

STUDENT ACTIVITIES FUNDING COMMISSION (SAFC)

<https://cornell.campusgroups.com/safc/home/>

SAFC Guidelines Updates

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These funding guidelines articulate the processes by which student organizations may request funds. All student organizations that request and receive funds through SAFC are expected to understand and follow these guidelines.

Last amended, Spring, 2022.

1 - Terms

1. **Allocation** - A promise of funds set aside by the Commission in response to a request for funding.
2. **Applicant** - The Student Organizations submitting a budget.
3. **Application** - A budget submitted to the SAFC to be reviewed.
4. **Business Day** - A business day is considered a Monday-Friday when Cornell University is open. Typical business days for SAFC transactions will occur when classes are in session.
5. **Commissioner** - A member of the SAFC.
6. **Budget Approval** - A signature or online approval of the budget done exclusively through CampusGroups by a minimum of 2 officers (President(s), and/or Treasurer(s)) of an organization
7. **New Organization** - An organization that either did not receive or did not spend any funds allocated by the SAFC during the previous two academic years. Resources on how to register a new organization can be found in the Big Red [Guidebook](#).
8. **Quote** - A quote is a good faith estimate of the cost of goods or services for which the applicant is applying funds. To be valid for the Commission the price quote must:
 - a. Be dated within the current academic semester.
 - b. Include unit costs or prices for each requested expense and cost of shipping and handling, if applicable.
 - c. Come directly from the vendor of the item(s) being requested.
9. **[Registered Student Organization](#)** - An organization that has complete registration with the Campus Activities Office.
10. **Spending Cap** - The Commission assigns each organization a maximum allocation spending cap, which determines the maximum cumulative amount of funding the organization can receive annually.
11. **[Campus Activities Office](#)** - The Campus Activities Office is an administrative unit of the university which regulates [registrations of student organizations](#), allowing them certain privileges on campus, including the right to apply for funds from the SAFC. The office also provides extensive information and advisory resources to officers of registered student organizations.
12. **SOBO (Student Organization Business Office)** - Through the Campus Activities Payment Request system, SOBO can assist with processing reimbursements, purchasing items, reservations, and responsible for any direct payments for services, guest speakers/performers per University policy.
13. **[CampusGroups](#)** - Is the student online engagement platform used to engage with the student body. Students can view what events are taking place, attain important information, and also connect with student organizations. Additionally, student organizations can register their club, request funding, post their events, communicate with their student org members via the platform.
14. **[Scheduling@Cornell](#)** - The website contains information and links to help you schedule space for an event, meeting, info session, social gathering, access important academic dates and information, and much more. If you are requesting and receiving funds from SAFC for food, on-campus space reservation, and/or vendor services on campus, you will need to have your event submitted and approved in this platform.

2 - Version of Record

The version of the guidelines posted on the Student Activities Funding Commission CampusGroups website is the version of record, and it shall supersede any other existing versions. The Campus Activities Office in conjunction with SAFC shall maintain and modify this version when needed.

3 - Funding Eligibility

To be eligible to request funds or to spend allocated funds an applicant must:

1. Register with and be approved by the Campus Activities Office before the budget deadline in each semester (organizations that are not registered cannot request funds).

2. Have undergraduate members who comprise at least 60% of its total membership, excluding alumni members.
3. Be in good standing with the Commission and Cornell University.
4. Be distinctly different from other organizations. The Campus Activities Office along with SAFC may convene a meeting with organizations that share similar missions with similar membership.
5. Have at least one officer take the mandatory [SAFC Quiz](#). Help Sessions and Office Hours will take place at the beginning of the semester.
6. Have a minimum of 2 officers (President(s) and/or Treasurer(s)) of an organization affirm their approval for each request by digital signature via CampusGroups by the budget deadline (registered officers must be two distinct individuals).

4 - Funds

The Commission allocates funds according to these guidelines and its bylaws. The Commission will provide one opportunity for the submission of funding requests each semester, with potential for a special projects funding cycle (as long as the organization stays within its spending cap). The special project's funding will be determined by the SAFC on an as-needed basis each semester.

When funding decisions are released, the funds will be used towards expenses that occur between the first and last days of classes (unless Campus Activities approves for events to occur outside of the first and last day of classes). Allocations do not guarantee that specific reimbursements or payments will be issued. For this reason, organizations are advised to consult with the Commission before entering into any commitment with financial consequences.

Within a category, organizations can adjust original budget allocations if the proposed items are permitted within the guidelines at the discretion of SAFC and/or the Student Business Organizational Office (SOBO). This will be facilitated through a CampusGroups category change/cancelation form.

