

Heller School Student Enrichment Funds Guidelines for Spring 2026

The Heller School Student Enrichment Funds are fully supported by Heller alumni and friends and earmarked exclusively for student support.

Eligible Masters-level students may apply for **one-time book awards (up to \$250) and/or conference grants (up to \$700)** according to the guidelines. An eligible student may receive **each award only one time** (but may apply more than once if earlier requests are declined).

Eligible PhD students may apply for **two conference grants (up to \$700 each)** only during their time at Heller - one pre-proposal and one post-proposal approval; and eligible PhD students may be awarded **one dissertation grant (up to \$3,000)** during their career at Heller. PhD students are also eligible to apply for **one-time book awards (up to \$250)**.

All awards must be disbursed while the individual is still enrolled as a student and cannot take place after graduation date.

All applications should be submitted via the google form link included in each award/grant description below.

[Application for Book Awards](#)

[Application for Conference Grants](#)

[Application for Dissertation Grants](#)

Applications for Spring 2026 Book Awards and Dissertation Grants open on January 14, 2026.

You can apply for a Conference Grant anytime of the year. You can send any questions to
hellerfa@brandeis.edu.

All grant recipients are required to write a thank you letter (one page in length) that explains how the support has contributed to their student experience. These letters are shared with alumni who, in turn, are more excited to contribute to the fund when they hear your story. Receipts and thank you letters are due as soon as all purchases have been completed. You may forfeit the award if these materials are not received at that time. **Please notify the email above if you decide at any point not to collect your award so that we may open it up for other students.**

Please note: **Conference Grants** are designed to support participation in external, immersive, and professional conferences. Even if the total cost is below the funding threshold, the policy does not allow for multiple smaller registrations or department-level events to be combined into one grant.

In some cases, awards may also be taxable income, which may be taken out at the time of your award by the Accounts Payable office.

Book Awards:

PhD and Master's students in-residence are eligible for \$250 awards to defray the costs of reading materials for the semester. Applicants must apply outlining:

- Degree program and anticipated graduation date
- Current plan of study and career goals
- Financial need

What materials are eligible to be reimbursed by the Book Award?

Materials listed below that are a course requirement are eligible for reimbursement:

- Textbooks
- Books
- Software
- Course packs (i.e. Harvard Business School Course packs)

Applications are due **Wednesday, February 11, 2026**. The number of awards will depend on the availability of funds. **Applicants will be notified about the results approximately 2-3 weeks after the deadline.**

Students whose requests are granted will receive up to a \$250 reimbursement payment after we receive:

- A complete expense summary in Excel (shipping costs can be included)
- All original receipts. PDFs and/or screenshots preferred (must include your name or reference to you in the order confirmation and detailed order information. Example: Creating a PDF of your Amazon order confirmation email which lists items ordered in detail. This can also be downloaded from your Amazon account.) Receipts that do not include the following information will not be acceptable:
 - Your name and/or email address
 - Name of the vendor (e.g., Amazon, etc.)
 - Name of the item
 - Cost of the item
 - Date of Purchase
- A signed thank you letter to be shared with alumni donors who make these grants possible

Book awards are not paid up front, but are a reimbursement. If you need assistance purchasing books in advance, please contact Ravi Lakshmikanthan (kanthan@brandeis.edu).

Each Master and PhD student may receive only one book award during their Heller career and must use the award by the end of the semester in which it is awarded. Awards cannot be transferred to different semesters and if the awarded student doesn't use it, they are required to reapply.

This award cannot be used for electronic devices such as computers, printers, or tablets (iPads, Kindles, etc.)

If you receive this grant in the spring, and you plan to graduate in May, you must submit all materials as early as possible to be reimbursed before you graduate.

Submit a Book Award Application

Conference Grants:

Masters students and PhD candidates may apply for a grant to pay expenses related to attending a professional conference relevant to their areas of professional and scholarly interest and which could provide valuable career networking opportunities. This grant is designed to support participation in an immersive professional conference. Even if the total cost is below the funding threshold, the policy does not allow for multiple smaller registrations or department-level events to be combined into one grant.

Maximum award amounts based on provided receipts should cover primarily **registration, lodging, and travel:**

- up to \$700 for those **presenting** original work
- up to \$300 for those **attending** without presenting original work

Please note: food expenses are **NOT** eligible for reimbursement.

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis until the semester's funds are depleted. Applications should be submitted **one month or more before** the conference, and include:

- the title and description of the conference
- conference dates and location (City, State or City, Country)
- estimated conference fees including registration, lodging, and travel
- why attendance is beneficial
- If **presenting** at a conference, please share the email confirmation or letter from the organization that includes your invitation to present.

Sponsored students should first check with their sponsoring agency to determine if conference funding is available through that agency. If students are receiving external funding, Conference Grants **may not apply** to the same costs which are covered by their sponsoring agency or another similar award.

