



# Professional Development Procedures For The Public Health Laboratory Fellowship Program

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## Introduction to the Professional Development Request and Disbursement Process

Fellows are allocated professional development funds to embark on approved professional development opportunities. These allocated funds are meant to defray expenses associated with approved professional development opportunities and may not necessarily cover the entire cost of the expense(s).

Approved professional development opportunities/purchases are intended to support the fellow's growth while in the program by enhancing their knowledge and skillset to assist them with their fellowship project(s).

Fellows must obtain approval from their mentor(s) before embarking on professional development opportunities that require travel.

- This is especially important because travel (such as seminars/conferences, training, fieldwork, etc.) would temporarily pull fellows away from their fellowship projects.

Further, fellows will need to receive preapproval from the APHL Fellowship Team **before embarking on any professional development opportunity or making any related purchases**. This is the **FIRST** step in the APHL process.

- If appropriate, requests will be approved if the fellow has funds left. **\*\*\*Please note** although the request may be approved, fellows may not receive disbursement of funding for all expenses **IF** there are any pending requests or additional requests being fulfilled causing the remaining balance to drop or be depleted. Further, the request may be approved even if the fellow does not have enough funds to cover the listed total cost; the fellowship team will notify fellows of the remaining balance if fellows do not have enough funds remaining to cover the listed total cost.

**\*\*\*Please note:** If fellows have approval to embark on an opportunity, then the opportunity must take place prior to the fellowship end date (examples include conferences and online courses). If the opportunity is for an immediate purchase (books, subscriptions, membership fees, etc.) fellows need to have the request submitted, approved, and have completed the 'Highlight Your Experience' form prior to the fellowship end date.

New requests for subscriptions, memberships and exam preparation materials submitted within the last 90 calendar days of the fellowship, and all new requests submitted within the last 30 calendar days, will not be approved except on a case-by-case basis as this time frame hinders the fellow's ability to maximize the use of resources during their fellowship.

If the professional development opportunity is approved, the fellow will receive disbursement of funds in their stipend payment to pay for all associated expenses, except airfare (see airfare section below), and then submit a 'Highlight Your Experience' form.

- If a request is submitted, approved and flight is booked (if applicable) **by the 15th of the month**, the requested funds will be disbursed in the same month's stipend payment.
- If submitted, approved and flight is booked (if applicable) **after the 15th**, then the requested funds will be disbursed in the following month's stipend payment.
- Fellows are **REQUIRED** to complete a 'Highlight Your Experience' form to avoid any future request delays or withheld stipends. Failure to complete the experience form would signify the fellow did not embark on the opportunity and thus the amount of disbursed funds would be withheld from a future stipend payment.

If the approved professional development opportunity involves travel, and a fellow extends travel for personal reasons, the personal portions of the trip will **not** be included in the disbursement of funds (e.g., extended hotel stay and additional per diem).

## Examples of Approved Professional Development Requests

If fellows are interested in embarking on a professional development opportunity, and are wondering if the opportunity will qualify for reimbursement, please review the list of approved opportunities

below:

- Attend conferences/meetings/trainings in the United States – includes travel and registration
- Books and aids (textbooks, reference materials, online courses, exam preparation materials)
- Dues and membership fees for a professional organization
- Obtain a certificate in a public health related subject
- Obtain licensure related to the public health laboratory profession
- Seminar or Webinar fees
- Subscriptions (Data Camp, LinkedIn Premium, Coursera Plus, scholarly journals, or similar)

**\*\*\*Please note that professional development requests must be specific to the fellow's project and/or would be beneficial to the fellow's professional and personal growth while they are in the fellowship program.** Although some requests are indeed professional development related, APHL can only approve requests for fellows that fit these parameters. In addition, some funding items (such as laboratory project related instruments and testing supplies) may be more applicable to the APHL Fellowship Project Supply Fund pursued by mentors.

- Although fellows can be approved for a disbursement of funding for exam preparation materials, APHL cannot approve a disbursement of funding for the actual exam fees (MCAT, GRE, etc.).

If fellows have any questions about whether an opportunity is appropriate to use their professional development funds for, please contact [fellowships@aphl.org](mailto:fellowships@aphl.org).

## Submitting a Preapproval Request

**Before embarking on any professional development opportunity or making any related purchases, fellows need pre-approval from the APHL Fellowship Team and approval from their mentor if an opportunity involves travel.**

To do so, fellows will submit a professional development request form to briefly explain the professional development opportunity they are interested in. Fellows will also attach proof of mentor approval for any travel related opportunity they are interested in.

