Big Lift	1	Up to $1,000

VI: Award Criteria

<u>Resource Criticality</u>
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.)

<u>Research Rigor</u>
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.)

<u>LHRD Benefit</u>
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.)

VII: Application Process and Dissertation Advisor Consent

Award applications will be accepted on a rolling basis starting on July 1 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.