



Staff Professional Development Grants FY26

Spring Application Cycle: January 1, 2026-June 30, 2026

The UNC School of Medicine Staff Professional Development Grant is being offered to invest in the professional development of the school's talented and dedicated staff. We strongly encourage staff to apply, and requests will be reviewed by committee. Those approved will receive grant award letters for the specified program and further reimbursement details.

Who is eligible: Teammates must have 12 months of service with the School of Medicine as a regular/permanent SOM employee at time of application. Temporary employees (including Postdocs, student SHRA categories) and employees classified as faculty are not eligible for these grant funds.

One grant award per fiscal year (Fall 2025 or Spring 2026). Exception in FY26: Tuition reimbursement/continuous degree programs may be funded in both cycles after any available tuition waivers are applied. Awards within a given fiscal year are not guaranteed.

What the grant covers: **The grant covers professional education and training that can make an immediate impact on an employee's current role:**

Professional education/training including credit and non-credit courses, conferences, certificate programs or similar instructional opportunities. Specifically, the grant is designed for expenses incurred (including registration, materials, travel) that an employee's department or other sources cannot cover. Memberships are only covered when the total cost of participation in a program is less than the cost without membership.

Your supervisor may be a good resource to help determine programs that best fit your current development goals.

Requests received by the Committee may be accepted and funded, accepted and partially funded, or denied if not eligible or grant funds have been depleted for that cycle.

Tuition reimbursement considerations: Courses for academic credit not covered through the University's tuition waiver benefit or current department commitments are eligible if:

- You are currently enrolled or plan to enroll in a degree program or academic (for-credit) course provided by an accredited community college, college, or university for Spring term, or a Summer term that is completed by June 30, 2026.
- You meet the eligibility requirements to receive reimbursement for the semester as outlined in the [UNC Educational Assistance Program](#), as reimbursement will need to be requested through that program using the chartfield code we will provide. The Education Assistance Program requires that the timing of the reimbursement be processed after successful completion of the course.
- Other scholarships or awards must be applied first; gap may be filled using grant funds.
- Book expenses may be reimbursed for books noted on the class syllabus.
- The grant may not cover all tuition expenses or costs, especially for programs outside of the UNC System or not eligible for tuition waiver benefits. Please keep this in mind when planning the total cost of your degree program.

Other funding: If you receive funding through your department, through another grant program or scholarships (such as the University Employee Forum professional development grant or the NRP Professional Development Award), you must deduct that amount and note in your application.

Application Criteria

- You must meet the employment eligibility requirements outlined.
- Application must be complete and received by the deadline noted below.
- Funding must be for individual benefit and meet a professional development purpose.
- The application must include details about the program, a **detailed** budget of expenses, and an answer to the following essay question: How does this opportunity relate to your current position, AND, how will this opportunity advance your professional goals? (Maximum 400 words)

Program Priorities

Demand for grant funds exceeds available funds. Funding priorities:

- Tuition reimbursement for degree programs, certification and development courses are prioritized.
- For conference travel requests, preference is given to presenters who have been invited to present, and, have outlined clear objectives for attendance. Virtual options are recommended.
- International conference travel requests will not be considered.

How to Apply

- **Link to application** (https://unc.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_4PdhP9bAQNxcKq)
- Prepare your budget **before** starting your application. You may download [this optional worksheet](#) to help you compile your budget of expenses (registration fees, airfare, lodging, per diem, ground transportation, etc.) Take your time - you'll want to ensure that funds requested will cover the total cost of your program.
- Draft essay in a Word document, then paste into the application. The essay is key in the approval process – please be thoughtful in your response.
- One grant award per fiscal year (Fall 2025 or Spring 2026). Exception in FY26: Tuition reimbursement/continuous degree programs may be funded in both cycles after any available tuition waivers are applied. Awards within a given fiscal year are not guaranteed.
- Online application submissions are required and only complete applications will be considered. If you are unable to submit through the online application, please contact marilyn_butterworth@med.unc.edu.
- Applications will be taken within the submission period (December 8, 2025 – January 6, 2026, 11:59pm) only. Applicants will be notified by January 30, 2026 on the status of their request.
- Applicants may apply for funds for professional development activities that are used by June 30, 2026. For example, apply for a Spring grant for a July 2026 conference that requires registration fees and airfare expenses in this cycle. In this example, final costs are expected to be submitted for reimbursement in July immediately following.
- Questions? Contact Martha Modlin, martha_modlin@med.unc.edu