

Student Media Grant Funding Guidance

Queen Mary Students' Union
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 Queen Mary Students' Union (QMSU)



Student Media Grant Funding Criteria and Guidance

Introduction

Each year, Queen Mary Students' Union receives a block grant from the University to support student activities and a proportion of this is made available to Student Media Outlets through an application process.

The purpose of the funding is to support Outlets to run activities, projects, events, or initiatives to further their aims and objectives. Applications are open to affiliated Students' Union Outlets only.

Applying to the Student Media Outlet Grant Fund is competitive, given the amount of money that is available. Outlets are encouraged, therefore, not to rely on funding from the Outlet Fund but to also consider how they can source other income for their projects/events/activities.

The rounds will take place as follows:

Round	Deadline	Students' Union Response Deadline
1	1 st September 2020 at 9am	11 th September 2020 at 5pm
2	4 th January 2021 at 9am	22 nd January 2021 at 5pm

Late applications will not be accepted.

The Application Process

Making a funding application:

To apply for funding from the Outlet Grant Fund Outlets must submit an application form by the deadline set (late applications will not be accepted). Applications must be submitted by a Head of Media (Editor-in-Chief/Station Manager/Deputy Editor or other equivalent role.).

Applications will only be accepted if the Heads of Media have attended Student Media Committee training, with the exception of Round One applications. The funding for Round One will be allocated under the assumption that the Heads of Media will attend training in September; if the Heads of Media do not attend training, the money will be recalled.

The application form will ask for the following information:

- How much money you're requesting
- A full budget breakdown of what you would spend the money on
- When and where the project/event/activity would take place
- Summary of the project/event/activity that you're applying for grant funding for
- How the project/event/activity will contribute to the aims and objective of your Outlet and how it will benefit your members
- If your Outlet will be using any other income to support the project (ie, donations, sponsorship, ticket sales, subs). Outlets will be asked to explain why they require funding and why it cannot be funded by tickets sales, sponsorship or money in subs accounts.

- For printing costs, Outlets will be required to explain why the funding cannot be secured through advertising or why money in subs account cannot be used, reduced print runs and other means to increase sustainability both physically and financially.

Providing as much detail as you can in your application strengthen, and putting time to structure your application well, will strength your chances of your bid being requested.

Decision making process:

The applications are read and reviewed by two Sabbatical Officers. Decisions are based on a set of criteria, as outlined in the 'funding criteria' section of this document.

Funding application outcomes:

If your funding is approved you will receive an email detailing how much of your request was funded, any conditions of funding, a spending deadline, and a reminder of how to spend allocated money. If necessary, you will also be reminded to submit any relevant paperwork (such as budget sheets or risk assessments) for the event/project/initiative.

Funding can only be spent on what it was awarded for. Any money unspent by the set deadline will be recalled and allocated back to further funding rounds.

If your funding application is not approved you will receive a reason why. If the reason is not clear you can request further information from the Student Media Team on su-studentmedia@qmul.ac.uk or by coming in for a meeting. Sometimes applications are rejected if it was not clear enough what your Outlet was going to do with the money. Again, you're welcome to get some feedback from the Student Media Team on how to improve the application. Please don't resubmit the exact same application – if it didn't get approved in the first place, it's unlikely to get approved without changes.

If, after speaking to the Student Media Team about the reasons why your application was rejected, you are still not satisfied with outcome you can appeal the decision by contacting an Executive Officer.

Funding Criteria

- The total which Student Media Outlets can bid for is £2,000. This limit is for the whole academic year.
- Outlets need a minimum of 10 paid members in order to be eligible for funding.
- Outlets with over £1,000 in their subs account will not be eligible for funding except in exceptional circumstance.

What can be funded?

- Production:
Printing/Equipment/Web Hosting/Domains/Software*
- Events:
Venues, equipment, contribution to general costs
- Promotion:
General Outlet promotion/events promotion. This must be sustainable and reusable promotional material to align with the Students' Union's commitment to sustainability.
- Entries and affiliations:
Competition entries, insurance.
- Travel:
Such as coach hire, travel expenses, accommodation
- Equipment:
New or replacement equipment essential for Outlet activity, hiring essential equipment

- Training and development:
Developmental opportunities for your members

*The Students' Union will no longer fund external websites hosted by Student Media Outlets from the central pot. Student Media Outlets must now fund this themselves either via grant funding (additional funds have been added for this) or via their subs money. Previously only a limited number of outlets benefited from central funding for this and therefore this change has been made to improve the accessibility to funding and fair distribution for Outlets. The money for IT and Software has been ringfenced for this purpose only.

