



Resolution 1: Changes to the GPSA Finance Commission Funding Guidelines

Abstract: This resolution proposes two sets of changes to the GPSA Finance Commission Funding Guidelines: a set of temporary policies that will apply during the 2020-2021 academic year only, and a set of permanent changes to the Funding Guidelines.

Sponsored by: Arielle Johnson, Chair of the GPSA Finance Commission

Reviewed by: GPSA Finance Commission, GPSA Appropriations Committee

Whereas, student organization-led activities are an important way to maintain community, which is always important and is especially crucial during the COVID-19 pandemic; and

Whereas, the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the programming needs of student groups, with groups shifting towards virtual and distanced activities; and

Whereas, the GPSA Finance Commission Funding Guidelines should be updated to reflect the current needs and situation of the graduate and professional community at Cornell; and

Whereas, there are also items in the Funding Guidelines that require permanent updates: for example, language relating to the CampusGroups online platform; and

Whereas, the Funding Guidelines may be amended by a majority vote of seated GPSA members.

Be it therefore resolved, that the attached policies in Appendix A (“Pandemic-Related GPSAFC Funding Policies for the 2020-2021 Academic Year”) shall apply for the 2020-2021 academic year only, and shall supersede the existing Funding Guidelines wherever relevant during that time; and

Be it further resolved, that the attached changes in Appendix B (“Permanent Changes to the GPSAFC Funding Guidelines”) shall be permanently made to the GPSAFC Funding Guidelines; and

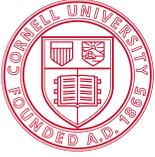
Be it further resolved, that all GPSA-funded events shall continue to follow all Cornell, state, and federal guidelines pertaining to the COVID-19 pandemic; and

Be it finally resolved, that the GPSAFC will continue to monitor the pandemic situation and may propose further updates to the Funding Guidelines as necessary.

Respectfully Submitted,

Arielle Johnson

Chair of the GPSA Finance Commission



Appendix A: Pandemic-Related GPSAFC Funding Policies for the 2020-2021 Academic Year

All line number references are to the current GPSAFC Funding Guidelines¹ and indicate a part of the existing guidelines that will be superseded by the Pandemic-Related Funding Policies during the 2020-2021 academic year. Justifications are provided to explain why policies are necessary and/or beneficial; however, the justifications do not constitute official GPSAFC policy.

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1. All events will be required to be advertised on the CampusGroups calendar when they are registered on CampusGroups and 25Live, rather than on the University Events Calendar (lines 48-50). (CampusGroups and 25Live event registration, and attendance tracking through CampusGroups for in-person events, will be mandatory under University guidelines.)

Justification: The CampusGroups calendar will be searchable by date and event category allowing students to find events of interest, so it will not be necessary to also post on the University Events Calendar. Tracking attendance of in-person events through CampusGroups will be critical for contact-tracing efforts on campus. If the CampusGroups calendar proves to be a useful tool for helping graduate and professional students find events of interest, the GPSA should consider adopting the move to the CampusGroups calendar permanently, especially because that functionality is integrated with the other features of the CampusGroups system.

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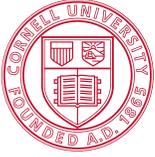
2. All in-person events, which will have a size cap and require registration in advance, must occur on campus or on auxiliary Cornell properties. GPSAFC-funded virtual events are allowed and encouraged, and students may participate from anywhere in the world. However, off campus in-person events are still not allowed (line 65).

Justification: Virtual events allow participation from the whole Cornell community, even those who are learning remotely this semester or quarantining at the time of the event. Off-campus in-person events are not allowed for legal reasons and to prevent COVID spread.

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3. Groups will be allowed to send, mail, or deliver “kits” of supplies for virtual activities (e.g. yarn for a craft night) that will be allowed to remain permanently with members (line 204), unlike groups’

¹ <https://cornell.campusgroups.com/gpsafc/fc-guidelines/>



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61 durable goods (line 152). Individually packaged “kits” can also be made available for pickup at a
62 central location on campus.

63 Justification: “Kits” will allow groups to host a wide range of hands-on events virtually.

64

65 4. Groups will be allowed to pay for postage (line 186), as well as office supplies related to sending
66 mail (line 181).

67 Justification: This will allow groups to set up pen pals at other universities, nursing homes,
68 etc.; and keep up with group members who are located in another US state or internationally.
69 It will also allow for the sending of “kits” by mail if necessary.

70

71 5. The honorarium cap will increase to 1000 USD per speaker per group, from 500 USD; only
72 virtual speakers will be allowed (line 210).

73 Justification: As groups will be somewhat more limited this year in terms of what events are
74 feasible, this will allow groups to spend more of their money on speaker honoraria. Groups
75 will also be encouraged to co-sponsor speakers, and a central forum (likely a Google Doc)
76 will be set up for groups who are seeking co-sponsorship for virtual speakers.

77

78 6. Groups will be permitted to send “kits” with non-perishable food ingredients or non-perishable
79 food to event participants via delivery; individually packaged non-perishable food can also be made
80 available for pickup on campus. The food must be a part of an organization’s virtual event, i.e. a
81 group cannot buy food simply for the sake of giving its members free food; there must be an
82 associated virtual event that participants attend that is open to the entire Cornell graduate and
83 professional community. Event registration can be capped if necessary. (line 486). The food must
84 be purchased online. Food will not be allowed at in-person events.

