

Funding Guidebook

2024-2025

Updated as of 2024-09-30



Association étudiante de l'Université McGill

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.

Students' Society of McGill University

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(514) 398-6800 | ssmu.ca | 3600 rue McTavish, Suite 1200, Montréal, QC, H3A 0G3

About

Are you an 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 four (4) years, the SSMU has funded over 500 student-led groups and their events/projects in the McGill community.

From member fees collected each semester, the SSMU has approximately \$350,000 available yearly to assist student groups with their events or initiatives. This money is distributed among several different funds, each with a specific mandate defining the types of initiatives that the fund may be used for. The funds aim to aggregate and redistribute the fees to SSMU Clubs and other student groups to improve the campus experience for McGill undergraduate students.

Contact

For any questions or concerns regarding the information in **this guidebook** or the overall funding process, please do not hesitate to contact:

SSMU Funding Commissioner: fundcom@ssmu.ca

For other finance-related questions, please contact:

SSMU VP Finance: finance@ssmu.ca



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A. Society Wide

Arts Undergraduate Society

Engineering Undergraduate Society

Science Undergraduate Society

B. McGill Wide

D. Community Wide



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 requirements for approval (in addition to the fund-specific requirements, if necessary):

- 1) No salaries or stipends may be funded. Note that this does not exclude honorariums for speakers, facilitators, and volunteers from funding.
- 2) No funding shall be approved for alcohol.
- 3) No funding will be provided to cover the merchandise or executive apparel cost.
- 4) Subject to the restrictions outlined in this guide, for applications exceeding \$200 SSMU will only cover up to 75% of the deficit on a single application.
 - a) Where applicable (e.g. for galas, conferences, sporting events...etc.), groups are expected to make **significant** fundraising/sponsorship efforts, and charge appropriate ticket prices or member contributions.
 - i) Where groups make significant efforts and successfully cover more than 85% of their expenses with sponsorships, fundraising, or ticket revenue, SSMU may consider covering anywhere from 85%, up to 100% of their deficit.
 - b) For applications whose primary purpose is to raise money for a donation to an external group (e.g. charity), subject to the restrictions below, SSMU will only cover up to 50% of projected or actual expenses. Groups are expected to raise enough money to ensure a viable donation can be made.
- 5) No more than 5% of any fund, or \$5,000 (whichever is lower), can go to one group or organization in a single application during the first half of the application period. This limit will be re-assessed and adjusted based on the remaining balance of the specific fund and the volume of funding applications during the second half of the application period.
- 6) Due to a disproportionately high demand for certain funds, in addition to the general requirement outlined above, the funds listed below are subject to the following restrictions:
 - a) The Club, Campus Life, and Community Engagement Funds: 5% of the current fund balance or up to \$2,000 per application, whichever is lower.



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- b) The Ambassador Fund: A fixed allocation of up to \$500 for individual applicants. Fixed allocation of up to \$2,000 for every group application. A group is three or more people.
- 7) The committee can suspend some of the funding restrictions listed above by unanimous vote on a case-by-case basis and with justification in cases where adhering to these restrictions may cause undue financial hardship.
 - a) Applicants are encouraged to provide details about how the funding restrictions listed above could cause undue financial hardship in their application's "Description" section.
- 8) Any application for over \$2,000 MUST be submitted AT LEAST 4 weeks before the event date.
 - a) If the deadline is missed, the application can be submitted but will be reviewed at the end of the year.
- 9) While the committee tries to ensure equitable distribution of funds, they are ultimately disbursed on a first-come-first-served basis.
- 10) Funding requests must be made by (a) SSMU Member(s) for the use by SSMU member(s).
- 11) No funds may be used to loan resources to Society groups for startup costs.
- 12) No funding applications may be approved if they span more than one (1) Fiscal Year.
- 13) No group shall be granted funding over the amount requested in their application or applications.

2. Application Process

- 1) Fill out the [funding application](#).
- 2) Create an [event or initiative budget](#) outlining all expenses and attach it to the application.
 - a) If the application is proactive, use quotes or best estimates.
 - b) If the application is retroactive, report exact expenses.
 - c) If your event is for operating expenses, no event budget is necessary.
- 3) Attach the [annual budget of the club or organization](#).



