



User Guidelines

SOFAC Policies and Procedures

Website: <https://www.missouristate.edu/Organizations/SOFAC/default.htm>
E-mail: SOFAC@missouristate.edu

SOFAC Timeline for Student Organizations

The following timeline is a general outline that SOFAC adheres to every fiscal year. **Exact dates are posted on the SOFAC website for the current fiscal year.** *denotes a required event to receive SOFAC funding

- **July 1 – Fiscal Year Begins.** *Student organizations that received SOFAC funding can access their funds for the current fiscal year beginning on this date.*
- **August – Fall Semester Begins.** *The exact date varies each year. Please check the academic calendar for more information.*
- ***August-September – Student Organization Reregistration Period.** *Any student organization awarded SOFAC funding must be registered. If they fail to register or reregister their organization by the final reregistration date, they will lose their SOFAC funding and cannot re-access it.*
- **August-November – SOFAC Council Recruitment.** *During this time, SOFAC council applications will be live, and active advertising will be done to promote the opportunity for students to be on the SOFAC council. Required groups will be emailed at the beginning of the year to inform them that they must select one member from their group to represent them on the council by a specified date. All other student organizations will be reached via mass emails to inform them of the opportunity to serve on the SOFAC Council.*
- **January – Spring Semester Begins.** *The exact date varies each year. Please check the academic calendar for more information.*
- ***February – Budget Proposal Workshops.** *Student organizations interested in applying for funding must attend one budget proposal workshop before they can apply for funding. This is an annual requirement so organizations must attend each year that they want to apply for funding. It is required that the organization's current or upcoming president or treasurer attend in order for their attendance to be counted.*
- **March – Budget Proposal Review and Approval Process.** *The SOFAC council will begin reviewing budget proposals and conducting outreach efforts to gain clarity on any questions they have about the proposals. Award letters will be posted on each organization's BearLink page under the Documents tab.*
- **Early April – Appeal Hearings.** *Any student organization seeking to appeal against the decision made by the SOFAC council may do so during this time.*
- ***April – Payment Meetings.** *Student organizations awarded SOFAC funding must attend a payment meeting to be guaranteed the funding they were awarded. This meeting will cover how organizations use their funding. Failure to attend this meeting will result in a loss of the awarded funding.*
- **June 15 – Deadline to submit SOFAC requests to be processed for the current fiscal year.** *This hard deadline is in place to ensure that SOFAC and financial services have ample time to process all final requests.*
- **June 30 – Fiscal year ends.** *All unused allocated funds will be put back into the SOFAC budget to be used for the next fiscal year. Unused allocated funds cannot be accessed or reallocated after the deadline.*

Purpose and Objectives

- The Student Organization Funding Allocation Council, hereafter referred to as SOFAC, was established, as part of the Memorandum of Agreement, to receive budget proposals and allocate 30% of the Student Involvement Fee to registered student organizations at Missouri State University.
- The primary goal of SOFAC is to allocate funds on an annual (fiscal year July 1 – June 30) basis, thus allowing student organizations to thoughtfully budget for and plan programs and activities.
- SOFAC shall allocate funds to organizations with the following objectives in mind:
 - o To assist, via funding, registered student organizations' efforts to sponsor services or events that directly contribute to the betterment of the Missouri State student community.
 - o To assist, via funding, registered student organizations' efforts to sponsor events on campus to improve the social, cultural, recreational, and educational offerings to the students and the rest of the University community.
 - o To assist, via funding, registered student organizations' efforts to participate in services or events designed to foster members' educational, leadership or career focused growth, or to assist in the attainment of the respective organization's mission/purpose.
 - o To assist, via funding, registered student organizations' efforts to sponsor physical and/or environmental improvements in the quality of the Missouri State University student community.
- SOFAC funds will not be the sole funding source for an organization's events or services.
- Guidelines and paperwork forms can be found on the SOFAC website.
- Any organization currently registered with the Office of Student Engagement (OSE) is eligible to apply for funding, provided the organization has completed the Annual Registration process through the Office of Student Engagement in the Fall semester.
- SOFAC shall make funding decisions in a viewpoint-neutral manner.
- SOFAC reserves the authority to fund an organization at a level under that of the requested amount.
- SOFAC shall establish a set of internal standards and guidelines for funding which will be revised at the end of the Spring semester and posted to the SOFAC website at the beginning of the Fall semester annually.

