

Guidance on the 2018 TPS Bursary Competition

Introduction

The Transport Planning Society supports the development of Young Professionals through the annual Bursary Competition. Bursaries provide young transport planners with the opportunity and funding (£500, paid on successful submission and presentation of a paper to the TPS Board) to conduct a piece of innovative and structured thinking on the topic of

‘Transport Planners and other disciplines – Better together’

as explained in the Bursary Application Form.

Successful applicants will work with a mentor (normally a TPS Board member) to prepare a paper and present it to the TPS Board.

The best paper is given the “Bursary of the Year” award and an additional £250.

This note provides further guidance to Bursary Applicants.

Topic and Title

The TPS Board has chosen a subject for the bursary scheme and applicants must then propose a specific subtitle and topic of their choice which fits this subject. It is helpful if your title gives a clear impression of what the reader can expect to see in the paper.

If, after beginning your research, it becomes apparent that you need to change the focus of your paper (e.g. due to lack of availability of anticipated data) this can be done with the agreement of your mentor, as long as the revised paper is still relevant to the subject.

When choosing a topic, you should bear in mind that you will have just under five months in which to undertake your research and complete the written paper, so please make sure that what you propose will be manageable in the time available as well as being relevant to the year’s subject.

More generally

Applicants should choose to use the bursary as an opportunity to do something they would not do in their “day job”. However, you can build on or extend work that you are doing for your employer (with their agreement). If you do this, the work completed for the bursary must be your own original work and be additional to that for which you are being paid.

We encourage primary research and data collection for the bursary. The most successful Bursarians (including most of those who have won Bursary of the Year) in recent years have included either new analysis of existing data or collation of fresh data, collected through survey or from other sources.

While a literature review may be a helpful introduction to your chosen topic, do not rely on a literature review alone for the main part of your work (as it will not add to established knowledge) unless you are able to draw some very original conclusions from it.

Word Limit and Paper Size

The word limit for the paper is **5000** words.

Appendices can be added and do not count towards the word limit. However, they should not be used as a way of including additional material, and Appendices will not be read when the papers are judged. Nevertheless, they may be a useful way of recording references, a copy of any questionnaire used, organisations consulted, methodology used etc. Detailed transcripts of interviews or lengthy summaries of literature reviewed should not be included.

You are free to include photos and diagrams in the paper but the size of the finally submitted document (including Appendices (if any)) must not exceed 5Mb and, desirably, should be considerably less. Video clips must not be included.

The role of the mentor

Your mentor will offer you advice and guidance on the research or analysis you are undertaking and on the content of your paper. For example, they may suggest additional issues you might want to cover or a different way of analysing data, or advise on the structure of your paper.

However, they are not project managing your work and it is your responsibility to ensure that the paper is completed on time and that you are making sufficient progress in the early stages to meet the final deadline.

The frequency and type of contact you have with your mentor is for agreement between you. Where location permits, some choose to meet face-to-face; others rely mainly on phone and/or email contact.

Deadlines

It is important to meet the **31 December 2018** deadline set for the submission of your final paper. If you anticipate difficulty meeting this deadline, you should advise your mentor as soon as possible.

Extensions to the deadline are only likely to be granted in exceptional circumstances.

Any other deadlines (e.g. for submitting drafts for comment) are for you to agree with your mentor although we encourage all bursary holders to develop a plan for their work and an outline of their paper at an early stage.

Presenting your paper

Part of the requirement for receiving the bursary is a presentation of your paper to the TPS Board. This will take place at an evening event in Central London in January 2018 on a date agreed to suit Bursarians and Board members. The decision on Bursary of the Year is based on both the written paper and the presentation. If for any reason, you are unable to present at this event, it may be possible to arrange for you to present to the Board on another occasion. However, again, this is only likely to be possible in exceptional circumstances.

What bursary holders get in return

Apart from the £500 awarded upon successful completion of the paper and presentation (and the additional £250 for Bursary of the Year), the bursary scheme offers a great opportunity to develop as a transport planning professional. Previous bursary holders have welcomed the opportunity to spend time focusing on issues or techniques that they cannot pursue in their day job, and to expose their ideas to a senior audience. TPS will disseminate the completed work through our website and many

bursary holders go on to present their findings at conferences, such as the annual Transport Practitioners' Meeting.