



February 19, 2020

Guidelines for the Administration of Young Investigator Travel Grants (YITGs)

Background: On August 28, 2019, Mason Reichard (AAVP President) tasked the individuals listed below (Members of the *Ad Hoc* Committee) with reviewing current AAVP policies governing Young Investigator Travel Grants (YITGs). Specifically, the committee was asked to critically assess all phases of YITGs, including who should be eligible, should there be a more thorough review process of student applicants, how much money should be awarded, are matching funds necessary, should there be a cap on the amount of money spent or the number of grants awarded each year, and, if any other questions arose during discussions, how the *ad hoc* committee advised they should be addressed. As a deliverable, the committee was asked to provide a logical and defensible recommendation to the AAVP Executive Committee how YITGs should be administered moving forward. The committee produced a document with its recommendations. These were reviewed by the AAVP Executive Committee and endorsed with some modifications at the AAVP Executive Committee mid-year meeting in Lexington, Kentucky, on February 10, 2020. The present document constitutes the guidelines for the administration of the YITGs as endorsed by the Executive Committee.

Members of *Ad Hoc* Committee:

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Process: The AAVP YITG Ad Hoc Committee met three times by phone on September 12, October 14, and November 11, 2019, to discuss the charge and formulate recommendations. Drs. Little, Vatta, and Peregrine also met by phone on December 2 to review a draft of the present document. During this process, the committee gathered available data from AAVP on YITG awards over the past 5 years (Table 1) and the increase in spending associated with our current process (Figure 1). To gain input from all members of the committee, we also completed a survey and discussed the results as a group.

Findings: The committee discovered that, while AAVP YITG spending has increased in recent years, the budget records available combined spending on AAVP student chapter representatives and AAVP award recipients (Outstanding Graduate Student and CAPC) with YITG recipients. For the committee discussions, the committee separated the YITG awards from the other student spending.



Guidelines for the Awarding of YITGs:

1. *Eligibility for AAVP YITG funding.* Only AAVP members who are graduate students (MS or PhD), post-doctoral associates in the first 3 years of their training program, veterinary students, or undergraduate students should be eligible for a YITG award. Priority for awards should be graduate students and post-doctoral associates first, and veterinary students and undergraduate students second. To receive a YITG award, recipients must be registered as an AAVP member, have an abstract accepted for presentation, provide a mentor letter at the time of application (see #4 below), and present at the AAVP meeting.
2. *Not eligible for AAVP YITG funding.* Although everyone with relevant interest is encouraged to participate in the annual AAVP meeting, YITGs will **not** be awarded to post-doctoral associates more than 3 years out from their PhD, or any other individuals (faculty, post-DVM trainees not enrolled in a MS or PhD program (interns, residents), research scientists, MPH students, etc.) regardless of when they completed their graduate or professional degree.
3. *Addressing budget shortfalls.* If sufficient funds are not available to support all individuals in a given category in a particular year, then YITGs should be awarded first based on the quality of the abstract, and then by PI/mentor (each mentor only receives funding for 1–2 students depending on availability of funds) and by order of seniority (students in training longer receive priority). For example, if 5 veterinary students apply and funds are only available for 2, then the 5 will be ranked by quality of abstract and the two best abstracts will be awarded. If budget shortfalls continue or escalate, additional limitations to the program should be revisited in the future.
4. *YITG application process.* To verify student status (MS, PhD, veterinary, post-doc in first 3 years after receiving PhD, or undergraduate) and ensure eligibility for the YITG, a mentor (PI, principal investigator) letter should be included with each application. The letter should specifically state (1) student status at the time of presentation; (2) start date of student in current training program; (3) if a post-doctoral associate, the month and year the PhD was awarded; and (4) if matching funds will be provided by the mentor/PI or the home institution.
5. *Review of YITG applications.* The Executive Committee delegates the responsibility for the allocation of awards in accordance with these guidelines to the awards committee, with the student representatives of the Executive Committee designated as advisors to the awards committee chair. In the case that the review of abstracts is required, the Program Chair will be responsible for assigning reviewers. Prior to awarding any funds, the awards committee chair or their designee should evaluate the applications and confirm each student: (1) is an AAVP member in good standing; (2) has an accepted abstract at the upcoming AAVP meeting; and (3) is eligible to receive a YITG based on their trainee status at presentation. Incomplete applications that do not include a mentor/PI letter validating student status should be



considered invalid and funds not awarded. It is not the responsibility of the awards committee chair, the student representatives, or the AAVP Secretary/Treasurer to solicit letters or request dues payments be made to ensure applications are complete.

