



PENN STATE BERKS

**STUDENT INITIATED FEE
HANDBOOK**

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The purpose of this handbook is to provide guidance on the Student Initiated Fee as it pertains directly to Penn State Berks. Information in this handbook reflects the Penn State Student Fee Board (SFB) Handbook, which is the official Student Initiated Fee governing document, found at studentfees.psu.edu

1. General Information

1.1 Student Initiated Fee Allocation Committee Contact Information

Email: bk-studentfee@psu.edu
Telephone: 610-396-6062
Web Address: <https://berks.psu.edu/studentfee>

1.2 Student Initiated Fee (SIF) Purpose

The information in this section is adapted from the SFB handbook, found at studentfee.psu.edu.

The purpose of the Student Initiated Fee (SIF) is to enhance the out-of-class experiences of all students by having the Student Fee Allocation Committee (SFAC) distributing Student Fee monies in an equitable, viewpoint-neutral, and timely manner as empowered by the Student Fee Board (SFB) at University Park and the University Board of Trustees. The Student Fee accomplishes experience enhancement through supporting facilities, recreation, services, and activities at our campus based on needs, expectations, and requests as determined by our Penn State Berks students.

1.3 Student Initiated Fee (SIF) Principles

The information in this section is a direct excerpt from the SFB handbook, found at studentfee.psu.edu.

The purpose of the fee is to enhance the out-of-class, non-credit-bearing experience at the campuses based on identified student needs. The following principles guide the use of the fee monies:

1. Students should control the collection and utilization of their Student Fee dollars under the authority of the University President.
2. Generally, revenue raised should remain at the campus where it is collected; however, multi-campus initiatives are permitted with the approval of the appropriate fee board(s).
3. Student Fee revenue should supplement, and not replace, current University funding to programs and services.
4. Student Fee revenue raised will support non-academic improvements to student life.
5. The Student Fee will not be folded into general tuition funds.

6. The Campus Allocation committee will allocate funds collected at each campus.
7. A Student Fee may only increase/decrease with the approval of the designated fee board.
8. The use of this fee should be public knowledge and actively reported to students. Meetings and official business of the Student Fee Board shall be open to the student body.

1.4 Terminology

Academic Day: any day the University's classes are in session. This does not include study days, final days, weekends, holidays and/or the days between semesters.

Academic Year: the time-period beginning the Monday after Summer Session II commencement through the Sunday of Summer Session II commencement the following year. The order of semesters in an academic year is Fall, Spring, Summer Session I, and Summer Session II.

Honoraria (singular-honorarium): honoraria described as "an ex-gratia payment, i.e., a payment made without the service provider recognizing themselves as having any liability or legal obligation to a person for in a volunteer capacity or for services for which fees are not traditionally required."

Professional (in relation to field trips): a person who has in the past, or currently is, working in an industry and has professed expertise in a particular area.

Performers: a person who with talent(s) in a specified area of creativity that provides entertainment to audiences. Examples may include acting, singing, theatre, magic, DJ/VJ, dance, and similar.

Program: any event (e.g., speaker, concert, on-campus conference, performance, cultural affair) that enhances the out-of-class experience provided by members of the Penn State community for students at Penn State Berks.

Project Plan: a project plan defines project goals and objectives, specifies tasks and how goals will be achieved, identifies what resources will be needed and associated budgets and timelines for completion

Networking: making contact and becoming acquainted with individuals or groups for personal gain. Examples include, but shall not be limited to, personal networking (i.e., casual, non-academic, or non-professional) and academic/ professional networking (i.e., career fairs, resume sessions, and job/internship interviews).

Quote: documentation specifying the details of item(s) or service(s) that is provided by the supplier that at a minimum includes supplier name, the total price, quantity, and item/service description.

Requestors:

1. Recognized Student Organizations (RSO): Recognized through the Campus Life Office.
2. Independent: any full-or part-time registered Penn State Berks student currently assessed the Student Initiated Fee.

3. Faculty/Staff: University employees affiliated with a Penn State Berks department/unit.

SAF: Student Activity Fund

SAFAC: Student Activity Fund Allocation Committee

SFAC: Student Fee Allocation Committee

SFF: Student Facilities Fund

SFFAC: Student Facility Fund Allocation Committee

SIF: Student Initiated Fee

Total Program Costs: the total expenses for execution of the program. Total program costs include but are not limited to the amount being requested from SAF, expenses covered by any donations (community and in-kind), and expenses covered by student organization contributions.

Travel: any activity in which students leave the University to attend or participate in an experience not provided by Penn State students or faculty. All educational travel should accomplish an organizational function or an individual's educational goals and/or improve a service offered to all students.

2. Student Fee Allocation Committee (SFAC)

2.1 SFAC Mission

The mission of the SFAC is to objectively and effectively allocate the Student Initiated Fee (SIF) funds in an equitable, viewpoint-neutral, and timely manner. SIF funds include the Student Activity Fee (SAF) and the Student Facility Fee (SFF). Funding may apply towards events, travel experiences, equipment, facilities, and other items requested by Penn State Berks students, faculty, and staff. The SIF funds ultimately enhance student life, add value to the out-of-class experience, and/or improve the educational climate at the Penn State Berks campus.

