

American Society for Microbiology (ASM)

Peggy Cotter Travel Award Program for Early Career* Branch Members

Purpose: The ASM Peggy Cotter Travel Award Program for Early Career Branch Members provides funds for outstanding early career* Branch members to attend ASM Microbe.

***Definition of Early Career:** For the purposes of this award, “early career” includes

- a. Postdoctoral fellows (up to 15 years beyond terminal degree).
- b. Clinical Laboratory Scientists/Bench Techs (CLS, MT, MLT, MLS) (up to 15 years beyond terminal degree).
- c. Early Career Faculty (either tenure track or non-tenure track; e.g., Assistant Professors, Research Assistant Professors, Visiting Assistant Professors, etc.) (up to 15 years beyond terminal degree).
- d. Early-Stage Investigators (ESI’s) (up to 15 years beyond terminal degree).
- e. Industry personnel (up to 15 years beyond terminal degree).
- f. Other – as determined by Branch, but only individuals who are up to 15 years beyond terminal degree.
- g. NOTE – Students are NOT eligible for this award.
- h. EXCEPTIONS – Exceptions to the 15-year time limit may be made in special circumstances on a case-by-case basis (e.g., career delays caused by taking parental leave to care for children).

Amount and Number of Awards:

- Up to 3 awards per Branch.
- Each award is \$1650.

Use of Awards:

- Awardees will use the awards to partially defray the costs for registration, travel, accommodation, meals, and incidentals associated with attending ASM Microbe. The award amount generally does NOT cover all costs. If the award amount does not cover the awardee's full costs of attending ASM Microbe, the awardee is responsible for paying the balance. The award funds will be distributed after ASM Microbe, once it is verified that the awardee attended the ASM Microbe meeting.

Abstract Submission to ASM Microbe:

- Abstract submission to ASM Microbe is completely independent of the ASM Peggy Cotter Travel Award Program for Early Career Branch Members.
- Awardees will NOT be guaranteed a poster or oral presentation at ASM Microbe.
- Awardees of (or applicants to) the Peggy Cotter awards program may submit abstracts to ASM Microbe (and are encouraged to do so) by the deadline established by ASM, but there is no guarantee that their abstracts will be accepted.

Administration of Awards:

- Each Branch may identify up to 3 awardees, based on criteria established by the award program and the individual Branch (see below for program criteria).
- ASM (the national organization) will verify ASM and Branch membership status of proposed awardees, but otherwise, the choice of awardees is solely the responsibility of the Branch.
- Each Branch will provide ASM HQ with names and contact information of awardees by the deadline specified by ASM HQ (the deadline varies each year depending on the dates of Microbe).
- ASM HQ will work directly with awardees to handle processing and distribution of funds.

- Awardees will be responsible for paying any local, state, and federal taxes associated with receipt of cash awards.
- Federal and State government employees must check with their individual agencies to confirm whether they are permitted to accept cash awards prior to acceptance of any award. Any tax consequences will be the responsibility of the award recipient.

Travel Arrangements:

- Awardees will be responsible for registering for ASM Microbe and making all their own travel arrangements to attend the meeting. The award funds will be distributed after ASM Microbe, once it is verified that the awardee attended the ASM Microbe meeting. Award funds are to be used to defray the costs associated with attending the meeting (registration, travel, accommodation, meals, incidentals). The award amount generally does NOT cover all costs. If the award amount does not cover the awardee's full costs of attending ASM Microbe, the awardee is responsible for paying the balance. ASM does not require the submission of an expense report or receipts.

Forfeiture of Award Funds:

- All award program funds must be used for the purpose of funding outstanding early career Branch members to attend ASM Microbe. The funds cannot be used for any other purpose by the Branches or individual awardees.
- In cases where a Branch awards fewer than 3 awards, its unused funds will revert to ASM.
- In cases where an awardee decides not to attend ASM Microbe, the Branch can arrange for another individual (who meets the award criteria) to use the funds to attend ASM Microbe; if no other candidate is available, the funds will revert to ASM.

