

ALLOCATION PROTOCOLS FOR STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION FUNDS

4.1 FUNDING PROCESS OVERVIEW

Student Government Association (SGA) provides funding for registered student organizations to support events, programs, travel, and other related items that support and enhance students' extra-curricular experience. RSOs are encouraged to work collaboratively and combine resources to enhance their ability to serve students. When RSOs seek to co-sponsor activities, each RSO should submit an individual request to SGA with a clear itemization of all financial needs and contributions from their specific organization.

4.2 STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION FUNDING REQUESTS REQUIREMENTS

In order to receive funding from the Student Government Association, Registered Student Organizations (RSOs) must satisfy the following requirements:

- I. Be in good standing with Student Life & Development (must have completed all requirements for an active RSO).
- II. Attend bi-weekly Forum meetings.
 - a. Good standing is defined as attending 4 out of the 6 Forum meetings in the Fall semester and 5 out of 7 of the Forum meetings in the Spring semester
 - b. Attended by an active member of the organization
 - i. All attendance will be tracked at each Forum. It is the responsibility of the organization representative to sign in to each Forum.
- III. Be an Active RSO within Student Government Association
 - a. Complete monthly oversight forms.

4.3 STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION FUNDING REQUESTS PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES

Registered Student Organization Funding Requests

Registered Student Organizations' funding requests should be submitted to the SGA Treasurer using the appropriate [Funding Request Form](#). Only Registered Student Organizations in good standing are eligible to request funding from SGA. All forms must be submitted within 30 days prior to the event.

The following information must be submitted for consideration for funding:

- A written description of the specific event and purpose of the event
- An estimate of costs for any required supplies or services that correlate to the programs, activities, or events.
- A list of all expenses and vendor information
- All supporting documentation (quotes, invoices, items requesting)
- Date that you would need the items by

Registered Student Organization Funding Process

Once all documentation has been submitted, the SGA President and SGA Treasurer will meet with the SGA Advisor once a week (date and time determined at the start of each semester and communicated at Forum) to review requests to ensure that request forms have been completed properly, and that all necessary supporting documentation has been submitted. Any requests that are not submitted in the proper format with all required supporting documentation will be returned to the submitting organization. Organizations are strongly encouraged to work with their advisors on the preparation of all documentation before submission to the SGA.

After completion of the initial review, the SGA Treasurer will make a preliminary decision about each request and refer the request(s) to the appropriate approving authority (SGA Allocation Committee or SGA Forum). Any funding request after the initial review meeting will be reviewed at the next scheduled meeting day.

If you are requesting to purchase items locally, you will only be allowed to submit request from Walmart. All requested shipping purchases must be requested from Amazon and can take up to 2-3 weeks to be ordered and delivered. This process will also be communicated to the organization, if the funding request is approved.

Funding requests for less than \$250.00 will be reviewed and approved or denied by the SGA President and SGA Treasurer.

Funding requests for \$251.00- \$500.00 will be reviewed by the SGA Treasurer to ensure that it meets SGA funding requirements and then be sent to the Cougar Allocation Committee, comprised of 7 Senators (1 for each college and 1 At-Large). The SGA Treasurer is Chair of the committee.

Funding requests for \$501.00 or above will be reviewed by the SGA Treasurer to ensure that it meets SGA funding requirements and will be voted on at SGA Forum. The funding request must be approved by the majority of the SGA Forum which consists of all RSO representatives and SGA Senators.

The SGA Treasurer shall have veto equal to that of the SGA President in all matters concerning budget approval and revisions to the SGA budget. Veto power will be upheld by the SGA President in the case of a decision from the Cougar Allocation Committee, so that no bias is made from the SGA Treasurer. If there is veto from the decision of the Cougar Allocation Committee, it will go to the SGA President so that no bias is made from the SGA Treasurer.

Approval or denial of funding requests will be communicated to the requesting student organization by the SGA Treasurer. Once the information has been sent to the registered student organization, it is the responsibility of the organization to follow all processes accurately.

