



The Office of VP Finance Sustainability Projects Fund Guide

Purpose of Document

This guide is intended for the use of all interested parties in the fund's history and instructions about how to apply. This acts as a guide that compliments both the AMS Internal Code of Procedures and the SPF Committee's Terms of Reference. The AMS Internal Code of Procedures outlines the purpose and limitations the Sustainability Projects Fund in Article 6. 1. (a). xi). The activities of this fund should also reflect the values expressed in the AMS Lighter Footprint Strategy, the AMS Environmental Sustainability Strategy and the AMS Ethical and Sustainable Purchasing Policy. Should any conflicts arise, the AMS Policies will supersede this document.

This guide was prompted as an attempt to consolidate previous documents and various information available online and in printed form. The goal is to ensure that all existing language regarding the SPF is unified and in agreement. It is expected that this document will be updated and reviewed at least annually in a swift manner to reflect the needs of the fund.

Background of the Fund

The AMS Sustainability Projects Fund (SPF) began in September 2011 when UBC students passed a successful referendum to support student initiated sustainability projects at UBC through a \$2.25 per student fee each year. The fund currently has a replenishing fund of >\$90,000 per year. The SPF is a redistribution of student fees, distinct from university funding. The purpose of the SPF is to create a sustainable campus and foster an environmentally conscious culture by funding student-led projects that reduce the ecological footprint of UBC students and their campus. The Code of Procedures states that "The purpose of this Fund shall be to provide funding to Active Members for sustainability projects that enhance opportunities in:

1. student engagement related to sustainability;
2. reduction of the Society's ecological footprint and the ecological footprint of UBC Vancouver and the Alma Mater Society of UBC Vancouver
3. education and outreach related to sustainability;
4. the environmental, ecological and socially sustainable operations of the Society and UBC Vancouver."

This is intended to include sustainable business proposals, student-led events, projects for specific programs (such as ASIC and SEEDs) and any feasible idea that engages our campus in sustainable activities.

SPF Administration

Administrative support for SPF activities is provided through the AMS Sustainability Projects Fund Administrator, the AMS Sustainability Coordinator and the Vice-President Finance of the AMS.

The Sustainability Projects Fund Coordinator co-facilitates (with the Sustainability Coordinator) a SPF Information Session for students in the beginning of each term; ensures that the SPF webpage is up-to-date; taking minutes of the SPF Committee meeting; maintains a database of applications and their status; arranging SPF committee meetings; receives receipts for reimbursement; submits them to the VP Finance for approval; and communicates with the SPF Committee and with applicants (with particular attention to noting comments on unsuccessful applications to be shared with SPF applicants)

The VP Finance attends meetings of the SPF Committee; approves the SPF budget and signs off on reimbursement requisitions

The Sustainability Coordinator is responsible for overseeing the SPF process; chairing the SPF Advisory Committee meetings; and communicates directly to the VP finance.

SPF Website

The SPF web address is: <http://amssustainability.ca/submit/>.

The public portion of the website is used to provide information on SPF (including previous, current and future allocation of funding), membership of committees, SPF guidelines, criteria and procedures, and all relevant application forms. Students will use the public website as a means to upload their application(s) as well as provide their final reports outlining outcomes of their student projects.

Formstack is used to host all applications for the use of the SPF Committee.

SPF Administration and Procedure Review Process

A new feedback process will be set up for the SPF on its procedures and application experience.

- a optional survey is sent out to applicants
- At the end of each term, the feedback is compiled and recommendations should be given due consideration, with specific changes and actions presented to committee by the SPF Administrator in order to create a more robust fund.

Process for Application

At the beginning of each academic term, the SPF Administrator (with support from AMS Sustainability Coordinator) will be responsible for facilitating a SPF Information Session for potential applicants on the basics of how to apply.

At the same time, students should use the SPF webpage, to check their eligibility, upcoming

deadlines and application regulations. From this site, students can download the estimated budget form and planned timeline form. After reviewing the SPF website, students with questions should contact the SPF Coordinator at sustainadmin@ams.ubc.ca. Once completed, the student can upload their application on the same webpage as they fill out the general online application form.

Submission Deadlines

Submissions are reviewed on a monthly basis. Deadlines are usually during the last week of each calendar month. Thus, review by committee usually occurs in the first week of each calendar month.

Student Eligibility Regulations

1. All applicants must be registered UBC students (a.k.a. active members of the AMS)
2. Applications will be accepted from students, student groups or clubs
3. Applications will NOT be accepted from faculty members, staff, or off-campus organizations.
 - a. They may apply towards the fund in coordination with an active member as a secondary applicant however.

Funding Eligibility Regulations

The following list clarifies and reinforces the AMS Internal Code of Procedures.

