Manitoba Soil Science Society Travel Awards Terms of Reference

1. GOALS

The Manitoba Soil Science Society (MSSS) brings together soil scientists, agronomists, ecologists, environmental scientists, and related professionals to promote and recognize excellence in soil science research and education across Manitoba and beyond. With a particular focus on addressing local agricultural and environmental concerns, MSSS aims to foster collaborative research, knowledge exchange, and professional dialogue within the soil science community.

These travel awards leverage MSSS funds to foster knowledge exchange by supporting the participation of emerging researchers in Manitoba. This will be achieved by providing travel awards to students conducting soil science research, enabling them to showcase their work, network with established professionals, and engage with current research and management issues relevant to Manitoba and the broader prairie region. These awards are specifically targeted at undergraduate and graduate students whose research aligns with MSSS's mission to advance the understanding and sustainable management of soil resources.

2. DEFINITIONS

Undergraduate students – Students enrolled in an accredited Bachelor's degree or diploma program at a recognized post-secondary institution.

Graduate students – Students enrolled in an accredited Master's or Ph.D. program at a recognized post-secondary institution.

MSSS Membership – Memberships of MSSS is open to individuals who demonstrate a professional interest in soils sciences and attend either the annual conference/AGM or field tour. There are no membership fees. Termination of membership occurs in the event of the member failing to attend any three consecutive meetings in combinations of the annual conference/AGM or summer tour.

3. AWARDS & FUNDING

As funding permits, MSSS will fund on an annual basis two travel awards. The final number and value of these awards are subject to available funds and are at the discretion of the MSSS Executive.

1. Manitoba Access Travel Award

Value: $300 CAD

This travel award is designed for undergraduate and graduate students who are traveling from outside Winnipeg to attend the annual MSSS Conference and Annual General Meeting in Winnipeg, MB. The funds are intended to help offset the additional costs associated with travel and accommodation for attending this event. This award is made possible through the support of, and in recognition of, the dedicated volunteers and members of MSSS who contribute their time and effort to organize and deliver the annual Conference and AGM and Summer Soil Tour.

2. Manitoba Soil Extension & Applied Research Travel Award

Value: $500 CAD

This travel award is designed for undergraduate and graduate students who are residents of Manitoba and members of the MSSS and wish to attend a professional conference or scientific meetings outside the province of Manitoba. The funds are intended to help offset the costs of travel, accommodation, and registration associated with attending these events. This award is made possible through the support of, and in recognition of, the dedicated individuals who organize and deliver continuing education and outreach activities in soil science across Manitoba, such as the annual Soil Fertility Refresher Course.

4. ELIGIBILITY

Applicants are eligible if they meet the following conditions:

1. Manitoba Access Travel Award

1. Meet the definition of graduate student or undergraduate student.
2. Be residing outside of Winnipeg and incurring travel costs to attend.
3. Have registered for the upcoming MSSS annual AGM and Conference in Winnipeg, Manitoba.
4. Student, or their supervisor, must be a member of the MSSS.
5. Previous awardees are not eligible to reapply.

2. Manitoba Soil Extension & Applied Research Travel Award

1. Meet the definition of graduate student or undergraduate student.
2. Must be a resident of Manitoba.
3. Eligible applications will be those that involve attendance of a soil science meeting outside of Manitoba.
4. Student must be a member of the MSSS.
5. Previous awardees are not eligible to reapply.

5. CALENDAR

Applications must be received by December 15th. If this date falls on a weekend, the deadline will be extended to the following Monday. The results will be announced in January.

6. APPLICATION & EVALUATION

1. Manitoba Access Travel Award

Applications must include the following:

1. Completed and signed application form.
2. Condensed CV (max. 4 pages), including relevant work and volunteer experience, publications, research projects, conference presentations, and awards.

Evaluation criteria

1. Candidate meets the eligibility requirements.
2. Academic, scientific, and volunteer accomplishments of the candidate.
3. Quality and relevance of the research/project to soil science.
4. Clarity and quality of the applicant's personal and professional development benefits and expected advancement of soil science.
5. Priority is given to applicants who are presenting an oral paper or poster at the MSSS annual AGM and Conference.

2. Manitoba Soil Extension & Applied Research Travel Award

Applications must include the following:

1. Completed and signed application form.
2. Condensed CV (max 4 pages), including relevant work and volunteer experience, publications, research projects, conference presentations, and awards.
3. Document (max 1 page) describing the soil science meeting to be attended, the dates of the meeting, the deadlines for registration, and why it is an appropriate venue to engage with the soil science community.

Evaluation criteria

1. Candidate meets the eligibility requirements.
2. Academic, scientific, and volunteer accomplishments of the candidate.
3. Quality and relevance of the research/project to soil science.
4. Clarity and quality of the applicant's personal and professional development benefits and expected advancement of soil science.
5. Location and suitability of conference/meeting.
6. Priority is given to applicants who will be the presenting author that attends and communicates their scientific results at the soil science meeting.

7. GENERAL FUNDING CONDITIONS

- Awards are intended to cover travel-related expenses and will be provided as a lump sum to the awardee.
- MSSS will not reimburse invoices or make direct payments to providers.
- Manitoba Access Travel awardees must attend the MSSS annual AGM and Conference to receive the award.
- Manitoba Soil Extension & Applied Research Travel awardees will forfeit the funds if travel to the conference does not occur within the calendar year in which award was received.
- Should an awardee be unable to attend, the award will be forfeited and may, at MSSS's discretion, be offered to a runner-up. Any such reassignment must be confirmed and paid within the same calendar year for accounting purposes.

8. EVALUATION PANEL

- Composed of at least three current members of the MSSS, including at least one executive member.
- Members with conflicts of interest (personal/professional ties with applicants or hosts) will be excluded from evaluation.