

Student Initiative Fund: Guiding Principles (August 2022)

The Student Initiative Fund (SIF) offers financial support to projects that enhance the student experience and foster a sense of community at the University of Toronto. The Student Initiative Fund (SIF) is a fund overseen and operated by the Division of Student Life (University of Toronto, St George).

This money is allocated into three terms: Fall, Winter and Summer.

- Applications must be clearly marked with the funding term that you are applying for.
- SIF has two Funding Tiers. Applications must be clearly marked with the Funding Tier you are applying for:
 - **Tier 1 - Simple Event or Initiative (External Platforms, not Zoom or Teams):** up to \$499 funding available
 - **Tier 2 - Medium-Large Scale Continuous Initiatives with (Virtual) Speakers or Facilitators:** \$500 - \$3000 in funding available
- The committee will review applications after the deadline for that term has passed.

Honoraria, Prizes and Fees for Services

| Prize | Honoraria/Gift | Fee for Service |
|--|--|--|
| Awarded through success in a contest | Used as a symbol of gratitude <u>for assistance with an initiative.</u> Not won. | Paid via invoice for a service provided to initiative. |
| Can be won by participants | Does not require an invoice | Invoice required |
| Maximum of \$100 per person (subject to -pre-approval) AND \$100 per initiative | Maximum of \$100 per person (subject to -pre-approval) | Can be greater than \$100 (subject to -pre-approval) |
| Cannot be cash | Can be cash | Can be cash |
| Recipient must sign a declaration acknowledging receipt of the prize. | Recipient must sign a declaration acknowledging receipt of the prize, gift or honoraria. | Invoice that shows fee was paid. Proof of payment is required. |

- Regarding fees for services, SIF will fund these fees up to what the committee deems reasonable, based on aspects including but not limited to impact, audience and value to the University of Toronto community. An appropriate invoice (services such as speakers, entertainment, and music) must accompany all fees for services.

- No cash prize money will be awarded. Prizes may be awarded to a maximum of \$100 per person AND per event. Recipient must sign a declaration acknowledging receipt of the prize. Each prize must be given its own original declaration.
- Honoraria may be awarded to a maximum of \$100 per person. Recipient must sign a declaration acknowledging receipt of the honoraria. Each honorarium must be given its own original declaration.
 - Honoraria differ from speaker fees and other service fees as they are a symbol of gratitude rather than a payment for a service.
 - Payments for a service are not honoraria and honoraria cannot be a payment for a service.
 - Honoraria cannot exceed \$100 per person. Honoraria that exceeds this amount will not be reimbursed.
 - This is inclusive of the entire initiative. If you are giving honoraria to a speaker/facilitator every week that exceeds \$100 for the entire initiative this is no longer honoraria and now becomes payment for a service and must be treated as such. This means an invoice must be included and required.
 - Payments for services must include invoices.
- Invoices for revenue spent on expenses
 - Initiatives cannot be run at a profit, e.g. revenue plus SIF funding cannot exceed initiative expenses
 - If your SIF funding combined with all revenue sources (if applicable) exceeds initiative costs you must return the equivalent amount of unspent SIF funding. You cannot keep unspent SIF funds, which may mean returning unspent SIF funds.
- A contact is required for money paid from other university sources

Eligibility Requirements

- All applicants will be emailed once the SIF committee has completed their review. Successful applicants will be required to respond to the Chair of SIF accepting the funding within 10 business days. Failure to respond will result in forfeiture of funding.
- The committee has the right to fund all or partial line items within the budget within the parameters of the Terms of Reference and Guiding Principles
- Resource publications may be conditional on additional consultation and review.
- SIF will make every effort to fund the maximum number of applications in each term.

- The spirit of SIF is to help enhance student programming with a focus and priority for new and innovative projects. For recurring annual projects, applications will be received. Applicants should be mindful of locating other sources of revenue and should make all attempts to be financially sustainable without ongoing reliance on SIF. SIF should not be relied upon as a continuous source of sustainable funding. Projects seeking funding after three years of continuous funding will not be considered.
- Funding will only be given to projects for UofT students. Clear articulation of the benefits to the UofT community is required for projects with any participants being non-UofT students.
- Additional sources of funding will not impact the value of the application.
- Cheques take a minimum of 35 days to arrive from the date submitted to the secretary of SIF.

Student Initiative Fund: Terms of Reference (Updated August 2022)

Background

The Division of Student Life (SL) annually receives requests for funding from students with ideas on how to positively contribute to the student experience at the University of Toronto. In response to this demand, SL has created the Student Initiative Fund (SIF) to assist students in accomplishing their goals. The intent of the Student Initiative Fund is to provide a source of funding to assist students in implementing programs that contribute toward a positive student experience and foster a sense of community at the University of Toronto.

Requests for funding to the SIF can be submitted by any University of Toronto St. George student who is assessed non-academic compulsory incidental fees, or any student group (recognized or otherwise) whose members are assessed non-academic compulsory incidental fees for any project for which they can demonstrate that the spirit of the project broadly aligns with the *Division of Student Life's Mission and Vision: "To enrich the university experience for and with students by fostering learning, growth, connection, communities and support." ; "That every student finds a sense of belonging, realizes their potential and flourishes on their journey at the University of Toronto and beyond."*

In addition to aligning with the *Division of Student Life's Mission and Vision*, the Student Initiative Fund (SIF) supports the *Domains of Innovation and Goals* set forth by the *University of Toronto Innovation Hub*.

Access for Every Student: students of all abilities and backgrounds have equitable access to programs, services, resources, and spaces. Goals: Creating accessible digital & physical spaces,

addressing financial barriers, supporting under-represented & diverse populations, navigating institutional structures, deepening participation & engagement and improving financial literacy.