2.2 Student Activity Fee Allocation Committee (SAFAC) Membership

The information in this section is adapted from the SFB handbook, found at studentfees.psu.edu.

The committee shall be comprised of the following:

1. SGA President (co-chair) *
2. Chief Student Affairs officer or designee (co-chair) **
3. 6 student appointees
4. 2 additional student appointees (to serve as alternates)
5. 1 staff member**

6. 1 faculty member** (recommended by the Penn State Berks faculty senate)

* In the case of a tied vote, the ruling will go the direction of the chair's vote (SGA President).

**Non-voting committee members.

It is recommended that the staff person responsible for student activities, or similar position, be the non-voting staff appointment.

It is recommended that one of the student alternates be the SGA Treasurer.

2.3 Student Facility Fee Allocation Committee (SFFAC) Membership

The information in this section is adapted from the SFB handbook, found at studentfees.psu.edu.

The committee shall be comprised of the following:

1. SGA President (co-chair) *
2. Chief Student Affairs officer or designee (co-chair) **
3. 6 student appointees
4. 2 additional student appointees (to serve as alternates)
5. 1 staff member**
6. 1 faculty member** recommended by the Penn State Berks faculty senate
7. Director of Business Services or designee **
8. Director of Development or designee **

* In the case of a tied vote, the ruling will go the direction of the chair's vote (SGA President).

**Non-voting committee members.

2.4 Appeals Committee Membership

The information in this section is adapted from the SFB handbook, found at studentfee.psu.edu.

A three-person Appeals Committee consisting of one staff member and two students. These individuals may not have been a part of the group that reviewed the original request. At the Commonwealth campuses this may mean that the individuals appointed are not members of the Local Allocation Committee.

This Appeals Committee will determine if the appeal meets any of the below stated grounds for an appeal and complete the Appeal Outcome Review Form to document the review:

1. Deviations were made from the Local Allocation Committee policy and/or SIF policy.
2. Facts were missing at the time of the initial review.

The Appeals Committee may choose to:

1. Sustain the original decision made by the allocation committee, or
2. Award more than the original allocation.

2.5 Applying for Membership

The information in this section is adapted from the SFB handbook, found at studentfee.psu.edu.

At the start of the academic year, the Student Government President will post an application for current students to apply for a committee position.

Names generated from this open application process, as well as recommendations received from faculty, staff, and students-at-large, will be reviewed by the SGA President and the Chief Student Affairs Officer.

These students should provide a diverse representation of the campus student population so that a broad perspective can be gained by the allocation committee as recommended by the co-chairs and approved by the SGA.

Two students will be appointed as alternates in the event a voting member cannot attend.

It is recommended that one of these alternates be the SGA Treasurer.

3. Meetings/Review Types

The information in this section is adapted from the SFB handbook, found at studentfee.psu.edu.

While campuses determine the frequency and format of their allocation committee meetings, it is required that the committee is included in all decisions made regarding policy changes and allocation of the Student Fee Funds at Penn State Berks.

Standing allocations must be resubmitted and reapproved by the committee every year and committees are required to take minutes at each meeting.

3.1 Allocation Meetings

Berks SFAC will hold one (1) SAF allocation meeting in the fall, one (1) SAF and one (1) SFF meeting in the spring semester. Proposals are reviewed the following week after the close of the proposal round. A quorum of two-thirds (2/3) of the current allocation committee roster is needed for voting to occur.

All meeting minutes are made available on the SIF website. In case of technology failure, you may request meeting minutes in an alternative format by sending an email to bk-studentfee@psu.edu.

3.2 Policy Review

Any student paying the Student Initiated Fee at Penn State Berks may research and generate policy recommendations for the Penn State Berks Student Initiated Fee Handbook.

The Berks SFAC meets in an official capacity to vote on policy and process changes annually. A quorum of two-thirds (2/3) of the current general committee roster is needed for voting to occur.

Changes to SFAC policies and procedures, approved by the committee (unless directed otherwise by the Student Fee Board Handbook), will be effective at the beginning of the following academic year unless otherwise determined by the committee.

3.3 General Allocation Review

This is the most common type of review for a SAF submitted proposal.

Proposals are reviewed for two (2) categories:

1. Programs and Services
2. Personnel Staffing

Programs and services proposals are reviewed in ten (10) funding groups:

1. Educational events
2. Social events
3. Recreational events
4. Guest speaker, performer, or training facilitator
5. Food
6. Gift Cards
7. Give-a-ways, apparel
8. Publicity
9. Travel
10. SGA Club Organization budgets

SAF Proposal Review Steps:

1. **Proposal Submission.** The requestor submits the SAF proposal with all required documentation.
2. **Proposal Review.** The proposal is reviewed by the allocation committee and a decision to approve, deny, or table the request is made.
3. **Funding Decision.** Watch your PSU Email for a message detailing the committee's decision, any stipulations of the decision, and instructions on how to track spending and submit reports. You must complete ALL the steps listed in your award allocation email.
4. **Closeout Tasks.** At the end of each semester, all recipients of SIF funds will be required to submit follow-up materials. Directions will be included in your Award Email.

