Student Sustainability Grant Handbook

Revised: 19 September 2018

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) and has the potential 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 or the Western Student Association (WSA) Campus Sustainability Chair for more information about the SSG.

b. SSGAC and the OfS may promote ideas for projects on their social media pages and websites. These ideas will be made available for students who want to make a change but might not know where to begin. Ideas advertised on these pages may also be older grants that can be taken over by new applicants.

3. Funding Guidelines

a. Proposals are due to the Office for Sustainability (OfS) at 11:59pm on the Thursday before Thanksgiving (fall allocations) and 11:59pm on the Thursday before Spring Break (spring allocations).

b. Applicants are encouraged to submit an abstract to the OfS by the first Monday in October for fall allocations and first Monday in February for spring allocations. Submitting an abstract ensures the OfS can adequately instruct applicants on the steps necessary to craft a successful proposal.

c. Applicants are encouraged to attend information sessions offered by the OfS. Information sessions will educate applicants on facets of the SSG application and allow for applicants to ask questions.

d. All applicants who choose not to attend the information sessions 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, or similar complexities, this meeting is strongly encouraged (See section 4, Necessary Stakeholder Approvals).

e. All proposals must be submitted using the Student Sustainability Grant Application, which can be found at www.wmich.edu/sustainability/grants.

f. Groups may collectively author and submit proposals.

g. Proposals should be saved as a single PDF document and sent via email to ssg-sustainability@wmich.edu and wsa-sustainability@wmich.edu with the subject line: lastnameSSGproposal. Hard copies and other file formats may be rejected.ssg-sustainability@wmich.edu and with the subject line: lastnameSSGproposal. Hard copies and other file formats may be rejected.

h. 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.

i. Proposals that do not include all required supplemental materials (i.e. budget, timeline, letters of support, space assessment, etc.) will be rejected.

j. Any proposal that seeks that seeks to make physical changes to WMU grounds of property must include written approval form all necessary WMU stakeholders. Proposals intending to make physical changes must take place on properties owned by WMU.

k. 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 seek compensation should seek additional funding from other sources.

l. 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).

m. Applicants may combine funding from the SSG with additional funding sources.

n. 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."

o. Following pre-screening by the Office for Sustainability, grant proposals undergo a review by the Student Sustainability Grant Allocations Committee (SSGAC) to evaluate and select the proposals that most closely align with the goals of the SSG.

p. Applicants are encouraged but not required to attend the SSGAC review meeting in order to answer any questions that the committee might have with regards to their proposal face to face.

q. Funding will be denied if the Student Sustainability Grants Allocations Committee (SSGAC) determines that the primary purpose of an activity is to make a charitable donation.

r. 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 units may require a significant window of time to review and approve proposed 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. <u>$1 to $1,499.99</u>

    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. <u>$1,500 to $4,999.99</u>

    i. Applicants must meet all conditions for the $1 to $1,499.99 range.

    ii. Two or more students must author the proposal.

    iii. Students must support the proposal. Support is presented in the form of a letter written by a student not named as an author in the proposal. Letters must include the student's name, program of study, a brief statement of support, and their signature.

c. <u>$5,000 to $9,999.99</u>

    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 <u>wsa-sustainability@wmich.edu</u>, and signatures must be submitted to the OfS at least 14 days before the application deadline for verification.

d. <u>$10,000 or more</u>

    i. Applicants must meet all conditions for the $5,000 to $9,999.99 range.

    ii. The proposal must be supported by formal resolutions by both the WSA and 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 14 days before the application deadline for verification.

    iii. Instructions for passing a WSA resolution can be found in the WSA Constitution at <u>www.westernstudentassociation.org.</u> 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 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. <u>Association and Purpose</u>

    i. The SSGAC is a collaboration of the WSA, GSA, OfS, and Office of Student Engagement (OSE).

ii. The SSGAC is responsible for fairly and appropriately allocating grants according to student fees guidelines, university guidelines, and guidelines related to OSE financial processing requirements. The SSAGC 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 will be used by OSE 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 SSGAC Chair will email colleges to request nominations of students to serve on the SSGAC.
   iv. The OfS will post nomination information on www.wmich.edu/sustainability and their social media accounts by the Monday after Labor Day annually.
   v. The SSGAC Chair will work to post nomination information on www.westernstudentassociation.org and WSA's social media accounts by the Monday after Labor Day annually.
   vi. Any WMU student may be nominated by themselves or another student, staff person, or faculty member 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 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

vii. The GSA selects both graduate representatives. If GSA representatives are not appointed to the SSGAC 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 officer is the the Chair.

ii. The WSA Campus Sustainability Chair is appointed by the WSA President and Vice President and is confirmed by the Senate.

iii. 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 OSE and the OfS.

iv. An OfS representative will serve as secretary for the SSGAC Committee while proposals are being reviewed. Responsibilities of the Secretary are to record the business of the SSGAC; to provide minutes to the OfS for posting on the WMU Sustainability website; to maintain a record of disbursements for each proposal in cooperation with the OSE 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.

