WSA ALLOCATIONS GUIDE

Introduction

RSOs at WMU can apply for funding through our student government, the Western Student Association. The WSA Allocations Commission (WSAAC) handles this process. WSAAC funding comes directly from the Student Assessment Fee (SAF). The rules regulating the SAF funding process through WSA can be found here: WSAAC bylaws. A shortened version of these rules, as well as the procedure for submitting a proposal, can be found below:

General Information:

- WSAAC will partially fund events, conferences, and operational expenses for qualified RSOs. This process is subject to the WSAAC Bylaws.
- Fully read and reference the WSAAC bylaws before submitting a proposal.
- Proposals will be considered on a first come, first serve basis.
- Deadlines: Proposals must be submitted 30+ days before event/conference date, 14 days before the deliberations date, & the event/conference must be held at least five (5) days after the deliberation date.
- All necessary documents are to be turned in on time with the completed proposal via email to wsaac-chair@wmich.edu

Event Funding rules:

- Event funding for an RSO during one semester will not exceed $10,000.
- Total Funding for food and drink must not exceed 40% of total budget of an event unless the event is under $100.
- Advertising, including social media, is required for all events funded by the WSAAC.
- All promotional materials (flyers, posters, buttons, etc.) must be created and printed by The Source.
- All promotional material for a SAF funded event must brandish the SAF logo.

Operational Funding rules:

- Operational funding for an RSO per academic year will not exceed $1,000.
- Operational expenses: Not restricted to a specific program or event. Operational expenses include, t-shirts, office supplies, food for meetings, purchases of equipment.

Conference Funding rules:

- Conference funding for one academic year will not exceed $1,000.
- All students attending the conference must be in good standing and be at least part time enrolled.

- A Faculty or Advisor letter of recommendation for the conference must be submitted with the conference budget.

**Prerequisites to apply for funding:**

- RSOs must be registered with the Office of Student Engagement.

- RSOs are required to complete an RSO Orientation session through the Office of Student Engagement before they attend Deliberations. [The orientation is now online](#).

- RSOs must have a zero or positive balance in its University (on-campus) accounts at the time of application for Student Assessment Fee (SAF) funds.

- RSOs must have one registered WSA senator that attends weekly WSA meetings. The senator must be in good standing with WSA and contribute to student government in order to qualify for funding. [Become a senator](#) today!

**How it works:**

RSO funding proposals are submitted to the WSA Allocations Chair via email. The WSAAC Chair first screens both the RSO and accompanying proposal to ensure adherence to the [WSAAC Bylaws](#). The chair will contact the RSO directly with feedback if the proposal needs corrections. Once the proposal is in order and necessary documents have been received, the WSAAC chair will invite your RSO and the accompanying proposal to the corresponding deliberations hearing. Keep in mind, a proposal must be submitted and corrected on or before the deadline corresponding to the deliberations hearing you wish to attend.

**Step by Step Guide:**

1. Proposals are heard on a monthly basis. These deliberations dates are posted on the WSA WMU webpage. We recommend that you apply for funding far in advance.

2. Please download the [proposal form](#) that correlates to the type of funding your RSO is requesting. Instructions on how to fill this form out can be found within the proposal form.

3. For any item you are requesting funding for, please provide proof of price from the vendor (Price quotes, Invoice, “Online Cart Total”, Food Menu with written breakdown, ie)
4. Submit the proposal by following the instructions listed in the proposal form. A WSAAC commissioner will contact you to request any modifications or additional documents necessary.

5. If approved, you will receive information regarding the corresponding deliberations meeting that your proposal will be heard at.

6. Attend deliberations. Present your proposal to the Allocations Commission (2-3 minutes). Please expect to answer any questions the Allocations Commission may have.

7. The approval, partial approval, or denial of your proposal will occur immediately after your presentation.

8. In the days following your proposal approval, you will be emailed a “Funding Letter” that details the items your RSO has been awarded SAF funding for. This is your ticket to receive reimbursement for or to turn in any invoices/receipts related to the expenses your RSO incurs. Please note, only items listed in this funding letter will be funded.