SFF Proposal Review Steps:

1. The requestor submits the SFF proposal with all required documentation.
2. After review by the allocation committee, if no concerns or red flags have been identified, the proposal is forwarded to the Chancellor.
3. If the project is between \$5,000 - \$10,000 three competitive bids are strongly encouraged.
4. If the project is between \$10,001 - \$24,999 three competitive bids are required. The Office of Physical Plant at University Park will review the project.
5. The SGA President will be required to submit to the Office of Physical Plant, responses to the following questions:
 - Is the project in the best interest of the campus?
 - Does it match with any other known projects?
 - Did the process that led to these recommendations include appropriate and adequate student participation?
 - Do these recommendations generally reflect the consensus of the students who participated in that process?

Tabling (SAF and SFF)

A proposal may be tabled for several reasons including, but not limited to, the request being incomplete, lack of pertinent information, and discrepancies in calculations.

When items are tabled, they are set aside. No money has been or will be allocated toward these tabled expenses. Once the issue for tabling has been remedied, proper documentation must be submitted to the allocation committee within five (5) academic days from notice. At this time, review and revote will occur for the tabled items. If updated information for the tabled item(s) has not been submitted within

the five (5) academic day deadline, the tabled items will be removed and considered ineligible for SIF funding until the next funding round.

3.4 Standing Allocation Review

These allocations are reoccurring year-to-year needs and have been voted on by the SFAC to live as an ongoing standing allocation. Standing allocations must be resubmitted and reapproved by the committee every year. Amounts allocated to these initiatives may vary depending on available SIF money.

3.5 Appeal Review

The information in this section is adapted from the SFB handbook, found at studentfee.psu.edu.

Appeals are not heard solely based on disagreement with the decision of the allocation committee. Grounds for appeal are honored by the allocation committee when one of the following is found to have occurred:

1. Deviations were made from Allocation Committee policy and/or SFB policy.
2. Facts were missing at the time of the initial review.

The steps for an appeal are as follows:

1. Requestor appeals to the Berks Allocation Committee using the Student Initiated Fee Appeal Form found at <https://berks.psu.edu/studentfee>. Requestor must check the Appeal to Berks Allocation Committee box and provide an explanation for the appeal.
1. The appeal must be submitted to the Berks Allocation Committee within five academic days from the date of notification of the outcome of the request.
2. A three-person Appeals Board will be appointed by the Berks Chief Student Affairs Officer or University Park Allocation Committee (UPAC) Advisor, consisting of one staff member and two students. These individuals may not have been a part of the group that reviewed the original request. At the Commonwealth campuses this may mean that the individuals appointed are not members of the Local Allocation Committee.
3. This Berks Appeals Board will determine if the appeal meets any of the previously stated grounds for an appeal and will complete the Student Initiated Fee Appeal Outcome Review Form to document this review.
4. The Berks Appeals Board may choose to:
 - A. sustain the original decision made by the allocation committee, or
 - B. award more than the original allocation.

5. This decision must be communicated to the requestor within five academic days from the date when the appeal decision was made.
6. If the appeal is not granted, the original decision goes unchanged, and the requestor is to be notified that their appeal was denied and that they have the right to further appeal to the University Park SFB within five academic days from the date when the appeal decision was made.
7. If the requestor chooses to further appeal to the University Park SFB, the Student Initiated Fee Appeal Form must be completed again and submitted by checking the Appeal to University Park Student Fee Board box and providing an explanation for the second appeal.
8. After reconsidering the request following the second appeal, the University Park SFB may then choose to:
 - A. sustain the original decision made by the Berks allocation committee, or
 - B. award more than the original allocation.
9. The University Park SFB will make the final decision, which may not be appealed.

4. Student Initiated Fee Funds (SAF/SFF)

4.1 Student Activity Fund (SAF) Funding

The information in this section is a direct excerpt from Section 2.1 of the SFB handbook, found at studentfee.psu.edu.

Activities funding enhances the student out-of-class experiences including programming, travel, equipment, and media publication. The primary use for activities funds is to enhance the campus climate through student-initiated programming, activities, and experiences. Student activities educate, entertain, and/or engage students outside of academic requirements.

4.2 Student Facilities Fund (SFF) Funding

The information in this section is a direct excerpt from Section 2.2 of the SFB Handbook, found at studentfee.psu.edu.

Facilities funding enhances student out-of-class experiences by supporting both large-scale and small-scale infrastructure projects primarily intended for student use or benefit. Large-scale projects include facility development through building and/or renovating University facilities intended for student out-of-class use. Small-scale projects can include, but are not limited to, student requested enhancement/increase of existing resources, support of facilities for recognized student organizations,

campus beautification and memorial projects, and the purchase of equipment designed for a student facility.

4.3 Recreation and Wellness Funding

The information in this section is a direct excerpt from Section 2.1 of the SFB handbook, found at studentfee.psu.edu.

