



SERTA funding support for Conference Attendance and Education Programs

Guidelines for applicants

Version 4.5 – July 2023

The Study, Education and Research Trust Account

About the SERTA Scheme

The Study, Education and Research Trust Account (SERTA) enables Gold Coast Health staff to engage in research, education and professional development activities that will improve their ability to deliver optimal health care to the Gold Coast community.

The SERTA Committee is responsible for overseeing the delivery of the SERTA Business Plan which incorporates funding opportunities for staff to engage in research, education, and professional development. The scheme is managed through the Office for Research Governance and Development (ORGD) within Gold Coast Health. The SERTA Committee is administered as per the Health Service Directive: *Private Practice in the Queensland Public Sector* and reports to the *Gold Coast Health Private Practice Governance Committee*.

Application Process

Conference Attendance and Education Programs

This guideline is for Gold Coast Health employees seeking financial support through the SERTA funding scheme where no alternate access to funding is available for the proposed activity.

SERTA will consider applications for conference attendance where the applicant has been invited to deliver an oral presentation of 10 minutes or more, and education programs and activities where operational funding or other resources are unavailable to the applicant.

The document outlines eligibility conditions and criteria and provides information on the financial aspects of this category which relate to Professional Development Allowances (PDA), and allowable reimbursements.

- The SERTA Committee meets on the **third** Wednesday of each month to review funding applications. Applications must be received **two** weeks prior to the Committee meeting to be considered for review. Applications received outside of this timeframe may be deferred until the next monthly meeting. Retrospective applications will not be considered.
- To receive the Committee's consideration, applications must meet the eligibility criteria and including all required information and attachments. Applications will be considered confidentially by the SERTA Committee and Chair; applicants may be invited to present their submission to the committee to assist in the decision process.
- Applications must be completed online via the SmartyGrants platform. The form can be accessed on the [SmartyGrants](#) platform by selecting Conference Attendance and Education.
- For any questions regarding the online application process or for further information, contact GCSERTA@health.qld.gov.au.

SmartyGrants Help Guide

Please refer to the [SmartyGrants help guide](#) when completing your application. This will explain the essential steps you need to take to complete and submit your form.

- The Committee's decision will be communicated in writing within 10 working days.

Document ID: Version 4.5 – July 2023
Conference Attendance and Education
Programs

Supporting document requirements

Document	Requirement
AUTHORISATION	The Manager Authorisation form must be completed and uploaded into the online application.
PDA	The Professional Development Allowance (PDA) form must be completed and uploaded into the online application (where applicable)
CONFERENCE / EDUCATION PROGRAM DETAILS	A copy of the conference / education program flyer detailing fees/costs and the invitation to present from the organiser.
QUOTES	Quotes for accommodation, travel (if applicable)
OVERSEAS TRAVEL FORM	Overseas Travel form and evidence of Ministerial approval application or copy of approval letter (if applicable)
APPLICATION FORM	Application form completed via the SmartyGrants platform

Eligibility and Criteria

Eligibility	<p>Applicants must at the time of making application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ hold a Gold Coast Health appointment which is at least 0.2 FTE, with either a permanent appointment, or held a temporary appointment of over 12 months at the time of the event.○ have approval from the Line Manager based on the importance of the activity to the work area.○ not had a successful application in this category in the current financial year.○ not have any outstanding reporting obligations for prior SERTA funded activities.○ meet eligibility based on Professional Development Allowance balances (if applicable).
Funding Cap	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Each applicant is eligible for one successful application to SERTA per financial year in this category.

Study, Education and Research Trust Account (SERTA) Funding Scheme Guideline

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A maximum stipend of \$5,000 per application applies for those invited to deliver an oral presentation of 10 minutes or more at a conference, where operational funds or other resources are unavailable to the applicant. ○ A maximum stipend of \$1,000 towards education programs (course fees), relevant to the applicant's discipline, where operational funds or other resources are unavailable to the applicant. <p><i>Note: Education programs, in the context of this category, typically, refer to approved training courses which include some form of testing throughout, or a final written examination or practical test.</i></p>
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Retrospective applications will not be considered. ○ Only applicants who have been invited to deliver an oral presentation at a conference (10 minutes or more), are eligible for funding. Applicants may claim for travel, accommodation, and registration up to \$5,000. Applicants must ensure presentations clearly identify the Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service Logo. ○ SERTA funds can only be claimed for events located overseas if Ministerial Approval has been granted for travel. ○ As the applicant is a representative of Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service, a separate application for Ministerial Approval is required for events involving overseas travel. This is a requirement whether the applicant is paying for the flights or not. An application for overseas travel can be found in the Travel Section at Queensland Health Intranet (QUEPS) or by contacting the travel coordinator. The travel application needs to be submitted at least 8 weeks prior to travel to allow time for the Minister's consideration. ○ Evidence of the overseas travel application and/or approval should be submitted with the application for SERTA funding. ○ Applicants requesting funding for education programs are eligible to claim up to \$1,000 for registration/course fees related to the activity. ○ Funding is not transferrable. ○ Non recurrent funding must be expended within one year of approval unless otherwise approved.
Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The request must align to the Strategic Goals of Gold Coast Health. ○ Support is required from the Line Manager, confirming that the activity is consistent with the applicant's performance goals and that leave has been approved to attend the event.