Permitted Expenses

Organizations may request funds for the following categories of expenses in a budget application:

1. Recruitment
2. Operating expenses
3. Programs (events/practices)
4. Publications

Spending Caps (Maximum Allocation)

The Commission assigns each organization a maximum allocation spending cap, which determines the maximum cumulative amount of funding the organization can receive annually.

The Commission will annually evaluate the number of spending caps and the total number of organizations and may increase or reduce the spending cap throughout the fiscal year depending on the number of funds available and the number of new organizations that request funding.

Adjustment of spending caps can only be updated after the Spring academic semester. Will take effect for the upcoming Fall Semester of 2022 if no objection.

The Commission assigns every new organization to the \$1,000/year Spending Cap.

5 - Categories of Supported Expenses

This section describes the kinds of expenses which the Commission may fund.

1. Recruitment
2. Operational Expenses

3. Programs (events/practices)
4. Publications

The following general principles apply to all expenses funded by the Commission:

1. The Commission funds only for expenses that relate to the purpose of the organization as specified in its registration with the Campus Activities Office.
2. In funding requests, organizations must always break down the amounts requested in each expense category and specify the permitted expense in the category to which the amounts relate.
3. Depending on the type of request and the category, [additional documentation](#) or conditions may apply to funding requests.

Recruitment

Recruitment expenses support the functions of the organization related to recruitment, regardless of when it is done in the semester. A \$300 per semester is suggested for recruitment expenses. This cap will apply to the overall total budget requested and allocated. When reviewing budget requests, SAFC will consider the recommended cap and reach out to the organization if there are questions or concerns.

The following expenses are allowed under this category:

1. Copying, printing, social media services, stickers, pens, and other general items related to advertising for recruitment.
 - a. Must follow the [University Branding](#) guidelines around the use of Cornell name and logo (for pens, stickers, etc.)
 - i. Logo approval form should be approved beforehand and must be included with Payment Request.
 - b. If branded items are exclusively distributed to club members, they are operational expenses.
2. Food may be permitted if it is available to both club members and applicants and must abide by [Cornell University guidelines](#) (and be registered through scheduling@cornell.edu (25Live)).

Operational Expenses

General Purpose

Operating expenses support the operation of the organization.

The following expenses are allowed under this category:

1. Repairs and maintenance of equipment
2. Durable goods (any item that lasts longer than 2 years)
 - a. Organizational branded items/apparel, (must follow the [University Branding](#) guidelines around the use of Cornell name and logo) including uniforms
 - i. Logo approval form should be approved beforehand and must be included with Payment Request.
 - ii. Items can only be for club members and must benefit the majority of club members.
 - b. Storage unit/locker rental expenses for durable goods may be approved on a case-by-case basis
3. Background checks and other clearances
4. Web hosting, subscriptions and/or software
 - a. Must be core to the club's mission
 - b. In order to receive funding for subscriptions, clubs must attach their mission statement and explain how the event is related to that mission statement

Programs (events/practices)

This category includes expenses associated with private and public events, which should all be **posted in CampusGroups**. Events also need to be registered and approved through scheduling@cornell.edu (25Live). In

order to receive reimbursements or have payments processed for event expenses, a PDF of the scheduling@cornell.edu approval must be included with the Payment Request. Approval may take a few weeks; therefore, clubs should begin the process during budget application.

The following expenses are permitted under this category:

1. Public events
 - a. Definition
 - i. Public events are defined as events open to the entire community
 - ii. Public events include but are not limited to hosting a speaker, tournament, open activity, or photography (that anyone can attend)
 - b. Examples of Program expenses
 - i. Food, which must abide by [Cornell University guidelines](#) (and be registered through scheduling@cornell.edu (25Live)).
 - ii. Speaker fees (travel and lodging for speaker should be included in the engagement fee)
 - iii. Supplies essential to the event
 - iv. Venue rental
 - v. Professional event production service including video/sound recording or photography expenses
 - vi. Event advertisement
 1. Copies and chalk
 2. Social media advertising
 3. Organizations can utilize the Cornell Daily Sun.
 - a. \$64.00 per 1/8 page vertical
 - vii. Media rental and licensing fees
 - viii. Giveaways
 1. Cannot be a prize
 2. Must be given to a majority of participants (goodie bags, etc.)
2. Private events
 - a. Definition
 - i. Private events are defined as events exclusive to club members
 - ii. Private events include:
 1. Reasonable social club activities
 - a. Event is on campus or virtual
 2. Activities core to the mission of a club
 - a. Includes but is not limited to club competitions, practices, select travel events
 - b. **To receive funding under this sub-category, clubs must attach their mission statement to the budget and explain how the event is related to that mission statement**
 3. General body meetings
 - a. Regular meetings of club members
 - b. Examples of Private expenses
 - i. Reasonable social club activities
 1. DIY kits
 2. Supplies required for event, not including food
 - ii. Activities core to the mission of a club
 1. Registration fees for virtual event attendance
 2. Registration for in-person events
 3. Travel and lodging (Can only request travel/lodging costs up to the spending cap and allocation. This means that travel and/or lodging total cost could exceed the allocation, but SAFC will only cover up to the organization's spending cap limit.)