Types of Funding

- Annual funding for a single organization shall not exceed \$2,000.
 - SOFAC reserves the authority to fund an organization at an amount less than the annual maximum.
 - No allocation shall be considered a guarantee. Receiving funding should be considered an award. Regardless of if the organization has received funding in the past, they are held to the same guidelines as any other organization.
- While funding can be requested for a wide variety of expenses, there are certain rules that apply to several types of expenses. The rules are discussed in this section.
- **General Budget Proposal**

Please note this list is not exhaustive and includes the most common covered requests by organizations. Additional expenses meeting one or more of the SOFAC primary objectives may be eligible for SOFAC funding per SOFAC approval.

 - A General Budget Proposal is a request for funding for any of the expenses below.
 - Equipment purchase
 - Association/Membership Fees (organizations only)
 - Transportation expenses (airline, train, car/bus rental, gas, parking, taxi/shuttle, etc.)
 - Lodging
 - Entertainer/Speaker/Other contracted persons fees
 - Conference registration fees
 - Facility reservation fees
 - DJ services
 - Any allocations for DJ services must be for university-wide functions, not parties of individual student organizations.
 - Advertising Expenses
- **Interim Funding**
 - To assist new organizations established after the General Budget Proposal timeline, SOFAC shall maintain an Interim Funding budget, which will provide them with the opportunity to receive funds.
 - Interim proposals must be submitted at least one month prior to the first event for which the organization is seeking funding.
 - Student organizations that received funding through a General Budget Proposal shall only be eligible for Interim Funding in the event of emergency expenditures.
 - Emergency expenditures are defined as those that result from a natural disaster, theft, vandalism, or unexpected equipment failure and would be extraordinarily detrimental to the organization if not funded.
 - Insufficient funding received by organizations through the General Budget Proposal funding process does not constitute grounds for Interim Funding under emergency conditions.
 - No applications for Interim Funding in the current fiscal year will be accepted after the first Friday of April each year.
- **New Organization Funding**
 - There will be a maximum of \$100 per organization for recruitment and advertising purposes.

- Organizations who have been frozen for 2+ years may receive New Organization Funding per completion of the constitutional approval process through the OSE
- **Post-Season Funding**
- Post-Season funding is intended to provide additional funding to those organizations who qualify for post-season competition which could not have previously planned for at the time of their original General Budget Proposal submission date.
 - This fund is intended to reward organizations which excelled by qualifying through competition in their organization's primary activity.
 - Post-Season funds are to be used for events that could not have been financially budgeted for because acceptance was not guaranteed.
- There will be a maximum allocation of \$1,000 per organization, per fiscal year.
 - There will be a maximum allocation of \$250 per student, per event. A \$500 per person, per fiscal year maximum will also be established.
 - Post-Season funding is not guaranteed solely on qualification for post-season competition.
- **Conference Presentation Grant**
- This grant is designed to financially assist student organization members who are selected to present a topic or research at conferences.
 - Academic presentations, or those that are a result of class work, are not permitted to use this grant fund. Only those presentations which are a result of the students' membership and work within the organization will be funded.
 - All grant applications will be reviewed in a case-by-case manner to determine whether the presentation is a result of organization membership or academic classwork.
- Requesting organization may also not include the conference expenses as part of their General Budget Proposal for which a Conference Presentation Grant is requested.
- Any student wishing to submit a request must:
 - Complete the appropriate form found on the SOFAC website
 - Submit a copy of an acceptance letter from the conference or program (must show student's name as a presenter).
 - Students must be registered students when applying for the grant and at the time of travel to the conference.
- Applicants must be an active and/or dues paying member of the organizations requesting funding.
- Applications must be submitted to the OSE at least ten (10) business days prior to your departure.
- Applications received after that timeframe will not be considered.
- Students traveling to a conference during the summer semester for which they are not enrolled in classes must have been enrolled for both the previous spring semester and the following fall semester.
 - If the student is not registered during the following fall semester, the student will be required to reimburse SOFAC.
- Recipients must be presenting or otherwise actively participating at a conference.

- Active participation means more than just attendance and does not include assisting with physical setup or supervision of a conference, or participation as a judge, reviewer, or facilitator.
- No grant may exceed \$250 per event; no student presenter may receive more than \$500 per fiscal year.
 - No grant may be awarded if the student is funded by another university entity.
- **Annual Designated Funds**
- Prior to setting the Allocation Budget for the fiscal year (the dollar amounts available to be requested by student organizations), the SOFAC staff will first set aside funding for various annual events/services including:
 - SOFAC shall maintain a 10% reserve of the total allocation from the Student Involvement Fee.
 - The Director of Student Engagement will establish an annual budget to SOFAC members of anticipated expenses for operating SOFAC by the end of February annually for the following fiscal year. Such expenses may include, but are not limited to:
 - Computer Equipment, Maintenance and Software
 - Event & Meeting Services Fees
 - Data Lines including local and long-distance phone charges
 - Staff salaries (Graduate Assistant and Student Specialist)
 - Professional Development
 - Office Supplies and Printing fees
 - Council Orientation and Training
 - Student Organization Travel Insurance
 - Council Development and Appreciation
 - Sponsorships
- All monies remaining in an organization's "account" will be 100% swept at the end of the fiscal year back to the SOFAC budget.
 - The council, in conjunction with the MOA Commission, will determine the use of any carryforward monies.

