



Student Organization

Allocation Committee (SOAC)

Funding Guidelines

For Student Organizations

Student Organization Allocations Committee (SOAC)

Standing Guidelines

I. Program Mission

This committee enhances student involvement at Texas A&M University-Commerce by providing funding for student organization events and activities that will positively impact the campus community. We fund campus programs that contribute to an overall spirit of involvement and learning. We fund travel opportunities that develop skills for student leaders and connect their organizations to networks of peers. Through our work with student organizations, we encourage fiscal responsibility, quality event planning, and collaboration.

II. Eligibility

- A. Funding through SOAC is only available for active and registered student organizations.
 - a. All requests for funding must be presented to the Assistant Director, Student Government Association and Student Organizations in the Office of Student Engagement
 - b. Funding applications will be available for the next fiscal year starting in August and will be accepted through the end of July of each year or until funds have all been allocated.
- B. Organizations which are not in good standing per Student Organization policy are not eligible for SOAC funding.
 - a. This includes organizations that have unpaid or outstanding balances.
- C. Organizations must have a Tax Identification Number (EIN) on file in order to seek funding through SOAC. If an organization does not have a Tax Identification Number, the organization can request a number from the IRS through this link: <https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/apply-for-an-employer-identification-number-ein-online>
- D. Organizations that request and receive funds from Student Service Fee may not request funds from SOAC.
- E. Organizations requesting funds must be able to show how the request will be beneficial to the growth and development of the organization.
- F. Organizations requesting funds must be able to show how the request benefits the student body and A&M-Commerce community.

III. Funded Activities

- A. Operational Funding - (up to \$200 per year)

Funds are available for student organizations for the benefit of the individual

organization for the purposes of training, operations, or recruitment and marketing. Operating funds should be requested at minimum 3 weeks in advance of the requested need. Student organizations can request funds more than once, but cannot exceed the total \$200 for the fiscal year (September to August).

B. On-Campus Events - (up to \$700 per event, can request multiple events throughout year)

Funds are available for on-campus events or activities that stand to benefit, entertain, develop, or educate the student body. Funds requested for this purpose may not exceed \$700.00 per request of student organization.

- a. All requests for on-campus events or activities must include a detailed, itemized budget with costs for supplies, contracted items or services, marketing, and other expenses.

C. Travel - (up to \$700 per travel)

If individuals are operating as private citizens, not as an organization, SOAC will not fund any travel request of this nature.

Funds are available for student travel to regional, national, or international conference and competition activities. Funds requested for this purpose may not exceed \$700 per travel request.

- a. Organizations may only request travel funding once per semester.
 - I. Fall and Winter are considered 1 semester, while Spring and Summer are considered 1 semester
- b. All requests for travel/conference funding **MUST** specify itinerary, travel participants, cost of transportation, registration, and lodging expenses for all conference attendees. If an itinerary for a conference is not available, you will be asked to provide an itinerary before funds are released to the organization. All expenditures will follow established state regulations and university policies. Travel policies can be found at this link: <http://www.tamuc.edu/facultyStaffServices/travelOffice/default.aspx>. Requests for funding will be evaluated according to the individual program, as itemized in the budget request.
- c. SOAC travel funds will not cover meals, gas for personal vehicle, or miscellaneous expenses.
- d. Organizations will need to complete a travel risk assessment at least 2 weeks prior to their travel or SOAC funds will be forfeited.

IV. Advisor Travel

- A. Advisor travel will not be covered by SOAC. An advisor is encouraged to be present, in attendance, and responsible for the student organization traveling.
- B. If the organization does not have an A&M-Commerce advisor able to travel with

- the organization, but the student organization is nationally affiliated and has a graduate chapter advisor who is responsible for the organization at the conference, SOAC can still reimburse for student organization travel, lodging, and registration costs.
- C. If the organization does not have their on-campus advisor traveling or in attendance at the conference or event, the organization may have another TAMUC full-time faculty or staff member serve as advisor and responsible for the organization.

