

**Nohad A. Toulan School of Urban Studies and Planning
Portland Planning Diversity Award program**



The Portland Planning Diversity Award (PPDA) program is a partnership between PSU Toulan School of Urban Studies and Planning (TSUSP) and local partners in the public, private and non-profit sectors to support Master of Urban and Regional Planning (MURP) students from underrepresented backgrounds in the planning profession, especially persons of color.

PPDA represents a powerful commitment by TSUSP and the local planning community to cultivating a more diverse pipeline of future planning professionals. It provides more than just financial support - students receive hands-on professional experience and mentorship opportunities. Since its inception in 2012, over two dozen MURP students have been supported through the PPDA program. Recent partner agencies have included: Portland Bureau of Development Services, Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, Bureau of Environmental Services, Portland Housing Bureau, Metro, and Portland African-American Leadership Forum.

How it works

PPDA provides MURP students graduate assistantship (GA) funding support, which includes full-time tuition benefit, partial fee remission, and a monthly stipend based on a minimum 0.30 FTE (12 hours/week) appointment working with agency partners. Prospective students apply to PPDA at the time of admission to the MURP program, and two-year awards are made upon admission to attract the most competitive candidates to the MURP program. Historically, TSUSP has offered three full PPDA funding commitments per cycle. Resources permitting, the program has been able to make one-year funding commitments as well, which are available to incoming and returning MURP students. PPDA recipients are selected by TSUSP but agency partners may be involved in the selection process, and agencies interview and approve all candidates before a placement is made.

The program is based on a partnership between PSU and the host agency or organization. The two entities share the cost of the GA position, with external partners contributing toward the cost of the position based on the student's program year and FTE level. Non-profit partners may receive a lower cost-share rate. PSU and the agency execute a contract or Intergovernmental Agreement (for public sector partners) to formalize the partnership.

The student's appointment lasts for the duration of the academic year (AY), from September 16 to June 15 of the following year. The student is considered a PSU graduate student employee, and is paid on a monthly stipend. However, it is expected that the host agency will provide workspace for the student, and ensure that the student is fulfilling the expected number of hours implied by their appointment. Agencies are not obligated to rehire the student for the subsequent year, and students may seek out other appointments if they wish.

More information, including recent PPDA student profiles, is available at:

<https://www.pdx.edu/usp/diversity-awards>

PPDA AY 2020/21 Public/Private Sector Cost-share rate by student and appointment level

As of AY 2020/21, the cost-share rate for returning (second year and beyond) MURP students will be higher than for incoming students, to reflect their skill and experience levels.

FTE (Hours per Sept-June Academic Year)	Partner cost-share (first year/returning)	Effective hourly rate to partner
0.30 (468 hours)	\$9,000/\$12,000	\$19.23/\$25.64
0.40 (624 hours)	\$12,000/\$15,000	\$19.23/\$24.04
0.49 (764 hours- maximum)	n/a* / \$17,500	n/a / \$22.91

* PPDA partners are not recommended to hire incoming MURP students on 0.49 FTE appointments.

The full cost for a GA position, including tuition remission, partial fee waiver and monthly stipend, is approximately \$25,000-28,000 per student. The balance of the costs for each position are supported by PSU general funds and external donors through the [Toulon School Diversity Fund](#) at the PSU Foundation.

Program Contacts:

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