

Virginia Tech
Graduate Student Budget
Board

Registered Student
Organizations (RSO) and
University Student Life
Programs (USLP)

Funding Policies & Procedures

****Approved by Graduate and Professional Student Senate (GPSS) 09/09/2021****

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PART I: POLICY

Article I Section I

MISSION

The Graduate Student Budget Board (**GSBB**) manages the allocation process of a portion of the graduate and professional student portion of the student activity fees to registered graduate or professional student organizations. GSBB strives to provide funds for graduate and professional student organizations in a fair and equitable manner, consistent with the votes of the representative board of GSBB. The purpose of funds allocated by GSBB is to enrich the graduate and professional student experience at Virginia Tech both socially and professionally.

Section II

SUPPORTING STATEMENTS

The views and opinions expressed by organizations that are funded through the Graduate Student Budget Board do not reflect any official policy, stance, or position of the Board and are solely the opinions, viewpoints, or reflections of that specific organization.

Graduate and professional students at Virginia Tech who pay the student activity fee, and registered graduate/professional student organizations are eligible for GSBB funds.

Section III

GRADUATE STUDENT BUDGET BOARD PURPOSE

The creation of the Graduate Student Budget Board (GSBB) was initiated by the members of the Graduate and Professional Student Senate (GPSS), in order to have a mechanism for reviewing and making fund allocation decisions to support graduate and professional student organization programming consistent with their organization's purpose. The funding comes from the graduate and professional portion of the student activity fees paid by graduate and professional students.

Article II Section I

GSBB STRUCTURE AND MEMBERSHIP POLICY- PILOT PHASE

During the pilot phase 2, The Graduate Student Budget Board (GSBB) will consist of:

- Two (2) members from the Graduate and Professional Student Senate (GPSS) including the Director of Finance of GPSS, the Chairperson of the Finance Committee;
- Eleven (11) board members, one from each caucus defined by GPSS, who are nominated by the Finance committee of GPSS;
- All Board members of the GSBB should be confirmed by the General Assembly

Section II

GSBB CHAIR

The Chair of the GSBB will be the Finance Director of the GPSS. During the pilot phase, the Chair will serve during the 2021-2022 academic year. The chair is a non-voting member of GSBB, unless to break a tie vote. The responsibilities of the chair include:

- Set agendas for the GSBB meetings;
- Facilitate and attend all meetings;
- Maintain a GSBB Chair email account;
- Guide the GSBB without bias in the application of policy and precedent when reviewing funding requests;
- Hold regular office hours to meet with organizations for questions and clarifications on GSBB policy and procedure;
- Attend university meetings as necessary;
- Coordinate appropriations strategy with the SECL;
- Act as a liaison between the SECL and the GSBB;
- Delegate tasks to the Vice Chair and/or other GSBB board members;
- Vote to break the tie when there is a tie among votes;
- Update status of requests including rationales;
- Contact organizations on behalf of GSBB regarding any questions and updates on requests

Section III

GSBB VICE CHAIR

The Vice Chair of the GSBB will be the Chairperson of the Finance Committee of the GPSS. During the pilot phase, the Vice Chair will serve during the 2021-2022 academic year. During this phase, The Vice Chair will be a voting member of GSBB. The responsibilities of the chair include:

- Attend all meetings;
- Support and take delegation from the Chair;
- Take the place of Chair at meetings, if needed, or during the Chair's absence;
- Represent the Board's interests at Appeals meetings;
- Coordinate meetings with the board members and take meeting minutes during the GSBB meetings;
- The Vice Chair will be the voting member of the board

Section IV

GSBB ADVISOR

The advisor for the Graduate Student Budget Board is a full time staff member appointed through the Student Engagement and Campus Life (SECL) and the Graduate and Professional Student Senate (GPSS).

