



Student Sustainability Grant Handbook

Revised: 4 October 2016

1. What is the Student Sustainability Grant?

- a. The Student Sustainability Grant (SSG) supports student research, activities, and initiatives that will foster a campus culture of sustainability at Western Michigan University (WMU), while working to benefit all students.

2. Who should apply?

- a. The SSG is available to all WMU students who pay the sustainability fee. Virtually all majors and programs at Western Michigan University address one or more aspect of sustainability, and therefore the possibilities for projects, initiatives, and events are limitless. Students are strongly encouraged to contact the Office for Sustainability (OfS) or the Western Student Association (WSA) Campus Sustainability Chair for more information about the SSG.

3. Funding Guidelines

- a. Proposals are due to the OfS and the WSA Campus Sustainability Chair at 11:59pm on the Thursday before Thanksgiving (fall allocations) and 11:59pm on the Thursday before Spring Break (spring allocations).
- b. All grant authors are advised to schedule a meeting with the OfS at least six weeks prior to the application deadline. This meeting is intended to assist grant authors to plan and write a complete grant proposal for consideration by the SSGAC. If proposals involve changes to university facilities, buildings, landscape, campus safety, or research involving humans or animals, this meeting is mandatory (See Section 4. Necessary Stakeholder Approvals).
- c. All proposals must be submitted using the Student Sustainability Grant Application, which can be found at www.wmich.edu/sustainability/grants
- d.
- e. Groups may collectively author and submit proposals.

- f. Proposals should be saved as a single PDF document and sent via email to wmu-sustainability@wmich.edu and wsa-sustainability@wmich.edu with the subject line: lastnameSSGproposal. Hard copies and other file formats may be rejected.
- g. The Office for Sustainability, in cooperation with the WSA Campus Sustainability Chair, will evaluate whether proposals are safe, adequately, budgeted, and possible within existing university infrastructure. Applicants who submit proposals that do not meet these criteria will be rejected.
- h. Proposals that do not include all required supplemental materials (i.e. budget, timeline, letters of support, space assessment, etc.) will be rejected.
- i. Students may not receive stipends or hourly compensation from Student Sustainability Grants. Personnel listed in proposal budgets must be University staff, faculty, or outside contractors. Students who wish to receive compensation should seek additional funding from other sources.
- j. Funding will only be awarded once to a project per funding cycle. Multiple applications may not be submitted to cover separate parts of an activity in any given funding period (for example, applicants may not submit one proposal for food and another for entertainment to fund an event).
- k. Applicants may combine funding from the SSG with additional funding sources.
- l. In accordance with WMU's Non-Discrimination Policy, funding shall not be determined "on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, protected disability, veteran status, height, weight, or marital status."
- m. Funding will be denied if the Student Sustainability Grant Allocations Committee (SSGAC) determines that the primary purpose of an activity is to make a charitable donation.
- n. The SSGAC may not provide funds to erase debt or cover expenses already incurred.

4. Necessary Stakeholder Approvals

- a. All grant proposals that seek to impact or change university infrastructure in any way (facilities, landscape, buildings, etc.) are required to complete a space assessment (form included in SSG application) and schedule a consultation appointment at least six weeks prior to the application deadline with the OfS. Any proposed physical infrastructure changes must take place on properties owned by WMU.
- b. The consultation appointment is required to help identify critical stakeholders and approvals that must be pursued and attained before the grant application deadline. For example, Campus Planning, Facilities Management, Landscape Services, Environmental Health and Safety, Building Managers, and other departments may require a significant window of time to review and approve new campus activities.

- c. Project authors with proposals that will impact or change the university infrastructure who do not schedule this appointment with the OfS at least six weeks prior to the application deadline will be directed to apply the following semester. If you are in doubt or have any questions about the grant application, please direct questions to the OfS or the WSA Campus Sustainability Chair.