Recreation funding supports the health and wellness of students through sports, recreation, and fitness activities primarily for students. Current services include, but are not limited to, access to strength and fitness equipment, fitness lessons, intramural sports, club sports, adventure recreation, and aquatics.

4.4 Services Funding

The information in this section is adapted from Section 2.1 of the SFB handbook, found at studentfee.psu.edu.

Services funding provides services to students that increase student success. Funding for services is used to improve the well-being of students, which in turn increases the likelihood of success in their academics. Services funding may not be used to directly support the academic progress of a student.

Current services include, but are not limited to, student legal services and childcare subsidy. This category, unlike all others, often funds full-time, salaried staff that exclusively support student services. Funding of this category will consider employee commitments, contractual obligations, and long-term impacts during the allocation process in close consultation with the Vice President for Student Affairs and the President or the Chief Student Affairs Officer and Chancellor at the commonwealth campus.

4.5 Special Funds

The information in this section is a direct excerpt from Section 2.1 of the SFB handbook, found at studentfee.psu.edu.

Special funding supports a yearly allocation for specific categories of interest that enhance a primary component of the out-of-class experience, as determined by students. This category of funding is established through Special Funds, which are utilized to leverage funding for projects that relate to a specific area of interest.

5. Student Initiated Fee Limitations and Restrictions

5.1 Limitations on SIF Fund Use

The information in this section is adapted from the SFB handbook, found at studentfee.psu.edu.

The list below details limitations that have been put in place by the Student Fee Board at University Park for the use of the Student Initiated Fee Funds for all campus locations.

- Funding CANNOT be discriminatory, arbitrary, or capricious.
- Viewpoint neutrality must be followed when allocating any Student Fees. Based on court decisions, allocating boards must make decisions that are viewpoint neutral, which is defined as decisions that are not based on religious, political, or personal views. Furthermore, all viewpoints, including those that are controversial, must have an equal chance of receiving funding. However, it is not required that all groups be funded equally or that opposite views must be funded. The same criteria used for other events, such as student interest and involvement, can be used to determine funding amounts for potentially controversial programs.
- No person or sponsoring organization may make a profit from an SIF-sponsored event.
- With approval from the sponsoring organization and the allocating body, a separate group may sell a commodity or raise funds at an SIF-sponsored event. A registered student organization may conduct approved fundraising activities at SIF-supported events provided the main purpose of the activity being supported by the fee is not fundraising and the event is free and open to the University community. A student who attends said event and does not donate must be able to gain the same experience from said event as someone who donates to the fund-raiser and attends said event. All proceeds from the fundraiser must benefit a charity or philanthropy as defined by the IRS, and in the case of a US-based organization, has 501c3 tax-exempt status or is a recognized student organization of The Pennsylvania State University. The registered student organization wishing to raise funds at an event supported by the Student Fee, but sponsored by another registered student organization, must have the permission of the sponsoring registered student organization to raise funds at the event. The sponsoring registered student organization of the event will have the final determination in the selection of the group to conduct the fundraising activity. All fundraising activities must be approved in advance by the Campus Allocation Committee and follow the procedures outlined in Policies and Rules for Student Organizations.
- Requestors must use SIF funds in the manner for which they were allocated.
- Activities sponsored by the SIF must be open to all University students at the campus that is funding the event. When funding events, campuses and allocation committees should consider the balance of accommodating fee-paying students and possibly accommodating guests. In determining whether to make an event open to guests, campus allocation committees will be

mindful of risk management issues, being welcoming to adult learners and their family members, and other students with varying needs.

- Student Fees shall not be used to backfill expenses from the general funds budget, nor should the Student Fee be used to replace what is currently funded through the general funds.
- Any organization receiving funds directly from the SIF may not request additional funds from a Campus Allocation Committee.
- Individual chapters recognized by the Interfraternity Council, Multicultural Greek Council, National Pan-Hellenic Council, and Panhellenic Council are eligible for funding only when the event is open to the entire University population.
- Money may be used for wages (preferably for students) and, in the case of services, salaries. In some cases, wages for professional staff may be appropriate when student employees with appropriate time and/or experience are not available. Approval for use of activity fee money for specific salaries must be given by the appropriate student fee/allocation board and must be endorsed by both the Vice President for Student Affairs and the President for decisions at University Park and by the Chief Student Affairs Officer and the Chancellor for decisions at a Commonwealth campus.
- Co-sponsorships: CCSG, GPSA, and UPUA have the option of using portions of their budget to co-sponsor. Co-sponsorship, as pertaining to fixed allocation funds, is the ability to host an event or initiative in conjunction with another student organization, entity, or off-campus establishment (i.e., the Borough Council).
- CCSG, GPSA, or UPUA, must take part in the planning of any event for which they are a co-sponsor. Organizations must go before these student governments and ask them to cover specific expenses of their program.
- Co-sponsorship does not apply to events jointly funded by UPUA, GPSA, and CCSG.
- The facility fee shall be used for projects on University-owned properties. If a campus would like to utilize income from the facility fee for a project at a non-University-owned location, the campus committee responsible for allocating the fee (or appropriate campus leadership) must seek an exception from the Vice President for Student Affairs (or designee) prior to incurring such expenses.
- At the Commonwealth Campuses, fee funding for intercollegiate athletics should be limited to start-up funding for new teams for a maximum of three years and for equipment with shared usage between recreational/intramural programs. Additional consideration should be given when funding facilities that support athletics, including the extent to which these facilities are available for informal/formal recreational use.