4.4 STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION FUNDING GUIDELINES

The amount of funding an RSO may receive, is determined at the beginning of each Fiscal Year (Fall semester). The amount an RSO may receive can be determined by the RSO's stated programmatic needs and is dependent upon submission of accurate documentation supporting the request and available

funds. SGA's recommendations and the SGA Advisors decision for RSO funding will be based solely on whether the requesting RSO has met the following viewpoint-neutral requirements,

- The RSO's funding application must be submitted by the applicable application deadline (30 days prior to the event).
- The RSO's funding application must be complete with all submitted invoices.
- Events and activities funded through student activity fees must be open to all CSU students (not a ticketed or for-profit event).
- The RSO's request must accurately estimate the likely cost of the event, including by taking into consideration the number of students likely to attend
- If an RSO requests funding for one or more events, individual organization requests must be submitted per event. The event space must be approved prior to submitting SGA funding request.

SGA will not use the length of time the RSO has been in existence as a criteria when making funding decisions for RSOs.

Items typically funded through SGA, based on BOR guidelines, include:

- Independent contractor fees for outside speakers and entertainers (which can include travel-related expenses, but flat rate contracted fees are preferred)
- Event production and promotion expenses (including equipment rental, printing, etc.)
- Prizes/awards from raffles: Participation in raffles must be available to all students.
 - Raffles/lotteries may be lawfully conducted without a license if participants are allowed to enter at no cost. For these events, individual prizes must be de minimis in value (not to exceed \$75).
- Food and refreshments for student activities when open to all students (closed meetings, club member specific meetings/socials/banquets, or officer meetings are excluded)
 - Promotion to the student body is required. The event must be added to CSUinvolve. The organization must submit the event to Cougar Connection by the Friday prior to the event. Additionally, the organization must announce the event at an SGA Forum, prior to the event.
- Promotional items directly associated with student events, within individual value limits (note: limited quantity t-shirts for event promotion are permissible, but t-shirts specifically for organization members are not)
 - Promotions must be consumable in nature (i.e. a giveaway, printed materials) and not "permanent" items or items for which inventory control might be required (including no permanent display boards, banners, tablecloths, etc.).
 - No advertising costs associated with non-CSU supported platforms
- Travel that is directly related to a student organization's purpose and through which the members traveling will represent CSU (see TRAVEL for more details).
- There will be no reimbursement for students, faculty, staff or organization/department. All requests must be submitted and approved in the required timeframe and provided clear approval prior to purchasing. If a student, faculty/ staff member, organization or department takes it upon themselves to purchase items, even if the item has been approved, there will be

no reimbursement, and the individual or organization/department is responsible for the cost incurred.

- The only exception to this guideline is by prior written approval by the SGA Advisor.

In any given year, SGA may also establish guidelines related to specific types of expenditures based on circumstances and the remaining amount of resources available for allocation. If such caps are established, SGA will ensure that information is included in the minutes of the meeting during which the decision was made.

4.5 INAPPROPRIATE EXPENDITURES

SGA must comply with all rules and regulations of the institution, the Board of Regents (BOR), and any additional requirements imposed by local, state, or federal agencies, when allocating funds from SGA. SGA may choose to establish stricter guidelines or funding limits that go above and beyond the regulations set forth by the institution, the BOR, and any additional requirements imposed by local, state, or federal agencies.

Per the USG Business Procedures Manual (section 24.3.1) Student Activity Fees should not be expended on the following:

- Alcohol, tobacco, drugs, or any illegal or substances
- Individual or club memberships in civic organizations
- Political campaigns, parties, candidates, or events
- Membership fees for civic organizations
- Events that are not open to all CSU students such as general body meetings, membership recognition events/end of year gatherings, club socials, planning meetings/retreats
- Personal use items (e.g. stoles/cords, personalized business cards, etc.)
- Funds for scholarships and stipends
- Gifts and other items intended primarily for personal use
- Employee recognition and meals (including student employees)
- Sales tax
- Events held off-campus
- Expenditures that violate applicable law, Board of Regents' policy, and CSU policies and procedures.

