



SOUTHEASTERN PLANETARIUM ASSOCIATION

Professional Development Fund Application

Application Deadline: June 1, 2026

Instructions

The SEPA Professional Development Fund was set up by SEPA Council and is funded by proceeds from the Silent Auction held at conferences, as well as from member and vendor donations.

Each award covers the amount of registration and, if funds allow, a stipend for travel and/or hotel stay. Recipient names will be sent to the conference host in order to assure that the Professional Development Committee (PDC) will cover the conference registration fee. If there is a stipend, it will be in the form of a check given to recipient at the end of the conference once receipts are given to the SEPA Treasurer.

To apply, one must be currently employed as a member of the planetarium staff or be a student/intern at an active planetarium in the SEPA region and be a full SEPA member (not a vendor). Volunteers may apply if they can demonstrate a high level of involvement at their home institution or in the planetarium field. A recommended method is to obtain a reference letter from a supervisor attesting to the volunteer's role and contributions. Volunteers must also be full SEPA members. The applicant must meet deadlines for submitting this application form and, if selected, must also meet deadlines for conference registration and paper presentations. Applicants must complete the form below and submit it electronically or by mail to the chair of the PDC at the address below.

Award recipients must present a paper or poster at the conference. The paper, or a write-up of the poster, must be submitted to the editor of the SEPA Journal (Woodrow Grizzle at southernskies@sepadomes.org) in order for it to appear in the edition immediately following the conference. (The 2026 Conference is August 18-22, so the submission deadline is November 1st.)

If you are unsure of your eligibility, please get in touch with the PDC Chair (contact info below).

The committee will discuss the applications and choose recipients, as soon as possible, after the application deadline. Successful applicants will be notified by e-mail on or about June 15, 2026.

Award recipients must respond with written acknowledgment of acceptance and must formally register for the conference within one week of being notified. Failure to do so will be interpreted as a rejection of the award, in which case funds will either revert back to SEPA or be given to another applicant.

Complete and send to the PDC Chair at past-president@sepadomes.org

or by postal mail to:

**Professional Development Committee
c/o: Jason Dorfman
Bays Mountain Park & Planetarium
853 Bays Mountain Park Rd.
Kingsport, TN 37660**

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Full Name: _____

Planetarium: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone Number where you can be reached directly: _____

1. How many years have you been a SEPA member? _____
2. How long have you worked in the planetarium field? _____
3. Without financial aid, will you be able to attend the upcoming SEPA conference? _____
4. If your employer/planetarium is able to provide any financial assistance or pay part of conference expenses, please list the amount: _____
5. In one paragraph, tell us why you believe you should receive this award.

6. How do you anticipate benefiting from attending the SEPA Conference?

7. Do you plan to attend any other planetarium conferences this year, with or without financial assistance?

8. Please describe your paper or poster that will be presented at the conference and be published in the SEPA journal.

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