V. Application Process

- A. For all funding requests applications must be submitted using the SOAC Application Form. Application materials must be submitted in hard copy format or by e-mailing the Assistant Director for SGA and Student Organizations. Only applications that include all required materials will be considered for funding.
- B. Upon receiving the completed application, the Student Organizations staff will send a notification of the next SOAC Review Meeting. The requesting organization must send at least one student organization representative knowledgeable about the request to this meeting to answer committee questions about their request in order to receive approval. If no member attends this meeting, the request will be reviewed by the committee; however, will likely impact the amount of funding approved. If members have a conflict with the meeting time, the organization Advisor may serve as a suitable representative for the organization submitting a request.
- C. If a representative does not attend the SOAC Review Meeting due to extenuating circumstances (i.e. emergency), the organization will have one chance to reschedule their meeting. If no extenuating circumstances are provided for missing a meeting, the organization will forfeit their request and the committee will not hear the request. Please notify the Assistant Director, Student Government Association and Student Organizations if no representative will be able to attend the meeting so alternative accommodations may be made.
- D. The SOAC Review Meeting will consist of the committee asking the representative various questions about the request. The committee will determine how much to allocate to your request based on the representative's responses. A few typical questions include: "How will your request benefit the organization," "How will your request benefit students and the University community," and for travel, "What do you hope to learn from your travel and bring back to share with other students."
- E. Organizations will receive a copy of the funding memo notifying the approved expenses from the request at the SOAC Review Meeting. Only submissions with completed applications and documentation will be approved.

VI. Guidelines

- A. SOAC will meet at least twice a month, depending on the university calendar.

Meeting dates for SOAC will be posted on this website:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/studentorganizations>

- B. Funding requests/applications must be approved **prior to the event or travel**. Requests must be turned in to the Assistant Director, Student Government Association and Student Organizations at least **3 weeks** prior to the event or travel date.
- C. If applications are not submitted in advance, SOAC will not review your request unless there are extenuating circumstances provided (i.e. information not available for a conference, inability to get signatures, etc.)
- D. All funding will be distributed via reimbursement or university payment card (when applicable).
- E. The Expense Report and all required paperwork is due to the Assistant Director, Student Government Association and Student Organizations within **two weeks** following the approved event or activity.
 - a. Any expense report received after the two weeks of approved event, activity, or travel date specified will result in suspension and forfeiture of future funds, requiring repayment for items purchased, and/or forfeiture of reimbursement.

VII. Expense Report

All organizations approved for funding are required to **complete an Expense Report on the SOAC Expense Report form and return to Assistant Director for SGA and Student Organizations**. The Expense report form must be submitted **within two weeks** following the event or travel. The Expense Report must have attached to it the following:

- A. A detailed, line-item event budget describing all expenses for approved items
- B. Copies of paid receipts for which funding was approved
 - a. Receipts must display the name of the business, business address, and phone number
 - b. Hand-written receipts must have all the required information above concerning the establishment, and the amount written in BOTH numbers and words, like a check.
 - c. Receipts must indicate the date the bill was paid; hotel receipts must reflect a zero balance.
 - d. Receipts must include the method of payment
- C. Expense reports not being submitted will result in suspension and forfeiture of future funds and/or requiring repayment for items purchased.
 - a. Additionally, organizations not submitting expense reports will result in a probation period of a year where the organization cannot request funds.
- D. Completed answers for the questions asked on the Expense Report.
- E. Any items missing from the Expense Report will deem the Expense Report incomplete.

VIII. Conference Travel

- A. Organizations which have been approved for travel funds applied to a conference, must submit a presentation to the Assistant Director, Student Government Association and Student Organizations within 2 weeks after the conference.
 - a. The presentation must include what the students learned at the conference and will apply to their organization OR
 - b. Include a topic that can be presented as a resource to TAMUC Student Organizations.
 - i. Presentations must be in a powerpoint presentation format or format that can be presented to the SOAC Committee and recreated to be used on the student organization website.

IX. Limitations

- A. Requests for awards, prizes, or gift card purchases will not be approved.
- B. Funds will not be allocated through event funding for items that may be used for a later event or could be inventoried for an organization's later use. An organization may use 1x Funding for this purpose.
 - a. Inventoried items are purchases that are not directly used or consumed during the event that are leftover once the event has been completed.
- C. Funds cannot be used for the purchase of alcoholic beverages or tobacco products.
- D. Catered Meals
 - a. Sodexo is the exclusive food service provider for Texas A&M University-Commerce, Sam Rayburn Student Center. No outside food or drink is permitted to be brought into the building without a waiver being approved by the RSC, Sodexo Dining Services General Manager, and the Office of Auxiliary Services. Please complete the Food Waiver Request, for approval a minimum of fourteen (14) business days prior to event date. If approved, the application will be forwarded to Sodexo Dining Services for final approval. Should outside food be brought into the Rayburn Student Center you will be asked to remove it.