6. *Amount to be awarded.* The maximum spend on AAVP YITGs each year is \$20,000, but this figure will be reviewed from time to time and may be increased or decreased at the discretion of the AAVP Executive Committee. Further, the maximum amount to be paid each student will be \$700 in matching funds. In years when more students apply than funds are available to support; the AAVP will prioritize students who are funded rather than reducing the amount awarded to each individual student (see #3 above).
7. *Process for receiving funds.* To be reimbursed, each student must submit scanned receipts for all usual, customary, and reasonable (UCR) travel expenses to the AAVP Secretary/Treasurer within 2 weeks following the meeting. Travel expenses include transportation, hotel, meals, taxi or ride share, airport parking, registration, and similar expenditures associated with attending the meeting. *Per diem* will not be considered; actual receipts (scanned) for food purchased while in transit or while attending the meeting are required. To avoid confusion, each receipt should be explained in brief, e.g. “lunch in transit 19 June 2020”. Each student may receive up to \$700 matching funds so long as receipts are provided for UCR travel expenses justifying that amount (i.e. at least \$1,400 in total expenses must be documented to receive the maximum \$700).
8. *Matching funds.* Matching funds from the mentor or home institution should be expected but not required. If matching funds are not available, the mentor must provide a letter certifying that matching funds are not available (see mentor/PI letter above). So long as otherwise qualified, students without matching funds would still be eligible for the lesser amount of 50% the cost of attending the meeting or \$700. However, no YITG recipient will receive more than the maximum amount allowed (50% expenses up to \$700).
9. *Cap on the amount of money spent or the number of grants awarded each year.* No more than \$20,000 will be spent on the YITG program each year, unless this amount is modified by the Executive Committee, and each recipient will receive only up to \$700 per year in matching funds. If all students request the maximum, then only ~ 28 awards could be made each year. However, usually ~50% of students request the maximum amount. Accordingly, up to 32 YITGs may be approved to qualified applicants. In addition, the YITG program will be re-evaluated on a yearly basis by the Executive Committee prior to the annual meeting to ensure the aims of the grants are met by the \$20,000 budget cap while also ensuring that the funding fits within the overall budget or the AAVP.



Table 1. Young investigator travel grants^A awarded by American Association of Veterinary Parasitologists, 2014–2018.

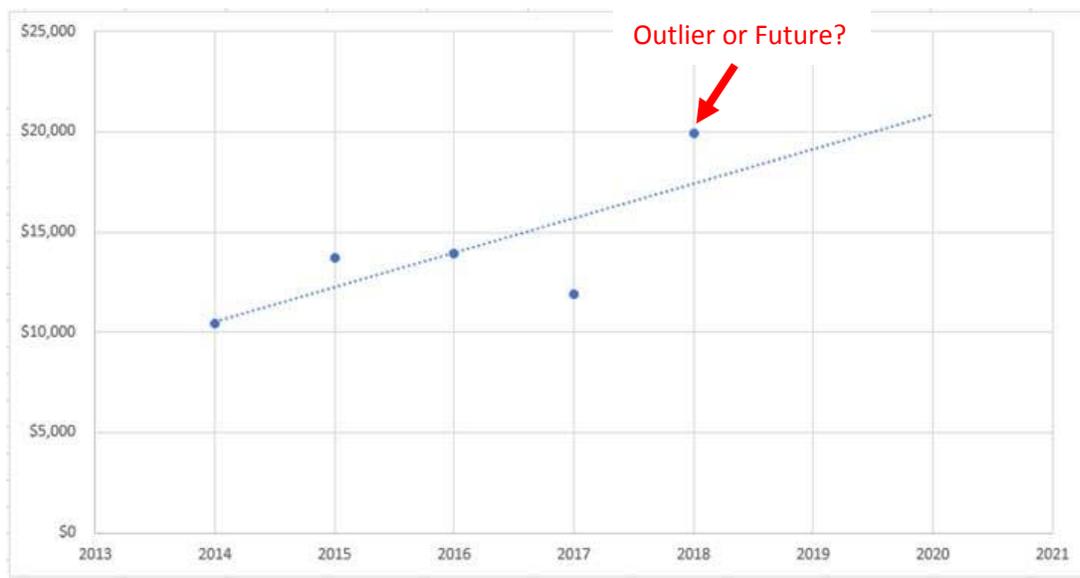
Year	Total amount spent on YITG ^A (average award ^B , total number)	Without undergraduates	Without veterinary students and undergraduates	Status of recipients
2014	\$10,404 (\$473, 22)	\$9,904	\$9,904	21 GR, 1 UN
2015	\$13,718 (\$443, 31)	\$12,243	\$11,421	1 PO, 24 GR, 4 UN, 2 VE
2016	\$13,900 (\$434, 32)	\$12,087	\$11,517	1 PO, 23 GR, 5 UN, 2 VE, 1 NR
2017	\$11,904 (\$313, 38)	\$11,425	\$9,255	2 PO, 25 GR, 2 UN, 7 VE, 2 NR
2018	\$19,921 (\$415, 48)	\$17,581	\$14,756	4 PO, 29 GR, 6 UN, 9 VE
Average	\$13,969 (\$416, 34)	\$12,648	\$11,371	2 PO, 24 GR, 4 UN, 4 VE

^AActual recorded expenditure for YITG; excludes student awardees (Outstanding Graduate Student and CAPC) and AAVP student chapter representatives. Higher numbers presented at the AAVP business meeting resulted from combining YITG with travel by student awardees and student chapter representatives.

^BRequires 100% match and thus student expense for attending is at least twice the amount awarded

PO: Post-doctoral associate; GR: graduate student; UN: undergraduate student; VE: veterinary student; NR: not reported

Figure 1. Young investigator travel grants^A awarded by American Association of Veterinary Parasitologists, 2014–2018.



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