

Student Group Funding Policy

I. Overview

- I.1. This document seeks to provide a clear and transparent framework for the funding of ratified student groups throughout the academic year. This includes eligibility requirements, what activities may be funded, and the limitations of each type of funding. It formalises the objectives behind funding student groups, alongside the principles, criteria, and stages of funding available.
- I.2. Funding for student groups is a core area of our work and it aims to support groups in achieving their goals for the year, as well as ensuring long term development of groups in order to boost the experience of all members involved.
- I.3. While this document outlines the different types of grant funding available for groups it is important to understand the additional unseen costs that are paid directly by the Students' Union and the University. This includes the staff salaries to provide administrative support to groups (for example arranging and developing ongoing committee training, delivering annual elections, processing finance requests, website support, risk assessment reviews, running Freshers' Fair, and other general admin requests), insurance policies to cover the activity of groups, facilities costs (often absorbed by the University), and more.
- I.4. Due to the limits on the amount of funding available it is important that stringent criteria are applied to funding requests on a principle led basis. In general, student groups should not expect funding from the Students' Union but instead build a budget based on income generated through their membership fees, as well as other fundraising activity.

2. Aims and Objectives

- 2.1. It is our aim to build resilient student groups that are financially sustainable. The primary driver for this is through membership fees (although fundraising and sponsorship can supplement this) and we will actively support groups to ensure they have the correct processes in place to achieve financial sustainability.

- 2.2. In addition to self-funding, we provide multiple grant funding opportunities throughout the year. This is to enable groups to respond to changes with each fund having specific criteria attached – this ensures the funding process for all student groups is clear and transparent.
- 2.3. All the funding opportunities outlined in this policy are to exclusively support ratified student groups. They will not be used for anything other than their intended purpose or to support other groups or individuals outside of student groups.
- 2.4. While all applications will be considered and fairly assessed against the relevant principles and criteria, funding is never guaranteed.
- 2.5. Generally, student groups should seek to spend the majority of the income they generate from their membership fees within the same financial year to ensure those individuals paying the membership are directly benefiting from the activity.
- 2.6. Where an application has been successful, a grant is awarded to the student group to be spent within the academic year in which it is awarded. All funding shall only be used for the purposed it has been awarded. At the end of the academic year, any remaining grant funding will be transferred back to the Students' Union.
- 2.7. Should an application be unsuccessful, we will provide an outline of reasons why based on the aims, objectives, principles, and criteria set out in this document.
- 2.8. Funding from any funding pot cannot be used for the following reasons:
 - i. Subsidise refreshments and beverages, including alcoholic beverages, that are not crucial for the functioning of the student group.
 - ii. Subsidise the cost of merchandise aimed to be sold to raise funds.
 - iii. Donate to other charities or for fundraising purposes.
 - iv. Subsidise gifts/prizes/prizes aimed at a small group of members.
 - v. Cover external speaker costs.
 - vi. To cover/subsidise any events or activities that have taken place prior to receiving the grant.

3. Eligibility Criteria

3.1. In order to be considered for any form of funding the following criteria must apply:

- i. The student group must be ratified by the Students' Union
- ii. A core committee must be in place (elected or co-opted), as per the student group's constitution. The Students' Union considers the three core positions to be President, Secretary, and Treasurer.
- iii. The group should contain a sustainable number of paid members (not applicable to student networks).
- iv. The committee will have discussed any funding requests and be in agreement about the application.
- v. If a historical deficit exists, the student group must have a working Deficit Management Plan in place.
- vi. The group must have adhered to the published deadlines and completed an application form in full within the timeframe given.

4. Funding Pots

A. New Student Groups Start Up Fund (Year-round)

4.1. Once a new group has been formally ratified, it will automatically receive a set amount of funding to seed fund the start of the group's activity. This amount of funding will be a flat amount that will be applied to all new groups irrespective of activity. The amount of funding new student groups will receive is £50.

4.2. New student groups will have further opportunities within the year to apply for any open funding rounds where they meet the applicable criteria.

