

Funding

Funding models for clubs and societies

This resource will help you to think about how you allocate grant funding to your clubs and societies. It will help you to consider the make-up of the grant allocation committee, the application process, and the terms and conditions of grant funding.

Introduction

In many students' union there is an allocated pot of money available for grants for societies and/or clubs. The amount available varies greatly between different students' union, and also sometimes between different groups within the same students' union.

There is no consistent model across students' unions that is used for allocating grant funding. Additionally there isn't a specific model for grant funding that NUS recommends. However it is encouraged that your model is open, accessible, fair and democratic. Consider any new processes that you introduce to ensure that it is the most efficient method for students, staff and elected officers.

The grant-allocation committee

To ensure a fair and democratic allocation procedure it is a good idea to have a committee, or at least more than one person making the decision.

To create your grant-allocation committee you should consider:

- Will there be a staff presence on the committee?
It may be a good idea to include a member of staff who works directly with clubs/societies and perhaps someone from the finance team of your students' union.

- Will there be student representation on the committee, apart from the sabbatical officer?
- Who will chair the committee?
- How often will the committee meet?

It is probably more efficient to pre-plan these meetings and promote the dates to the groups applying for funding so that they can then ensure they submit applications in time.

- How will voting in the committee meetings work?

Does each committee member get equal vote? Will you vote on all decisions or just difficult ones?

- What will the committee be called?

An alternative to a committee could be to decide on grant funding through a forum of all club/society committees.

The application process

Consider how you can make the application process straightforward for committees whilst still ensuring the relevant information is collected.

Answering the following questions should help you to identify what needs to be included in your application process.

- When will applications need to be submitted?
 - One opportunity as part of strategic planning for club/society committees
 - Throughout the year, whenever they need funding
 - Throughout the year at specific dates
 - Once per term
- What format will the application be?
 - Online
 - Downloadable form, emailed to committee
 - Paper form
 - Combination of above
- What specific information do you need to make a decision?
 - Name of club/society and contact details
 - Current funds
 - Details about funded activity
- Could you combine this process with another?
 - Registration
 - Development planning
 - Event planning
 - Health & safety

Other things to consider

- Make it clear about the terms and conditions of funding. For example if you can't fund events with alcohol, state this on the application form and explain this when you speak to committees.
- Ensure that the key dates and deadlines are considered carefully and justifiable. If you can't justify a deadline then why is it in place?
- Ensure all key dates and deadlines are promoted and explained.
- Offer a right to appeal a decision afterwards.

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If you have any questions about this guide or would like to suggest any amends please contact studentopportunities@nus.org.uk