85 Justification: Food is an integral part of many graduate and professional groups’ activities. It
86 contributes to cultural and regional identities, promotes social bonding, and can create a
87 sense of a “special occasion”. Due to Cornell Risk Management guidelines and other
88 regulations, food must be non-perishable, must be purchased online, and can only be
89 purchased for virtual (i.e. not in-person) events.

90

91 7. Information on Summer 2021 Budgets will be decided/announced by the GPSAFC during the
92 Spring 2021 semester (line 410).



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93 Justification: We do not yet have enough information about the course of the COVID-19
94 pandemic to make decisions about the Summer 2021 budget.

95

96 8. Tier increases during Fall 2020 (line 286): To be considered for a tier increase, an organization
97 must provide proof that they spent at least 90% of funds allocated for events scheduled during the
98 Fall 2019 semester, an explanation of how the organization would have spent 90% of its Tier cap
99 during the full 2019-2020 academic year, plus one of the following additional criteria:

100 1. Proof of utilization of at least 90% of tier cap and allocated funds during the 2018-2019
101 academic year.

102 2. Proof of at least a 35% increase in membership in 2019-2020 compared with 2018-2019.

103 3. Current status as a Tier 1 organization.

104 The application should also include a statement on why the organization needs a tier increase (e.g.
105 plans for future events, growth in membership, etc.) and a financial plan for how the organization
106 would utilize the funds in the upcoming academic year.

107 In summary: The whole application should include 1. proof of 90% of Fall 2019 event allocations
108 spent; 2. an explanation of how funds would have been spent in spring 2020; 3. an explanation of
109 the additional criterion that qualifies the group for a tier increase (18-19 records, member increase,
110 or Tier 1 status); 4. a statement on why a tier increase is needed; and 5. a financial plan for 2020-
111 2021. The full application should be emailed to the FC Chair, Arielle Johnson, at arj66@cornell.edu.

112 Justification: Most groups were unable to spend 90% of their tier cap in 2019-2020 due to
113 the pandemic interrupting the spring semester, but groups should still get a chance to move
114 up a tier if they have a need for additional funding.

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116 9. No organizations will be moved down a tier (line 304) for the 2020-2021 academic year.

117 Justification: This was previously announced due to event cancellations during the COVID-
118 19 pandemic.

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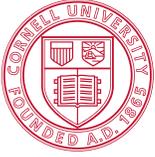
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Appendix B: Permanent Changes to the GPSAFC Funding Guidelines

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130 All line number references are to the current GPSAFC Funding Guidelines and indicate a part of the
131 existing guidelines that will be permanently changed, deleted, or added to, as relevant. Justifications
132 are provided to explain why policies are necessary and/or beneficial; however, the justifications do
133 not constitute official GPSAFC policy.

134

135 1. Eliminate “and provide a link to the GPSAFC Event Calendar” from lines 48-50.

136 Justification: No such calendar exists.

137

138 2. Eliminate clause 3 of XI. Co-Sponsorship: “Total allocation for a single event shall not exceed the
139 cap for Tier 4” (line 427).

140 Justification: Large collaborations should be allowed to exceed \$3500 (and have in the past).

141

142 3. Add “CampusGroups” in parenthesis to specify that CampusGroups is the electronic community
143 platform mentioned in the guidelines in lines 21-22: “Budgets should be submitted through the
144 electronic community platform used by graduate and professional student organizations
145 (CampusGroups) by the deadlines...”

146 Justification: This will reduce confusion as there is no other electronic community platform
147 used for GPSAFC budget submissions besides CampusGroups.

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149 4. After line 80, add a new line, “12. Help with CampusGroups and more information about
150 GPSAFC is available at <https://cornell.campusgroups.com/gpsafc/>. Student organizations may
151 also request help from the Cornell Student Organization Business Office (SOBO) on budgeting,
152 direct payments to vendors, food ordering, and reimbursement by emailing sobo@cornell.edu.”
153 (Also update the subsequent numbering.)

154 Justification: This will allow graduate and professional student organizations to readily find
155 resources to get help with the GPSAFC budgeting and payment process.



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157 5. Change lines 58-59 “In order to receive allocated funding, an organization must turn in receipts
158 for expenses to the GPSAFC accounts representative within one month of expenditure” to
159 “Organizations can request money electronically from approved budgets in CampusGroups using a
160 Payment Request in either of two ways: 1. by purchasing items with personal funds, submitting an
161 itemized receipt(s) within one month of the purchase, and being reimbursed; or 2. by requesting a
162 direct payment from Cornell to a Cornell department, a vendor or a person before or after an event.
163 Payment requests should be for the exact amount of money spent/needed for an event, not the
164 amount of money originally budgeted for the event. It is fine to go slightly over-budget for some
165 items/events and under-budget for others as long as the total of payment/reimbursement requests is
166 less than the total GPSA funding an organization has been allocated so far for the academic year.”

167 Justification: The new language more accurately reflects the reimbursement/payment
168 options available to graduate and professional student groups.

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170 6. In lines 288-289, remove “or through the electronic community platform used by student
171 organizations”.

172 Justification: CampusGroups currently does not have the functionality for groups to submit
173 tier increase requests.

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175 7. In lines 23-24, change “The president, treasurer, and faculty advisor of the organization must
176 submit written approval of each budget” to “The president and treasurer must submit approval of
177 each budget”.

178 Justification: This change reflects the reality that CampusGroups approval is not “written”.
179 It also removes the requirement that advisors approve budget requests, which had been a
180 cause of stressful delays in the budget approval process for many graduate and professional
181 student groups.