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- a) The annual budget must include the event / initiative budget.
- b) If your organization only does one event, no annual budget is necessary.
- 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 13th for the Winter Semester**.
- 6) Applications submitted after December 1st will still be reviewed, but have no guarantee of timeliness in response and payment. As of now, we cannot review applications over the summer, so **applications accepted after April 15th will not be accepted**.

***Note about Proactive/Retroactive Applications:** If an event will be taking place after April 15th but before June 1st, please submit a proactive application BEFORE applications close on April 15th of each year. Otherwise the Funding Committee cannot consider your application for funding because it will be reviewed in the next fiscal year.

***Full-status SSMU clubs must submit an [event declaration](#) before submitting a funding 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.
- If approved, the applicant must submit a post-funding report (details on [page 15](#)).
 - Once approved, be sure to include an acknowledgement of funding on your promotion materials for your event (more details on [page 15](#)).
- If rejected, the applicant can appeal the decision (details on [page 16](#)).



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Week 3:

- The Club or organization will receive their 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 Commissioner or extremely high volumes of applications.**

****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 applications.

- 1) Specific and detailed budgets that follow the SSMU templates:
 - a) [Event or initiative budget](#)
 - 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. Extent of fundraising efforts.



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- 5) Groups with high bank balances (3x higher than requested amount) may be expected to contribute more to their initiatives than other groups. While it will endeavor to do so rarely, the committee will use its discretion to ensure equitable distribution of funds, especially when demand for funds is high.
 - a) Individual applicants to the Ambassador Fund will never be expected to disclose personal banking 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, please fill in your [banking information](#).

If you are not a SSMU Club, but you do have a group bank account, please put the group bank account direct deposit 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 them to accept the money on your behalf and then distribute it to you. **SSMU will distribute the money to the stated undergraduate society, and your group will be responsible for collecting it from the society.**

Please note that SSMU WILL NOT DISBURSE FUNDS TO AN INDIVIDUAL'S BANK ACCOUNT.

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. For each application, we evaluate it based on the same criteria as listed above. 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, though your group may not necessarily receive approval for the full amount.

That said, requests that amount to more than 15% of an overall fund must be approved by the Legislative Council as well as the Funding Committee.



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Note that for lavish events hosted at expensive venues exceeding what is necessary for the event to function, the funding committee will expect significant efforts to fundraise and raise money through tickets and other means.

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 have not yet paid your expenses and don't have receipts, it will be considered 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: Each application may only receive funding from one single fund. However, your group may submit several applications for different initiatives either from a single fund, or from different funds for each initiative, as long as **only one fund is applied per event/initiative..**

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 group's 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 (i.e., not sanctioned).



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Goal

- a) To provide funding for Club activities throughout the semester (as opposed to a per-event basis).
- 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.
- b) SSMU will cover your club deficit provided you have made significant fundraising efforts.*

B. Ambassador Fund

Requirements

- a) Organizations/Individuals are expected to cover 25% of the overall cost (through personal contribution or external fundraising), unless it creates an undue financial burden. If traveling outside of the country, the applicant 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, or
- b) To contribute to the visibility and recognition of the SSMU, its members, or McGill.



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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)

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



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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

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

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



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- 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

F. Environment Fund

Requirements

- a) Event or initiative must be in itself sustainable
- b) Requires approval from the Sustainability Commissioner.

Goal

- a) To promote a culture of sustainability on campus



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- 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 ccfundcom@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
- c) Requires approval from the Equity Commissioner.

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 Improvement Fund

Requirements

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

Goal

- a) To support physical improvements to student spaces and resources 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

Improvements should not benefit an exclusive group of students (e.g., a new couch in the faculty executive lounge)



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) The amount requested cannot exceed the deficit shown in the event budget

Process

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



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- 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 an approval email. Within five weeks of the date your event/initiative is complete, or by April 30, 2025, whichever is sooner.
 - i) The Funding Commissioner can extend the above deadlines on a case-by-case basis.
- 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



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- 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 e-transfer, depending on the method of payment.
- 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
- c) Unused funding must be returned to the SSMU.

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.



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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:

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](#)



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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) [OPIRG 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](#)

D. Community Wide

- a) [Innovation Fund](#)
- b) [Pivot Funding Opportunities Database](#)



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- c) [Public Works and Government Services Canada](#)
- d) [Grants.gov](#)
- e) [Proposal Central](#)