

Before You Apply for a *Promotion of Doctoral Studies (PODS) Scholarship*

Q: How much is a *PODS Scholarship* for and when is it paid?

A: *PODS Scholarships* are broken down into two categories. For those applying for a *PODS I Scholarship*, you can be awarded \$7,500, paid in two separate and equal distributions delivered September and March of the academic award year. For those applying for a *PODS II Scholarship*, you can be awarded \$15,000, paid in two separate and equal distributions delivered in September and March of the academic award year.

Q: What is the scholarship period and an award year?

A: The scholarship period is considered September 1st through August 31st.

Q: When can I apply for a *PODS Scholarship*?

A: *FPT* accepts applications for *PODS Scholarships* once a year, generally October through January. You should refer to *FPT*'s website for specific deadline dates.

Eligibility Requirements for a *PODS Scholarship*

Q: Can I use the *PODS Scholarship* for my DPT program?

A: No. The *PODS Scholarship* is for post-professional doctoral studies only – meaning for graduate studies after receipt of the DPT degree in pursuit of a terminal degree such as PhD.

Q: Which *PODS Scholarship* should I apply for?

A: You should review the *Promotion of Doctoral Studies Scholarship Guidelines* for eligibility requirements as to which mechanism is appropriate for your stage of studies. Generally, pre-dissertation phase students should apply for the *PODS I Scholarship* while students in the candidacy phase of their programs should apply for the *PODS II Scholarship*. However, there are timelines in which your studies must fall for specific eligibility for each mechanism. You are strongly urged to review these eligibility requirements, timelines, and program plans with your mentor/advisor before applying to a specific mechanism.

Q: Can I apply to both the *PODS I Scholarship* and the *PODS II Scholarship* at the same time and let *FPT* determine which one I am better suited for?

A: No. You must pick either *PODS I* or *PODS II*. *FPT* will not pick for you.

Q. If I apply for a *PODS I Scholarship* and *FPT* determines that I am really a *PODS II Scholarship* candidate, will *FPT* move my *PODS I Scholarship* application to the *PODS II Scholarship* review category? Or vice versa?

A: No. Whichever scholarship funding mechanism you submit your application to is the one in which it will remain and be evaluated. Therefore, if you applied for a *PODS I Scholarship* and you meet the criteria for being a *PODS II Scholarship* applicant, your *PODS I Scholarship* application will be

disqualified for you being ineligible. That is why it is very important that you meet with your mentor/advisor to determine the best scholarship funding mechanism in which to apply.

Q: Can I roll over credits I earned in my DPT program into my post-professional doctoral program and be eligible for a [PODS Scholarship](#)?

A: Yes but you should also discuss your situation with [FPT](#)'s Scientific Program Advisor **BEFORE** applying so any discrepancies or potential misunderstandings can be addressed and resolved in advance of application review. If you don't, your application can run the risk of being administratively disqualified.

Applying for a [PODS Doctoral Scholarship](#)

Q: I have no publications or my publication record is very modest. When I apply, should I list all of the manuscripts in preparation that I anticipate publishing?

A: Yes – depending upon which [PODS Scholarship](#) mechanism you are applying for, this could be considered appropriate. In general, the reviewers will consider the stage in which you are at within your educational track and consider if your record of or lack of publications is appropriate for that stage. You will probably not be penalized if you have no or relatively few publications in preparation for a [PODS I Scholarship](#) application. However, if you are well into your program and are applying for a [PODS II Scholarship](#), the reviewers will expect to see work towards publication. You should make every effort to publish your graduate work as quickly as possible. If, despite your best efforts, there are circumstances beyond your control that have delayed publication of some of your graduate work, you should explain the situation in your application and also ask your references to address the issue.

Q: What should be in my Plan of Study?

A: The Plan of Study should be specific for you. It should include a description of the courses you plan to take and when you plan to take them. It should include a description of what you will be learning in these courses and why it is important to your development as an independent investigator relevant to your research interests. You should include experiences such as lab meetings, journal clubs, conferences you will attend, collaborations that you will engage in, teaching activities, and plans for ensuring that you have access to equipment and core facilities that are essential for your Plan of Study. You should also address any plans for postdoctoral training. Be specific in your Plan of Study and avoid generalizations.

Q: From whom should I request reference letters?

A: Reviewers expect to see **two letters of recommendation** from your graduate advisor/mentor and other people who know you and your work well. Reviewers will also want to see letters from those who are serving as additional mentors for various aspects of your program and project. ***If you are seeking advice or guidance from additional individuals throughout the course of your program, you should provide at a minimum, a biosketch for that individual.*** A letter of recommendation can also be included, but that is your option. The reviewers will want to see what that individual brings to the table for you and why you would want them on your team. Good choices include: members of your dissertation committee and former collaborators, if they are independent investigators. Bad choices: graduate students, postdocs, and people who do not know you well enough to evaluate your scientific skills and potential as an independent investigator.