Award Selection Criteria:

General Criteria for All Awardees –

1. All awardees must be participating members of their local ASM Branch.
2. All awardees must be Postdoctoral, Clinical Laboratory Scientist (CLS, MT, MLT, MLS), Contributing, or Premium members of ASM (the national organization) at the time of application/nomination. Student, Supporting, Emeritus, and Honorary members are not eligible for the award. NOTE: Students are NOT eligible for this award, regardless of the member type for which they opted when joining ASM.
3. All awardees must be “early career” which for the purposes of this award includes the following:
 - a. Postdoctoral fellows (up to 15 years beyond terminal degree).
 - b. Clinical Laboratory Scientists/Bench Techs (CLS, MT, MLT, MLS) (up to 15 years beyond terminal degree).
 - c. Early Career Faculty (either tenure track or non-tenure track; e.g., Assistant Professors, Research Assistant Professors, Visiting Assistant Professors, etc.) (up to 15 years beyond terminal degree).
 - d. Early-Stage Investigators (ESI’s) (up to 15 years beyond terminal degree).
 - e. Industry personnel (up to 15 years beyond terminal degree).
 - f. Other – as determined by Branch, but only individuals who are up to 15 years beyond terminal degree.
 - g. NOTE – Students are NOT eligible for this award.
 - h. EXCEPTIONS – Exceptions to the 15-year time limit may be made in special circumstances on a case-by-case basis (e.g., career delays caused by taking parental leave to care for children).
4. Past recipients of this travel award are NOT eligible to receive the award again.

Branch-Specific Criteria –

1. In addition to the ASM “General Criteria for All Awardees” listed above, each Branch may determine its own specific additional criteria for selecting awardees.
2. Selection criteria a Branch might choose to use include:
 - a. Branch meeting awardees (posters, oral presentations).
 - b. Active, engaged members of the Branch.
 - c. Postdoctoral Chapter officers.
 - d. Individuals whose abstract submissions to ASM Microbe are seen as exceptional.
 - e. Individuals who are “multipliers”: influencers who mentor undergraduate or graduate students or newly trained clinical microbiologists, and/or who are active participants in social media or other outreach efforts, and/or who can “get the word out” about ASM Microbe and ASM.
3. Any specific criteria identified by an individual Branch must NOT conflict with the ASM “General Criteria for All Awardees” outlined above. Otherwise, Branches have discretion to determine the criteria.

Students:

- Students are NOT eligible for the Peggy Cotter Awards for Early Career Branch Members.

Application and Selection Process:

- Each Branch will determine its own specific application and selection process. ASM suggests that the processes be fairly simple and non-cumbersome for applicants and reviewers.
- Application and selection processes will be handled by the Branches; ASM (the national organization) will verify ASM and Branch membership status, but otherwise will not participate in the collection of applications or the review and selection of awardees.

Reporting Requirement:

- Each awardee should supply a brief report (verbal or written) to the Branch about their experiences at ASM Microbe. Individual Branches will determine how/when the reporting will take place. Feedback questions a Branch might choose to use include:
 - Demographic questions
 - What is awardee’s level of training, terminal degree.
 - Principal position.
 - Demographics.
 - How did awardee learn about the ASM Peggy Cotter Travel Award Program for Early Career Branch Members
 - Branch meeting.
 - Email.
 - Website.
 - Mentor/Faculty member.
 - Other.
 - Was the awardee’s networking experience enhanced by the travel award?
 - Was the awardee’s Microbe meeting experience made possible by the travel award?
 - Did the awardee make new connections from the meeting?
 - Ask the awardee to rate the value of the following Microbe activities: (1-5)
 - Poster Talks and Sessions.
 - General (e.g., Opening Session, Future of ASM/President’s Forum or Keynote).
 - Scientific (e.g., Meet-the-Expert, Plenary, Lecture, or Symposia).
 - Since the meeting, has awardee integrated anything learned into his/her practice?
 - Yes/No - If yes, please elaborate.
 - Optional feedback in text format on ways we might improve the travel awards program for awardees.

- ASM will conduct a survey asking for feedback on the travel awards program to allow for efficient collection of data.

Relationship between ASM and its Branches:

- As set forth in detail in ASM's Policies and Procedures Manual, ASM is an independent legal entity from its Branches.
- This program is not intended to and does not alter the legal relationship between ASM and its Branches, and ASM is not responsible for any claim from an attendee related to his or her selection or non-selection for this program or other legal claims as a result of this program.