UC-AFT Professional Development Fund
Call for Applications 2026–27

Professional Development Fund (PDF) Grant for
Lecturers and Other Represented Unit 18 Faculty at UC Berkeley

Professional Development Fund (PDF) 2026-2027 Grant Applications are now being accepted for teaching, research, and scholarship. The PDF offers grants of $500–$12,000 in support of professional development activities that enhance scholarly and pedagogical endeavors, including intellectual and research activities contributing to faculty scholarship and effectiveness as teachers and mentors. Grants are open to all Unit-18 faculty (lecturers, teachers, field coordinators and faculty hired under the Unit 18 contract) with teaching appointments at UC Berkeley during Summer 2026, Fall 2026, or Spring 2027.

PDF grants are available to Unit 18 faculty as a result of the hard work of the University Council – American Federation of Teachers (UC-AFT) in supporting lecturers and librarians across the UC system. The PDF originated in the 2003 UC-AFT Unit 18 contract, along with the continuing appointment for lecturers. The University initially funded the PDF at $135 per FTE on each campus. Our most recent contract increased this to $250 per FTE.

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Schedule

PDF Workshops
Thursday, 3/12 at 5pm in the Ethnic Studies Library, Stephens Hall
   Come and join us for snacks and refreshments!

Wednesday, 3/18 from 12-1 pm via Zoom
   https://berkeley.zoom.us/j/99870085146?pwd=a3i8gQnN0oc88dXJl5OHgvmQyeEfQl.1
   Meeting ID: 998 7008 5146
   Passcode: UCAFT

Please attend one of these PDF workshops to learn more about the application process, grant criteria, successful past applications, etc.

Application Deadline: Friday, 4/10 at 5pm
Email applications to appolicy@berkeley.edu. No late materials will be accepted.

Award Announcement: Friday, 5/8

Grant Proposals

Grants will fund proposals of $500-$12,000 that include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Research expenses that will contribute to the applicant's pedagogy
- Academic training (e.g., taking courses related to teaching responsibilities at UCB)
- Seminar, workshop, conference or studio attendance fees
- Software, hardware, and technical support equipment for use in research and/or teaching (including in special cases the purchase of books, films, or software in preparation for teaching assignments) that will remain University property
- Travel expenses related to teaching, teaching-related research, or other scholarly endeavors

The Council encourages creative project proposals and distributes awards broadly within the university community. Preference will be given to applicants who have not received a large award in the last two years. For conference funding, preference will be given to applicants who are presenting at conferences, though applicants attending conferences are still encouraged to apply. The Council welcomes collaborative proposals, including, but not limited to projects linked to co-taught courses, shared research endeavors, and collaborative presentations.

Awards will cover professional development activities undertaken between May 15, 2026 and August 15, 2027. The Council reserves the right to offer partial or more substantial funding of requests in accordance with its annual allotment of funds.

The Council is not able to fund the following items:

- Projects that primarily support student work or create new opportunities for students
- Projects that cannot demonstrate an ultimate beneficial impact on pedagogy and/or the educational mission of the University
- Projects that mainly benefit or involve institutions other than UCB
- Projects seeking funds for the production or promotion of publications
- Projects seeking funds for salary or stipend for the applicant, a graduate student, or an assistant
- Expenses for colleagues who are not co-applicants (travel, fees, etc.)
- Course relief
- Incomplete or late submissions
- Laptop/computers
- Travel for remote employees to visit UCB

Application Process

Applicants should submit application materials as a single pdf file attachment by email to appolicy@berkeley.edu, with the subject line "2026 PDF Application." (Note: In these instructions, PDF in capitals refers to the Professional Development Funding program, while pdf in lower case refers to the pdf document format.) The title of the pdf file should include the applicant's last name and first initial followed by underscore PDF2026, with no spaces (e.g., AhmedM._PDF2026.pdf).

Application materials must include the following:

1. A completed checklist and cover sheet (see attachment below)
2. A one to two-page application letter addressed to the Professional Development Funding Council, which includes the following:
   - The specific purpose of the funding and the amount requested.
   - The time frame in which this funding will be used.
   - The relevance of this proposal to the applicant's scholarly and pedagogical development (as it applies to the applicant's role as a Unit 18 Non-Senate Faculty at UCB).
   - The specific purpose of the funding and the amount requested.
   - The time frame in which this funding will be used.
   - Any additional sources of funding you expect to receive for this activity, specifying the amounts.

