Funding Guidebook

2021-2022

Updated as of 2021-07-19

Students' Society of McGill University
Tel: (514) 398-6800 | Fax: (514) 398-7490 | ssmu.ca
3600 McTavish St., Suite 1200, Montréal, QC, H3A 0G3
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About

Are you a SSMU Club looking to get your operational expenses funded? Are you a campus group hosting an event or starting an initiative this year? Do you need financial assistance to make that happen? That's what the SSMU funds are for. Over the past two years, the SSMU funded over 400 student-led groups and their events/projects happening in the McGill community.

From member fees collected each semester, the SSMU has approximately $350,000 available each year to financially assist student groups with their events or initiatives. This money is distributed amongst 8 different funds, each with specific mandates. The goal of the funds is to aggregate and redistribute the fees to SSMU Clubs and other student groups in order to improve the campus experience for McGill undergraduate students.

Contact

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the information in this guidebook, or the overall funding process, please do not hesitate to contact:
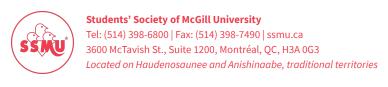
Allie McGowan
Funding Commissioner 2021-2022
fundcom@ssmu.ca

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1. General Application Conditions

Any McGill undergraduate group is eligible to apply for funding, even if they are not a SSMU Full Status Club. A group that decides to submit a Funding Application must meet the following **absolute requirements** for funding approval (in addition to the fund-specific absolute requirements, if necessary):

1) The application must be submitted by a SSMU member (e.g., any McGill undergraduate student)
2) The main people benefitting from the proposed initiative must be SSMU members
3) The applicant group must not be sanctioned by SSMU or have pending sanctions
4) The funding must be for an existing group, and not for the purpose of starting a new club, group, or organization
5) The funding must not go towards salaries or stipends for club or service executives/members
6) The funding must go towards an event or initiative spanning one Fiscal Year (June 1st to May 31st) or less
7) The funding must be for an event or initiative happening within the current Fiscal Year (June 1st, 2020 - May 31st, 2021)
8) The event or initiative must not exclude any SSMU members, unless it is absolutely necessary for the goal of the event
   a) If this is the case, please state why in your application

2. Application Process

1) Fill out the [Funding Application](#)*
2) Create an [event or initiative budget](#) which outlines all expenses and attach it to the application
   a) If application is proactive, use quotes or best estimates
   b) If application is retroactive, report exact expenses
3) Attach the [annual budget of the club or organization](#)
   a) The annual budget must include the event / initiative budget
4) Attach receipts, quotes, estimates, and justification for **ALL** expenses
5) Submit application before the funding deadlines of **December 1st** for the Fall Semester and **April 15th for the Winter Semester**
6) Applications submitted after these days will still be reviewed, but have no guarantee of timeliness in response and payment. Once the fiscal year is over, no applications submitted will be accepted.

Note about Proactive/Retroactive: If you have an event that will be happening after April 15th but before June 1st, please submit a proactive application BEFORE applications close on April 15th of each

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year. Otherwise we cannot consider your application for funding because it will be reviewed in the next fiscal year.

*if you are a full-status SSMU club, you must submit an [event declaration](#) before your application

3. Application Timeline

Week 1: Application is submitted for review

Week 2:

> Funding Committee convenes to make a decision on the funding request (committee meets once a week)

> An approval or rejection email will be sent, informing the applicant of the committee decision

a) If approved, the applicant must submit a post-funding report (details on [page 15](#))
  i) Once approved, be sure to include an acknowledgement of funding on your promotion materials for your event (more details on [page 15](#))
b) If rejected, the applicant can appeal the decision (details on [page 16](#))

Week 3: Club or organization will receive approved funding amount

If the applicant group is not a Full Status SSMU Club, we may contact you for more banking details.

Total time from submission to decision: 1-2 weeks*
Total time from decision to receipt of payment: 1-2 weeks**

If you have any questions about the status of your application email fundcom@ssmu.ca

*Please note that these are estimated time periods and that the wait time may be longer due to situations beyond the control of the Funding Commissioners.
 **Time is dependent on the SSMU accounting department

4. Selection Criteria

This section is intended to give applicants a sense of what the Funding Committee looks for when selecting and prioritizing applications.