5.2 Items that will NOT be Funded

The information in this section is adapted from the SFB handbook, found at studentfee.psu.edu.

The list below details the restrictions for items that will not be funded and has been put in place by the Student Fee Board at University Park for the use of the Student Initiated Fee Funds for all campus locations.

- Appropriations in furtherance of a political campaign or activity by any candidate or candidate's staff for political office.
- Appropriations to a legislative lobby or to a registered student organization whose primary purpose is to influence legislation.
- Grants-in-Aid and scholarships.
- Salaries and stipends may only be funded by the SFB.
- Donations or charitable contributions of money or products.
- Funding of philanthropic activities where the primary purpose is fund-raising.
- Retroactive expenses (events held prior to submitting the request for funding or events where funding has been committed before the allocation meeting and agreement are completed).
- National association memberships on a per person basis. Individual memberships are not permitted; however, group memberships to a national organization are allowed.
- Membership dues for fraternities or sororities.
- Programs and activities that are for academic credit and/or are considered an essential component of a class (not attending or participating could have a negative effect on a student's grade in the course).
- Hiring legal services or providing bail-bond funds. This does not include funding for a Student Legal Services office, which is available to all fee-paying students at University Park.
- Honoraria for Penn State faculty or staff speaking about his/her area of expertise.
- Purchase of a specific gift for a specific person or items used to raise funds. This means that promotional items for events, door prizes, and participation prizes that are distributed randomly are allowable expenses to purchase with the Student Fee.
- Personal, non-contractual gain of any student, faculty member, staff member, or any other person.
- Purchase of or reimbursement for the purchase of alcoholic beverages.
- Any religious ceremony or worship service, except when such activity is for educational purposes.
- Any activity, material, or program whose primary purpose is recruitment or increased membership in the sponsoring group. Elections held by university-recognized student governments are not considered to be recruitment. Events/initiatives meant to recruit candidates to run or those indicating how to run or how to vote in these elections can be funded

by the student fee. Funding for student government elections should be limited to \$2,000 per organization.

All expenditures must follow University Policies and Rules and Policies and Rules for Student Organizations.

The Pennsylvania State University prohibits discrimination and harassment against any person because of age, ancestry, color, disability or handicap, national origin, race, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or veteran status. Discrimination or harassment against faculty, staff, or students will not be tolerated at The Pennsylvania State University.

5.3 Limitations on SFF Fund Use

The information in this section is an adapted excerpt from the SFB handbook, found at studentfee.psu.edu.

- Monies allocated from the Student Initiated Fee to the Facilities Fund will be used to accommodate improvements and expansions to non-academic, recreational and/or multi-use space for students.
- The Facilities Fund will not:
 1. be used to support ongoing operational costs associated with any project.
 2. be used to pay debt service.
 3. be used to pay for rental agreements.
- Monies allocated to the Facilities Fund at a particular location will be used at that location.
- Monies not spent in a particular year will be carried forward from year to year until enough funds are generated to complete an approved project. Interest will be credited (using the University's short-term rate) on an annual basis to any unused funds.
- New facilities or modifications to current facilities will be consistent with the campus' strategic and master physical facilities plans.
- At Penn State Berks it is required for any changes to an approved project to be submitted to the SFFAC co-chairs for review to assure it aligns with SFF guidelines and is still the best use of SFF funds.

5.4 Penn State Berks Additional Funding Restrictions and Requirements

5.4.1 General items that will NOT be funded by SIF:

- Uploads that are not in PDF format.
- All personal medications including off-the-shelf and over-the-counter medications with or without a prescription. Not to include public health initiatives (i.e., influenza vaccines)

- Expenses for advisors, staff, and faculty travel.
- Health insurance, travel insurance, or health provider expenses.
- Miscellaneous expenses including emergency expenditures, unforeseen expenses, and last-minute additions.
- Tips and gratuities of any kind.
- Compensation for a product or services if said person is also a member of the organization requesting funding.
- Food and/or any related costs for RSO meetings.
- Season passes described as a ticket that can be used multiple times within a limited period for entry to a venue.

5.4.2 Campus Specific Requirements

- All staff and faculty expenses will be made by the respective individual or office and allocated to the proper SIF I/O account following Finance Office guidelines.
- **Quotes** must include the following criteria:

1. **Source:** examples include:

Email – must be created using screenshot, print function, or print-screen function saved as a PDF and show To and From fields, itemization, total cost, and vendor signature.

Website – must show URL in screenshot or in Snipping Tool image. Image can be pasted into a Word document and then converted to PDF.