Section V

GSBB MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

The roles of the members of GSBB are listed as follows:

- Attend all GSBB meetings. Each member is allowed two (2) absences per semester;
 - Excused absences including but not limited to: illness, personal/family emergency, or exam scheduled during the meeting time
 - All excuses need to be submitted to the Chair and Vice Chair prior to the meeting
 - Unexcused absences are counted at the discretion of the Chair and Vice Chair
- Actively participate in meetings;
- Respond to any and all eVotes;
- Accept and complete delegated tasks from the Chair;
- Communicate decisions quickly and efficiently to relevant organizations;
- \$100 Abstain from voting if there is a conflict of interest

Article III Section I

FUNDING CATEGORIES AND MAXIMUM- PILOT PHASE (2)

Funding of the Graduate Student Budget Board (GSBB) during the Pilot phase will be available to student organizations with majority graduate student membership. Student organizations whose membership is evenly split between graduate and professional students and undergraduate students will also be considered based on an organization's mission and purpose and intended audience. All requests should align with the organization's mission and strive to improve the graduate student experience. All events funded by GSBB must be open to the entire graduate community.

Below are the types of funding available to each eligible graduate organization. All maximums outlined are per organization during the pilot phase.

Section II

PROGRAMMING AND EVENT FUNDING

General Program

Organization's programs and events that are open to the campus community.

- This category will be funded up to \$6,000. Funding for this category includes contract fees, travel, and lodging for contracted guests (performers, speakers, artists, etc.).
- Funding may be spent on multiple events by the organization, but each event must be applied for individually.
- Contract fees for this funding category are funded up to \$4,999.
- Submit requests 30 calendar days prior to event date

Major Program

Organization's programs and events that are open to the campus community, are booked in a major venue on campus. And meet one or both of the two criteria.

- This funding category will be funded up to \$7,500. Funding for this category includes contract fees, travel, and lodging for contracted guests (performers, speakers, artists, etc.).
- One or more contracted guests (performer, speaker, artist, etc.) whose contract fees sum to more than \$5,000.
- Major venues are the GLC Auditorium, GLC Multipurpose Room, Squires Commonwealth Ballroom, Haymarket Theatre, Colonial Hall, Burruss Hall, and the Drillfield, Moss Arts Center, and the Lyric Theater.
- If an organization requests funds for a Major Event and fails to meet any of the criteria stated above to be classified as a Major Event, (such as \$5000 minimum in contract fees) they shall be capped for reimbursement at the General Program max of \$6000 if any funds remain.
- Submit requests 60 calendar days prior to the event date

Outreach Events

- This category will be funded up to \$500 per organization
- A maximum of 2 outreach events will be funded per fiscal year
- This funding category includes logistics required for outreach events, including but not limited to travel accommodations, registration fees, lodging, etc.
- Food or beverage cannot be included in this outreach category. Food funding for an outreach event can be applied for separately and will fall under the policy for Food and Beverage for Events/Meetings
- Outreach events are limited to 50 miles surrounding the campus of the applicant organization, for example, a graduate student organization located at the Roanoke satellite campus could apply for outreach funds if the event is located within 50 miles of the HS&T Campus
- Outreach events are limited to events pertaining to the local community; for example, events with the target audience of middle or high school students in the geographic area
- Submit requests 30 calendar days prior to the outreach event date

Food and Beverage

- The maximum amount of funding for the food category per organization per funding academic year is \$1,000
- The maximum per person cost of food requested cannot exceed \$15 per person per event
- Food service charges, food equipment rentals, delivery charges, supplies, food, and beverages will only be funded for meetings and events specific to the organization's mission
- The purpose of the meeting or event and justification of how it aligns with the mission of the organization must be outlined in the request for funding
- Organizational meetings or events will be formal meetings or events among the board members, members, potential members of the organization, and invited

guests

- Meetings or events may include weekly, monthly, quarterly or annual gatherings hosted by the organization.
- If requesting GSBB to pay an invoice for food, organizations must go through America To Go to purchase food. However, organizations are eligible to be reimbursed if they pay the food vendor out of pocket
- The meeting or event must be held on the Virginia Tech campus or at a space subject to the approval of the Board, based on justification by the organization
- Alcoholic beverages may be served for organization meetings/events, but will not be funded by the GSBB
- Funding will not be provided for events occurring at a location whose primary purpose is serving alcohol (bars, etc.)
- Submit requests minimum 30 calendar days prior to meeting/event date