Fund Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide seed funding to enable a new student group to get up and running including purchasing marketing materials or relevant equipment.
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<p>Eligibility for Specific Fund (in addition to 3. Eligibility Criteria)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student groups must have completed the registration process, including all online training, documentation, and induction meeting. • Student groups must have completed their yearly plan (summer project) which includes submission of their onboarding items, including goals for the year, membership fee, and committee members list. • Must be a newly ratified student group.
<p>Fund Timeline</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When formally ratified the student group will have the seed funding added to their group account.
<p>Available Funding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £50 <p>Available once per student group at the point of ratification.</p>

B. New Academic Year Funding (June/July)

4.3. The purpose of this funding is to ensure newly elected committees can have an effective start to the new academic year. While it is expected that the majority of funding for a group's activities will come from memberships and other fundraising income, we understand that membership numbers are unknown during the summer, and it is difficult to accurately project income and expenditure.

4.4. By applying for funding in the summer, it enables student groups to purchase any items, such as marketing materials, that will help them to hit the ground running in the new academic year before income has been generated from membership fees. All active student groups will receive funding based on their risk status (Appendix I).

<p>Fund Scope</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and enhance the skills of Society members through a bespoke activity.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive recruitment by hosting a large-scale event to expand your audience and the Society’s scope. • Explore membership ideas by purchasing a new piece of equipment, aimed to improve the delivery of activities.
Eligibility for Specific Fund (in addition to 3. Eligibility Criteria)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student groups must have completed the registration process, including all online training, documentation, and induction meeting. • Student groups must have completed their yearly plan (summer project) which includes submission of their onboarding Items, including goals for the year, membership fee, and committee members list.
Fund Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications open: 1 June • Applications close: 31 July • Panel review: 1-16 August • Outcomes released: 31 August
Available Funding	<p>Funding is based on your student group* risk factor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low risk – £50 • Medium risk – £75 • High risk – £100 <p>*Student networks are automatically classed as high risk.</p> <p>Available once per year for student groups.</p>

C. Support Funding (November/December)

4.5. After being in operation for six-eight weeks, student groups should have a better idea of their position in regard to new memberships. The purpose of this funding is to enable

groups to utilise their membership data and more accurately project their income and expenditure for the remainder of the year and react to any changes in circumstances.

4.6. Funding will be based on the funding principles criteria outlined in Appendix 2 and is not guaranteed.

Fund Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the main purpose of the group’s activity that ensures a high-quality experience for all members. • Supporting costs to ensure the group can continue to exist long-term. • Encouraging innovative thinking to expand the offer to more students, in particular, work that ensures a group is more inclusive. • Supporting with costs to ensure effective controls are in place for health and safety.
Eligibility for Specific Fund (in addition to 3. Eligibility Criteria)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everything within the New Academic Year Funding. • The student group must have a yearly membership fee of at least £2.00. <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everything within the New Academic Year Funding. • Is a Student Network.
Fund Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications open: 1 November • Applications close: 30 November • Panel review: 1-13 December • Outcomes released: 10 January
Available Funding	Variable – please see Appendix 2.

	Available once per year for student groups.
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D. Campaign Funding (Year-round)

*****For NETWORKS to bid against the network budget line*****

- 4.7. The purpose of this funding is to ensure student networks can campaign effectively throughout the academic year, on key issues that are affecting students on a local and national level at Roehampton University. As all Student Network memberships will be free of charge, funding will largely come from sponsorship agreements and donations. To that effect, this funding is available to support Student Networks in their functions.
- 4.8. All fundings outlined in this section are to exclusively support Student Networks with activities and events related to their campaigns; they will not be used for anything other than their intended purpose, or to support events and activities outside of the scope of their campaigns.

Fund Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the main purpose of the group's activity that ensures a high-quality experience for all members. • Supporting costs to ensure the group can successfully run and sustain campaigns. • Encouraging innovative thinking to expand the offer to more students, in particular, work that ensures a group is more inclusive. • Supporting with costs to ensure effective controls are in place for health and safety. • Supporting students' democratic rights through funded campaigning
Eligibility for Specific Fund (in addition to 3. Eligibility Criteria)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is a Student Network • Funding is used solely for an RSU approved campaign

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Networks must submit a detailed campaign plan for ratification which outlines, at minimum, the following details for the campaign: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Objective(s) ○ Timeline ○ Stakeholders involved ○ Actions ○ Measurable impact/outcome ○ Budget including income and expenditure
Fund Timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When campaigns have ratified by the RSU, funding will be provided to the student group.
Available Funding	Available once per campaign

Appendix I: New Academic Year Fund Risk Matrix

Our objective in assessing the risk status of a student group is to ensure that we understand where groups may need extra support so that they have the best chance at being sustainable long term, both financially and in delivery.

