

Discretionary Fund Policy

Policy owner: Vice-President Operations and Finance

Audience: Executive Committee

Approved: Meeting (Meeting April 23rd, 2015)

Last Reviewed: N/A

Review Schedule: July 2016

1 - Introduction

This Policy is designed to guarantee accountable and professional management and expenditure of Discretionary Funds. Mismanagement of these funds could lead to significant financial and reputational harm to the organization. This policy applies to all members of the Students' Unions who are allotted Discretionary Funds.

2 - Definitions

- **Closely Associated Person** – See "Conflict of Interest and Conflict of Commitment Policy"

3 - Policy

3.1 - Eligible Expenses

In general expenses covered by the Discretionary Fund are the following;

1. Expenses related to travel for professional activities (ex: luggage fees, unanticipated costs etc.)
2. Training Manuals & Books relating to the work of the individual
3. Professional Development Courses and Workshops (excluding university classes)
4. Office Furniture and Equipment that wouldn't otherwise be covered, relating to work
5. Additional telecommunications expenses (ex: roaming charges for business purposes)
6. Sustainable transportation expenses (ex: bus passes, bike equipment, etc.)
7. Expenses relating to meetings (ex: meals, snacks, tea/coffee, etc.)
8. Professional apparel, and cleaning of apparel (ex: dry-cleaning)
9. Expenses relating to the campaigns of URSU
10. Other expenses related to the individual's professional obligations, subject to the approval of the Board of Directors

Funds in the discretionary fund are intended only for the individual they are allocated to. The Discretionary Fund may not be used to cover the expenses of other individuals, especially Closely Associated Persons. Expenses claimed to the Discretionary Fund should respect the guidelines of the Conflict of Interest and Conflict of Commitment Policy and the member should not put themselves into a situation where a Conflict could be perceived. Individuals with Discretionary Funds should endeavour to be thrifty when using the Discretionary Fund.

3.2 - Ineligible Expenses

Certain expenses are not permissible under any circumstance;

1. Tuition fees
2. Cash Bonuses
3. Direct and Indirect Political Contributions (ex: purchase of tickets to an event where proceeds go to a political party)
4. Donations to other organizations
5. Gifts of any value
6. Alcohol
7. Other expenses that are not related to the individual's professional obligations to the University of Regina Students' Union

URSU will not reimburse any expenses that fall into the above categories. Additionally, the Board of Directors may declare certain other expenses ineligible at the time of reporting by a majority vote of the Board of Directors. If the individual has already received payment for the expense that is deemed ineligible the member will be expected to repay the organization at the earliest possible opportunity. Failure to do so could lead to consequences as laid out in the Consequences for Non-Compliance section of this policy.

Expenses beyond the amount laid out in the Executive Discretionary Fund line of the Budget shall not be authorized under any circumstances.

3.3 - Disclosure

Members who have access to a Discretionary Fund shall report any expenses reimbursed by their Discretionary Fund at the next Board of Directors Meeting. Elected members shall also report an accounting of year to date Discretionary Fund expenses at the Annual General Meeting.

3.4 - Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Directors

Members of the Board of Directors are responsible for;

- ensuring that claimed Discretionary Fund expenses are eligible according to the criteria laid out in this policy
- ensuring that this policy is updated as necessary to prevent unforeseen abuse of the Discretionary Fund
- ensuring that the Discretionary Fund Policy is otherwise followed

President

The President is responsible for;

- completing the duties of the Vice-President Operations and Finance when they are unavailable or are claiming expenses

Vice-President Operations and Finance

The Vice-President of Operations and Finance is responsible for;

- ensuring that claims reports have been properly filled out and filed
- ensuring that reimbursement happens in a timely manner
- ensuring that expenses claimed respect this policy

URSU Members with Discretionary Funds

URSU Members who have access to Discretionary Funds are responsible for;

- complying with this policy
- ensuring that they do not overspend or attempt to overspend their discretionary fund

4 - Consequences for Noncompliance

Failure comply with this policy could result in disciplinary action including;

- non-payment of expenses claimed
- garnishment of wages to ensure re-payment of disbursed funds
- removal of discretionary fund access
- termination of the member's position with the URSU (as described in Article III & VIII of the URSU Constitution)
- further legal action as determined by URSU

5 - Processes

Expense Claims Procedure

All claims shall follow the following procedure:

1. The claimant shall fill out a Discretionary Fund Claim Form (including statement) and affix the relevant original receipts
2. The claimant shall submit the form to the Vice-President of Operations and Finance
3. The Vice-President of Operations and Finance shall consider and file the claim
 - a. If the claim is an eligible expense a cheque shall be prepared for the member
 - b. If the Vice-President Operations and Finance feels the form is incomplete, inaccurate or improperly filled out, they may request that the claimant re-submit the form or defer reimbursement pending the approval of the Board of Directors
4. The claimant shall present an accounting of expenses at the next Board of Directors meeting. If the claimant is unavailable or otherwise fails to report the expense the Vice-President Operations and Finance shall report the expense.

If the Vice-President Operations and Finance is the claimant the President shall take the role of the Vice-President Operations and Finance in the above procedure.

6 - Related Information

Discretionary Fund Claim Form; **Appendix 1**

URSU Constitution, Bylaws and Policy: <http://ursu.ca/governance/constitution-bylaws-and-policy>