



THE PATRICIA AUSTIN GRADUATE STUDENT AWARD

The Patricia Austin Graduate Student Award is offered for outstanding graduate student research in adapted physical activity. The award is adjudicated by the North American Federation of Adapted Physical Activity (NAFAPA) Board.

Patricia Austin was a pioneer in the field of adapted physical activity in Canada. After completing her Ph.D. at Michigan State University, she was a faculty member at the University of Alberta for 31 years prior to her untimely death from cancer in 1978. Dr. Austin developed the first undergraduate concentration in adapted physical activity in Canada and contributed significantly to the development of physical activity programs for persons with disabilities. She also made a major contribution to the development of Special Olympics in Canada.

Purpose

The award is given to recognize *outstanding scholarly research* conducted by a graduate student in adapted physical activity.

Eligibility

The applicant must submit an unpublished scholarly paper reporting a research study in adapted physical activity.

1. The applicant must be the principal author of the submitted scholarly paper.
2. The paper must have been written within 24 months of the date of application, and the work completed while the student was registered in a recognized graduate program as a Master's or Doctoral student.
3. At the time of submission for the Pat Austin Graduate Student Award, the paper must be unpublished. This means that the paper cannot already be published, or In Press, for publication in a scholarly journal, at the time of submission. The author(s) certify this to be true through the submission of the paper for this award. In your cover letter, please indicate if the paper has been submitted for publication and provide the date of submission.
4. The applicant must not have been a previous recipient of the Patricia Austin Graduate Student Award.
5. Only one submission will be accepted from each applicant.

Application

1. The application package should include (a) cover letter stating that the submitted manuscript meets all eligibility criteria; (b) a confirmation/support letter from the applicant's mentor; and (c) deidentified copy of the manuscript as one file including tables and figures.

2. Individuals must submit the unpublished scholarly research paper in a PDF format, following the American Psychological Association format, 7th edition.
3. Manuscripts must be written in English; they should be double-spaced, including quotes; they should be written with Times New Roman 12 pt. fonts; and they should not exceed 30 pages in length, including title page, abstract, main text, reference list, tables, and figures.
4. All manuscript must be deidentified. Remove names and any identifying information from the manuscript.
5. A confirmation/support letter written by the student's advisor/mentor must be included in the submission, indicating that: (a) the submitting author was a student when the paper was written; and (b) the student was the principal investigator in the research and the primary author of the paper. Applications will not be considered without this confirmation letter.
6. The deadline for applications for the 2025 competition is: **March 1, 2026**. Submit applications via mail to: Dr. Andy Pitchford, NAFAPA President-Elect. Email: andrew.pitchford@oregonstate.edu. Please ensure the subject line of your email says: Patricia Austin Award Submission.

Award

The recipient of the Pat Austin Award will orally present their scholarly paper in a distinguished session at the NAFAPA symposium. The recipient will also be awarded with a certificate following their presentation. A public announcement of the award recipient will also be made on the NAFAPA website when the final decision is made.

Financial Support

There is no financial support for the Pat Austin Award including travel expenses associated with attending the symposium.

Selection Procedures

1. The NAFAPA President-Elect and a representative from the Faculty of Kinesiology, Sport, and Recreation of the University of Alberta will facilitate the review process.
2. A review committee for the award will be appointed and comprised of experienced researchers in Adapted Physical Activity. All submitted manuscripts will be reviewed and evaluated by at least two reviewers without apparent or potential conflicts of interest. Reviewers will submit their evaluations to the NAFAPA President-Elect who will facilitate the committee process for selecting the winner.
3. Review criteria will include: a) Scientific merit of the research b) Novelty of the research c) Strength of introduction d) Soundness of method e) Soundness of results f) Quality of discussion g) Overall quality of the paper
4. Applicants will be informed of the outcome of their applications by June 1, 2026