

# Societies Fund: Terms of Reference

**Affiliated Societies** are independent, membership-based organisations expected to be financially self-sufficient in fulfilling their aims and covering recurring expenses.

## Aims of the Fund

### 1. Support Growth of Affiliated Societies

- **Startup Grants:** For new projects/events aligned with society's goals but with financial risks.
- **Startup Loans:** For events expected to generate significant income.
- **Improvement Grants:** To enhance accessibility, sustainability, or student experience in existing projects/events. Requires a viability assessment and a follow-up meeting with the Grants and Societies Officers.

### 2. Enhance Student Experience Beyond Membership

- **Open Project Grants:** These are for initiatives open to and benefiting non-members.
- **Income-Generating Event Loans:** These are for open events expected to generate income.

### 3. Promote Collaboration Among Societies

- **Joint Project Startup Grants:** For new initiatives involving multiple Societies.
- **Collaboration Improvement Grants:** To enhance previously non-collaborative joint events/projects.

### 4. Boost Society and Association Reputation

- **Community Engagement Grants:** For events/projects involving or benefiting the local community.
- **Wider Participation Grants:** For events attracting local, national, or international participants.

### 5. Encourage Sustainable Practices

- **Sustainability Grant:** For projects/events aligned with Sustainability Guidelines, whether new or modified.

### 6. Promote Accessibility

- **Accessibility Grant:** Supports projects or events aimed at improving accessibility or launching new initiatives with accessibility in mind.

## Funding Criteria

Grants or loans are available for events or projects that:

- Further the Society's aims but carry financial risks due to unforeseen circumstances.
- Are open to both members and non-members.
- Are hosted by multiple Societies.
- Involve or benefit the local community.
- Align with the Environment Committee's Sustainability Guidelines.
- Have been reviewed by the Disabled Students' Network (DSN) or meet DSN guidelines.

### Loan Approval:

- Loans will only be approved if the event/project is projected to generate net income that meets or exceeds the loan amount.

### Loan Consultation:

- Before applying for any loan (retrospective or not), Societies must consult:
  - A member of the Senior Management Team, usually Deputy General Manager (Finance),
  - Director of Student Development and Activities,
  - Societies Officer, and
  - Grants Officer.
- The Fund will not typically cover shortfalls from events that generate less income than expected, except in exceptional circumstances.

## Application Process

Applications will be evaluated based on:

- **Alignment** with the aims of the Societies Fund.
- **The financial standing and history** of the Society, including:
  - Current account balance,
  - Budgeting practices,
  - Number of previous grants applied for,
  - Whether the same expense has been previously requested.

- **Exceptions:** If an application does not meet typical terms, the Societies Committee may approve a grant/loan with agreement from a Students' Association Senior Management Team member.

### **Specialist Consultation:**

- For specific types of events or activities, the Societies Committee may seek advice from relevant groups when appropriate, including but not limited to:
  - Chaplaincy – for religious events or Societies,
  - Charities Subcommittee – for charitable events or Societies,
  - Environment Subcommittee – for sustainability-focused events or Societies,
  - Disabilities Subcommittee (DSN) – for accessibility-related events or Societies.

### **Value of the Fund**

- During the annual budget-setting process, the Sabbatical Officers determine the total available funding for the academic year. Applications are considered from 1st September to 30th June.

### **Administration of the Fund**

The Fund is managed by the Societies Committee, which:

- **Decision-Making:** Approves, partially approves, requests more information, or rejects applications.
- **Financial Consideration:** Considers the financial situation of the applying Society and financial viability of Loan Requests.
- **Voting:** Decisions are made by consensus or by a majority vote if necessary.

### **Application Criteria**

- **Submission:** Send applications to the Grants' Officer at socgrant@.
- **Eligibility:** Must be Affiliated Societies.
- **Funding Scope:** Projects/events must occur within the same academic year.
- **Venue:** Use Association facilities unless unavailable or unsuitable.
- **Funding Limits:**
  - Maximum grant: £3,000.00

- Maximum loan: £5,000.00
- **Attendance:** Required for requests over £500 or any loan at a Societies Committee meeting.
- **Documentation:** Submit a completed and approved Aims and Activities Form. A risk assessment may be required if requested by the Building Manager.

### **Grant or Loan Claim Process**

- **Notification:** The Grants Officer will inform successful applicants via email.
- **Redemption:** Present purchase receipts or invoices to the Students' Association Cash Office. Alternatively, the Cash Office can pay expenses in advance if an invoice is provided.
- **Restrictions:** Grants cannot be used to reimburse alcohol purchases, though events can include alcohol.

### **Alterations to the Terms of Reference**

This document outlines the Societies Fund's purpose, decision-making process, and application criteria. It is reviewed annually by the **Director of Student Development and Activities** in collaboration with the Societies Committee.

Decisions on applications and guidelines based on these criteria are delegated to the **Societies Committee**.