5. Grant Requirements

a. \$1 to \$1,499.99

- i. Students requesting \$1,499.99 or less are required to submit an application, proposal narrative, advisor approval, department head approval, budget, timeline, and space assessment.

b. \$1,500 to \$4,999.99

- i. Applicants must meet all conditions for the \$1 to \$1,499.99 range.
- ii. Two or more students must author the proposal.
- iii. Both undergraduate and graduate students must support the proposal. Undergraduate applicants must include a letter of support from a graduate student, and graduate students must include a letter of support from an undergraduate student. Letters must include the student's name, program of study, a brief statement of support, and their signature.

c. \$5,000 to \$9,999.99

- i. Applicants must meet all conditions for the \$1,500 to \$4,999.99 range.
- ii. The WSA Campus Sustainability Chair must endorse the proposal with a letter of support or the authors must collect ≥ 500 verifiable student signatures with WIN numbers. The WSA Campus Sustainability Chair can be reached at wsa-sustainability@wmich.edu, and signatures must be submitted to the OfS at least fourteen days before the application deadline for verification.

d. \$10,000 or more

- i. Applicants must meet all conditions for the \$5,000 to \$9,999.99 range.
- ii. The proposal must be supported by formal resolutions from both the WSA and the Graduate Student Association (GSA) or the authors must collect ≥ 1000 verifiable student signatures with WIN numbers. The signatures must be submitted to the OfS at least fourteen days before the application deadline for verification.

- iii. Instructions for passing a WSA resolution can be found in the WSA Constitution at www.westernstudentassociation.org. Instructions for passing a GSA resolution can be found by emailing gsa@wmich.edu.
- iv. The proposal must include a detailed letter of support from the primary author's advisor.
- v. The proposal must include at least one detailed letter of support from an additional WMU faculty or staff member.

6. Student Sustainability Grant Allocations Committee Bylaws

a. Association and Purpose

- i. The SSGAC is a collaboration of the WSA, GSA, OfS, and Student Activities and Leadership Programs (SALP).
- ii. The SSGAC is responsible for fairly and appropriately allocating grants according to student fees guidelines, university guidelines, and guidelines related to SALP financial processing requirements. The SSGAC will be responsible for developing an allocation request spreadsheet that is used by each requesting group or individual which details the approved expenditure categories and amounts, and SSGAC approvals. This document is what will be used by SALP to disperse and monitor allocations.

b. Membership Selection

- i. The SSGAC is composed of nine undergraduate students, two graduate students, and a chair (who can be either an undergraduate or graduate student).
- ii. Students must be in good academic standing as determined by WMU.
- iii. The OfS will contact the dean of each college to promote student nominations within each department by Labor Day annually. Deans will be expected to pass information to all faculty and students within each college.
- iv. The OfS will post nomination information on both www.wmich.edu/sustainability and its social media accounts by the Monday after Labor Day annually.
- v. The SSGAC Chair will post nomination information on www.westernstudentassociation.org and WSA's social media accounts by the Monday after Labor Day annually.
- vi. Any WMU student, staff person, or faculty member may nominate an undergraduate student to be a member of the SSGAC (excluding the Chair) using a standardized SSGAC nomination form. Forms must be submitted in hard copy or electronically to the office of the SSGAC Chair in the Student Organization Center (SOC) by 11:59pm of September 30th annually. The SSGAC Chair will evaluate

nominees and make appointments from each college in accordance with the structure laid out below. The WSA Senate must confirm all undergraduate appointees before they may sit on the SSGAC.

College of Arts & Sciences (Sciences)	1 Seat
College of Arts & Sciences (Humanities & Social Sciences)	1 Seat
College of Aviation	1 Seat
Haworth College of Business	1 Seat
College of Education & Human Development	1 Seat
College of Engineering & Applied Sciences	1 Seat
College of Fine Arts	1 Seat
College of Health & Human Services	1 Seat
Lee Honors College	1 Seat
Graduate College	2 Seats

- vii. The GSA selects both graduate representatives. If GSA representatives are not appointed by September 30th, the SSGAC Chair will appoint graduate students following the same process used for undergraduate allocations committee appointments.
- viii. The term of each SSGAC member will end after whichever of the following comes first: their appointment expires at the end of the Summer I semester, they submit their resignation in writing to the SSGAC Chair, they graduate from WMU, or they violate the Rules of Conduct outlined in the SSGAC Committee Bylaws.