When an event is booked in the RSC in addition to adjacent outdoor space, including both the North and Club patios and West Walking Mall area, Sodexo still must be used as the food service provided. Student Organizations and/or departments may not use outside food vendors to circumvent Sodexo by holding an event where food is served outside while the majority of the program is held in the student center.
 - b. When considering catering, think about how many people will actually be attending your event, do not try and over-estimate. The SOAC Committee reserves the right to fund you for catering at a lower level if they believe less

people will be attending and encourage the organization to think about lower quantities of food.

- E. SOAC Funds may not be used for charitable contribution or towards events where any profits may go to a philanthropy.
- F. Campus events that charge admission, or a fee to attendees are not eligible for SOAC funding.
- G. Funds will not be allocated for any request where an organization is fundraising to generate revenue for the organization. This includes, but is not limited to, funds for scholarships.
- H. Direct expenditures for lecture fees may not be utilized for any political organization to enhance, endorse, or support a declared political candidate or further the development of said organization or candidate. This is not to be a restriction or interference of an organization's freedom of expression or ideas.
- I. Receptions/Banquets
 - a. Expenditures for refreshments will be evaluated according to the individual program, as itemized in the budget request. Requests for party favors and souvenirs will not be funded.
- J. Honorariums
 - a. Any guest speaker or performing artist may only be funded for parts of their speaking or performance arrangement that are open to all students. Any parts of the arrangement or itinerary that are closed to specific audiences will not be funded. Honorariums need to be submitted with a breakdown of cost including a speaker's or performer's itinerary.
- K. Expenses funded by University Department
 - a. Any expenses paid for an event or travel by a University Department with the intention of the organization reimbursing a University Department will not be approved by SOAC. If a department pays up front for any portion of a travel request or event request, those portions will not be approved for SOAC funding. SOAC cannot fund a University Department.
- X. **Forfeiture of Funds**
 - A. SOAC will not appropriate funding to additional items if approved purchases cost less than what was originally approved. SOAC will only allocate based off the approved funding.
 - B. All organizations are required to notify the committee as soon as it is determined that a scheduled program will not occur. Notification should be within one week after the approved date.
 - C. Any submission of fraudulent receipts for reporting purposes will result in forfeiture of reimbursement. This may also jeopardize future funding requests for up to one year for the organization.
 - D. Infraction of Agreement
 - a. Deviations from the approved funds for an activity will result in forfeiture of reimbursement.

XI. Administration of Programs

A. Printing and Publicity

Publicity will be viewed in the context of promoting the success of a program by making the general community aware of the event.

Utilization of University artwork must be approved by the Marketing and Communications department's marketing standards:

<https://www.tamuc.edu/facultyStaffServices/marketingCommunications/brandToolkit/default.aspx>

Organizations receiving allocations or SOAC funding must also use a University-licensed vendor for orders that contain university marks or artwork. Please look at the list to determine which vendors are licensed and approved. If an organization uses a non-licensed vendor, the funding approved for that expense will not be granted. Approved vendors can be found at this link: <https://clc.com/license-search/>.

B. Co-Sponsored Programs

When two or more organizations co-sponsor an event, only one organization may apply for SOAC funding. Co-Sponsored Programs may only request up to \$700 total.

XII. Tax Exemption Information

Because the University is a non-profit organization, no taxes or tips can be paid with funding from the Student Organizations Allocation Committee. Consequently, any state taxes or tips paid are under the financial responsibility of the organization. In order to avoid paying state sales taxes, it is imperative that your organization use your Federal Tax ID (EIN) number and exemption forms when making purchases or travel. Please note that only organizations that have applied for 501(c)(3) status as a federally tax exempt organization and have applied for an exemption from Texas state sales tax may be exempt from sales tax when purchasing goods. If you do not know your organization's tax ID number or need assistance in applying for tax exemption, please stop by the Student Involvement Suite and ask.

XIII. Appeal of Committee Decision

If a request is denied, within 2 weeks of the denial, the organization may complete an appeal form and submit to the Executive Director for Student Engagement and Assistant Director, Student Government Association and Student Organizations. The committee will submit in writing to the Executive Director for Student Engagement a statement of its decision. Upon review, the Executive Director will notify in writing the organization and the committee of his/her decision.

XIV. Contingency for reimbursement

In cases where an organization does not have funds to make purchases or extenuating circumstances, an organization may request items be purchased using the Purchasing Card or Travel Card of the Assistant Director for SGA and Student Organizations. Times for these instances are reserved for events or travel where if the organization cannot be reimbursed and not having funds upfront would cause the event or travel to be cancelled or postponed. Organizations will need to submit **CURRENT** bank statement information to provide documentation for the upfront funding. Additionally, the organization must submit an Expense Report with valid receipts for submission within 2 weeks after event/travel.