Q: My advisor/mentor has little or no experience training pre-doctoral students. How should this situation be addressed within my application?

A: Your advisor/mentor should consider asking a more experienced faculty colleague to serve as a co-advisor/mentor. A well-thought-out training plan in which the roles of the advisor/mentor and the co-advisor/mentor are clearly delineated should be part of your application. In addition, an advisor/mentor who has not previously trained pre-doctoral students should describe any other training experience that might be relevant, e.g., supervision of graduate students or mentoring of a collaborator's pre-doctorals or postdocs.

Q: *My advisor/mentor has little or no extramural grant support. Will this matter in review and how should this situation be addressed within my application?*

A: Yes, this will factor into the assessment of your program and overall review score. You should read the answer to the question above and address the grant support situation in a similar manner.

Q: *What transcripts do I need to submit and why?*

A: You must submit all your transcripts – this includes your undergraduate transcripts. This is important for the reviewers to see to make a determination in progress and potential.

Review of *PODS Scholarship Applications*

Q: *What happens after I submit my *PODS Scholarship* application and how long does the review and award process take?*

A: Your *PODS Scholarship* application will be evaluated by **FPT's** Scientific Review Committee (SRC). Each application will be assigned a Primary Reviewer and a Secondary Reviewer. The two scores will be averaged for a Preliminary Score. Preliminary scores of all reviewed applications will be gathered and all applications that have a preliminary score better than a determined "cut line" will be discussed by the full SRC for Final Scoring. The review process takes on average four (4) months. **FPT's** Board of Trustees will vote on *PODS Scholarship* award after the review process and final scoring is complete. The number of *PODS Scholarships* awarded are pre-determined in the previous year's budgeting process which is dependent upon levels of funds available. Applicants should receive notice as to *PODS Scholarship* award status by June of year of application.

Q: *Can I submit updates to my *PODS Scholarship* application?*

A: Generally no. Any updates or additional application materials is extremely limited and will be considered on a case-by-case basis due to extenuating circumstances. No guarantees can be made that the reviewers will receive any updated application materials and then it will be at the reviewers' discretion as to if they will consider these updated application materials. You should contact the Scientific Program Administrator with these types of requests.

Q: *What are the scores based on?*

A: You should refer to the *Promotion of Doctoral Studies Scholarship Guidelines*, "Criteria for Evaluation".

Q: *Will I receive any feedback from the review of my *PODS Scholarship* application?*

A: Yes, all *PODS Scholarship* applications reviewed will receive a review packet. A review packet will contain a summary sheet of your scores and a full-committee discussion summary (if applicable), a Primary Review, and a Secondary Review. You should read the reviews thoroughly and carefully as they can contain useful information and advice in regards to your program and future applications to **FPT**.

Q: Who should I contact to discuss my **PODS Scholarship** application review?

A: For those applicants having questions about their reviews and/or scores, you may contact **FPT's** Scientific Program Administrator. You will not be told who reviewed your application under any circumstances and should not contact any member of the SRC in regards to your **PODS Scholarship** application.

PODS Scholarship Award

Q: I received a **PODS Scholarship**! When will I receive my scholarship?

A: Congratulations! You will be required to sign a Letter of Agreement with **FPT** during the summer after award notice is delivered. After signature, you will receive the first payment in September and the second payment in March.

Q: Is my **PODS Scholarship** reported to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS)?

A: Yes, **FPT** is required to report your **PODS Scholarship** to the IRS. You will be asked to complete a W-9 before receiving your first scholarship check. However, you will not receive any tax documentation forms in regards to your **PODS Scholarship**. It is your responsibility to incorporate the income on your tax reporting forms.

Q: Is my **PODS Scholarship** tax free?

A: That depends upon your use of your **PODS Scholarship**. Some uses of scholarship money are not considered tax deductible. It will be your responsibility to make those determinations and reporting to the IRS within your tax returns. **FPT** will provide you with a guidance sheet for scholarship proceeds use, but it is ultimately your responsibility to report the use appropriately.

Q: Am I required to file any reports to **FPT** in relation to the **PODS Scholarship**?

A: Yes, you will be required to final a Final Report in relation to the scholarship year. This will be due in September after the scholarship year concludes in August. You will receive specific information as to the contents of this Final Report from the Scientific Program Administrator. Keep in mind that failure to submit a Final Report will bar you from any future **FPT** funding.