### Some key points about the request form:

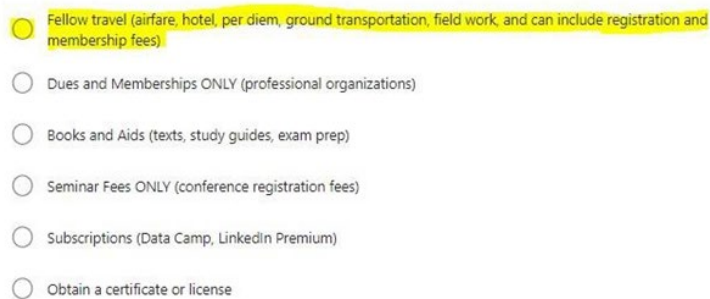
- For **Professional Development Type**, please only select '**Seminar Fees**' (as shown below) if you are **only** seeking funding for the seminar/conference/training/workshop registration cost and nothing further.

- Fellow travel (airfare, hotel, per diem, ground transportation, field work, and can include registration and membership fees)
- Dues and Memberships ONLY (professional organizations)
- Books and Aids (textbooks, exam preparation materials, poster printing, or similar)
- Seminar/Webinar/Online Course Fees ONLY (virtual conference/seminar registration fees)
- Subscriptions (Data Camp, LinkedIn Premium, Coursera Plus, scholarly journals, or similar)
- Obtain a certificate or license related to the public health laboratory profession

A helpful tip for Seminar Fees: when registering for a seminar or conference, please make sure to **always register at the student price** whenever this pricing option is available. Since the fellowship is considered an educational experience, fellows can register at the student price. To retrieve proof of being in an educational program, answer 'Yes' to the question 'If planning to register for a

Conference/Webinar/Seminar' on the request form or reach out to fellowships@aphl.org and we can provide the necessary documentation.

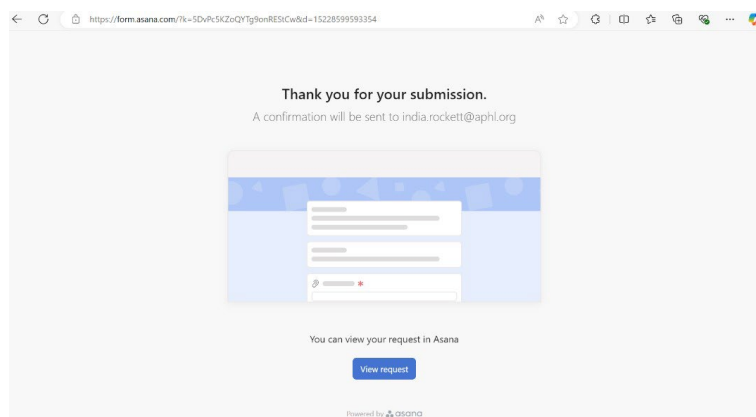
- If fellows are traveling to attend a seminar/conference/training/workshop and the registration fee is **one of many expenses** associated with the opportunity (registration fee, hotel, baggage fee, ground transportation, etc.), then please select **'Fellow Travel'** for **Professional Development Type** (as shown below).

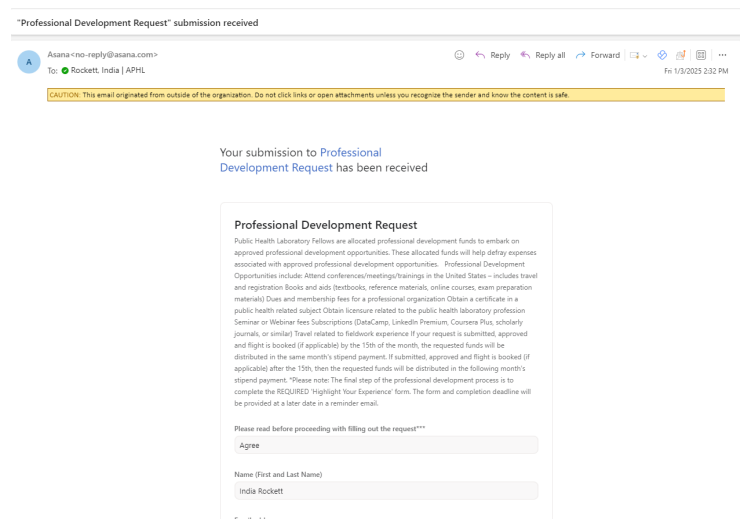


The image shows a list of radio button options for 'Professional Development Type'. The first option, 'Fellow travel (airfare, hotel, per diem, ground transportation, field work, and can include registration and membership fees)', is selected and highlighted in yellow. The other options are: 'Dues and Memberships ONLY (professional organizations)', 'Books and Aids (texts, study guides, exam prep)', 'Seminar Fees ONLY (conference registration fees)', 'Subscriptions (Data Camp, LinkedIn Premium)', and 'Obtain a certificate or license'.