This list is not exhaustive and may be altered as necessary to ensure compliance with CSU and other required policies and procedures. RSOs that attempt to use funds inappropriately may become ineligible for future funding, subject to disciplinary action, and/or required to reimburse the University for the inappropriate expenses.

4.6 FUNDING LIMITS

SGA utilizes consistent guidelines for requesting funding. The following guidelines apply, in addition to all other criteria established herein.

- Maximum funding allowed for any single event, program, or activity is \$1000, regardless of how many students or organizations are involved.
- All RSO-sponsored events, programs, or activities must be held on a CSU campus.
- All events, programs, and activities receiving financial support must be open to all CSU students and promoted.
 - The event, program or activity cannot be a ticketed or for-profit event.
- Giveaways/prizes involved in pre-approved equal opportunity drawings cannot exceed a single value limit of \$75 and cannot include the purchase of gift cards
- Each RSO may receive up to a maximum of \$1500 per fiscal year for approved funding requests (to include event and travel requests), within specific guidelines.
- To ensure opportunity for the maximum benefit across the student body, SGA has established the following travel assistance limits:
 - \$250 maximum funding for any individual organization member per trip
 - \$1,500 maximum funding for any registered student organization

4.7 TRAVEL FUNDING

This is subject to change, based on USG, Georgia Department of Public Health & Centers for Disease Control guidelines. RSOs may request funding to support student travel that is directly relevant to the primary mission and purpose of that organization. Students receiving travel funds from SGA must represent the RSO and university by presenting at conferences, participating in competitions, or related activities where there is a clear business purpose for the travel and a direct benefit not only to the individual student traveling but also to the broader student body and the university.

SGA will pay student travel costs associated with registration fees, lodging, and transportation. Other travel-related expenses are not covered by SGA, including travel meals, luggage fees, VISA or passport fees, inoculations, parking or printed materials. All student travel information must be submitted a minimum of 60 days prior to the travel date. Failure to meet this deadline may result in the forfeit of approved travel funding. Travel pre-payment requests must be accompanied by all mandatory Student Travel Forms for each student for whom funds are being requested. Registered Student Organizations should work with their Advisors to make sure that all paperwork is completed accurately and that all necessary approval signatures are obtained before submission to the SGA.

All student travel must adhere to the same standards as CSU employees. The following Student Travel forms must be completed in order for the funding request to be considered:

- Student Travel Application Form (One form for group.)
- Student Field Trip & Travel Approval Form (One form for group.) (PDF)
- Release & Waiver of Liability Form (Must be completed for each student participating in the trip.) (PDF)
- Student Travel Advance/Pre-Pay Authorization Form (One form for group.) (PDF)
- **Note:** *These forms must contain all of the required approval signatures or they will not be considered. All Student Travel Paperwork Forms can be found using this link: Student Travel Procedures - Columbus State University*

Registration Fees are typically the only component of student travel that can be paid for in advance. In some cases, it may be possible to issue a pre-payment check for lodging. However, the lodging registration will need to be made using a personal credit card. The Registered Student Organization (RSO) requesting a lodging pre-payment will be responsible for obtaining a W-9 Form from the vendor hotel (if necessary), and also written confirmation that the hotel will accept a University check. If the hotel will accept a check as payment, the check will be issued to a representative from the RSO, who will then be responsible for presenting it as payment to the hotel at check-in.

Due to a change in University Policy, reimbursements will be considered on an extremely limited basis. As there are pre-payment options available, student groups and organizations are strongly encouraged to plan ahead.

4.8 APPEALS PROCESS

All decisions made by SGA are advisory recommendations to the SGA Advisor and may be appealed by the RSO. In the event an RSO is denied a funding request, the RSO may request the appeal of the decision within five business days of the communicated decision. Appeals must be in writing and submitted to the SGA President, SGA Treasurer and SGA Advisor via email. The SGA President will respond to the appeal within five business days.