Formal Quote – showing vendor letterhead with contact information submitted as a PDF.

2. **Itemization:** includes the item details and quantities of all items.

3. **Total Cost:** includes taxes, shipping/handling, and all other applicable fees.

4. **Current:** can be no more than 3 months old or must have “good through” date listed.

- **Unacceptable Quotes:**
 - Personally created documents with information typed or pasted in; documents showing only links. The committee will not visit links or entertain quotes provided through links.
 - Quotes from membership stores or clubs (like Sam’s Club, Costco, et al).
- **University-Approved Vendors:** There are certain items that must be ordered or booked using University Approved Vendors (i.e., entertainment vendors). Visit <https://controller.psu.edu/risk-management/vendors/entertainment> for more information.

- **Registration Events:** When limited seats are available and will have registration for the event, Penn State Berks Students should have priority. SAFC recommends an 80/20 split, with 80% of tickets being reserved for Penn State Berks students and the remaining 20% for Penn State staff, faculty and community-at-large. Should student tickets not be exhausted 2 weeks before the event, tickets may be released to all.
- **Ticket Sales:** For all events requiring a fee/ticket for admission, all Berks student fees/tickets must be less expensive than those of all other attendees (including children). Penn State Berks students must be given priority for tickets events/activities.
- **Guest Speakers & Performers:** A biography is required for the Guest Speakers, Performers, and Facilitators that a requestor is looking to bring on campus and must be uploaded with the proposal.
 - RSOs that propose Guest Speakers, Performers, and Facilitators must have an advisor who actively participates in the planning and execution of the event.
 - Honoraria (singular: honorarium): will not be funded by SIF.
- **Galas and similar large events** must have an advisor who actively participates in the planning and execution of the event hosted by a student organization.
- **Virtual Events** hosted by the University must use a Penn State instance of Zoom or Microsoft Teams. The Penn State department or committee hosting the event must have the ability to terminate the event should the need arise. When hosted solely by a RSO, these events are considered off campus events and it is recommended that the RSO have the same ability to shut off the virtual event should the need arise. In the case of a co-sponsored event involving a university department or committee, the University requirements of using a Penn State instance Zoom or Microsoft Teams will prevail.
- **Food:** SAFC will fund food for student participants, for on-campus programs for which food is a part. Food and/or any related costs for club meetings or recruitment are not covered. To have food at an on-campus event you must provide the Penn State Berks Housing and Food Service Office with the opportunity for the first right of refusal for catering. To obtain a catering quote, complete the Catering Order Form found at <https://berks.psu.edu/studentfee>.
- **Advertising:** All advertising related to events funded by the Student Initiated Fee must prominently display the phrase "Funded by the Student Initiated Fee" on all advertising materials. Funding recipients should make every effort to ensure legibility/ accessibility on advertisements for fonts and text layout. For more information visit <https://accessibility.psu.edu/legibility/>.
- **Giveaways and Apparel:** Any items (apparel, giveaways, et al) that will have a Penn State logo or the words "Penn State" on them must be ordered from an approved Licensed Vendor. Visit <http://www.clc.com/Licensing-Info/Client-License-List.aspx> for the list of approved Licensed Vendors.
 - Giveaways are to be for Penn State Berks students only and must be given away at random (i.e., attendee name drawn at random or a winner of a competition where all students in attendance are able to participate and the winner is not selected by any entity).
- **Prizes/Awards:** SAFC will consider items that meet all the following criteria:

- Follow University policy FN10 Other Business Expenses and Activities.
- Are integral to the success of the program.
- Include process of selection for winners.
- Are not gifts that can be considered awards. This includes, but is not limited to awards, honors, trophies, bouquets, donations, scholarships, or stipends.
- **Gift Cards:** SAFC will consider gift cards that meet the following criteria:
 - Must follow University policy FN10 Other Business Expenses and Activities.
 - E-gift cards sent directly to PSU student emails.
 - Students may only win once per event.
 - RSOs must have an advisor present for the selection of winners.
- **Travel:** All travel requests must fall within at least one of the following categories:
 - **Educational** - The primary purpose is for students to gain knowledge or insight that will enhance the out-of-class experience such as a conference, field trip, or cultural experience. Educational travel requests must include a published description and itinerary of the educational travel experience (or comparable description and itinerary from a previous year ONLY if current year's information is not available), complete breakdown of costs, as well as all required travel-related quotes that are allowable for funding by the SIF.
 - **Conference** - A meeting for consultation, exchange of information, or discussion, especially one having a formal agenda for academic, scholarly, or professional/industry topics.
 - **Field trip** – A travel experience where a significant time in the educational location is spent accompanied by a professional in that field, or in the case of a performance event, must be spent viewing the performance, and must be within the 48 continental United States.
 - **Cultural experience** – A travel experience where students will learn about a set of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterize an institution, organization or group or country.
 - **Service** - The primary purpose is for students to volunteer assistance where the primary beneficiary is a community in need. SFAC will not fund trips in which the student organization will be providing a service to its parent organization or purchase items that would be donated to the service recipients. Travel to and from the destination plus time spent at the destination must occur within a 24-hour period.
 - **Recreational** – The primary purpose is for students to have fun out-of-classroom experiences to places as a day trip, i.e., travel to and from the destination plus time spent at the destination occurs within a 24-hour period.
- SAFC will only consider funding for travel where the students attending will be taking an active role in the travel experience. SAFC will only consider funding student travel requests

for those students currently enrolled in Berks campus classes during the semester in which they are traveling. Students who have graduated and are no longer enrolled in classes are not eligible for funding.

