Dependent Care Professional Travel Grant Program for Postdocs

Empowering scholars. Advancing careers.
Challenge
The elusive work-life balance.

Without support, postdocs with families are:

**unlikely** to attend (18%), or unsure about attending (41%);

**unable** to stay for the full activity (65%);

**struggle** to 1) focus 2) engage, and 3) minimize stress (83%)
Opportunity

A career incentive that empowers postdocs with families for minimal cost for UC San Diego with high impact potential for postdocs and the University.

UC San Diego is the only university in the nation to offer this type of travel funding to postdocs.

$20,000/year ≤$600/postdoc

UC San Diego
Postdoctoral and Visiting Scholar Affairs

UC San Diego
Office for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

POSTDOC ASSOCIATION

CSW
Market size/Reach

Total # Postdocs = 1200

- with dependent(s) = 300
- with professional development opportunity
- awarded financial assistance = 30

*based on 1-yr average

Postdocs represent >70 departments and research units at UC San Diego.

Most conferences are 2-3 days, up to one week.

Childcare in San Diego costs ~$20/hour.
Accessible Platform

A website devoted to the description of the award with an easy-to-use application interface.

**Dependent Care Professional Travel Grant**

Professional meetings, conferences, workshops and other scholarly work are critical for career advancement. Expenses for dependent care present a major challenge for postdoctoral scholars (postdocs), both male and female, as most funding agencies and training funds do not allow for such expenses. Postdoctoral scholars, in particular, are in need of these travel opportunities given their temporary position as trainees on the cusp of entering the job market (the position being the last “step” in their training). This grant program seeks to alleviate expenses of child- and adult-dependent care costs incurred by postdocs during these vital professional development travel opportunities.

This program is supported in part by an Innovation Grant from the Vice Chancellor’s Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. Alexandra Bortnick, Ph.D., former Chair of the UC San Diego Postdoctoral Association, served as Principal Investigator on this successful grant application. We would like to thank Dr. Bortnick for her continued support of her fellow scholars at UC San Diego.

The Office of Postdoctoral and Visiting Scholar Affairs, Postdoctoral Association and the Committee on the Status of Women are also sponsors of this program.
How it works

- Email Campaign
- Online Application
- Committee Review
- Pre-travel survey
- Sponsored dependent-care
- Post-travel survey

Allowing postdocs to make **consistent progress** toward career goals
Diverse Demographics

3 application periods

48 applicants; 30 awardees

>90% attending professional conferences

>86% presenting research
Successful Outcomes

$490 average per awardee =

> 92% made progress on academic work

100% expanded or maintained professional network

100% increase visibility for professional development

> 85% facilitate new or existing collaborations

> 85% developed new project ideas and received direct opportunities such as:
  • invited speaker to national meeting
  • job interview

* data collected from post-travel survey
Enthusiastic Testimonials

“This grant **boosts my confidence** that I can have a scientific career that won’t come at the expense of my baby’s needs.”

“This grant **encourages me** to continue along the trajectory of becoming a professor.”

“I am a single mother… it is hard for me to express how **much easier financially, mentally, and organizationally** this conference will be.”

“I feel **hopeful about UCSD** as a place that **supports its community members** who have family responsibilities.”

“This family-friendly grant **enabled me** to avoid making a choice between my daughter and my career.”
Future Steps
Assess the long-term impacts of this grant on postdoc career decisions and transition times.

Establish long-term institutional support

Increase award amount appropriate to travel needs
Project Team

Alexandra Bortnick, Postdoctoral Scholar

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Jennifer Oh, Director Academic Research Scholar Affairs

Mark Lawson, Professor and Faculty Director
Thank you and Q&A

Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
Becky Petitt
Frank Silva

Chancellor’s Advisory Committee for the Status of Women
Christine Williams, Chair of Family-Friendly Policies Working Group

“I am sincerely grateful for this grant and hope that this award program will continue to support postdoc scholars with families.”