

Student-Hosted Career Conversations

(GSA-Supported Informational Networking Initiative)



Purpose & Scope

The **Graduate Student Association (GSA)** supports this initiative **solely to reduce financial barriers to career networking**. The intent is to enable **informational interviews** that help students navigate pathways to jobs and internships. In this context, informational interviews are short, informal conversations where you ask someone about their job, organization, and career path to learn and build connections, not to directly ask for a job.

To know more about such interviews, please visit [this resource](#).

Students are fully responsible for identifying professionals, reaching out to them, and scheduling and hosting the conversations. The GSA will not source professionals or broker introductions. However, students are highly encouraged to rely on their respective school's professional development center to identify and connect with alumni.

Each student is eligible only once per semester.

Program Concept

Any graduate student may host a short, informal career conversation with a professional from their field of interest (alumni or non-alumni). Such a conversation must focus on career pathways and trajectories, hiring insights and expectations, practical advice for internships, jobs, or sector entry, and related themes only.

Such conversations may be 1:1 or in a group of 2-6 students only.

GSA Support: Reimbursement Model

To keep the program accessible and easy to administer, **GSA support is limited to post-event reimbursements**.

Eligible expenses include food, local transportation for the student (public transportation/rideshare), parking, and related expenses. However, costs like alcohol, long-distance travel, and lodging are ineligible to be reimbursed.

While the final cap can be adjusted based on total budget availability, the maximum reimbursement can be up to **\$30 per student (per such conversation)**. However, if hosted on campus, students will be reimbursed up to \$17/person for the buffet at The Faculty Club.

The reimbursements must be claimed within the same semester and cannot be carried over to future semester(s).

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Process

1. *After* your meeting has occurred, students will be required to submit a reimbursement request form (see below), including the receipt(s) and a short meeting summary of 30-40 words.
2. The GSA will process all *complete* applications within 5 business days and share a decision. Students should expect to receive their reimbursement within 2 to 3 weeks.
3. All reimbursement request forms must be submitted by the following deadlines in order to be considered: Fall Semester - **December 1**; Spring Semester - **May 1**.

Professional Behavior Guidelines

Receiving this GSA support requires the students to adhere to these basics of professionalism:

1. **Treat the conversation as a professional meeting:** be punctual, dress neatly, and silence your phone and notifications during the discussion. Be present and alert.
2. **Clarify expectations up front:** briefly restate the purpose (career exploration, pathways, and hiring insights), keep the focus on learning rather than asking for a job, and stick to the agreed-upon time.
3. **Come prepared and engaged:** research the person and their organization, bring a few thoughtful questions, listen actively, avoid interrupting, and include everyone if it is a small group conversation.
4. **Be respectful with logistics and money:** choose accessible locations, stay within reimbursement guidelines (no alcohol or extravagant spending), and handle bills and receipts carefully and transparently.
5. **Follow up courteously:** send a brief thank-you note within 24-48 hours, mention one or two key takeaways, and avoid excessive follow-up or pressuring the professional for referrals or job leads.

To apply for this effort, please fill out this reimbursement application form:
<https://forms.gle/iegswufxPCq8rNrU8>

For any queries, please reach out to brandeisgsa@brandeis.edu