Students whose requests are granted will be **reimbursed** after submitting:

- A complete expense summary
- All original receipts. PDFs and/or screenshots preferred. Receipts that do not include the following information will not be acceptable:
 - Your name and/or email address
 - Name of the vendor (e.g., hotel, airline, etc.)
 - Name of the item
 - Cost of the item
 - Date of Purchase
- A signed thank you letter to be shared with alumni donors who make these grants possible
- If **presenting** at a conference, please share the email confirmation or letter from the organization that includes your invitation to present.
- *Optional* – A photo of you at the conference presenting or attending.

If you receive this grant in the spring, and you plan to graduate in May, you must submit all materials as early as possible to be reimbursed before you graduate.

Attendance at conferences and award payment must occur before your commencement date.

If you choose to attend or present at a conference in person, please ensure your flights and hotel reservations are able to be cancelled or reimbursed. If you are granted an award, then decide not to attend and still incur expenses, the award is no longer eligible.

This award is reimbursed based on receipts and will only cover incurred expenses to attend. If your conference changes to a virtual format, flights and hotels will not be covered. All expenses are reimbursed after the conference takes place and up to the amount mentioned above.

[Submit a Conference Grant Application](#)

Dissertation Grants:

Post-proposal doctoral students may apply for a grant to assist in the final stages of conducting research and writing dissertations. These small grants (up to \$3,000 maximum) are intended to help students who have made substantial progress in their work, and to relieve specific dissertation-related expenses (e.g., transcriptions, travel outside of the Boston area related to collecting data, software purchases, consulting, or other direct research costs). It is preferred that these funds be used within 6 months of applying.

This grant does not cover expenses such as computers/iPads, travel for conferences, editing costs, stipends, health insurance, tuition, program related expenses, any programs outside of Brandeis, anything related to incidental expenses, food expenses for survey participants, and other non-direct costs.

Please note the following:

- **Costs for consultants** are permitted, but the applicant must give appropriate reasoning why this is a necessary cost, and reasoning why this can't be done on their own. Based on past awards, we have determined a rate of \$50-\$70/hr. (for up to a max of 25 hours) is within reason. Detail who the consultant is, what services they are providing, and why you are unable to perform that action. It is expected that students should conduct as much of their own research, analysis, writing, and editing as possible.
- **Transcription costs** are also limited for these grants. (A list of transcription services and costs are available upon request. Based on our research, firms are very expensive and automated services are more cost effective.) Please provide a quote from a company with your application for the amount you need for transcriptions. Max transcription cost is up to \$1,750 and quotes are required in order to process the award.
- Brandeis has instituted a new **gift card policy** and you must go through Brandeis to purchase them in advance (more information can be provided on how to do this). Gift cards can be used for paying focus group participants or individual interviews one-on-one for research purposes, including to complete a survey. These are only granted for up to \$25/hr. Brandeis/Heller will follow up with you to confirm you have dispersed the gift cards and you will have to provide a report of your activity. If you haven't utilized all the funds provided, or you don't report back that they have been used, it will be required to return them to Brandeis University.
- If **IRB approval** is required for your project, please have this completed when you apply. If your timeline for IRB approval is near this application deadline, we can work with you and approve your award "pending IRB approval."
- If **IRB approval is not needed** to conduct your dissertation research, please indicate that in your application and ask your Chair to note this in their support letter.
- Brandeis/Heller will be in touch with you after your expected expenses are spent to confirm they were spent in full. You may be asked for a report confirming this information for accounts payable. Any unused funds are required to be returned to the University.

Students should submit a PDF file including:

- **A cover letter** that outlines the purpose and significance of their study with budget justifications and a strong statement on why this grant would be helpful. It should also include where they are in the dissertation process and a timeline for completing the work. The application must not exceed 2 typed, single-spaced pages in Times New Roman, 12-pt font.
 - **Include a detailed budget in a visual chart** broken into categories of expense (Data costs=\$X, Gift cards=\$X, etc. with detailed usage of item). Please do not include a Miscellaneous section – this will not be approved. Quotes and/or receipts are required for each item in your budget. Only submit a budget for up to \$3,000. This is in addition to the minimum 1-page application letter.
- **A copy of your abstract.**

- **A letter of support from your dissertation chair.** Not only should the chair express their support to complete your dissertation according to your timeline, but it should also reference why the committee should support your proposed expenses.

You cannot change the terms of your application/budget after you apply.

Applications are due by Wednesday, February 18, 2026. Applicants will be notified approximately 3 weeks after the deadline, or once the committee is able to meet. The number and size of awards will be decided by committee and determined by the available funds at that time and by the application supporting the student's dissertation goals. If the committee has questions, you will be contacted for more information. Grant payments will be processed once the Development and Alumni Relations Office has received the student's signed letter of appreciation for the award and/or required support documents as requested. Any unused funds are required to be returned to the University. If you have questions before or after applying, please email hellerfa@brandeis.edu.

Submit a Dissertation Grant Application