Marketing and Advertising

- The Board will consider the percentage of costs related to publicity and advertising.
 - Funding for this category cannot exceed more that 20% of the total event budget.
- For social media-related advertising (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat), organizations will be funded up to \$100 per event.
- Publicity funding will be considered for media that directly focuses on currently enrolled students at the Blacksburg/Roanoke campuses.
- For print-related advertising (flyers, posters, table cards) organizations will be funded up to \$100 per event (please see “Publicity and Advertising” below).
 - GSBB may examine the type/size of an event when awarding print-related funding.
- Printing of programs for events will be funded up to \$0.14 per copy.
- Printing or publishing organization-specific material (agendas, minutes, recruiting, newsletters, etc.) will not be funded.
- Any event funded by GSBB must include an accommodation statement on all marketing and advertising materials.

Fundraising

- The costs associated with charitable events may be fundable.
 - If any organization is hosting a philanthropy, benefit, or similar type of event, costs associated with the event, may be funded.
 - The event must be an activity open to the Blacksburg campus community that is participatory in nature.
 - Allocated funds from GSBB cannot go directly to charities, benefits, third parties, etc.
- Organizations can host events that may result in generated money.
 - Fundraising events are capped at \$200 per fiscal year
 - Fundraising events are still eligible for marketing and advertising funds in addition to the amount listed above.

Section III

CONFERENCE AND COMPETITION FUNDING

- This funding category will be funded up to \$3000 per organization
- Organizations must demonstrate how conference and competition attendance:
 - Meets the organization's mission; and
 - Benefits the organization and individual members of the organization
- The Organization requesting funds for their members must justify their role in conference attendance which includes and is not limited to presenter, moderator, speaker, and competitors
- Funding for attendance will be considered on a case by case basis. Priority will be given to those presenting or playing an active role in a conference, however, funding for those wishing to only attend conferences will be allowed based on the availability of funds.
- There are no limitations or restrictions of the number of conferences and/or competitions per academic year for graduate student organizations
- Conference and competition funding includes travel accommodations (airfare, gas, train, car rental, parking, shuttle), registration fees, and lodging only
- This funding category will be eligible for either virtual or in person conference and competition registration
- Submit requests 30 calendar days prior to conference/competition start date or when payment is due, whichever is first.

Section IV

OPERATIONAL FUNDING

Insurance

- GSBB will fund general liability insurance for organizations.
 - GLI is defined as a policy that comprehensively covers an organization for activities they are hosting which fit within the parameters of SBB funding.
 - Insurance coverage for individual members of the organization will not be funded.
- One quote must be provided for insurance funding requests.
 - Insurance requests are exempt from the "Equipment" stipulation.
- If the Board feels that the quote is higher than average, they may ask for a second quote to be provided before rendering a decision.

Equipment

- Requests for funding of equipment will be closely examined.
- Equipment is any reusable item with the potential to be used more than once, with an expected lifespan of more than three years
 - Rentals will not be considered under this category.
- Equipment is property of the organization and not owned by any individual, member or representative of the organization.
- Requests must be well-developed and supported by the following documentation:
 - Justification, with a convincing argument for the necessity of the purchase.

- Detailed understanding of what equipment will be used for and how it will be utilized by the organization.
- Price quotations are required by at least three (3) vendors for any single item \$150 or more
- A storage location for the equipment must exist.
 - Organizations are expected to keep their equipment from year to year.
 - Requests for items funded within the past three years will not be funded without significant justification, such as safety concerns, equipment malfunction, etc.
 - Costs associated with storage of equipment will not be funded.
- Items must be organization specific and not accessible for rental through the university's vendors.
 - If an item is accessible through the university's vendors, but purchasing is still desired, a cost-benefit analysis and significant justification must be presented for funding consideration.
- If an organization is funded for purchasing equipment, it cannot be funded for the same, or similar piece of equipment, for 3 years following.