After submitting a request, the submitting fellow will receive a submission summary email, indicating their submission was received. The summary email will come from no-reply@asana.com with the subject line: **'Professional Development Request submission received.'**

**A copy of the submission summary email is shown below**

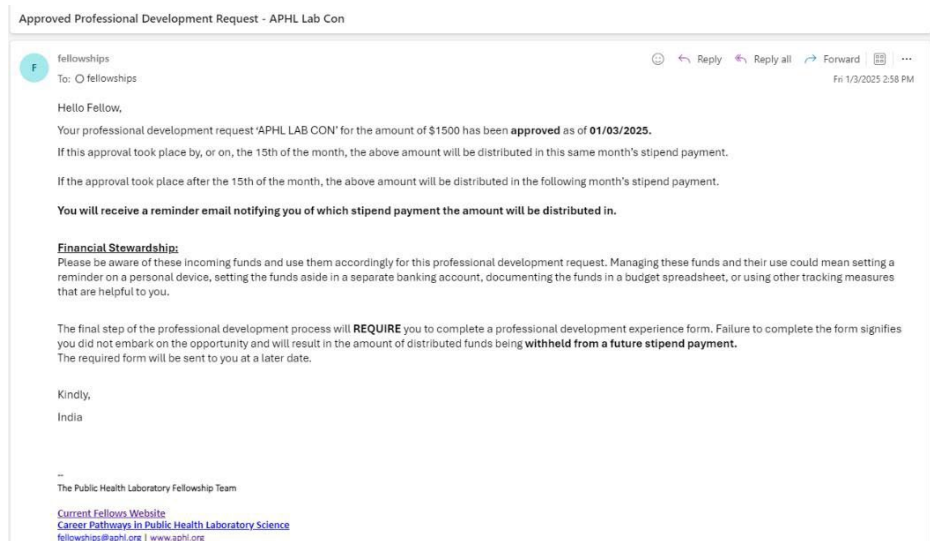




## Receiving Preapproval From APHL

The submitted request will be reviewed by the APHL Fellowship Team. If approved, the submitting fellow will receive an approval email from **fellowships@aphl.org** with the subject line '**Approved Professional Development Request - [Title of Event].**' The approval email will be specific to the submitting fellow.

### A copy of the approval email is shown below



To summarize, fellows should be receiving two email notifications during the professional development request process, **A.)** submission summary email and **B.)** an approval email, if approved.

**\*\*\*Please note:** professional development requests will only be approved if the fellow is in good standing within the program and has completed all program requirements to date. If the fellow is not in good standing, their request will be denied, and the fellow will be notified of the corrective action(s) needed.

## Embarking on the Opportunity

Once fellows have received approval, they will embark on the opportunity and/or purchase the item(s) outlined in the request form. If the opportunity involves travel via plane, the fellow will wait for approval and then book their flight through the APHL Travel Site as described below in section **5C** 'Airfare.'

The following sub sections contain essential information pertaining to opportunities involving travel.

### 5A. Lodging Information

If fellows are approved to travel for a conference/meeting/training/etc., they should review the lodging per diem rates for the city they are traveling to via this link. Fellows are expected to find economical accommodations, and the lodging per diem rate should be used as a guide in determining a reasonable lodging rate.

If accommodations exceed the nightly lodging per diem rate, please email **fellowships@aphl.org** prior to booking to explain the necessity of accommodation with an exceeded rate.

- Typically, major hotel chains will honor the lodging per diem rate if fellows let them know ahead of booking that travel is for business.
- Contact conference/meeting/training/etc. organizers to inquire about a host hotel, as these prearranged hotels are typically at or below the lodging per diem rate.

Lodging expenses will be included in the request form. Fellows will need to provide a thorough breakdown of the nightly rate, taxes, etc. for the accommodation in the professional development request form.

*APHL will **NOT** approve or provide funding for lodging arranged through vacation rental companies such as Airbnb, Vrbo, or affiliated sites.*

If a fellow extends travel for personal reasons, the personal portions of the trip will **not** be included in the disbursement of funds (e.g., extended hotel stay and additional per diem).