Submitting a Proposal

- All organizations must attend a SOFAC Budget Proposal Workshop scheduled during the spring semester before an organization may submit a Budget Proposal.
- Budget Proposals must be typed and submitted using the forms specified by SOFAC under “Forms” on the SOFAC BearLink page.
 - o All necessary paperwork can be found on the SOFAC website and BearLink.
- Allocation Meetings
 - o The SOFAC Student Specialist will prepare meeting agendas utilizing the budget proposals submitted.
 - o Council members will be assigned a portion of the agenda for which they will serve as the delegate.
 - Each delegate shall be responsible for reaching out to organization representatives for any questions, clarifications, etc. Student organizations should not reach out to their delegate, unless previously contacted by said delegate.
 - Each delegate shall prepare a recommendation for funding prior to the Allocation Meeting for each of their assigned organizations. Additionally, they should be prepared to answer any council questions regarding the proposal.
 - o The meeting Chairperson will facilitate a brief discussion for each organization on the meeting agenda.
 - o The delegate for the organization being discussed will present their recommendation to the council.
 - o After a brief discussion of the recommendation by the council, the Chairperson will ask for a motion to vote. The council will vote to approve or deny the recommended allocation for the organization.
- When evaluating proposals, SOFAC will consider the following criteria:
 - o Whether or not the proposal request meets one or more of SOFAC’s objectives.
 - o Whether the organization completed the assigned stipulation the previous fiscal year.
 - o Whether similar events in the past were successful or met most of their goals.
 - o To what extent does the organization plan to assist with organization goals financially, beyond SOFAC funding.
 - It should be noted that SOFAC funding is intended to assist with the expenses incurred by organizations and should not be the sole source of funding.
 - o No group may be allocated funds which has an outstanding balance due to the University which is more than 30 days past due.
 - Organizations with an outstanding balance more than 30 days past due are held to the Student Organization University Account Policy as outlined in the Student Organization Handbook, located on the OSE website.
 - o No funding shall be utilized for an activity which is required by an academic department, or which directly supports classroom instruction.

- Only students who have paid the Student Involvement Fee during the semester for which the funds are requested will be considered for funding.
- SOFAC will not allocate funds for any event which is being funded by the Student Activities Council (SAC) or any other entity funded by the Student Involvement Fee.
- No extra frills may be included. This includes, but is not limited to, staying an extra night at a hotel, additional charges for a room such as room service and Wi-Fi.
- SOFAC will not fund travel outside of the continental United States.
- SOFAC will not fund an organization's alumni members but will reimburse advisors for expenses incurred on behalf of the student organization members.
- SOFAC will not fund an organization's student members for performances/lectures.
- No SOFAC funded event or activity may substantially duplicate another provided by other University departments/student organizations held in the same semester.
- SOFAC funded events and activities on campus shall be free of admission to Missouri State students.
- SOFAC funded events/activities shall hold their events on campus to encourage the greatest amount of student involvement.
 - Groups requesting funds for local facility rental off campus will not be funded unless an apparent reason is indicated about why a campus facility will not meet the event's needs.
 - All local events and activities utilizing SOFAC funds must be publicized and open to all students free of charge.
 - The facility for the event must suit the size of the intended audience and the nature of the event.
 - Mileage reimbursement shall be limited to event-related expenses.
- SOFAC is a privilege and failing to use the allocation takes away from other organizations. Failure to use the allocation will result in a 10% penalty in future years.
- Contracted events:
 - Honoraria requests must be in range, or lower, for similar speakers/performers.
 - Contracts for guest speakers and other contracted individuals should be reviewed in advance with the Director of Student Engagement.
 - Contracted expenses must be accompanied by the contract/addendum approved by the Board of Governors for Student Involvement Fee expenditures. This contract must be approved and signed by the Director of Student Engagement before an event can take place.
 - SOFAC will not fund an organization's student members for performances/lectures.
- SOFAC shall not fund the following expenses:
 - Clothing items/uniforms for personal use
 - Decorations or supplies for the creation of decorations
 - Retreats, social events, or formal
 - Recruitment Events or Fundraiser/Philanthropy Events
 - Donations, gifts, awards, and scholarships
 - Academic paper/presentations at conference
 - Association membership dues for individuals