1) Specific and detailed budgets that follow the SSMU templates
   a) [Event or initiative budget](#)

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     b)   [Annual budget of the club or organization](#)

2) Events and initiatives that match the individual fund mandate as closely as possible
3) Events and initiatives that benefit both a large amount of SSMU members as well as benefit them to a large degree
4) Economic use of funding and cost-effective expenses
5) Student group events must be approved by the SSMU for insurance purposes **prior to submitting an application**. Make sure to fill out the [Declaration of Event & Insurance Request Form](#) to get approval. Please see page 15 of this document for more information.

5. Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What do I put in the "banking info" section of the application?

A: If you are a SSMU Club, you leave this information blank or fill in your CLU number in the "account number" space.

If you are not a SSMU Club, but you do have a group bank account, please put the group bank account direct deposit information or the e-transfer information. Please note that the bank account must be under the name of the club and cannot be a personal account.

If you are not a SSMU Club AND do not have a group bank account, you should contact the undergraduate society that best represents your club and ask for them to accept the cheque on behalf of you and then distribute it. You can put the email of the undergraduate society in the "e-transfer email" section. **SSMU will distribute the money to the stated undergraduate society, and your group will be responsible for collecting it from the society.**

Q: How much should my group ask for?

A: Ask for the amount you estimate you need in order to execute the event or initiative. The SSMU is not able to give more than is requested, so asking for less in hopes that it will increase your chances of getting approval is not a strategic choice. For each application, we evaluate it based on the same criteria as listed above, so if your event or initiative meets the criteria, paying special attention to matching the fund mandate and benefitting SSMU members, the amount requested should not affect the likelihood of approval.

That said, requests above $3,000 will be looked at with an additional degree of scrutiny, so if applying for this amount or above, pay special attention to having all documentation in proper order (e.g., event budget, annual budget, receipts).

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Q: What's the difference between retroactive and proactive applications?

A: Retroactive applications are for initiatives that have already passed, whereas proactive applications are for initiatives that have yet to happen. Retroactive applications do not need to submit a post-funding report.

Any group may submit a retroactive funding application for an initiative that has taken place within the current Fiscal Year.

Note: If your event has passed but you had not yet paid your expenses it will be considerate a proactive application and will require a post funding report.

Q: Can my group apply for more than one Fund? How often can we apply?

A: The rule is one initiative for one fund. For example, one initiative cannot be funded by two funds. However, your group may apply for several initiatives (several applications) to one fund, or to several funds for several initiatives. As long as for each initiative (application), you can only select one fund, you are fine.

You may apply as many times as your group needs.

6. Overview of SSMU Funds

For more information regarding the different funds you can apply to and the application requirements, please refer to the [Internal Regulations of Finance](#) document.

Note: If you are a part of the Nursing, Social Work, or Physical Occupational Therapy Faculties, please see your VP Finance before filling out an application.
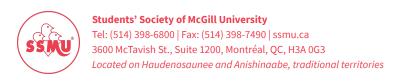
A. Club Fund

Requirements
a) Must be a Full status SSMU Club
b) Must be in good standing with SSMU rules and regulations

Goal
a) To provide funding for Club activities throughout the semester (as opposed to a per-event basis)

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b) To support meeting expenses, general operational costs, and events and initiatives

c) Activities should correspond to the Club's mandate, as specified in its constitution

What to include in the Funding Application

a) How the Club's activities align with the Club's mandate

b) Why the Club's activities are valuable (i.e., how they will benefit students)

c) The number of McGill students expected to participate and benefit from the initiative

d) Any other information that you think is relevant

Notes

a) The fund cannot go towards apparel for individual executives, unless this apparel remains as the property of the Club

b) SSMU will cover your club deficit provided you have made significant fundraising efforts.*

c) The SSMU cannot fund food and beverage purchases, unless it is central to the functioning or purpose of the event

    i) In this case, note in the application why it is necessary

B. Ambassador Fund

Requirements

a) Clubs/Organizations/Individuals are expected to contribute 25% of the overall cost, unless they can demonstrate that significant fundraising efforts have been made and they are still unable to contribute that amount

b) If traveling outside of the country, must acquire SSMU insurance (details on page 15)

Goal

a) To represent McGill as a competitor or presenter in competitions and conferences of an academic, athletic, or social nature

b) To contribute to the visibility and recognition of the SSMU, its members, or McGill

What to include in the Funding Application

a) Location of trip, method of travel, number of McGill students participating

b) Purpose of trip and how it represents the goal of the Ambassador Fund

c) Quotes, receipts, or best estimates (if proactive) of all expenses associated with the trip (e.g., travel, lodging, registration fees)

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Notes

a) All expenses should be cost-effective and justifiable. The Funding Committee reserves the right to deny funds if determined this condition is not met.