c. Officers

- i. The SSGAC officers consist of the Chair, the Secretary, and the Promotions Coordinator.
- ii. The WSA Campus Sustainability Chair is appointed by the WSA President and Vice President and is confirmed by the Senate.
- iii. The SSGAC Chair selects the Secretary and the Promotions Coordinator from amongst the confirmed membership of the SSGAC.
- iv. Officers may be undergraduate or graduate students.
- v. The Campus Sustainability Chair of the WSA holds a permanent seat as the SSGAC Chair but does not vote unless there is a tie. The responsibilities of the Chair are to schedule, set the agenda, and preside over all SSGAC meetings; to be the SSGAC's chief spokesperson; to represent the SSGAC in all appeals; to create and maintain an updated list of all SSGAC members, including name, contact information, major, academic college seat held, RSO/company involvement for abstentions, and date of

appointment; and to handle all matters not specifically outlined in these bylaws in coordination with SALP and the OfS.

- vi. The responsibilities of the Secretary are to record the business of the SSGAC; to provide minutes to the OfS; to maintain a record of disbursements for each proposal in cooperation with the SALP Financial Advisor; to prepare documents for meetings; to send notifications to applicants as appropriate; and to reasonably assist the Chair in other functions of the committee.
- vii. The responsibilities of the Promotions Coordinator are to work with the Chair to schedule classroom and RSO visits to inform students about the SSG; to organize times for the SSGAC to put up flyers; to work with the Chair to create and put up display cases in the Bernhard Center and other buildings on campus; and to reasonably assist the Chair in other functions of the committee.

d. Rules of Conduct

- i. All SSGAC members must maintain a cumulative GPA at or above 2.30.
- ii. All SSGAC members are required to attend all SSGAC meetings.
- iii. Any member who misses two meetings a semester without prior approval from the Chair will be removed from the SSGAC.
- iv. Members must inform the committee of conflicts of interest or biases throughout the review process. A member may be forced to abstain by quorum vote or Chair decision if he/she fails to abstain when conflicts of interest or bias occur.
- v. Members must file a list of all past or present student organization affiliations with the Chair before they receive voting rights.
- vi. Members of the SSGAC may not submit proposals for review.

e. Quorum

- i. Quorum is six members.
- ii. All ties must be resolved. The Chair will cast a tiebreaker vote if necessary.
- iii. All votes are by simple majority. With an even quorum this means 50% plus one vote. With an odd quorum this means any majority over 50%.
- iv. If quorum cannot be reached due to absences, the Chair will arrange an alternate meeting time at the earliest possible convenience.

f. Vacancies

- i. Vacancies shall be filled as quickly as possible using the formal selection process outlined in Article 5 Section b.
- ii. If quorum cannot be reached due to vacancies, the Chair will select temporary student representatives. Simultaneously, WSA, GSA, the OfS, and SALP will recruit

students for appointment.

7. Marketing the SSG

a. The Office for Sustainability is responsible for:

- i. Drafting and sending a press release to University Relations for syndication to WMU News and GoWMU by October 1st for the fall semester and Martin Luther King Jr. Day (MLK Day) for the spring semester.
- ii. Emailing the deans for communication to faculty by October 1st for the fall semester and Martin Luther King Jr. Day for the spring semester.
- iii. Featuring the SSG on www.wmich.edu/sustainability by October 1st for the fall semester and Martin Luther King Jr. Day for the spring semester.
- iv. Featuring the SSG on OfS social media accounts from Labor Day to the proposal deadline for the fall semester and from MLK Day to the proposal deadline for the spring semester.

b. The SSGAC Chair is responsible for:

- i. In cooperation with the OfS, work with the WSA Graphic Design Chair or RSO Designs to create print flyers and posters by Labor Day for the fall semester and MLK Day for the spring semester.
- ii. Featuring the SSG on www.westernstudentassociation.org by Labor Day for the fall semester and MLK Day for the spring semester.
- iii. Featuring the SSG on WSA's social media accounts from Labor Day to the proposal deadline for the fall semester and from MLK Day to the proposal deadline for the spring semester.
- iv. Announcing deadlines during WSA's weekly meetings and creating a slide for the meeting slideshow.
- v. Working with the WSA Graphic Design Chair or RSO Designs to create a slide for Miller Movies by Labor Day for the fall semester or MLK Day for the spring semester.
- vi. Forwarding the SSG press release to WIDR and the Western Herald upon receiving it from the OfS.

c. SSGAC members are responsible for:

- i. Announcing the SSG within their program and college from Labor Day to the proposal deadline for the fall semester and from MLK Day to the proposal deadline for the spring semester.