What cannot be funded?

Funding would not be granted for any of the following:

- Retrospective bids:
Anything you've already paid for will not be considered for funding.
- Donations or affiliations to a charity or political body:
As the Students' Union is a registered charity we cannot fund any donations to other charities, political parties, campaigns or trade unions.
We can also not subsidise your charity fundraising activities.
- Ultra Vires spending:
We can only fund projects/events/activities that directly relate to your Outlet aims and objectives (as outlined in your Outlet Development Plan).
Projects/events/activities should benefit your members and students.
- Food and drink:
Food or drink not considered to be a core part of an event/activity will not be funded (ie, AGM refreshments).

Frequently Asked Questions

Funding Allocation

- **What has been successfully funded in the past?**

The most impressive applications we have seen are those who have provided a full budget plan of what they want to buy, and how the fund plays a role in that – we have a blank budget sheet you can use and submit in your application. These budget plans map out different scenarios, and clearly demonstrate exactly how much it would help them.

Good applications also show that the society has a desire to grow and offer more for their members. For example, we have had performance societies who offer weekly beginners and intermediate classes but wanted to offer performance level classes for those who are more advanced. Whilst funding cannot be used for their usual classes, the funding helped them find an instructor to deliver a special series of advanced classes.

- **Is there a chance we will get less money than we have requested for?**

With the smaller pot this year, this may be very likely. We will fund what we can and a reason will be given if you are being given less funding than you had applied for.

- **What are the main reasons applications get rejected?**

Unfortunately, we do have a high rejection rate which may still occur this year due to the smaller pot. However, the main reasons why Societies Board has rejected applications are (in no order of importance):

- It was a late application
- The society is applying for more money than they are eligible (though Board may allocate the society the maximum amount they can get)
- Could not see how it fit in with your society's aims & objectives
- Felt like it was only benefitting a small proportion of your members – the fund should be to boost the experience of all your members. Exceptions may be made if you're sending a team on

competitions, but it's more likely that they'll agree to subsidise the costs but not completely cover it.

- It was not sustainable (e.g. asked for plastic cutlery and flyers to promote only one event)
- Lacked information/too vague/not a lot of research was done when submitting the application: whilst you can have some flexibility in dates, you need to show that you've done your research and know what this project/event will look like.
- The society wanted to use it for a charity event: this fund cannot cover anything that is not for the purpose of the society.

Spending your fund money

- **What we wanted to buy has now become more expensive! Can we get more money?**

Unfortunately, Societies Board allocates every single penny, so there will be none left after it is all allocated. Because of this, make sure you account for all costs such as delivery. You may request for more money, but it will mean it will reduce the overall pot for the next round: to do this su-studentmedia@qmul.ac.uk.

- **What we wanted to buy ended up being cheaper, can we use the money on something else?**

No. Funding can only be spent on what it was awarded for. Anything left will be recalled so it can be bid for again in future rounds. When listing what you want to purchase, list the item's cost before VAT as societies are exempt from paying VAT (VAT is covered in Finance Training).

- **My plans have changed, can I spend the money on something else?**

No. Funding can only be spent on what it was awarded for. Exceptions can be made if they are small changes (e.g. Video Gaming asking money for a specific game, but then later asks if they can use on another game) – if you are planning to purchase something that is different to what was outlined in your application, please consult us su-studentmedia@qmul.ac.uk.

- **When is the latest we can spend the money?**

All grant funding across the Students' Union needs to be spent by 31st July 2021 as this is the end of our financial year. Any unspent money will be recalled.

- **Can we request to change our spending deadline?**

As there is far less money in the pot this year, we will be more strict about the deadlines so that if you do not spend the money, we can recall it and put it back in the pot for other societies to use. However, if the money is for an event/activity that has been delayed, email su-studentmedia@qmul.ac.uk with proof that this has been delayed and we will work with you to set a new deadline.

If you have any other questions – now or after you've submitted your application, you can contact su-studentmedia@qmul.ac.uk. Please note that it may take us a few days to get back to you.