C. Community Engagement Fund

Requirements

a) Sole purpose of event cannot be fundraising
b) Not for ongoing operations

Goal

a) To empower club members to engage in charitable initiatives
b) To build connections between McGill students and the surrounding community

What to include in the Funding Application

a) Description of the event or initiative
b) How the event addresses social goals or needs
c) The number of McGill students and other community members that are expected to participate

Notes

a) If the club plans on making a donation at the end of the event, include proposed donation as an expense in your event budget and the Post-Funding Report
b) Funding is prioritized for projects that provide services which are linked to community development and where McGill students are directly engaged
c) The maximum amount SSMU will fund is the cost of the event

D. Mental Health Fund

Requirements

a) Initiatives funded by this should focus on supporting McGill students over other community members
b) Fund can go towards both events and ongoing operations

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Goal

a) To contribute to the promotion of mental health awareness
b) To improve students' mental health
c) To support the de-stigmatization of mental health issues on campus

What to include in the Funding Application

a) How the initiative contributes to the goals of the fund
b) The number of McGill students expected to participate and benefit from the initiative

E. Campus Life Fund

Requirements

a) Initiative must take place on or near campus
b) Initiative must benefit McGill undergraduate students first and foremost

Goal

a) To contribute to the betterment of campus life for the McGill undergraduate student population
b) To support projects, events, conferences, publications, and productions of an academic, social, or athletic nature

What to include in the Funding Application

a) Type of initiative and purpose
b) The number of McGill students expected to participate and benefit from the initiative
c) For events, include the location and details of activities within the event
d) Preemptively explain any large expenses (e.g., bringing in a speaker)

Notes

a) The SSMU will not fund alcohol permits or events with a focus on alcohol consumption
b) The SSMU cannot fund food and beverage purchases, unless it is central to the functioning or purpose of the event
    i) In this case, note in the application why it is necessary

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F. Environment Fund

Requirements

a) Event or initiative must be in itself sustainable

Goal

a) To promote a culture of sustainability on campus
b) To reduce the environmental impact of a group, campus resource, or campus service

What to include in the Funding Application

a) Description of initiative
b) Explanation of how the initiative meets the fund goal
c) Environmental impact report on event or initiative
d) The number of McGill students expected to participate and benefit from the initiative OR how the campus overall will benefit

Notes

a) The fund will subsidize the cost difference between choosing biodegradable materials over regular materials
    i) In this case, provide receipts or quotes for both options

b) For any questions regarding what constitutes an environmental initiative, please email the SSMU Environment Commissioners at environment@ssmu.ca and cc fundcom@ssmu.ca.

G. Equity Fund

Requirements

a) Initiatives must be inclusive wherever possible
b) Should focus on making specifically the McGill community more inclusive and equitable

Goal

a) To fund projects, research, and policies that aim to end discrimination and promote accessibility and inclusivity
b) To foster leadership, encourage civic engagement, or make observable differences in the representation or experiences of individuals who are members of disadvantaged groups

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What to include in the Funding Application

a) Description of initiative
b) The number of McGill students expected to participate and benefit from the initiative
c) Explanation of how the initiative specifically meets the fund goal

Notes

a) Initiatives including the word "equity" but not specifically meeting the fund mandate will not receive funding

H. Space Fund

Requirements

a) Must promote improvements to spaces specifically on the McGill campus

Goal

a) To support physical improvements to student spaces on campus

What to include in the Funding Application

a) Description of the proposed improvements
b) The number of McGill students expected to benefit from the improvements
c) Desired effect of improvements (e.g., accessibility increases, mental health increases, academic increases)

Notes

a) If looking to rent a space for club operations or an event, see either the Club Fund or Campus Life Fund
b) Improvements should not benefit an exclusive group of students (e.g., a new couch in the faculty executive lounge)

I. First Year Fund

Requirements

a) Must benefit first-year students primarily

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Goal

a) To enhance the experience of first-year students

What to include in the Funding Application

a) The number of McGill first-year students expected to benefit
b) Details of the proposed event or service
c) How it benefits first-year students

Notes

a) The fund consists of $1,000 per semester

7. Documentation Guidelines

A. Event Budget

Requirements

a) Must use the SSMU Event Budget template
b) All revenues from the event or initiative must be included in the event budget
c) Amount requested cannot exceed the deficit shown in the event budget