- Information describing the travel experience and a roster of all students intending on participating in the experience should be submitted with the SIF proposal.
- The primary focus of events away from the Berks campus cannot be community building, networking, proselytizing, pre-selected group retreats, conducting research, and/or lobbying.
- SAFC will only consider requests for travel to destinations not on the US State Department Travel Warning List.
- SAFC will have full discretion when determining funding for the number of students traveling.
- Charter bus quotes must be obtained through university-approved carriers. A complete list may be found at:

<http://www.controller.psu.edu/Divisions/RiskManagement/vendors/buslines/>

- **Travel Expenses:** Only travel expenses (transportation, lodging, and registration) will be considered.
 - Transportation costs include, Airfare, Bus Tickets, Train Tickets, Personal Mileage, Rental Vehicles, etc. It does not include mileage while at destination (i.e., rental car expenses from a destination airport to a conference hotel).
 - Hotel and transportation for trips will only be covered for the actual days and no more than one day before and after, of the educational/service trip programming.
 - Airline quotes and vehicle rental (unless fleet service) must be obtained from nationally recognized sources or travel agencies.
 - Funding may be provided for both passenger vehicle/truck rental and mileage if mileage is not already included as part of the passenger vehicle/truck rental fee and will be considered at the supplier's current mileage rate. Fleet rental and mileage will be considered at the current Fleet Services rate. Personal mileage reimbursement will be considered and awarded at the current SFAC rate.
 - Miscellaneous expenses related to transportation (e.g., taxis/in-city bus services and other public transportation, airport shuttles, airport parking, Uber costs, baggage fees, seat upgrades for airline tickets, insurance for airline tickets, upgraded airline tickets, airline insurance, personal travel insurance, et al) will not be considered for funding.
 - Only economy class airfare tickets will be considered for funding.
 - Submission of used boarding passes – All students traveling by air are required to submit their cancelled boarding pass with all receipts to the Trip's Coordinator within five (5) academic days of returning from the experience. If a student does not submit a boarding pass, it will be treated as an unused ticket and could result in the student being held financially accountable to SAF.

- Cancelled and unused reservations – All students who commit to a trip and have been funded are expected to attend the experience. If a student should cancel or choose not to attend, therefore wasting funds, the student organization will be financially accountable to SAF.
- **Travel Restrictions:**
 - **Recreational** - Travel to and from the destination plus time spent at the destination occurs within a 24-hour period. Hotels are not funded for these types of events. The collection of physical or electronic funds for the attendance of any registered or unregistered attendee(s) before or during a recreational trip is forbidden and will result in disciplinary action.
 - **Service** - Travel to and from the destination plus time spent at the destination occurs within a 24-hour period. Hotels are not funded for these types of events.
 - **International** - All students traveling outside of the 48 Continental United States and the District of Columbia must follow the University policy for international travel <https://policy.psu.edu/policies/tr01> and must register with the Travel Safety Network (TSN) <https://tsn.psu.edu/login>. SAFC will release funds for international travel allocations after the international travel experience has been approved by the University.

6. Increases in Funding (Addenda)

The information in this section is adapted from the SFB handbook, found at studentfees.psu.edu.

Any individual may request increased funding for an already supported SIF grant if the price of an item(s) or event/project fluctuated during the time passed from the initial request to the purchasing or event or project completion. An increased funding request will also be entertained if more funds are needed than originally expected to complete an event or project or if another opportunity arises to make the event or project stronger.

Addenda requests will only be considered if there are adequate funds remaining in the SIF allocation.

The following are guidelines for submitting an increased funding request:

1. Requester must e-mail the Student Fee staff at bk-studentfee@psu.edu and formally request increased funding. Email must include:
 - A. I/O name and I/O account number
 - B. Detailed reason for the increase request
 - C. Updated quotes, and
 - D. Detailed list of any changes to the original SIF proposal
2. Requests for increased funding will only be considered for up to 25% of the original amount approved.
3. Requests must be submitted 45 days prior to the event's start date.

APPENDIX A

SIF Red Flag Policy

The Penn State Berks SIF Red Flag Policy exists to encourage appropriate use of the Student Initiated Fee monies. The policy defines the misuse of SIF monies and the sanctions and penalties administered for infractions. The SIF Red Flag processes administered by the Penn State Berks Student Initiated Fee Allocation Committee (SIFAC) are designed to assist in holding fund recipients accountable for their actions.