9. Turn in any invoices, receipts, voucher slips, Independent Contractor forms, and W-9 forms you have to the Office of Student Engagement, located in the Bernhard Center. Print these documents one sided. Be sure to have these documents fully complete prior to attempting to process reimbursements or payments.

10. Any unused funding that was allocated to an RSO will be swept back to the general fund at the end of the year.

11. Please contact the WSA Allocations Chair with any questions you may have.

Written Proposal Requirements for Proposals over $2,000:

1. Please create a typed funding proposal document (sent in along with the proposal form) that contains the following elements:
   a. The name of the RSO
   b. Describe the RSOs statement of purpose, RSO age, number of members, & on-campus activities
   c. A Full roster of all RSO members and E-board members/titles
   d. A detailed description of the event and expectations
   e. Describe what your RSO has done to plan the event
   f. What are you planning to do still that hasn’t yet been done?
   g. The projected attendance you listed in the form, why did you choose this number?
   h. Provide a detailed description of all items requested to be funded, along with the vendors supplying these items. Include the legal name of the vendor. Are they local? How did you find this vendor? Why did you choose this vendor?
   i. Has this event happened before? Is it annual? What was attendance like last year?
j. Are you collaborating with any other RSOs? If so, why?
k. A detailed explanation of the location of the event. Why did you choose it?
l. A statement of why your RSO should receive funding for this event.
m. Closing remarks

2. In terms of length, the typed proposal can be as long or as short as you would like. Keep in mind, however, that the items listed above must be included in the proposal. You may add any additional information you would like. A higher quality proposal increases your chances for a positive funding outcome.

a. WSA Allocations Commission is charged with the responsibility of overseeing the allocations process. Part of this process is vetting the legitimacy of proposed events that would be funded by SAF funds.

b. Legitimacy in this context relates to the amount of planning and preparation that has gone into the event in question—compared to the amount of funding being requested. Legitimacy also relates to the items being requested—in relation to the event itself and its purpose. Conflicts of interest that arise from vendor choice are both unethical and make rise to question the legitimacy of the entire event. Ethical soundness of the event and proposal is also examined.

3. Deliberations will follow the same process as above, but your RSO will instead have 5-10 minutes to present your proposal any way you see fit. Please be prepared to answer questions. The WSA Allocations Commission will reference your written proposal as well as your proposal form during the deliberations meeting.

Information on the Deliberations Process:

Once a month, the WSA Allocations Commission gets together in a room to formally consider RSO funding proposals. Qualified RSOs with pre-approved proposals are invited to present during this time. This hearing is a semi-formal event. As such, dress respectfully. In terms of structure, there will be 10 WSAAC student commissioners in the room. There will also be at least one member of the Office of Student Engagement present. We ask that every RSO arrive 10-15 minutes early. Please take a seat upon arriving as the hearing will be ongoing. One member from your RSO must attend this hearing at the designated timeslot in order to be considered for funding.

Your RSO will be given a timeslot (2-5 minutes depending on the size of the proposal) to present. These timeslots are issued to RSOs based on the order at which the proposal was submitted. If a timeslot does not work for your RSO, please let the Allocations Commissioner know ASAP. We will do our best to accommodate but there are no guarantees that timeslot adjustments will be made. During your timeslot, your RSO can present the proposal anyway you see fit. Verbal presentations are perfectly acceptable. PowerPoint/visual aids are welcome but not required. We ask that your RSO provide a brief background on your organization before getting into the details of your proposal.
If your proposal makes it to a deliberations hearing, it means that the proposal follows the WSAAC bylaws and has a strong chance of being fully funded. With that being said, larger proposals will be scrutinized more than smaller proposals. There are three possible outcomes to attending deliberations. Your proposal can be fully funded, partially funded, or zero funded. If the WSAAC has any issues with your proposal, we will attempt every possible reconciliation before zero funding your proposal. This includes voting to remove certain individual items from a proposal rather than zeroing funding it. WSAAC retains the right to zero fund proposals if: the presenter does not attend the hearing; if any part of proposal is unethical; if the proposal does not benefit the WMU campus; if the proposed event is not accessible to all WMU students on campus.