- Food for organizations, events, or individuals; unless required by contract, included in registration
 - fees, or part of SOFAC training
 - Equipment which would be considered a weapon or used for weaponry purposes (i.e., ammunition, guns, knives, etc.)
 - Advisor/Coach/Trainer expenses
 - Speaker/Entertainer Fees outside of a contract/invoice
 - Expenses to attend a career fair or interview for employment
 - Furniture
- All University rules, regulations and policies are expected to be followed for events or activities funded by SOFAC.
 - Should any University rules, regulations and policies not be followed in any way it will result in the organization repaying SOFAC for the allocated amount, and face University sanctions.
 - Alcohol is not permitted at any event or activity funded by SOFAC, and it is the funded organization's responsibility to prevent the presence of alcohol at any such event.
- SOFAC Guidelines are subject to overall University Fiscal Policy, which may be found on the Financial Services website.

After You've Been Approved

- Allocated organizations do NOT immediately receive the funds once approved by SOFAC but can utilize funds through direct payment and reimbursement processes explained below.
 - Organizations allocated funds must attend a Payment Meeting following allocation decisions to discuss options for accessing funding.
 - A schedule of Payment Meetings will be set by SOFAC and made available to approved organizations upon notification of their approved proposal.
 - Organizations may utilize one of the following payment options:
 - Direct Payment: SOFAC will pay the vendor directly through check, credit card, or direct bill for the following expenses only.
 - Airline Tickets
 - Equipment Purchases
 - Conference Registration Fees
 - Contract Fees for entertainers, speakers, etc.
 - Reimbursement: For expenses not allowed for Direct Payment, SOFAC will reimburse individual students or the organization for other approved expenses including, but not limited to the following.
 - Hotel Reservations
 - Vehicle Rentals
 - Mileage or gas for transportation purposes
 - Parking fees
 - Taxi/Shuttle fees
 - Other travel expenses
 - Organizations should reference the SOFAC Payment Manual for more information on how to access funds by direct payment or reimbursement.
 - The SOFAC Payment Manual is located on the SOFAC website or by contacting the SOFAC Graduate Assistant.
- For expenses and events not included in the original General Budget Proposal, please contact the SOFAC Graduate Assistant for an updated Individual Activity Budget Breakdown form at least ten (10) business days prior to the date of activity/event.
 - Only those expenses submitted and approved through the review process will be funded.
- SOFAC will not reimburse for, or pay, Missouri State sales tax.
- All reimbursement paperwork must be submitted within ten (10) business days of an event.
 - Organizations may submit a Request for Extension to SOFAC for an additional ten (10) business days. The Request must be received within the initial timeframe and must receive approval from SOFAC Graduate Assistant.
 - A Request for Extension will only give the organization a maximum of ten (10) business days in addition to the original timeframe to complete any required paperwork.
- All Direct Payment and Reimbursement forms must be complete and correct within 30 days after the event or activity takes place.
 - Organizations which do not meet these deadlines will lose the ability to request reimbursement for the expenses.

- All Direct Payment paperwork must be submitted at a minimum of ten (10) business days prior to the desired date of direct payment.
- Receiving funding does not guarantee that all events on general budget proposals have been approved for funding.
 - Organizations who are unsure if an event will qualify for funding should contact the SOFAC Graduate Student or Student Specialist during office hours.
- The following Travel Guidelines should be consulted when travel outside of Springfield is anticipated:
 - Organizations traveling ten (10) miles or more outside of Springfield are held to the Student Organization Travel Policy.
 - Information regarding the policy and required paperwork can be located in the Student Organization Handbook or on the OSE website.
 - Organizations that fail to complete the required trip forms will face consequences, including a loss of SOFAC funding and/or sanctions through the Office of Student Conduct.
 - Reimbursement for travel for use of personal or rented vehicles, other than university-owned vehicles, will be in the types identified here:
 - Personal Vehicle: Drivers will need to submit a map showing the starting point (901 S. National Ave., Springfield, MO 65897) and the end point in # of miles (round-trip). Only mileage (at the standard University rate at time of travel) will be reimbursed. Note- No gas receipts will be reimbursed for personal vehicle use.
 - Rental Vehicle: Organizations are encouraged to use the Missouri State University rate at Enterprise. Gas receipts, in addition to the cost of the rental, are eligible for reimbursement.
 - University Vehicles: SOFAC will not reserve University vehicles for student organizations. In order to use a University vehicle, a sponsoring department must reserve the vehicles for student organizations. Upon return from a trip, SOFAC will reimburse the aforementioned department. Gas receipts, in addition to the cost of the rental, are eligible for reimbursement.
- All organizations receiving funds must adhere to all accounting procedures approved by Financial Services.
 - The organization President, Treasurer and Advisor are responsible for the organization's compliance with all University and SOFAC policies.
 - Paperwork will not be accepted by any person other than the organization President, Treasurer, or Advisor without prior permission.
 - Any advertising or promotion for a SOFAC funded event must include this statement: "This event was funded in part by the Student Involvement Fee and approved by the Student Organization Funding Allocation Council (SOFAC)."
 - Any item that is unable to fit the above statement must be pre-approved by SOFAC prior to print.

