1. What is the Student Sustainability Grant?

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

2. Who Should Apply?

The SSG is available to all WMU students who pay the sustainability fee. Virtually all majors and programs at Western address one or more aspect of sustainability, therefore the possibilities for projects, initiatives, and events are limitless. Students are strongly encouraged to contact the Office for Sustainability for more information about the SSG or to schedule an appointment for proposal development assistance.

3. Funding Guidelines

1. Proposals are due to the Office for Sustainability for prescreening at 11:59 p.m. on the Thursday before Thanksgiving (fall allocation) and 11:59 p.m. on the Thursday before Spring Break (spring allocation).

2. The Office for Sustainability offers free proposal development assistance. Appointments may be made until 14 days before proposal deadlines by emailing wmu-sustainability@wmich.edu or calling 387-0941.

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

4. 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. No employment-relationship compensation is allowed via SSG fund 52 accounts.

5. Groups may collectively author and submit proposals.

6. Students requesting less than $1,499.99 are required to submit an application, proposal narrative, advisor approval, department head approval, budget, timeline, and space assessment. Students requesting more than $1,499.99 are required to meet additional eligibility requirements:

   $1,500.00-$4,999.99
   a. Two or more students must author the proposal.
   b. Both undergraduate and graduate students must support the proposal. Undergraduate applicants must include a letter of support from a graduate student, and graduate applicants 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.
$5,000.00-$9,999.99

c. Applicants must meet all conditions for the $1,500.00-$4,999.99 range.

d. The WSA Sustainability Chair must endorse the proposal or the authors must collect ≥ 500 verifiable student signatures with WIN numbers. The WSA Sustainability chair can be reached at WSA-sustainability@wmich.edu, and signatures must be submitted to the Office for Sustainability at least 14 days before the application deadline for verification.

$10,000.00 or more

e. Applicants must meet all conditions for the 1,500.00-$4,999.99 range.

f. The proposal must be supported by formal resolutions by both the WSA and GSAC or the authors must collect ≥ 1,000 verifiable student signatures with WIN numbers. Instructions for passing a WSA resolution can be found in the WSA Constitution at www.westernstudentassociation.org.

g. The proposal must include a detailed letter of support from the authors’ advisor.

h. The proposal must include at least one detailed letter of support from an additional WMU faculty or staff member.

7. The Office for Sustainability will evaluate whether proposals are safe, legal, adequately budgeted, and possible within existing university infrastructure. Applicants who submit proposals that do not meet these criteria will be rejected.

8. The Office for Sustainability offers free proposal consultations until 14 days before application deadlines. Consultations are by appointment only and can be scheduled by emailing wmu-sustainability@wmich.edu or calling 387-0941.

9. Submit proposals via email to wmu-sustainability@wmich.edu in PDF format or submit hard copies to the Office for Sustainability.

10. The Office for Sustainability will reject proposals that do not include all required supplemental materials (i.e. budget, timeline, letters of support, space assessment, etc.).

11. Any proposal that seeks to make physical changes to WMU grounds or property must include a written approval from WMU Facilities Management.

12. 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).

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

14. 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.”

15. Funding will be denied if the SSG-AC determines that the primary purpose of an activity is to make a charitable donation.
16. The SSG-AC may not provide funds to erase debt or to cover expenses already incurred.

4. Student Sustainability Grant Allocations Committee Bylaws

a. Association and Purpose

1. The Student Sustainability Grants Allocations Committee (SSG-AC) is a collaboration of the Western Student Association (WSA), the Office for Sustainability (OfS), and Student Activities and Leadership Programs (SALP).

2. The SSG-AC will be responsible for fairly and appropriately allocating grants according to student fees guidelines, university guidelines and guidelines related to SALP financial processing requirements. The SSG-AC 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, approved amounts and SSG-AC approvals. This document is what will be used by SALP to disperse and monitor allocations.

b. Membership Selection

1. The SSG-AC is composed of eight undergraduate students, two graduate students, and a chair (who can be either an undergraduate or graduate student).

2. Students must be in good academic standing as determined by WMU.

3. The Office for Sustainability 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.

4. The Office for Sustainability will post nomination information on www.wmich.edu/sustainability and their Facebook and Twitter accounts by the Monday after Labor Day annually.

5. The SSG-AC Chair will post nomination information on www.westernstudentassociation.org and WSA’s Facebook and Twitter accounts by the Monday after Labor Day annually.

6. Any WMU student, staff person, or faculty member may nominate an undergraduate student to be a member of the SSG-AC (excluding the Chair) using a standardized SSG-AC nomination form. Forms must be submitted in hard copy to the office of the SSG-AC Chair in the Student Organization Center (SOC) by 11:59 p.m. of October 31 annually. The SSG-AC Chair will evaluate nominees and make appointments from each college in accordance with the structure below. The WSA Senate must confirm all appointees before they may sit on the SSG-AC.