### 5B. Ground Travel

APHL cannot approve or provide funding for fellows seeking to rent a car but will provide funding for public transportation and rideshare options such as Uber, Lyft, or taxi.

- If planning to use a ride share service like Uber, Lyft etc., in the request form, fellows will need to use the ground transportation calculator [Taxifare Finder](#) to predict the cost of each ride followed by an estimate of how many rides there will be, what the rides are for, and then the overall total of all rides. Even if a taxi is not the method of transportation, this specific calculator will need to be used as it produces a set calculation for all ground transportation.

If fellows plan to drive, instead of fly, for a long-distance opportunity, they **MUST** let the APHL Fellowship Team know as part of the professional development request form.

**\*\*\*Please note: APHL can only provide funding for mileage up to what the cost of airfare would have**

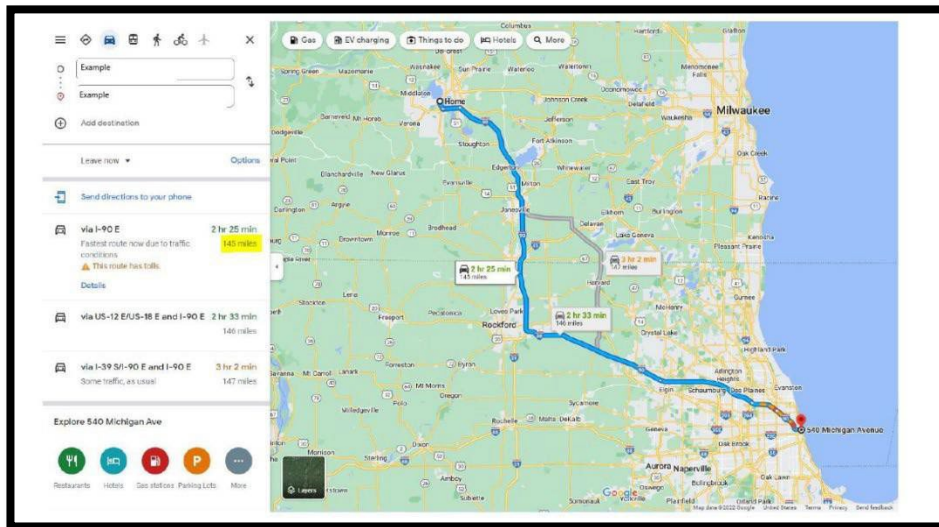
been.

- The APHL Fellowship Team will contact our travel agent to generate a cost comparison, between driving and flying, to decide the most economical method of travel.

If driving is the most economical method of travel, fellows will be able to receive funding for mileage. For mileage, fellows will need to include documentation of the miles for either a one-way or roundtrip of the distance traveled by providing a screenshot, or downloaded map of the route, as an attachment in the professional development request form.

It is **required** that total miles driven are visible as seen in the screenshot below: The fellow will calculate the mileage based on the current mileage rate to determine how much funding for mileage will be disbursed.

*\*The current mileage rate will be provided on the request form.\**



## 5C. Airfare

For professional development opportunities requiring air travel, the fellow **MUST book preapproved airfare through the APHL Travel Site.**

All fellows have access to the APHL Travel Site. Upon starting the fellowship, fellows received an email welcoming them to the travel site with instructions on how to log in to the APHL Travel Site.

Once the professional development request requiring airfare is approved, the fellow can refer to the welcome email mentioned above to log in to the APHL Travel Site. Once logged in, fellows will follow the instructions provided in the 'Approval' email to book airfare.

*\*Please read the instructions thoroughly from start to finish and submit any requested forms.\**

Fellows will refer to the following information when submitting a travel request on the APHL Travel Site. **Some information is specific to fellow funding types (WPP, Flu, AR, VBD, OAMD).**

The APHL Fellowship Team will contact fellows to relay their funding type.