Appeal Process

- In the case an organization feels the SOFAC policies have been administered incorrectly or unfairly, or that the process was conducted inappropriately, the organization may submit an appeal.
- Appeals can only be submitted by the student organization president.
- Appeals will be heard at the Annual Appeal Hearings during the outlined timeline on the SOFAC website and User Guidelines.
- Appeals must be made on one of the following bases:
 - o To determine whether the decision was made in a viewpoint-neutral manner.
 - o To determine whether the allocation process (review, recommendation, and allocation) was conducted fairly and in accordance with SOFAC Guidelines.
- Appeals must be submitted electronically to the SOFAC e-mail and addressed to SOFAC (CC: Director of Student Engagement).
 - o Appeal letters should articulate the grounds of the appeal, a proposed solution; and should include sufficient documentation and evidence necessary to support the claims made in the appeal.
 - o Appeal letters should be submitted to the SOFAC e-mail during the outlined timeline located on the SOFAC website.
- Appeals will go through the following levels:
 - o SOFAC Student Specialist
 - o SOFAC Appeal Hearings
 - o Memorandum of Agreement Commission, Chairperson
 - o Vice President for Student Affairs, who shall have final authority

Membership

- The council is composed of the following students and administrators:
 - Non-voting members:
 - Director of Student Engagement
 - Accountant- Financial Services, or designee
 - Accounting Specialist- Office of Student Engagement
 - Assistant Director for Co-Curricular Involvement
 - SOFAC Graduate Assistant
 - SOFAC Student Specialist
 - Voting members:
 - Student Member selected by Student Government Association (SGA)
 - Student Member selected by Student Activities Council (SAC)
 - Student Member selected by Fraternity & Sorority Life Governing Councils
 - Student Member selected by Residence Hall Association (RHA)
 - Student Member selected by Graduate Student Senate (GSS)
 - Student Members (4) from At-Large Student Body
 - Applications for the SOFAC council will be made available via BearLink in the Fall semester.
- All student members must be in good standing with the University and their respective organizations.

- Executive board members of SAC, SGA, RHA, GSS, and FSL Governing Councils are permitted to serve as members of SOFAC but may not be assigned to the organization for which they hold office.
- Student members selected by SAC, SGA, RHA, GSS, and FSL consist of a primary delegate and an alternate. Each has the power to represent the governing body's single vote.
- The following expectations are placed on the student members of the Council:
 - Serve approximately 30-40 hours throughout the academic.
 - Attend all Council Training sessions
 - Develop a thorough understanding of the processes and paperwork of SOFAC
 - Attend all Allocation Meetings (more than two unexcused absences will result in dismissal from the Council)
 - Serve as liaisons between the bodies they respectively represent and SOFAC
 - Serve as delegate for their assigned portion of the agenda.
 - Abstain from discussions and voting for funding requests of organizations for which they are active members.
 - Must be appointed before Thanksgiving break.
 - Allocation votes held outside of Council Meetings are to be made through Elections on the SOFAC page of BearLink
- Quorum will consist of majority student membership.
- The following should be made note with regards to Council voting:
 - Votes by proxy are not allowed.
 - Absentee ballots are not allowed.
 - Official action will require majority approval of student members.
 - Members may not vote on allocations of a group, which they are elected, appointed, or employed.

Amendments

- Any amendment to the SOFAC Guidelines must be approved by a two-thirds affirmative vote of all student members of SOFAC. Last amended and updated by SOFAC on 3/22/18.
- Originally endorsed and approved by the Student Government Association on 2/11/97.
- Originally endorsed and approved by the Student Activities Council on 2/11/97.