Process

a) Fill out template according to the SSMU Event Budget template
b) Provide all expenses or projected expenses
c) Provide all revenues or projected revenues
d) Subtract expenses from revenues to determine desired funding amount
e) Provide detailed explanations of all expenses and revenues
f) Compile all receipts and/or quotes/estimates into a pdf and attach to application
    i) These receipts can come in the form of scans, screenshots, and any other reasonable and legitimate medium
    ii) Organize expenses into categories within pdf (e.g., all food receipts, all transportation receipts)
    iii) Highlight where the expense is located on each receipt for easy totalling

Notes

a) If applying for funding proactively, provide best estimates for expenses and revenues

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     i)   In explanations of expenses and revenues, explain the estimate and how it was gotten to

b)   If actual deficit is less than expected, the SSMU will only provide enough funding to cover the actual deficit, as opposed to the expected one

B. Annual Budget

Requirements

a)   Must use the SSMU Annual Budget template
b)   All revenues and expenses from the event or initiative must be included in the annual budget
c)   The closing balance must be the same or less than your starting balance

Process

a)   Fill out the SSMU Annual Budget template
b)   Provide all expenses or projected expenses
c)   Provide all revenues or projected revenues
d)   Provide detailed explanations of all expenses and revenues

C. Post-Funding Report

Requirements

a)   Must be submitted within a timely fashion after receiving approval email
b)   Must contain exact numbers that match receipts
c)   Must be submitted for proactive applications only
d)   Post-funding report must be for the event that was in the original application
e)   If a Post-funding report is not submitted, future applications by the same group will be automatically rejected until the report is submitted

Process

a)   Update the SSMU Event Budget template with exact numbers following the event
b)   Update the SSMU Annual Budget template inclusive of updated event budget
c)   Update receipts pdf, replacing quotes/estimates with receipts if necessary
d)   Provide proof of SSMU acknowledgement

Notes

a)   For receipts for honorarium payments you may use a picture of a cheque or screenshot of an etransfer, depending on the method of payment.

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b) The SSMU acknowledgement can be, but is not limited to, a shout out on the club's Facebook page, a poster on display at the event, an acknowledgement on event website, etc.
   i) If unsure about what qualifies as an acknowledgement, contact fundcom@ssmu.ca

8. SSMU Insurance

In order to comply with SSMU regulations, any event hosted by a SSMU Club and funded by a SSMU fund must be disclosed to the SSMU. Events that require travel outside of Montreal might require additional insurance provided by the SSMU.

In order to receive that insurance, please fill out the Declaration of Event & Insurance Request Form BEFORE applying for funding.

Note: Disclose events at least 20 business days before the event

For more information regarding the declaration of events, check out the external events guide located here on the Club Resources - Organizing Events page.

9. Appeal Process

If you are dissatisfied with the decision of the funding committee, you may appeal the process. In order to do this, please fill out the Funding Appeal Form within seven days of the original decision.

If you are not satisfied with the response of the funding committee to your appeal, you can further appeal to the SSMU Legislative Council.

10. Other Funding Opportunities

Regardless of approval of funding from the SSMU, Clubs and organizations are encouraged to look into the numerous other funding opportunities available to undergraduate students.

Below is a comprehensive, but by no means exhaustive, list of funding opportunities on and around campus:

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A. Society Wide

Arts Undergraduate Society

https://ausmcgill.com/services/funding-applications/
a)   Journal Fund
b)   Supplementary Departmental Fund
c)   Special Projects Fund
d)   Arts Undergraduate Improvement Fund
e)   Fine Arts Council

Engineering Undergraduate Society

Students Initiatives Funding

Science Undergraduate Society

https://sus.mcgill.ca/resources/funding/
a)   SUS Special Projects Fund
b)   Student Space Improvement Fund
c)   SUS Ambassador Fund
d)   SUS Scholarship Fund
e)   CFI Innovation Fund

B. McGill Wide

a)   McGill Office of Sustainability – Sustainability Projects Fund
b)   QPIRG McGill Discretionary Fund
c)   MSSI
     i)   Ideas Fund
     ii)   Innovation Fund
     iii)   New Opportunities Fund
     iv)   Sustainable Development Goals Program

d)   Student Global Health Initiatives Fund
e)   Student Sponsorship Program
f)   Seeds of Change
g)   Dobson Cup

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D. Community Wide

a) [Innovation Fund](#)
b) [Pivot Funding Opportunities Database](#)
c) [Public Works and Government Services Canada](#)
d) [Grants.gov](#)
e) [Proposal Central](#)