- a. Driver of personal vehicle transportation - \$0.58 per vehicle per mile per US Internal Revenue Service
 - b. Rented or purchased modes of transportation (rented car, airplane, bus, etc.) may be funded in full if the expense is within the club's spending cap.
 - c. Lodging/Hotel/Motel fees - student lodging rate is \$50 per person per night
 - d. SAFC will **NOT** fund for food consumption for travel.
4. Equipment needed for practices (that cannot be secured on-campus)
- iii. General Body meetings
 - iv. Supplies required for event, not including food

Publications

Publication expenses include expenses incurred to create and distribute a publication to the campus community.

For expenses to be eligible under this category, they must support the production of a publication that:

1. Is available to the entire Cornell community and distributed at locations on campus frequented by this community, including campus dining facilities, student centers, and libraries.
2. Issue at least 75 copies that will be printed in the academic year the funds are requested.
3. Include the email, phone, or mailing address for the President, Treasurer, and Advisor of the organization in each issue.
4. For each publication, the applicant must provide:
 - a. Quote documentation for each expense.
 - b. Either a copy of a recent issue of the publication or, in the case of a new publication, a written outline detailing the format, content, and intended audience of the publication.

Prohibited Expenses

The following expenses are prohibited under all four categories.

1. Duplicates functionality or service already available on campus
 - a. Includes general office supplies that can be found on campus (hole puncher, scissors, staplers, chalk, general markers, etc.) Contact Campus Activities at activities@cornell.edu if an organization would like to borrow office supplies.
 - b. Click [here](#) to see a list of items available on campus.
2. Electronics (unless the club's needs are directly connected to its functionality. Examples of electronics are microphones, television, flash drives, etc.).
3. Alcohol
4. Prizes including but not limited to gift cards, raffles, or any item that is given as or considered to be won as a "prize."
5. Donations made directly with SAFC funds (A program/event can be planned with SAFC funds and funds raised by said program/event can be used as a donation. Organizations must coordinate with SOBO, by emailing SOBO@cornell.edu).
6. Payment or engagement fee if paid to a direct organization member or advisor
7. SAFC funds cannot be used to purchase tickets to events funded by other SAFC funded organizations.

6 - Payment Requests

Once you receive approval of your budget request, you **MUST** submit a Payment Request in CampusGroups in order to utilize your allocation. The approval of your budget request is just the first step towards utilizing the allocation. If you do not submit a Payment Request, **nothing will be purchased, paid for, or transferred.**

You can submit a Payment Request to have items purchased on your group's behalf, request a transfer to a University Department that paid for an expense already, pay for a University reservation fee, pay for a registration fee to a conference or tournament, request a direct payment for services or guest speakers/performers (this has to be done by Cornell and is not able to be reimbursed for), or request a reimbursement for expenses paid out of pocket. Without a Payment Request being submitted by the deadline, your allocation **will not be able to be utilized.**

For more information on how to submit Payment Requests, click [here](#).

7 - Special Project Request

To allow organizations to request funds in certain new or special circumstances, the Commission permits the submission of special project requests as needed. To request access to the Special Project budget please [click here](#).

8 - Suspension of Funds

Campus Activities in conjunction with SAFC awareness may temporarily suspend an organization's funds if university policies are broken. Campus Activities may consult with campus partners such as, the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards and other important offices when determining to suspend funds. Suspension of funds could result in loss of recognition of an organization, educational conversations, and/or other short-term or long-term actions.

Such a decision takes effect only after the following are informed:

1. The SAFC Co-Chair(s)
2. The President, Treasurer, Vice President, and Advisor of the affected organization.

9 - Budget Hearings

To receive an allocation, groups must have at least 2 officers (President(s) and/or Treasurer(s) approve the budget request in CampusGroups prior to the deadline and must include all [required documentation](#) for the budget item(s) requested.

A budget hearing process is provided to enable organization leaders to meet with Commissioners to resolve certain mistakes identified in or arising out of the initial budget submission or allocation process. Additionally, SAFC may encourage a student organization to utilize the Special Projects process as a possible solution (if applicable). Budget Hearings must be scheduled through this [link](#). An organization may utilize this process only when:

1. The organization was not successful in submitting a budget due to legitimate unforeseen circumstances (family concern, serious health concern or accident, CampusGroups glitch, etc.).
2. The Commission incorrectly interpreted or applied SAFC guidelines or relevant policies.