

**Western Kentucky University  
Academic Affairs  
Professional Development Award Guidelines**

Western Kentucky University will assist eligible full-time faculty and staff in meeting their professional development expenses by administering Professional Development Awards for individual employees.

**Criteria** – Professional Development Awards are intended to recognize meritorious performance for those individuals who have distinguished themselves by providing value-added professional contributions / service to the University’s mission. Professional Development Awards are not intended to support regular employee professional development.

**Sources** –Professional Development Awards should not be made from College / Departmental current base operating funds. Instead Professional Development Awards should be made from supplemental funds that have been made available to Colleges / Departments (such as DELO distribution dollars or Professional Development funds provided by the CPE).

**Requests** – Individual Professional Development Award (PDA) indexes will be established for those individuals receiving an award of at least \$500. Requests for PDA’s should be initiated by the individual’s Department Head and approved by the corresponding Dean via an email request to the Office of the Provost. The aforementioned request should include documentation of the individual’s meritorious performance, as well as, the source and amount of the PDA being requested. If approved by the Provost, the PDA index will be requested by the Academic Resource Manager and assigned by the Accounting Manager. Upon notification of the index number being assigned, the Departmental Office Associate will then be responsible for preparing the budget transfer to place the PDA into the newly established index. These funds will be intended for the individual employee’s use and are not included on his / her W-2 as taxable income.

**Guidelines** - In utilizing the allocations provided by this fund, individual employees must adhere to Western Kentucky University’s Discretionary Spending Policy

[http://www.wku.edu/policies/finadmin\\_policies/policy31101\\_discretionary\\_spending.pdf](http://www.wku.edu/policies/finadmin_policies/policy31101_discretionary_spending.pdf).

In addition, individual employees must meet all Internal Revenue Service stipulations regarding appropriate expenses and required documentation.

All expenses must be reimbursed within the fiscal year in which they are incurred. The PDA funds may not be used to provide supplemental payments for regular, full-time employees.

**Uses** - For the purposes of this policy, professional development includes those activities that enhance an employee’s work performance, ability and/or effectiveness and contribute overall to the success of the University.

**Allowable Items** - PDA funds can be used to support several of the expenses associated with ongoing professional development activities. These include:

- Books, reprints or other professional resources that will be used in relation to University teaching, research or scholarly activities.
- Travel expenses for attendance or presentation at professional meetings that will benefit the University by upgrading or enhancing the knowledge and skills of the employee. This category also may include local expenses such as rooms and meals and registration fees associated with professional meetings.
- Rental or purchase of computer and other capital equipment, hardware, software, and peripherals.

*Any goods, books or equipment purchased with PD funds will remain the property of Western Kentucky University.*

**Non-Allowable Items** – Examples of items that would not be acceptable as PD expenditures are as follows:

- Desktop computers, printers or scanners for the home
- Internet Service Provider (ISP) fees for Internet service

**PDA Carry Forward Balances** – PDA funds will be carried forward subject to the University’s Carry Forward of Year Ends Policy.

**PDA Overages** – The Department Head or his / her delegate is responsible for confirming that there are sufficient funds to cover any PDA expenses that are claimed or incurred. If an individual has overspent his / her PDA, resulting in a deficit at year end, then the individual’s Home Department will be held responsible for covering the overage. If the Home Department is unable to cover the overage, then the financial responsibility will fall to the Dean.

With the privilege of receiving PDA’s comes the responsibility of using these funds in compliance with the spirit in which the funds were allocated. As a result, it is the individual employee’s responsibility to ensure that the PDA expenses represent legitimate costs incurred for his / her professional development. In addition, the Department Head or his / her delegate will ensure that the PDA expenses claimed are both reasonable and eligible and that they are in accordance with WKU’s Discretionary Spending policy. If the Department Head or his / her delegate has any concerns about the reasonableness of a particular incurred expense, the Department Head will request that the employee provide an accounting for the charges. PDA expenses are additionally subject to audit by the University.