**Deliberations hearing example:**

WSAAC Commissioner- “We will now hear an operational proposal from (RSO)....”

_RSO member stands and walks to the front of the room, standing before 11 students sitting at a table. The RSO member greets the commission._

“Good morning. In a few moments, you will have approximately 5 minutes to discuss your RSO and present the components of proposal. After you have completed presenting, I will open the floor for questions from the commissioners here today. Upon the completion of questions, I will entertain a motion to vote on the funding outcome of your proposal today. I now yield the floor to you.”

_RSO member gives presentation and then yields to the commission._

“Thank you. I would like to open the floor for questions”

“Yes, I wanted to first say good job! I hadn’t heard of your RSO before but am very happy I’ve been able to learn about it today. My question: How many members are in your RSO?”

“How did you select these vendors for your event?”

“Why are you expecting 85 people to attend this event? Where did you come up with this number?”

“What is the significance of this event at WMU? Why should we fund it?”

“Where else are you getting funding for this event?”

“Has your RSO attempted to fundraise?”

“Tell me more about what your RSO does on campus”

“I’d like to close the floor to questions.”

“I’d like to entertain a motion to vote to fully fund this operational proposal for $$$”

“Second.... so moved”

“All those in favor... All those opposed.... All of those abstaining”

“In a motion of 9, 0, 1, with 1 abstaining, we move to fully fund your operational proposal.”
Payment Processing:

Once an RSO proposal is formally approved by vote of the Allocations Commission, the WSA Allocations Commissioner collects all information related to the funded proposal and formats it into what is called a “funding letter”. This one-page document contains information about what your RSO received funding for. Funding letters are sent to both the RSO and The Office of Student Engagement (OSE). Separately, the allocations Commissioner translates these proposals onto an electronic master ledger for OSE. OSE then electronically utilizes or creates a fund & cost center for your RSO. Your funds are stored electronically on this on-campus WMU accounting system file. Your RSO may access this funding in only two ways. 1- Your RSO may purchase the items you were allocated funding for up front, and then turn in receipts for these purchases to get reimbursed through the office of student engagement. 2- Your RSO may be invoiced (billed) for a service directly by a vendor, and you may turn in this invoice to the office of student engagement to pay the vendor directly. Under no circumstances may you access your funding without navigating through one of the two ways listed above. Funding will not be reallocated or re-appropriated for specific items if you decide that you no longer need these items. Further, Funding will not be processed to you unless you correctly fill out and bring all required forms to OSE for processing. This includes original copies of all receipts and invoices, a correctly filled out voucher form, an independent contractor form if a vendor is providing a service, a W-9 tax form if the vendor has not been paid by WMU recently, as well as a RSO service agreement form if you will be having catering for an event. Please remember to print all documents one sided. If you are unsure or have questions regarding the payment processing step of allocations, please review your RSO financial orientation prior to seeking help from WSAAC or OSE.

WSAAC Commissioner oath:

The WSA Allocations Commission (WSAAC), a standing committee of the student government, is charged with the responsibility of dispersing a significant portion of Student Assessment Fee funding to RSOs on campus. The commission meets monthly to entertain and vote on the funding of student proposals. Annually, this commission funds nearly $500,000 in student activities, with every single allocation subject to the rules and procedures dictated in the WSAAC Bylaws.

This commission is tasked with the very difficult job of allocating limited resources to hundreds of RSOs on campus. Ethics, efficiency, transparency, fairness, and empowerment are at the forefront of what we do. These values help define our philosophy: "We exist to provide equal and fair opportunity to any RSO on campus that desires funding. It is our duty to not only regulate and allocate funding, but also to educate and empower others in the process of requesting funding. We exist to determine the legitimacy, ethicality, and accessibility of proposed events on campus. We seek to simplify and add efficiency to the funding process for students. We make any and all information pertaining to historical funding outcomes publicly available."