Banners

- Banners (professionally made) will be funded up to the following amounts:
 - \$100 per year
 - \$25 for reprinting per year
 - Banners will only be funded for general organization logos/information and may not be event or date specific.

Section V

FUNDING GUIDELINES AND RESTRICTED ITEMS

Fines and Penalties

- Costs incurred from violations of, or failure to comply with, federal, state, local, or foreign laws or restrictions will not be funded.
- Fines and penalties incurred by late payments or other acts of non-compliance with contractors and others will not be funded.

Giveaways

- Promotional items that are event or organization specific will not be funded.

Installment Funding

- GSBB will not consider a funding scenario that would incrementally set aside funds over several consecutive payments to fund a single program.
- Funding for security deposits/refundable charges will not be allocated through GSBB.

Intramural Fees

- Registration fees for intramurals will not be funded

Taxes

- GSBB will fund sales tax as needed, but this must be included in the original request for funds.
- GSBB will not fund sales tax if it is requested after approval, in excess of the amount the group was approved for.

Dues

- Individual or organizational membership dues are not funded

Contract/Honoraria

- Payment of honoraria and contractual services from Budget Board funds may be subject to hiring and payroll regulations of the University.
 - GSBB will not fund contract payments or honoraria to employees of Virginia Tech.
- The board must know who the contracted guest is before funds will be allocated.
- GSBB does not judge the content, we only verify that bringing the guest aligns with the mission of the organization.
- GSBB will not fund contract payments, honoraria, or any costs related to the travel and lodging of students from other universities to come to Virginia Tech.
- If the organization enters into a verbal or written contract without the appropriate funding approval, the organization will be responsible for payment.
- Please note that contracts or agreements entered into on behalf of an RSO/USLP are the sole responsibility of the individual or the organization. Virginia Tech holds no responsibility with RSO/USLP contracts or agreements.
- It is strongly encouraged that before an RSO/USLP enters any sort of agreement or contract, they consult with Student Legal Services in Squires 143.

PART II: PROCEDURE

Article I Section I

GSBB PILOT PHASE TIMELINE

Pilot Phase 2 of the Graduate Student Budget Board starts September 10th, 2021. Items requested from the eligible graduate organizations will be fundable through . The GSBB board members will be responsible for structuring the board, conducting meetings for hearing requests from organizations, approving funding according to policy and coordinating payments and reimbursements with SECL. The GSBB will reconvene during Summer 2022 to reevaluate policy & procedure for Phase 3 pilot which is expected to go live at the start of Fall 2022.

Section II

GSBB MEETING PROCEDURES

Frequency of Meetings

- The board will meet bi-weekly on Wednesdays when classes are in session during the pilot phase starting from the second week of September, 2021. GSBB will not meet during breaks.
- Extra meetings may be scheduled if needed and can be called by the Chair of GSBB.
- If a meeting is not needed, it can be cancelled by the Chair of GSBB

Quorum

- Quorum is needed for each GSBB meeting in order to vote on requests
- Quorum is any number of members above 50% of voting members

Section III

EXPECTATIONS FOR ORGANIZATIONS

GSBB has the following expectations for the graduate student organizations that apply for funds:

- Requests are adequately described, reasonable, and logically align with the mission of the applicant organization;
- Applicant organizations conduct themselves with fiscal integrity with funds used efficiently and appropriately;
- Applicant organizations abide by GSBB deadlines;
- Programming and events are diverse, engaging, and educational for the graduate community
- Organizations practice fiscal integrity and prudent use of funds
- Eligible organizations will participate in a Funding Workshop about the funding application process, policy and procedure for GSBB

Section IV

FUNDING APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

The following criteria must be met to apply for funding with the GSBB:

- Be fully registered as an organization with Student Engagement and Campus Life (SECL).
- Have a majority graduate/professional student membership;
- Organizations with an even split of graduate and professional students and undergraduate students may still be considered by GSBB based on the organization's mission and intended audience
- Complete the GSBB Funding Workshop and receive a score of 100% on the quiz before applying for funds;
- Meet the established application deadline set by GSBB with forms filled out correctly;
- Only student organization members listed on the organization's GobblerConnect roster, who completed the GSBB Funding Workshop can apply for funding.
- If your organization falls out of good standing with the university, your funds will be revoked and/or you will not be eligible for reimbursement.
 - Good standing is defined as meeting registration and on-going student organization requirements through SECL.