Study, Education and Research Trust Account (SERTA) Funding Scheme Guideline

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For those receiving a Professional Development Allowance (PDA), the allowance MUST be fully expended to be eligible for the full entitlement of funding. Any unexpended PDA balance for the current year, will be deducted from the funding requirement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A PDA Expenditure form, with attached evidence of expenditure in the current year, is to be signed off by the Line Manager and submitted with the SERTA application. ○ Applicants who do not receive a Professional Development Allowance should ensure that this is noted on the application Authorisation form and signed off by your Line Manager.
Submission Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applications to SERTA must be submitted online via the SmartyGrants platform. The application form can be accessed on the SmartyGrants platform by selecting Conference Attendance and Education Programs. ○ As part of the online application, a summary is required (no more than 500 words) outlining the request, which demonstrates the benefit and alignment to the strategic goals of Gold Coast Health. ○ All supporting evidence is to be uploaded into the online application: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conference flyer and invitation to present / education program details ○ PDA form ○ Quotes for accommodation, flights (if applicable) ○ Overseas Travel form and evidence of Ministerial approval application or copy of approval letter (if applicable). ○ Once your application has been completed online and the checklist requirements have been fulfilled, your application can be submitted. ○ You will be contacted by the SERTA Secretariat should any further information be required. <p>Completed applications must be received two weeks prior to the SERTA Committee meeting (held the third Wednesday of each month) to be eligible for consideration.</p> <p>For travel and accommodation questions related to the types of financial transactions considered by SERTA please contact GCSERTA@health.qld.gov.au.</p>
Selection Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applications will be considered confidentially by the Gold Coast Health SERTA Committee. ○ In some circumstances, the committee may invite applicants to present their submission to the committee the following month to assist in the decision process.

Study, Education and Research Trust Account (SERTA) Funding Scheme Guideline

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once applications have been considered, the outcome/decision will be sent in writing via email to the applicant followed by a letter of confirmation.
Approved Applications	Once your application for funding has been approved by the SERTA Committee, a letter of approval will be provided within 10 working days. This will include confirmation and a breakdown of the funding amount approved as well as details on how to claim your funds.
Claiming Funds	<p>Travel and Accommodation Claims</p> <p>If travel and accommodation has not been booked via the Travel Hub as outlined above, receipt of payment for the SERTA approved travel and accommodation along with a completed expense form and copy of the SERTA approval letter should be emailed to GCSERTA@health.qld.gov.au to arrange for reimbursement of costs.</p> <p>All Claims (excluding travel and accommodation)</p> <p>It is preferred that successful applicants or their operational cost centre pre-pay attendance costs and provide SERTA with documentation for reimbursement or journal back to the operational cost centre. Applicants should complete an expense form, attach all receipts and a copy of the SERTA approval letter and email to GCSERTA@health.qld.gov.au to arrange for reimbursement of costs. If payment of an invoice is required, please forward this to the above email with a copy of the SERTA approval letter.</p>
Reporting Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant must provide a report to the Gold Coast Health SERTA Committee within 2 months of attending a conference or education program. A report template will be provided for completion on the SmartyGrants platform. Evidence of publications, presentations, collaborations, and networking accrued which was enabled by the SERTA grant should be uploaded as part of the report or emailed to GCSERTA@health.qld.gov.au. Further applications by the applicant will not be considered regardless of the financial year if any reports remain outstanding.

Types of financial transactions considered by SERTA

I.	Domestic Flights booked via the Travel Hub (for eligible applicants)
II.	International Flights booked via the travel hub and approved by the Minister (where applicable)
III.	Accommodation Domestic/International booked via the Travel hub (for eligible applicants)
IV.	Transfers to and from the airport in the destination where the event is held (for eligible applicants)
V.	Registration fees / costs

Types of financial transactions not funded by SERTA

I.	Food items
II.	Beverages including Alcohol
III.	In house Movies and Internet at Hotel
IV.	Petrol
V.	Magazines or newspapers
VI.	Dry cleaning and spa treatments at Hotel
VII.	Backfill / Overtime/ Penalties
VIII.	Any Breakfast, Meal or Incidental allowances itemised in Directive No 9/11 for Domestic Travelling and Relieving Expenses.

Split transactions

There will be no split transactions such as accommodation sharing, all accommodation will be booked via the HHS Travel Hub. If employees wish to share a room, please ensure this is clearly stated on the travel booking form. The employee/applicant booking the accommodation on behalf of the other applicants must be the person to claim.

Applicant checklist

Please ensure the following information and attachments are included in your online application to the SERTA Committee.

Applicant Checklist	✓
<p>Commence application if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A permanent appointment, or temporarily employed > 12 months in the Gold Coast Health. ○ No outstanding reports from previous funding applications. ○ Not had a successful application in this category in the current financial year. ○ Application is not retrospective. 	
<p>Complete SERTA Application Form</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Create account in SmartyGrants for online application. ○ Include evidence of conference, invite to present paper etc. / education program details; ○ Evidence to reflect costings such as quotes/flyers/article. 	
<p>Complete the Use of Professional Development Allowance (PDA) form (if applicable)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Include evidence of expenditure of Professional Development Allowance within current financial year. ○ If you do not receive a Professional Development Allowance, ensure that this is noted on the Application Authorisation form and signed off by your Line Manager. 	
<p>Complete QTravel booking and approval form (if applicable).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Include evidence of quotes from airlines and accommodation being requested. 	
<p>Any leave required to attend events has been applied for and approved by line manager.</p>	
<p>All relevant forms have been signed off by line Manager and Executive Director.</p>	
<p>Submit Online SERTA Application.</p>	

Contact information

Questions about the application process

The Secretariat

Study, Education and Research Trust Account
Gold Coast University Hospital,
Research Unit, E (PED) Block, Level 2,
1 Hospital Boulevard, Southport
Phone: 07 5687 0663 Email: GCSERTA@health.qld.gov.au

Claiming Approved Funds

Email: GCSERTA@health.qld.gov.au (Subject line: SERTA Claim)