- ii. Distributing the SSG press release to email lists within their college upon receiving it.
- iii. Assisting with putting up SSGAC posters in their academic college.
- iv. Attending all promotional events, such as Western Wednesday, Student Sustainability Grant writing workshops, etc.
- v. Working with the SSGAC Chair on special projects to promote the SSG in their academic college.

8. Proposal Review Process

- a. The OfS will produce electronic packets of coded proposals for blind review by 5:00 p.m. on the Friday before Thanksgiving (fall allocations) and 5:00 p.m. the Monday following Spring Break (spring allocations). The SSGAC Chair is responsible for providing all necessary contact information for distribution to the members of the SSGAC.
- b. The SSGAC Chair must distribute proposal packets no later than seven days before deliberations for read-only review.
- c. The deliberations will occur the week following Thanksgiving (fall allocations) and within two weeks after Spring Break (spring allocations).
- d. If the SSGAC is unable to make a decision during the first deliberation, the SSGAC Chair may contact and meet with the proposal author(s) to address questions or concerns of the SSGAC, while communicating about the process with the OfS.
- e. If necessary, the SSGAC may deliberate a second time during the week before fall semester finals week or during the third or fourth weeks of March.
- f. The SSGAC must make their final allocations decisions by finals week for the fall allocations and by April 1st for the spring allocations.
- g. The SSGAC Chair decides the format of deliberations and must include time for all members to speak.
- h. Voting follows Robert's Rules of Order.
- i. The SSGAC may choose to deny all funding, fully, partially, or conditionally fund proposals, and may veto line items of a budget. If the SSGAC conditionally funds a proposal, they may award additional funding to cover the costs of those conditions.
- j. The SSGAC must use the approved funding guidelines outlined in this document when deliberating budgets.
- k. The SSGAC may not allocate funds that, in their judgement, could result in a violation of University regulations.
- l. If a proposal is funded, the OfS will email an acceptance letter to the proposal author(s) and copy the SSGAC Chair. Results of the deliberation will be explained in the acceptance letter, including any budget modifications.

- m. A rejection letter will be sent to applicants whose proposals are denied, including a detailed explanation of the denial. Rejection letters must include a record of the vote and the basis and timeline for appeals.
- n. The OfS will provide the SALP Financial Advisor with a copy of all proposals and acceptance/rejection letters within seven days of notifying applicants and copy the SSGAC Chair.

9. Appeals Process

- a. Applicants who have been rejected during the OfS screening process can schedule a meeting with the Executive Director for Campus Sustainability to argue their case.
- b. Applicants who have been rejected by the SSGAC can schedule a meeting with the SSGAC Chair to argue their case.
- c. If the SSGAC Chair discovers new information about the application or that an applicant was rejected in error, the Chair may call an emergency meeting of the SSGAC for a re-vote.
- d. In the event that an appeal still cannot be settled satisfactorily, a final mediation will be scheduled with the WSA Judicial Council within fourteen days of the meetings mentioned above.

10. Accessing Funds

- a. Overview
 - i. SALP will have fiscal oversight of the fund 52 SSGAC account and funds. These funds will be managed by SALP in the same manner as is done for the Agencies (WSA, CAB, GSA). SALP will move allocated amounts to individual SSG fund 52's and will manage all transactions and sweeps in the same manner as is done for the Agencies. Any balance in the account at fiscal yearend will close to 23-0018280.
 - ii. Funds should be used for the intended purposes within twelve months of being awarded. The accounts must never end the twelve months in a deficit.
 - iii. All SSG funds must remain within the University accounting system (GLOW) as assigned by the SALP Financial Advisor.
 - iv. Primary proposal authors must attend a Financial Manager's Training with the SALP Financial Advisor before purchasing anything in their budget. All other students associated with an SSG are strongly encouraged to attend this training.
 - v. Funds may only be used for purposes specified in an applicant's budget. Surplus funds may not be used for unapproved items or services.
 - vi. The SALP Financial Advisor may freeze the accounts of groups or individuals whose projects exceed the timeline included with their proposal.