Section V

DEADLINES FOR SUBMISSION

- Each funding category has a submission deadline requirement:
 - Food and Beverage, Outreach Events, General Programming, Conference and Competition Funding
 - 30 calendar days from the date of the event or the date that the money needs to be spent.
 - Major Event Funding
 - 60 calendar days from the date of the event.
- Funding requests received less than the appropriate period of time prior to the event date will be denied
- GSBB does not meet during breaks. Organizations are required to request funding for events/expenditures taking place during breaks in advance to ensure approval from the Board. No expectations will be made.
 - Any requests for funds of events/expenditure taking place around winter break (December 1st to February 1st) must be made by November 1st.
 - Any requests for funds of events/expenditure taking place around summer break (May 1st and October 1st) must be made by April 1st.

Section VI

HEARING REQUESTS

- Requests will be heard on a first come first served basis in the order submitted by the student organizations

- GSBB meets weekly and every effort is made to hear funding requests as quickly as possible
- GSBB makes their funding decision based on:
 - How the funding request helps the organization meet its mission
 - If the request follows funding policies and precedents
 - Target audience for events and programs (not including outreach events) is currently enrolled VT students
 - How well justified and estimated the funding request is with appropriate supporting documentation
- GSBB reserves the right to:
 - ask for additional clarity if needed or
 - meet with organizations before awarding funding
- If the organization is sent an email seeking clarity on a request, they have one week (7 calendar days) from the date the email is sent, to respond
- If a response is not given within 7 calendar days, the request will be voted on with the information, or lack thereof, provided
- If the organization is asked to meet with the Board, the organization will be notified of the date and time
- If a representative of the organization is not present, the request will be voted on with information, or lack thereof, provided

Section VII

APPROVED FUNDS

- Once a request is approved, the organization will be notified of what the board approved in their request
- The organization is approved for ONLY what is on the request and award letter.
- For events receiving GSBB funding, any and all marketing and advertisements must include an accommodation statement.
- If funds are spent outside of what was approved and/or the amount approved, the organization will be solely responsible for paying those expenditures

Retroactive Funding

- Organizations cannot be reimbursed for payments made prior to funding approval.
- All payments must take place after approval from the board.
- If payments are made prior to GSBB approval, the organization is solely responsible for paying those expenditures.

Change of Event Information and Reallocations

- Organizations are required to seek GSBB approval for reallocation of funds if there is a change in previously approved funds and/or events and/or dates.
- Reallocation requests must be submitted no less than 7 calendar days prior to the event or expense. The approval of the reallocation must be received prior to the expenditure of the requested funds or prior to the event, whichever is first.
- This request to reallocate is done by emailing gsa@vt.edu.

- The email should include which line item(s) and amount(s), from the original request and identify what line item(s) the reallocation is being requested for.
- The email should also include a statement explaining the reason for the reallocation.
- Reallocation may only occur within the singular event originally requested. Funds cannot be reallocated between separate events, nor can they be reallocated to a new event.

Article II

Section I

PAYMENTS AND REIMBURSEMENTS

- There are several documents that must be completed and submitted on GobblerConnect, before a check request can be forwarded to the Controller's Office
- Approved funds are only dispersed through Direct Pay/invoice or reimbursement.
- Submitting an invoice and/or contract for a direct payment is the preferred method of utilizing the funding.
- If the invoice or charge is more than what was approved through GSBB, the graduate organization is responsible for paying the remainder of the costs
- Contracted speakers, guests and artists must be paid directly through the university, not through student organizations or their members. Other purchases from outside vendors (such as supplies, equipment, etc.) may be purchased by the student organization, provided they have received pre-approval to purchase and submit proper receipts and documentation for the purchase in order to receive reimbursement.