Fostering Connectedness: students experience a sense of belonging and connection within and to the UofT community. Goals: Nurturing international engagement & intercultural understanding, cultivating relationships, increasing peer connections, building & connecting communities and working across differences.

Future-Ready Students: students have opportunities to develop their skills and build their confidence beyond academics. Goals: Preparing students for a changing world, increasing work-integrated learning, expanding mentorship opportunities, leadership development, career exploration and development and fostering lifelong learning.

Integrated Learning Experience: students have access to engaging learning experiences both in and outside of the classroom. Goals: Fostering academic & co-curricular connections, facilitating experiential & immersive learning, generating purposeful in-class engagement, equipping faculty with information to support students, encouraging self-directed learning and increasing online learning options using educational technology.

Whole Student Development: students receive the support they need for their holistic well-being (physical, psychological, social and emotional). Goals: Cultivating mental, physical & spiritual health, building self-efficacy & self-motivation, fostering resiliency & self-care, identity development and the development of meaning & purpose.

Student Initiative Fund Board Structure

The Student Initiative Fund (SIF) offers financial support to projects that enhance the student experience and foster a sense of community at the University of Toronto. The Student Initiative Fund accepts applications from students at UofT St George and these applications are reviewed by the Student Initiative Fund (SIF) Board. The SIF Board is responsible for making decisions on the applications received for the Student Initiative Fund.

Part A: Board Structure

The committee will be comprised of:

1. Eleven student members as follows:

- One student member as appointed by the University of Toronto Students' Union.
- One student member as appointed by the University of Toronto Graduate Students' Union.
- One student member as appointed by the University of Toronto Association of Part-Time University Students.
- Five student members as appointed by the Assistant Vice-President Student Life or designate

from the general University of Toronto student population.

- Three student members as appointed by the Assistant Vice-President Student Life or designate from the executive of a recognized student club.

2. Two staff members as follows:

- One staff member as appointed by the Assistant Vice-President Student Life or designate from the groups of University staff known as the Student Life Professionals.
- One staff member as appointed by UofT Ancillary Services, Trademark Licensing Department.

3. Two non-voting members as follows:

- A non-voting chair as appointed by the Assistant Vice-President Student Life or designate whose role is to ensure that process and due diligence is followed.
- A non-voting recording secretary appointed by the Assistant-Vice President Student or designate to assist in scheduling meetings, collecting proposals, preparing for the meeting, record keeping, communicating with applicants, and generally assisting the chair.

Part B: Board Recruitment and Selection

- The UTSU, APUS, and GSU will be asked in September to provide the contact for their representative member selected to the Board. Should any particular constituent not wish to provide a member to sit on the committee, the Assistant Vice-President Student Life or designate will appoint a student member at their discretion, attempting to select a student who best represents that constituency.
- General Member positions will be advertised through a variety of Student Life channels.
- Committee members will serve for a term of one-year effective September 1 (with opportunity for renewal).

Eligible Expenses

A student/group can only receive one tier one and one tier two in an academic year.

A student/group can only be funded up to three times for any given event.

Proposals will not be funded if the project:

- Is for the purpose of fundraising
- Is held outside of the University of Toronto Community, i.e. an application is submitted by a University of Toronto St. George student on behalf of his/her community-based organization
- Involves personal expenses
- Includes alcohol-related expenses
- Is capital in nature, unless the capital is used for the formation of a new student club
- Is for general operating expenses of student clubs or organizations, i.e. SIF is intended for projects/events/activities and not business cards, apparel, compensation for event

organizers

- Is from an applicant who has not submitted the post-project reports for previous SIF-funded projects
- Excludes any student or student group from participation
- Requires reasonable event planning and risk management practices, and these have not been applied
- SIF will only fund programs and initiatives that take place on the University of Toronto's St. George Campus spaces. Pursuant to the Governing Council "[Policy on the Framework on Off-Campus Safety](#)", any SIF sponsored event will require its organizers to review the framework. When necessary, the organizers may also be required to meet with staff to implement appropriate principles concerning safety.
- Is for non-University of Toronto St. George students, including high school students. The primary audience must be U of T St. George students.
- Covers the cost of bottled water.
- University of Toronto students must make up 50% of the initiative's participants.
- Digital marketing expenses may not exceed \$100.
- Proof of payment instructions can be found on the SIF website and on in the SIF terms.
- Website development and design costs are considered capital costs and are therefore not eligible for funding unless for the formation of a new club/group.

Student and student group applicants are encouraged to:

- Seek approval of funding from other sources such as the Hart House Good Ideas Fund, the University of Toronto Students' Union, or Colleges/Faculties.
- As part of their applications, applicants will disclose if they are working with a University 'office' in the delivery of their project
- Successful projects are asked to recognize the Student Initiative Fund as a project partner

Transferring Funds and Reporting from Fund Recipients

40% of the funding request, based on the projected budget provided with the application, will be made available if requested. Within one month of the project conclusion, the sponsor/applicant will provide a detailed expense report of the project including all itemized receipts **and proof of payment** up to the total approved amount. Only expenses with corresponding original itemized receipts will be eligible for reimbursement. After the post-project report is received, the remaining expenses will be released. Failure to supply a post-project report will result in the project sponsor/applicant being personally responsible for the project costs.

Reporting from Student Life

As part of the annual Council on Student Services meeting schedule, Student Life will present a report outlining funds collected, projects receiving funding, and a current balance. Should a positive current fund balance exist at year-end, these funds will carry over to the following year and will be eligible for distribution.

The Council on Student Services will also make all annual reports public on the Student Life website after consideration.

Committee members will review the SIF Terms of Reference on an annual basis and make recommendations to the chair to forward the recommendations on behalf of the committee to the Assistant Vice-President Student Life or designate for approval.