   Arts & Sciences: Sciences____________________________________ 1 Seat
   Arts & Sciences: Humanities & Social Sciences______________ 1 Seat
   Business____________________________________________________ 1 Seat
   Fine Arts____________________________________________________ 1 Seat
   Aviation____________________________________________________ 1 Seat
   Education & Human Development___________________________ 1 Seat
   Engineering & Applied Sciences_____________________________ 1 Seat
   Health & Human Services____________________________________ 1 Seat
7. The Graduate Student Advisory Committee (GSAC) selects both graduate representatives.

8. The term of each member of the SSG-AC will end after (whichever comes first): their one-year appointment expires, they submit their resignation in writing to the SSG-AC Chair, they graduate from WMU, or they violate the SSG-AC Rules of Conduct.

c. Officers

1. SSG-AC officers consist of Chair and Secretary.

2. The Sustainability Chair of the Western Student Association (WSA) holds a permanent seat as the SSG-AC Chair, but does not vote unless there is a tie.

3. The Chair appoints the Secretary.

4. Officers may be undergraduate or graduate students.

5. The responsibilities of the Chair are to schedule, set the agenda, and preside over all SSG-AC meetings; to be the SSG-AC’s chief spokesperson; to represent the SSG-AC in all appeals; and to handle all matters not specifically outlined in these bylaws in coordination with SALP and the Office for Sustainability.

6. The responsibilities of the Secretary are to record the business of the SSG-AC; to provide minutes to the Office for Sustainability for posting on the WMU Sustainability Website; 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.

d. Rules of Conduct

1. All SSG-AC members are required to attend all SSG-AC meetings.

2. Any member who misses two consecutive meetings without prior approval from the Chair will be removed from the SSG-AC.

3. 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.

4. Members must file a list of all past or present student organization affiliations with the SSG-AC Chair before they receive voting rights.

5. Members of the SSG-AC may not submit proposals for review.

e. Quorum

1. Quorum is six members.

2. All ties must be resolved. The Chair will cast a tiebreaker vote if necessary.

3. All votes are by simple majority. With an even quorum this means 50% plus 1 vote. With an odd quorum this means any majority over 50%.

4. If quorum cannot be reached due to absences, the Chair will arrange an alternate meeting time within seven days.
f. Vacancies

1. Vacancies shall be filled as quickly as possible using the formal selection process listed in Article II: Membership.

2. If quorum cannot be reached due to vacancies, the SSG-AC Chair will select temporary student representatives. Simultaneously, WSA, the Office for Sustainability, and SALP will recruit students for appointment.

Marketing the SSG

a. The office for Sustainability is responsible for:

   a. Drafting and sending a press release to University Relations for syndication to WMU News and GoWMU (by Martin Luther King, Jr. Day for fall semester and October 1 for spring semester).

   b. Emailing the Deans for communication to faculty (by Martin Luther King, Jr. Day for fall semester and October 1 for spring semester).

   c. Featuring the SSG on www.wmich.edu/sustainability (30 days before proposal deadlines).

   d. Featuring the SSG on the OfS Facebook and Twitter accounts (30 days before proposal deadlines).

b. The SSG-AC Chair is responsible for:

   a. Working with RSO Designs or the OfS Graphic Design Intern to create print flyers and posters (30 days before proposal deadlines).

   b. Featuring the SSG on www.westernstudentassociation.org (30 days before proposal deadlines).

   c. Featuring the SSG on WSA’s Facebook and Twitter accounts (30 days before proposal deadlines).

   d. Announcing deadlines during WSA’s Wednesday meetings and creating a slide for the meeting slideshow (30 days before proposal deadlines).

   e. Working with RSO Designs or the OfS Graphic Design Intern to create a slide for Miller Movies (30 days before proposal deadlines).

   f. Forwarding the SSG press release to WIDR and the Western Herald (30 days before proposal deadlines).

c. For the spring semester allocation, SSG-AC members are responsible for:

   a. Announcing the SSG within their program and college (30 days before spring deadline).

   b. Distributing the SSG press release to email lists within their college (30 days before spring deadline).

   c. Organizing one Q&A session in their college (30 days before spring deadline).

   d. Working to feature the SSG on departmental websites within their college (30 days before spring deadline).

   e. Creating content for relevant message boards, display cases, etc. within their college’s buildings (30 days before spring deadline).
f. Ensuring that SSG slides, provided by the SSG-AC Chair, are included on LCD screens within their college’s buildings.