To do this we assess the following criteria and grade the responses and evidence we have based on the matrix below:

- Current financial status - how healthy is the student group’s account and are they at risk of going into deficit?
- Cost of core activity - is the cost of their core activity high and do they have essential purchases coming up that may be before receiving income from memberships? Will these costs push the group into deficit?
- Stability of the group - is the student group in a good position to operate in term one or are they likely to struggle?

Score:	Frequency:	Description:	Score:	Impact:	Description:
1	Rare	This will probably never happen or recur.	1	Negligible	No material negative impact.
2	Unlikely	Do not expect it to happen or recur but it is possible it may do so.	2	Minor	Impact would be felt, but this is not considered significant.
3	Possible	Might happen or recur occasionally.	3	Moderate	Impact would be localised, and control measures should be actively considered.
4	Likely	Will probably happen or recur, but it is not a persisting issue/circumstance.	4	Major	Impact would be significant, so robust control measures are required alongside active monitoring.
5	Almost Certain	Will undoubtedly happen or recur, possibly frequently.	5	Catastrophic	Impact would be devastating, control as above.

Likelihood:	Impact:					
		Very High = 5	High = 4	Medium = 3	Low = 2	Very Low = 1
Very High = 5		25	20	15	10	5
High = 4		20	16	12	8	4
Medium = 3		15	12	9	6	3
Low = 2		10	8	6	4	2
Very Low = 1		5	4	3	2	1

The scores across the three areas will be averaged to give a final score mapped to the following:

- Low risk – 3-29
- Medium risk – 30-47
- High risk – 48-75

Appendix 2: Support Funding Principles

Principle 1 – Core Purpose		
Rationale	Criteria	Amounts
Supporting the main purpose of the group’s activity (as outlined in the group’s constitution) to ensure a high quality experience that benefits all members, relative to the costs of accessing the activity.	What we may contribute towards:	
	1. Coaching that benefits all members.	Up to a maximum of 10% of total cost or £200 (whichever is the lower)
	2. Transport costs for training, fixtures and/or events and competitions.	Up to a maximum of 10% of total cost or £200 (whichever is the lower)
	3. Facility cost where that facility cannot reasonably be provided on campus.	Up to a maximum of 50% of total or £500 (whichever is the lower)
	4. Affiliations associated with competing, development and training.	Up to a maximum of 100% of total cost or £150 (whichever is the lower)
	5. Event set up costs for an event that is held in relation to the core purpose of the group and benefits all members (with the exception of guest speaker costs as below).	Up to a maximum of 25% of total cost or £150 (whichever is the lower).
	What we won’t contribute towards:	
	1. Coaching that only benefits specific teams e.g. first team members but not second team.	
	2. Any activity that benefits individual members rather than the collective membership.	

	3. Any social activity, including trips and tours.	
	4. Any activity that falls beyond the scope of the core purpose of the group as identified in the group's constitution.	
	5. Any non-student campaigns (funds must be spend on activities that directly affect students as students).	
	6. Any kit that is owned by individual members – please see the Access Fund for support in this area.	
	7. Any income generating events; it is expected that the group must cover all associated costs with the exception of fundraising events for other causes.	
	8. Any additional costs in relation to a Guest Speaker, including travel or security arrangements.	
Principle 2 – Sustainability		
Rationale	Criteria	Amounts
<p>Supporting costs that will ensure the group can exist for many years to come and aren't just quick wins.</p> <p>Applications should show an effort to be sustainable without funding through appropriate membership fees and fundraising and sponsorship considerations, as well as evidencing plans for the future sustainability of the group.</p>	<p>What we may contribute towards:</p> <p>1. A projected in-year deficit (a deficit that you think will be generated based on your income and expenditure for the year to come) to support you to deliver your plans (on the condition that your budget and membership fee is reasonable and you have considered other ways to cover a potential in-year deficit i.e. through sponsorship and fundraising).</p> <p>2. Unforeseen costs or impacting factors that will affect your core operation.</p> <p>3. Displacement facility cost for one year where your activity has previously been absorbed on campus at no cost to your group but that space is no longer available and alternatives cannot be found.</p>	<p>Up to a maximum of £500</p> <p>Up to a maximum of £500</p> <p>Up to a maximum of 80% or £1,000 (whichever is the lower).</p>

