

Department of Epidemiology Block Grant Funding

APPLICATION DUE DATES: OCTOBER 15, DECEMBER 1, FEBRUARY 15, APRIL 15

The Department of Epidemiology has a limited allocation of funds, from the Rackham School of Graduate Studies that are available to assist our graduate students in their research and travel expenses this year. The distribution of the funds will be determined by the Doctoral Program Committee.

A. The Rackham Block Grant Funds can be used for the following:

1. Research project costs; these costs may include, but are not limited to, costs for traveling to and from a research site, recruitment costs, laboratory processing costs etc.
2. Travel to a conference; in this case priority will be given to persons who are presenting at meetings. Students may also be funded to attend meetings where they are not presenting if the student adequately justifies how attendance at this meeting is integral to the completion of their research; however meetings where students are not presenting will be given lower priority for funding.
3. Although with a lower priority than items 1 and 2 above, non-credit educational workshops that are critical to a students' research agenda will also be considered for funding.

B. The Rackham Block Grant Funds may not be used for the following:

1. Costs related to daily living expenses, e.g., students' rent, food, or regular UM tuition except under extraordinary circumstances.
2. Research costs that pertain to activities a doctoral student can reasonably be expected to do her/himself; e.g., costs of hiring others to do data analysis.
3. Costs that are meant to reimburse students for activities that have already passed; i.e., to reimburse for meetings that a student has already attended or for research activities that have already happened.
4. Costs for which other, well established, and readily available funds are available; for example, no travel grants to conferences will be awarded unless Rackham Conference Travel Grant and Epidemiology Departmental Travel funds that are explicitly allocated for travel to meetings have already been accessed.

C. The following guidelines will be used when allocating Block Grant Funds:

1. Priority will be given to costs that are directly and clearly related to a students' research, particularly when this research is distinct from a supervisor's project and for which there exist no other clear sources of funding.
2. Applications will be more favorably reviewed when students have already accessed other sources of funds to help offset some of the overall costs of the particular endeavor; for example it will be advantageous for students to offset meeting travel using other sources (see B4 Above), for students to show some commitment from their supervisor for part of their requested research funds, or for students to demonstrate that they have sought outside funding to

- supplement requested research funds (such as the Rackham Research Funds, International Research Award, or NIH extramural funding).
3. Applications that are submitted in a timely fashion that demonstrably allows a student to plan ahead for both research implementation and meeting attendance; for example, very low priority will be given to applications for costs relevant to meetings that are taking place within a few short weeks.
 4. Applications that pertain to dissertation research will only be funded after the research plan has been approved by the students' doctoral committee during a formal prospectus defense. Applications submitted before a prospectus defense may be approved contingent on pending prospectus defense. Formative work that can assist a student in planning/developing her/his research proposal will be funded only if it is adequately justified and if the student makes a strong case that there is reasonable chance that the proposed work will move forward toward a successful prospectus defense in future.

The above are meant as guidelines. The Doctoral Committee reserves the right to use their discretion to award funds for compelling, meritorious causes. Overall, decisions regarding funding will be based on quality of the work proposed and how this will help the student achieve her/his training and/or research objectives.

To apply for this funding you should prepare an application addressed to the Chair of Doctoral Program Committee. Your application should clearly include the following:

1. A letter justifying why this proposal should be funded with explicit reference to the points above.
2. A budget that shows total costs for the activity in question including a full budget justifying these costs.
3. Demonstration of application to other sources of funds and the outcomes of these applications.
4. Clear budgeting of the exact amount requested from the Rackham Block Grant.
5. An unofficial transcript printed from wolverine access (be sure to put your name on this transcript as they are not included on the printout).
6. Evidence of completion of prospectus defense, if relevant (see C4 above).