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. <u>Quorum</u>

     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. <u>Vacancies</u>

     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 OSE will recruit students for appointment.

7. Marketing the SSG

  a. <u>The Office for Sustainability is responsible for:</u>

     i.   Drafting and sending a press release to University Relations for syndication to WMU News and GoWMU by the second Monday in September 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 the second Monday in September for the fall semester and Martin Luther King Jr. Day for the spring semester.

   iii.   Featuring the SSG on www.wmich.edu/sustainability by the second Monday in September 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.

    v.   Emailing promotional material to the GSA promotions team.

  b. <u>The SSGAC Chair is responsible for:</u>

i. In cooperation with the OfS, work with the WSA Graphic Design Chair, the OfS Graphic Design student, 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, the OfS Graphic Design student, or RSO Designs to create a slide for Miller Movies by Labor Day for the fall semester or MLK Day for the spring semester. A slide should also be displyaed on the screens in the Bernhard Center.

vi. Forwarding the SSG press release to WIDR and the Western Herald upon receiving it from the OfS.

c. <u>SSGAC members are responsible for:</u>

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 and to promote the SSG in their academic college.

8. Proposal Review Process

a. The OfS will produce electronic proposals for 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 assisting with 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, they may request clarification and request that the proposal's authors come in and present their proposal and answer questions. The SSGAC Chair will handle these requests from 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 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 judgment, could result in a violation of University regulations.

l. If a proposal is funded, the SSGAC Chair and OfS will email an acceptance letter to the proposal author(s). 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.

9. Appeals Process

a. Applicants who have been rejected during the OfS screening process can schedule a meeting with the Director for 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. OSE will have fiscal oversight of the fund 52 SSGAC account and funds. These funds will be managed by OSE in the same manner as is done for the Agencies (WSA, CAB, GSA). OSE 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 should never end the twelve months in a deficit.

iii. All SSG funds must remain within the University accounting system (GLOW) as assigned by the OSE Financial Advisor.

iv. Primary proposal authors must attend a Financial Manager's Training with the OSE 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 OSE 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 OSE 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 OSE 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 OSE RSO Handbook or email salp-rsofinances@wmich.edu.

b. Budget Change

i. Upon the approval of a grant application by the SSGAC, should the grant author find that they need to change their budget, they may do so by submitting a letter of explanation to the SSGAC Chair and the OfS.

    ii. The letter should include a new budget with changes noted, an explanation of why the budget needs to be changed, what they will be using the money for, and if any ramifications will occur due to adjusting the budget.

    iii. The SSGAC Chair will review the letter, and, if necessary, convene a meeting of the SSGAC. The SSGAC will review the letter and conduct a vote to approve or deny the changes to the grant author's budget.

c. <u>Grant Renewal</u>
    i. To renew a grant that extended past the original twelve-month deadline, the author must fill out a new SSG application.
    ii. The new application will follow the same rules and funding guidelines as outlined in this document.

11. Advertising

a. All advertising for SSG supported activities must adhere to OSE 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 individuals may be barred from future allocations.
d. The SSG logo must be used with the color scheme of green (HEX code 7fc241) and teal (HEX code 0a7e81) or grayscale (including black and white) if a design, material, or application requires an alternative to the color logo. 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 available upon request if needed for promotional purposes by the recipients.

12. Evaluation

a. When a Student Sustainability Grant is funded, the primary proposal author(s) will receive email notification about the evaluation procedure, which takes place in accordance with the OfS and the SSGAC Chair. The notification includes instructions for accessing funds, an outline for a written evaluation, and a date when the evaluation is due to the OfS.
b. Primary proposal authors are responsible for submitting a written evaluation to the OfS no later than 30 days after the end of their approved timeline or approved extension.

c. The primary proposal author is responsible for submitting a written evaluation 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 or 30 days after the grant is completed, whichever occurs first).

d. The OfS will inform the OSEFinancial Advisor if individuals miss their end of semester evaluation deadline for grants spanning multiple semesters. The OSE Financial Advisor may freeze the fund 52 in question until an evaluation is submitted.

e. The OfS will inform the OSE Financial Advisor if individuals submit their final evaluations late and they may be audited by OSE 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 OSE 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, OfS, OSE, WSA, GSA, or any other stakeholder suspects misuse of SSG funds, the WSA sustainability chair should be notified. Chair must request an audit from OSE and inform the OfS.

b. OSE 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, OSE, 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. Unused funds will be returned as directed by the OSE Financial Advisor into the appropriate SSG account.

15. Ongoing Use and Management of Consumables

a. All 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 long term management plan should be shared with your academic advisor for approval and clearly articulated in your grant materials. In the event consumables or revenue generated by the grant do not have an ongoing use plan, the grant advisor, GSA, OSE, WSA, and the OfS can cooperatively determine an appropriate means to continue use, repurpose, manage, or discard unused or unwanted items through the WMU Surplus Sales. Any plan for use of revenue generated by the grant will need to be approved by the WSA, OSE, GSA, and the OfS.