	4. Promotional material for Freshers' Fair and other promotional activities.	Up to a maximum of £50
	What we won't contribute towards:	
	1. Where a historic surplus is held in the group's restricted account unless in cases where we are aware of a specific development plan for the group where a 'saving' is required.	Surpluses in excess of £1,000
	2. An inherited historic deficit from previous financial years and previous committees. Instead, the Union will work with you on a Deficit Management Plan which works towards wiping out this deficit. Note – we will help fund other group activity but not the deficit itself.	Deficits in excess of £100
	3. A one-off payment for an item that will last less than 12 months, unless this is overridden by another principle (e.g.) safety.	
	4. Any merchandise that will be used to make money for group (mainly hoodies and clothing etc).	
	5. Any items or activity where the cost outweighs the benefit (e.g. expensive equipment that can be hired).	
Principle 3 - Inclusivity		
Rationale	Criteria	Amounts
Encouraging innovative thinking to provide an offer that is inclusive and ensures equal opportunities for engagement to all.	What we may contribute towards:	
	1. Equipment or resources that make the core purpose of the group more accessible to students.	Up to a maximum of 50% or £100 (whichever is the lower).
	2. Solutions that provide reasonable adjustment which will help include more students in the activity.	Up to a maximum of 50% or £100 (whichever is the lower).

	3. Opportunities which are being offered to engage with students who wouldn't usually be able to engage with the activity.	Up to a maximum of 50% or £100 (whichever is the lower).
Principle 4 – Health, Safety & Risk Management		
Rationale	Criteria	Amounts
Supporting costs that ensure the group operates with effective controls in place for the health and safety of its members.	What we may contribute towards:	
	1. The maintenance or purchase of equipment or other items that is directly related to the health and safety of the group's members.	Up to a maximum of £1,000.
	2. Safety and/or legal compliance expenditure required by the Students' Union to ensure effective health, safety and risk management purposes (i.e. first aid for fixtures, media law training).	Up to a maximum of £1,000.
Principle 5 – Capital items/large projects		
Rationale	Criteria	Amounts
To support the longer-term development of the group.	What we may contribute towards:	
	1. Funding towards equipment or resources that will benefit the longevity of the student group and will benefit future members, in circumstances where the student group has put in place plans to match fund.	Up to a total amount of £500.

Appendix 3: Glossary of Terms

Committee – Body of Society members responsible for the management for the Society; they are the main point of contact for the members and are in close contact with the RSU to ensure the sustainability of the Society.

Constitution – The goals established by the committee during the final step of the Induction Process.

Core committee – The three main committee roles; they are responsible for covering the basic needs of the Society.

Deficit management plan – A plan created by the Society to ensure the financial status of a Society improves, allowing the Society to financially thrive in the future.

Historical deficit – A record determined by the imbalance between the income of a Society and the way their funds are used.

Induction meeting – The last step in the registration process, an opportunity to introduce student leaders to the way the RSU and Societies work, as well as address any concerns or requests.

President – Acts as the main point of contact for the Society, responsible for establishing the visions and goals of the Society for the year.

Ratified – Officially recognised as a student group by the Roehampton Students' Union.

Registration process – Process consisting of outlining who will lead the Society, what roles they will take on, completing the online training and the Induction Meeting; the Society becomes ratified upon completion.

Risk status – Metric used to understand and determine the Society's financial status.

Secretary – Committee role responsible for the administrative management of the Society, including marketing and communications.

Treasurer – Committee role responsible for all financial matters of the Society, including keeping records of profits and losses of the Society.