- Travel Code (**same for all fellows**): 53170
- Program Number:
  - **WPP Fellows:** 250-919-25

- **Flu Fellows:** 250-410-25
  - **AR Fellows:** 250-431-25
  - **VBD Fellows:** 250-432-25
  - **OAMD Fellows:** 250-430-25
- Supervisor/APHL Contact:
    - **WPP Fellows:** FellowTravel Members
    - **Flu Fellows:** Nikki Marchan
    - **AR Fellows:** Nikki Marchan
    - **VBD Fellows:** Nikki Marchan
    - **OAMD Fellows:** Christin Hanigan
  - For **WPP Fellows:** Answer '**Yes**' to the following question: "Is the supervisor/APHL contact the same as the program number approver?"
  - For **Flu, AR, VBD, OAMD Fellows:** Answer '**No**' for the following question: "Is the supervisor/APHL contact the same as the program number approver?" Your Program Approver is **Kelly Wroblewski**

**\*\*\*Please note:**

- While fellows will not have to pay out of pocket for airfare booked through the APHL Travel Site, **the cost of the flight will be deducted from the allocated professional development funds.**
  - The APHL Travel Site is only to be used for flights for approved opportunities. If the flight fellows' book for the professional development opportunity involves personal travel, then **fellows will pay out of pocket for the personal portion.**
    - Fellows will need to notify the APHL Fellowship Team and the travel agent of their personal travel by detailing the information in the **Traveler Comments box** of the flight request. The travel agent will then work with the fellows for payment for the personal portion of the trip.

## 5D. Documentation for Disbursement

As part of the disbursement process, fellows will need to provide documentation detailing the cost of each expense.

**For non-travel opportunities include the following:**

1. A **description of the item(s) as well as a link or screenshot** showing the **exact** item and the **exact** amount it will cost.

**For travel opportunities include the following:**

1. **Event** - a link to the event including the location and dates of the event
2. **Registration cost**-provide a link showing cost of registration
3. **Hotel** - provide a link to hotel
  - Hotel nightly rates - provide a link or screenshot showing how much the nightly rate is and thus how much the total will be for the duration of the stay
  - *If fellows are planning to extend the trip for personal reasons, **the personal days should not be included in the hotel price breakdown.** Personal days will be paid by the fellow and not from the professional development funds.*

## Type of Travel

1. **If flying** - include documentation showing the cost of checked bags for departure and return. **DO NOT** include the flight cost as the flight will be booked separately.
  - o Flights **are not** arranged or booked through a third party (i.e., Expedia, Google Flights, Hopper, etc.) Fellows **MUST** use the APHL Travel Site to book a flight (further instructions are provided in an approval email).
2. **If driving** - include a Google Maps screenshot (or something similar) showing the starting point and destination coupled with the miles to be traveled.
  - o Provide a mileage calculation, which is: **round trip miles x mileage rate**. (*The current mileage rate will be provided on the request form.*)

**Ground transportation** - fellows will need to use the ground transportation calculator [Taxifare Finder](#) to predict the cost of each ride followed by an estimate of how many rides there will be, what the rides are for, and then the overall total of all rides. This specific calculator will need to be used as it produces a set calculation for transportation.

**Per Diem** - per diem for each day of the trip should be listed and should be generated from the GSA Per Diem [website](#). Travel days should be listed at 75% of the per diem rate and all other days should be listed at 100% of the per diem rate. The total per diem should also be included.

- o An allocated per diem is used for meals and incidentals.
- o The correct per diem rate is identified by the **county** in which the destination resides (*example: if traveling to Pasadena, CA the per diem rate for Los Angeles County is used because Pasadena is within Los Angeles County*).

## Sharing costs

1. If fellows plan to attend an event with another fellow, please be sure to provide a breakdown of the type of expense(s), the total cost of the expense(s), and the amount that is being split between fellows.

**\*Reminder:** If a request is submitted, approved and flight is booked (if applicable) **by the 15th** of the month, the requested funds will be disbursed in the **same month's stipend payment**. If submitted, approved and flight is booked (if applicable) **after the 15th**, then the requested funds will be disbursed in the **following month's stipend payment**.

- o If a fellow has already received the funds but needs to cancel a request due to last-minute changes (sudden illness, etc.) then they still need to notify the APHL Fellowship Team prior to the opportunity taking place/incurred expenses so APHL can take applicable action. The amount of disbursed funds will determine the next steps.

## Completing a Post-Experience Form

Following the disbursement of funds and/or the event, fellows **MUST** complete the required 'Highlight Your Experience' form to confirm they embarked on the approved opportunity.

**\*\*\*Please note:** It is **REQUIRED** fellows complete the 'Highlight Your Experience' form otherwise the amount of disbursed funds **will be withheld from a future stipend payment** as failure to complete the form signifies the fellow did not embark on the opportunity. Please set a reminder to not forget to complete this required form.

The 'Highlight Your Experience' form will be provided to fellows when applicable during the professional development process. Completing this form is the final step of the professional development process.

## APHL Fellowship Contact Information

Please contact [fellowships@aphl.org](mailto:fellowships@aphl.org) if you have any questions.



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*An APHL-CDC Initiative*