1. Student applicants MUST meet eligibility regulations as listed in Student
2. Applications must be received before the application deadlines.
3. Greater consideration will be granted to applications that benefit a greater number of the student body, directly or indirectly. Project examples of indirect benefit to students could include: Hosting workshops or education components of your project.
4. Additional funding solicited and secured must be noted in the completed application to support their proposal.
5. Only a correctly completed budget and timeline proposal will be presented to committee, the SPF Administrator holds the discretion to advise or request a resubmission before considering the application
6. Specific item regulations
 - a. No student salaries/wages/coop fees shall be reimbursed by SPF funds.
 - i. Professional services with receipts are acceptable, but the SPF does not provide honoraria to project leaders as this violates the AMS Policies regarding labour.
 - ii. However, honoraria in the form of a speaker fee will be considered by committee up to a maximum of \$1000.
 - b. Catering/food costs will be funded only for public events and at under \$25/person.
 - i. Events where food education is the main focus can be exempt from this limitation at the amount of funding will be at the discretion of the committee
 - c. No alcoholic beverages shall be reimbursed through SPF funds.
 - d. No airfare shall be reimbursed through SPF funds.
 - e. No conference registration fees will be reimbursed through the SPF funds. Student will be referred to other sources of funding available on campus.

- f. The SPF is not intended to fund the general operations of a group. Groups are encouraged to apply for funding for each individual project and event they wish to host. This allows for a clearer and more transparent account of what SPF funds are allocated for.

Criteria for Application Review:

Applications submitted will be evaluated using the criteria listed below.

Reduction of Ecological Footprint:

Submissions that propose methods to reduce the ecological footprint of physical operations on campus and promote sustainable behavior among UBC students will be prioritized in this category. Projects should aim to address one or more of the following: sustainable behavior, energy, water, carbon emissions, waste, living systems or pollutants. Focus will be given to projects that show linkages to sustainability planning at UBC and can demonstrate a clear connection to resources on campus. Proposals must demonstrate how they plan to impact the ecological footprint of UBC with a clear logic and definitive areas which will be addressed.

Increased Student Engagement:

Projects will gain favor in this category by demonstrating a clear goal toward enhanced sustainability of the social environment at UBC by creating student volunteer opportunities, skill enhancement outlets for UBC students and developing leadership opportunities. Projects that create social cohesion, ideally across an interdisciplinary environment will receive priority here.

Education and Outreach:

Proposals that can demonstrate a clear contribution to the educational aspect of sustainability while providing a linkage to UBC and the greater community will meet the aims of this category. By integrating with courses, opening opportunities for community engagement and also providing a visual presence for sustainability, funded projects can raise the profile of sustainability by students at UBC. Projects must also demonstrate a plan for engaging stakeholders. Advertising and publicity must be considered with a focus on raising awareness among students at UBC.

Longevity and Feasibility:

Developing an ambitious proposal that also integrates a demonstrated path to success is a core component of a project that will receive funding. A clear plan for the end of the project term will either identify opportunities for sustained operation, lasting impact or a scope that can allow for integration into the current processes of UBC or the AMS. Each project must assess the economic, social and environmental aspect of their work. Projects must incorporate a plan which demonstrates awareness of long-term needs.

Impact at UBC:

Priority will be given to projects that can demonstrate an impact on UBC's Point Grey Campus or in the University Endowment Lands.

Review of Applications

Monthly meetings by the Sustainability Projects Fund Committee will determine which projects are approved for funding. The process for this is guided by the SPF Committee Terms of Reference document. Committee will utilise the above criterion in evaluation and may approve, reject, or ask for a resubmission. Committee will meet one week after each month's submission deadline. The SPF Committee meetings are open to public and posted on the SPF webpage. For more information please contact the SPF Administrator regarding the committee.

Notification of Funding Offers

- All applicants will be issued an email to indicate posting on the SPF webpage of the list of successful applications, the amounts awarded, and instructions for accessing funds.
- Individual emails to unsuccessful applicants will also be issued indicating briefly the reasons as to why the applications were not successful.
- Successful applicants will be instructed upon notification to arrange a meeting time to sign a letter of acceptance and receive instructions regarding reimbursement.

Acceptance of Funding

- Should funding be accepted the primary and/or secondary applicant must sign a letter of acceptance
- This also confirms that they agree to write a final report for submission to fund administrator
- The letter of acceptance should utilise the standard format which includes the following elements: Indication of the date of approval and the date of signature; Indication of the maximum amount allowed for reimbursement; any relevant conditions under which the funding is contingent (for example the clarifications of ownership of the end product or tools used in a project); the signature

Reimbursement Process

- All payment reimbursements are receipt-based and must be accompanied by a completed SPF invoice form and submitted to the SPF administrator
 - Receipts should clearly indicate an itemized payment. Credit/Debit transaction records with no mention of the actual item paid for are not accepted.
- Only the primary and secondary applicants will be directly reimbursed to simplify the administrative procedures afterwards. Please make sure that your primary and secondary applicants are the ones that will be paying for the expenses at first.
- If there are many different people involved that need to claim expenses, the SPF Administrator has the right to reimburse the combined amounts to only the primary or secondary applicant, and allow them to handle the distribution of reimbursements to each member of the project.
- The SPF Administrator holds the right to reject all invoices that are not accompanied by a formal receipt. However in some circumstances a procedure for missing receipts can be made.
- Projects have two months after their project's stated completion date to file receipts. The SPF Administrator holds the right to reject reimbursement if it is too far past the projects slated completion. However discretion is applied with regards to project extensions and special circumstances as they arise.

This document was prepared by Chiyi Tam, Sustainability Assistant Co-ordinator in the April of 2014. Updated July 2nd, 2014.