- The relevance of this proposal to the applicant's scholarly and pedagogical development (as it applies to the applicant's role as a Unit 18 Non-Senate Faculty at UCB).
- Please indicate if you require your full funding request to carry out your proposed activities, or if partial funding would still be useful and you would still be able to carry out the proposed activities with partial funding.

3. A budget breakdown consistent with University policies, including other anticipated sources of funding. Reimbursements require itemized receipts, so DO NOT book travel packages that provide a single rate for flights, hotel, and car rental. Such packages cannot be reimbursed. **We encourage you to consult with your departmental financial analyst when preparing your budget to confirm campus policy requirements.**

4. Letters of support from department chairs, colleagues, and/or peers are not required but are strongly encouraged. If a project has received other forms of support from departments, research centers, or other sources, letters with evidence of such support must be provided. Support, including partial funding, from your department or program is considered favorably by the Council.

5. An updated CV, including applicant's campus address, email address, and phone number. The CV should state whether the applicant has a continuing appointment, and should include a brief summary of courses taught and/or developed at UC Berkeley.

Information on planning and booking campus travel can be found [here](#).

- Per campus guidelines, you are encouraged to use [Direct Bill ID](#), charged to your award funds, to book your airfare provided that personal days are not included in your travel plans, and all other policy requirements are met.
- US Department of State per diem rates for foreign travel can be found [here](#).
- Domestic per diem CONUS rates can be found [here](#), in compliance with *Subsistence Expenses* p.23 of UC Policy G-28.
- Convert foreign currency to US dollars via [OANDA Currency Converter](#).
- The budget should be based on a realistic estimate of projected costs at the time of purchase, not on sale prices that may no longer be available when the purchase is made. It is advisable to err on the generous side in your estimates. However, please consider that there are limited funds and many other applicants.

Travel advances will not be provided. Please see the [UC Policy G-28 Travel Regulations](#) for information regarding compliance with IRS regulations on the provision and reimbursement of business-related travel. **Reimbursement for travel must be submitted within 45 days of the completion of each trip.** In addition, equipment purchase amounts should include sales tax and shipping costs.

Please list budget items in order of priority for funding. While the council aims to fund proposals fully, complete funding is not always possible. The council may award partial funding for proposals according to these priority lists.

Fund Transfer & Expense Reimbursement

Funds will be transferred to the award recipient's department in July 2026, but can be available as soon as May 2026 upon special request. Certain expenses, such as conference registration and supply purchases may be charged directly to the fund. Other expenses, such as lodging and ground transportation may require reimbursed after the fact. The University requires documentation of all expenditures before reimbursement can be issued. **Please consult with your departmental financial analyst regarding department-specific processes and expectations, as well as campus policy guidelines.**

Please note that once awarded, a grant cannot be increased to cover a discrepancy between the estimated and actual cost of the project. Grant funds cannot be used for a project other than that for which they were originally dedicated. Requests for exceptions due to unavoidable special circumstances (e.g., conference cancellation, significant grant recipient health issues, or unanticipated project-related risk to personal safety) must be pre-approved by the UC Berkeley Academic Personnel Office. To request such an exception please prepare a short description comparing your original budget with your new proposed budget and submit it to appolicy@berkeley.edu (and cc Council Chair Khalid Kadir at kadir@berkeley.edu) using the subject line "2026 PDF Project Change".

Questions

If you have questions, please contact the PDF Council Chair Khalid Kadir at kadir@berkeley.edu.

Professional Development Council Members

Khalid Kadir	ISSP/Civil & Environmental Engineering
Angela Hume	College Writing
John Levine	College Writing
Sanchita Saxena	Legal Studies
Jeffrey Sykes	Music

2026 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND APPLICATION

Name:

Department:

Email Address:

Phone Number: (   )

Amount Requested: $

Short Title of Proposal:

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* The "Short Title" for your proposal should be a unique way that the Committee can refer to your project. For example: "Nigeria Travel Grant Primary Schools Second Language" would be helpful, "Boston Conference Expenses" would not.

Abstract (2–3 sentence description of proposal):

2026 PDF APPLICATION
CHECK LIST

Have you remembered to include the following documents with your letter of application?

☐   **Application**, including all supporting documentation.

☐   **Budget breakdown.** Please round up to the nearest dollar amount and indicate any other sources of funding for the proposed project. Please list items in terms of importance for funding.
> *Note: travel costs will be reimbursed and cannot be distributed prior to the trip.*

☐   **Letter(s) of Support** (recommended, not required). If you choose to provide letters of support, include them in your application pdf.

☐   **An updated CV**.

Please email one .pdf document of application materials, including this checklist to appolicy@berkeley.edu**. The subject line should include "2026 PDF Application."**