The Penn State Berks SIFAC reserves the right to audit any Student Initiated Fee allocation and to impose penalties for non-compliance with SIF policies as stated in the Penn State Berks Student Initiated Fee Handbook. Those who are found to be non-compliant will be subject to the Penn State Berks Student Initiated Fee Red Flag Policy as outlined below.

The misuse of Student Fee monies by an SIF grant recipient or participant may result in receiving an SIF “Red Flag.” Misuses of SIF funding are reviewed and sanctioned by SIFAC.

Misuses of SIF funding include, but are not limited to:

Violation of the SIF policies and procedures outlined in the Penn State Berks SIF Handbook, the Penn State Student Fee Board Handbook, and / or the Commonwealth Fee Board and Commonwealth Student Initiated Fee Operating Procedures.

Violation of the Penn State Student Code of Conduct.

Failure to follow SIF policies and procedures outlined in the Student Initiated Fee Award Notification email.

Failure to submit budget tracking spreadsheets and/or requested annual reports and documents.

Requesting duplicitous funding, i.e., making a duplicate-fund request by submitting a proposal to SIF and other Penn State sources or external funding which results in a net financial gain for the same items or services.

Storing SIF-funded materials or equipment off-campus and/or preventing other students or student groups from accessing SIF-funded materials or equipment.

Participants of Trips/Events who conduct any of the following:

- Without good reason, cancelling an RSVP for a trip after the Trip Coordinator’s stated deadline.
- Attending a trip but not actively participating in the paid or specific event/activity.
- “No Show” on the day of the trip, without providing advanced notice to the Trip Coordinator.

The funding recipient failing to notify SIFAC of a trip, event, or activity cancellation after funding has been awarded.

The funding recipient failing to notify SIFAC of a change in the original purpose and costs for the SIF proposal after funding has been awarded.

The penalties and sanctions will be administered as follows:

First Offense: Email notification for misuse of SIF funds. A warning will be placed in the funding recipient's file. Additional steps may be specified.

Second Offense: Email notification for misuse of funds and a 7-week probation. Probation applies to weeks in which classes are held and may include weeks of the semester following the offense date. During probation, the funding recipient may not use any of their approved allocated SIF funding. This includes sponsoring and facilitating SAF-funded events, programs, or trips and purchasing supplies, equipment, food, give-a-ways, gift cards, and apparel.

* Funds that have already been encumbered will be processed for payment; however, no new spending will be approved.

* Once the group or individual has completed their 7-week probation, all sanctions are lifted.

Third Offense: Email notification for misuse of funds and a 15-week suspension. Suspension applies to weeks in which classes are held and may include weeks of the semester following the offense date. During suspension, the funding recipient may not use any of their approved allocated SIF funding. This includes sponsoring and facilitating SAF-funded events, programs, or trips and purchasing supplies, equipment, food, give-a-ways, gift cards, and apparel.

* Funds that have already been encumbered will be processed for payment; however, no new spending will be allowed.

* Once the group or individual has completed their 15-week suspension, all sanctions are lifted.

Fourth Offense: Email notification for misuse of funds and suspension from using any remaining semester and/or academic year approved allocated SIF funding. All approved allocated funds will be taken back and returned to the SIF balance. Funding recipients will not be eligible to apply for SIF funds until the next academic year funding cycle.

* Funds that have already been encumbered will be processed for payment.

Additional Penalties

In addition to the Red Flag penalties, recipients could receive the following:

- A reduction of future Student Initiated Fee funding
- Referral to the Student Conduct process
- Ineligible to submit funding proposals and/or zero funding on all requests submitted for one or more full academic years following the infraction

* Any imposed penalties will be recorded in the funding recipient's file, documented on the SIF website, and filed for three years.

APPENDIX B

SIF Proposal Tips

Writing a proposal for Student Initiated Fee funding can be a bit intimidating, especially if it's the first time. Here are a few tips to help you get started.

Helpful Hints

- Review required resources like the Penn State Berks Student Initiated Fee Handbook, the SIF website, and the SIF Red Flag Policy.
- Events funded by the Student Activity Fee must be open to all Penn State Berks students. Freshmen, Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors must all be equally eligible to participate and benefit from the event, activity, trip, and/or resource.
- When describing your event, please clearly explain the purpose, what will happen, and how it will benefit ALL Berks students. If the committee members can't understand your idea, they are less likely to fund it!
- Consider listing some creative marketing ideas to advertise the event and get the word out to the entire Berks campus.
- When getting quotes, make sure that all fees are included. For example, if you're getting a performer, ask them to outline in their quote whether travel and lodging are included in their performance fee. If you're requesting funding for something that will be purchased online, print out a quote that also includes shipping. If your quotes do not include all fees, you will be responsible for the price difference on your own.
- Provide an itemized listing of projected expenses and income. For each item, include and clearly identify the Item Name, Unit Price, Quantity, Item Total, and website/vendor where you found these costs. The more details you provide, the better.
- Make sure you proofread your proposal, double check your math, and attach all the required quotes.
- Be mindful of deadlines! Late and/or incomplete proposal submissions will NOT be reviewed.
- If you aren't sure, don't be afraid to ask! Assistance is available in the Student Affairs office.