6. Proposal Review Process

a) The Office for Sustainability will produce packets of coded proposals for blind review by 5:00 p.m. on the Friday before Thanksgiving (fall allocation) and 5:00 p.m. the Monday following Spring Break (spring allocation). The SSG-AC Chair is responsible for pickup and distribution to members of the SSG-AC.

b) The SSG-AC Chair must distribute proposal packets no later than seven days before deliberations for read-only review.

c) The first deliberations will occur the week following Thanksgiving (fall allocation) and two weeks after Spring Break (spring allocation).

d) If the SSG-AC is unable to make a decision during the first deliberation they may request clarification or additional information about a proposal by emailing questions to wmu-sustainability@wmich.edu. The Office for Sustainability will remove sender information and forward these questions to proposal authors anonymously. Authors will have 3 days to respond to the Office for Sustainability, who will remove sender information and return responses to the SSG-AC.

e) If necessary, the SSG-AC may deliberate a second time during the week before fall semester finals week (fall allocation) and during the third or fourth weeks of March (spring allocation).

f) The SSG-AC must make their final allocations decisions by finals week (fall allocation) and April 1 (spring allocation).

g) The Chair decides the format of deliberations, and must include time for all members to speak.

h) For each proposal there may be a discussion prior to voting.

i) Voting follows Robert's Rules of Order.

j) The SSG-AC may choose to fully, partially, or conditionally fund proposals, and may veto line items of a budget. If the SSG-AC conditionally funds a proposal, they may award additional funding to cover the costs of those conditions.

k) The SSG-AC must use the approved Sustainability Fund Funding Guidelines when deliberating budgets. The SSG-AC must review the Funding Guidelines annually in cooperation with the Office for Sustainability and SALP and update the guidelines as necessary.

l) The SSG-AC may not allocate funds that, in their judgment, could result in a violation of University regulations.

m) If a proposal is accepted, the SSG-AC Chair and Office for Sustainability 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.

n) 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.
The Office for Sustainability will provide the SALP Financial Advisor with a copy of all proposals and acceptance/rejection letters within 7 days of notifying applicants.

7. Appeals Process

1. Applicants who have been rejected during the Office for Sustainability screening process can schedule a meeting with the Executive Director for Campus Sustainability to argue their case.

2. Applicants who have been rejected by the SSG-AC can schedule a meeting with the SSG-AC Chair to argue their case.

3. If the SSG-AC Chair discovers new information about the application or that an applicant was rejected in error, the Chair may call an emergency meeting of the SSG-AC for a revote.

4. If an acceptable solution cannot be reached between an applicant and the SSG-AC Chair, a staff member of the Office for Sustainability will begin mediation.

5. In the event that an appeal still cannot be settled satisfactorily, a final mediation will be scheduled with a University ombudsman within 14 days of the meetings mentioned above.

8. Accessing Funds

   a) SALP will have fiscal oversight of the fund 52 SSG-AC account and funds. These funds will be managed by SALP in the same manner as is done for the Agencies (WSA, CAB, GSAC). 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.

   b) Funds should be used for the intended purposes within the fiscal year that they are received so that those students paying the fees have access to the programs and offerings that the fees paying for. Therefore, any carry forward balance should remain minimal. The accounts should never end a year in deficit.

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

   d) Funds may not be transferred into a different on campus account, or into an off-campus account, unless approved by the SALP Financial Advisor.

   e) 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 a Student Sustainability Grant are strongly encouraged to attend this training.

   f) Funds may only be used for purposes specified in an applicant’s budget. Surplus funds may not be used for unapproved items or services.

   g) If an approved line item comes in under budget and another goes over budget, then the remaining funds may be shifted to cover the shortfall.

   h) 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.
The SALP Financial Advisor may freeze the accounts of groups or individuals whose projects or initiatives exceed the timeline included with their proposal. Extensions may be granted, but must be approved in writing by the Office for Sustainability and SALP Financial Advisor.

For additional information on how to access and manage funds, refer to the SALP RSO Handbook or email salp-rsofinances@wmich.edu.

9. Advertising

All advertising for SSG supported activities must adhere to SALP guidelines as well as bear the words “Funded through a WMU Student Sustainability Grant.” All electronic forms of advertising (i.e. Facebook) and group emails must also follow this guideline. Newspaper advertisements and chalking are exempt. 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.

10. Evaluation

a) Primary proposal authors are responsible for submitting a written evaluation to the Office for Sustainability no later than 30 days after the end of their approved timeline or approved extension.

b) 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/sessions. This does not include the semester when the funds were allocated (for example, an individual who is awarded a grant during fall semester must submit their first evaluation at the end of spring semester).

c) Evaluations must follow a standardized template. To request a copy, please email the Office for Sustainability at wmu-sustainability@wmich.edu.

d) The Office for Sustainability will inform the SALP Financial Advisor if individuals miss their end of semester evaluation deadline for grants spanning multiple semesters/sessions. The SALP Financial Advisor may freeze the fund 52 in question until an evaluation is submitted.

e) The Office for Sustainability 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.
11. Procedures for Misuse of Funds

a) If the SSG-AC suspects misuse of Student Sustainability Grant funds, the Chair must request an audit from SALP and inform the Office for Sustainability.

b) SALP or the Office for Sustainability 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. Any suspected criminal use of funds will be reported to all relevant authorities, including but not limited to WMU Public Safety, SALP, and Office for Sustainability.