

At the May 9 2023 UMCES Administrative Council (AC) a plan was approved to include support for the professional development of FRAs as part of a broader effort to improve the FRA work experience. Each UMCES unit was asked to establish a fund to support professional development of FRAs in non-degree programs (e.g., training workshops, certificates etc.) to increase their skill sets and benefit their careers, enhancing their ability to contribute to the UMCES mission. However, AL is also committed to the professional development of its students and postdocs and so proposes to implement this plan for all AL FRAs, students, and postdocs (i.e. soft money employees).

Fund details (as approved by the AC):

1. The fund should provide an annual amount that can be rolled over until it reaches a cap at which point no further funds would be added. At AL, this amount is set at \$250 annually with a cap of \$1,000.
2. The addition of funds is dependent upon funding availability and will be assessed at the start of each fiscal year.
3. The fund is for the benefit of the employee and not to be used to support travel or training that should be in the budget of a specific research project¹. For example, if a new project requires an employee to be trained on a specific instrument, those funds should be included in the project budget.
4. Each employee requesting to access funds should submit a brief description of the program and its benefits to their supervisor.
5. Following supervisor approval the employee should submit the same details to the unit Director. Final approval of the expenditure rests with the unit Director.
6. Certificates of completion (if available) are required and will be included in the employee's professional file.

¹Some examples of eligible activities include: trainings on networking, strengths, time management, managing up/down, conflict management, facilitation, anti-bias, mentorship, public speaking and communication, time management, applying for external funding. Some examples of non-eligible activities include: membership in professional societies, research expenses, and field work expenses.