- vii. Grant extensions and minor budget modifications may be considered by submitting a detailed letter of explanation to the SSGAC Chair and the OfS. The SSGAC Chair and OfS will review these requests in cooperation with the SALP Financial Advisor.
- viii. All unused SSG funds will be transferred to fund 23-0018910 at the end of the fiscal year unless projects have been approved with timelines extending into the next fiscal year. In this case, the SALP Financial Advisor will ensure that funds roll over into the appropriate SSG account.
- ix. For additional information on how to access and manage funds, refer to the SALP RSO Handbook or email salp-rsofinances@wmich.edu.

11. Advertising

- a. All advertising for SSG supported activities must adhere to SALP guidelines and include the SSG logo or the words “funded through a WMU Student Sustainability Grant.”
- b. All electronic forms of advertising (i.e. Facebook) and group emails must also follow this guideline.
- c. If this guideline is not followed, a hold may be placed on the SSG account in question and the offending individual(s) may be barred from future allocations.
- d. The SSG logo must be used with the color scheme as shown in green at the top of this document, or it may be changed to be black, white, or grayscale. The color scheme may not be altered from what is shown, and the font, logo design, and proportions may not be altered in any way. A high resolution digital logo will be included with your award materials for acknowledgment and advertising purposes.

12. Evaluation

- a. When a Student Sustainability Grant is funded, the primary proposal author(s) will receive information about the evaluation procedure, which takes place in accordance with the OfS and the SSGAC Chair. The information includes instructions, report templates, and a date when the final project report is due to the OfS.
- b. Primary proposal authors are responsible for submitting a final project report to the OfS no later than 30 days after the end of their approved project close date or approved extension.
- c. The primary proposal author is responsible for submitting an interim project report by the end of each semester or at the end of Summer II if a grant spans multiple semesters. This does not include the semester when the funds were allocated (for example, an individual who is awarded a grant during the fall semester must submit their first evaluation at the end of the spring semester).

- d. The OfS will inform the SALP Financial Advisor if individuals miss their end of semester evaluation deadline for grants spanning multiple semesters. The SALP Financial Advisor will freeze the fund 52 in question until an evaluation is submitted.
- e. The OfS will inform the SALP Financial Advisor if individuals submit their final evaluations late and they may be audited by SALP to determine if a misuse of funds has occurred.
- f. Individuals who fail to submit their final evaluations within 60 days of the end of their approved timeline may be barred from future allocations and audited by SALP to determine if a misuse of funds has occurred.
- g. Individuals with outstanding evaluations may not apply for additional SSG funds.

13. Procedures for Misuse of Funds

- a. If the SSGAC suspects misuse of SSG funds, the Chair must request an audit from SALP and inform the OfS.
- b. SALP and the OfS may suspend disbursements from any account under investigation.
- c. Penalties for misuse of funds may include warning, loss of current funding, and/or loss of future funding.
- d. Any suspected criminal misuse of funds will be reported to all relevant authorities, including but not limited to WMU Public Safety, SALP, and the OfS.

14. Procedures for Unusable Funds

- a. If it is determined that SSG funding previously awarded will no longer be able to be used for its intended purpose, a letter must be immediately sent to the SSGAC Chair and the OfS.
- b. Funding awarded will be returned as directed by the SALP Financial Advisor in accordance with the OfS and the SSGAC Chair (see 10a.i.).

15. Ongoing Use and Management of Consumables

- a. All products made from or equipment purchased through a Student Sustainability Grant is the property of WMU. All equipment and products purchased through this grant should have an ongoing management plan that determines what happens to items when a project is complete including who assumes management of materials once a project concludes. This ongoing use and management plan should be shared with your academic advisor for approval and clearly articulated in your grant materials. In the event consumables do not have an ongoing use plan, the grant advisor, SALP, WSA, and the OfS can cooperatively determine an appropriate means to continue use, repurpose, manage, or discard unused or unwanted items.