Deadline for Payment

- Organizations are required to submit the payment documentation, direct pay vendor invoice, contract, or reimbursement receipts and payment verification to the Student Organization Accounting Office no later than 45 days after the date of event.
- If the payment documentation is not turned in within 45 days, the organization forfeits the right to be reimbursed and those funds will revert back to GSBB.
- All reimbursement paperwork for the same event/expenditure/conference/competition must be turned in at the same time.
 - For example - If your organization is being reimbursed for a conference, reimbursement paperwork for all individuals who need to be reimbursed, and any additional payments made, must be turned in together to Gobbler Connect.
 - This does not include payments for contracts and vendors that are needed ahead of time.

Date Non-Specific Funding

- If the approved funding is not for a specific event date, (i.e. equipment), the

organization has 45 days after they are sent award notification to make the purchase and turn in all paperwork for reimbursement or payment.

- Failure to meet this deadline will result in the organization forfeiting access to the funding and the funds will revert back to GSBB.

Payment for Contracts/Honoraria

- Before an organization enters into a contract, it is strongly encouraged that the organization meets with Student Legal Services in Squires 143.
- Payment processing forms, completed and signed contract, W-9 form, and 20 questions form must all be turned in 4-6 weeks prior to your event.
 - Failure to turn in forms 4-6 weeks prior to your event will result in a check not being ready for payment to the contracted guest on the day of your event.
 - Payment made by an organization to a contracted guest, no matter the cost of the contract, and turned in for reimbursement, cannot be processed, and will be denied by GSBB.
 - Failure to submit the appropriate forms and/or to have these forms completed will delay the ability to have a check made. If a payee has a US Taxpayer ID or Federal ID number, the W-9 form will need to be submitted and signed by the person the check is being made out to (or an agency representative, if applicable). This process can take 30 days to complete, once all material is submitted to the Controller's Office.

Reimbursement for Personal Purchases

- The organization should submit the original detailed (itemized) receipt along with any appropriate backup documentation and the Student Payment Processing Form, via the [RSO/USLP-- SBB Electronic Payment Processing Submission \(2021-2022\)](#) on GobblerConnect
 - If paying with cash, check, or card, only the original detailed receipt is needed

Payment for University Services

- Invoices from University Services/Departments should be submitted via the available [RSO/USLP-- SBB Electronic Payment Processing Submission \(2021-2022\)](#) on GobblerConnect
- These invoices can and should be paid directly from the invoice and not through a reimbursement

Section II

APPEALS

- Appeals during the pilot phase may only be based on the following criteria:
 - a. Established policies and procedures were not followed.
 - b. The decision was not made within parameters with previous decisions of the board, in the same timelines of the pilot phase

- The fact that the Board did not fund an item at the requested level does not constitute grounds for appeal.

Hearing Appeals

- Registered Student Organization appeals will be heard by the GSBB Appeals Committee.
- The GSBB Appeals Committee
 - Consists of an independent commission of 3 Graduate delegates nominated by GSA
 - The chosen members to sit on any appeal, must not have been present and/or voted on the original request.
- An appeals schedule will be created one month after the appeal has been made by a student organization
 - If an appeal needs to be heard that week, Appeals committee members will hear the appeal.

Filing an Appeal

- All appeals must be submitted by the organization, and filed in accordance with the following appeal criteria.
 - All appeals of the GSBB allocation decisions must be submitted, no later than 5 PM on the date two (2) weeks from the date on the award letter.
 - The appeal will be delivered to the GSBB Advisor to begin the appeal process.
 - The GSBB Advisor will review the appeal and determine if it meets the appeal criteria.
 - If it does, the GSBB Advisor will convene the GSBB Appeals Committee for the upcoming week.

Hearing an Appeal

- The convened panel will review the request and meet with members of the organization who filed the appeal and the Chair or Vice Chair of the GSBB.
- The GSBB Advisor will be present to take minutes and to ensure that both sides are being presented.
- Once both sides are presented, and the panel feels they have enough information to make a decision, they will privately deliberate.