



STUDENT FEES ADVISORY COMMITTEE FY26 BASE AUGMENTATION REQUEST (A)

The WGRC is seeking a FY26 Base Augmentation Request in the amount of \$20,000 for staff professional development.

Professional development is essential for ensuring that staff at the WGRC continuously enhance their skills and stay updated on the latest trends and best practices in the field of sexual misconduct support and advocacy. By participating in trainings and conferences, staff acquire new knowledge and techniques that directly benefit the students we serve. These opportunities improve individual staff effectiveness and enhance the overall quality of services provided by the WGRC.

Conferences and professional development events also serve as invaluable networking platforms, allowing our staff to connect with peers, experts, and thought leaders from across the country. These connections can lead to fruitful partnerships and collaborations, facilitating the exchange of innovative programs and resources that can be implemented at UH. By bringing insights from other institutions, we can enrich our programs and better address the diverse needs of our student population.

Moreover, WGRC staff often present at local and national conferences, thus elevating the University of Houston's reputation on a broader stage. This visibility can contribute to increased grants and donations to the Division of Student Affairs, as organizations and funders are often more inclined to support institutions that demonstrate a commitment to excellence. Additionally, showcasing our work can inspire greater alumni engagement and giving, as former students recognize the value of their alma mater in advancing important social issues.

Finally, by prioritizing professional development, we align with our strategic goal of increasing retention rates for First-Time in College (FTIC) students and increasing retention rates for Pell-eligible First Time in College (FTIC) students. Well-trained staff are better equipped to support these students, addressing their unique challenges and ensuring they have the resources and guidance needed to succeed academically and personally. Ultimately, investing in professional development is not just an investment in our staff; it is an investment in the success and well-being of our entire student community.

Project: Professional Development

Investment: \$21,200 (Asking amount plus 6% admin fee)

Itemized breakdown estimate: Conference travel costs approximately \$2,000 to \$2,500 per conference. \$5,000 would cover 2 conferences a year for the 4 professional staff of the WGRC.