Academic and Professional Fund Rules
and Eligibility, Winter 2020-21

Last updated on Jan 19 2021

The Academic and Professional Fund provides funds for graduate student groups and organizations at the University of Chicago to plan and host events and programming that promotes academic and professional development. More resources can be found on our website.

Every graduate student at the University of Chicago is invited and encouraged to apply. We look forward to reviewing all of your applications, and learning about all of your fantastic work and achievements!

The application process is summarized below:

● **Application form:**
  ○ Each application requires you to prepare an itemized budget for the program/event and fill out this form. The budget must be uploaded with this form. **A UChicago email address is necessary for a valid application.**
  ○ The form must be submitted at least 14 days before the event date.
  ○ There are 4 application **deadlines** in each academic quarter, typically around the Fridays of week 1, 3, 6 and 8. Exact dates for each quarter are viewable on the Graduate Council website here.

● **Application review:**
  ○ Applications will be reviewed within two weeks following the deadline.
  ○ Post-review, applications will be assigned one of the following statuses: **fund in full, fund in part, additional information required, or rejected.**
  ○ You will receive an email with the status of your application, as well as the dollar amount of funding (if any) for which you have been approved.
  ○ If your application is rejected, we invite you to apply again as early as next quarter by submitting a new form.

● **Reimbursements:**
  ○ All awards will follow a reimbursement system. The amounts paid will be verified (e.g. using receipts) and then reimbursed to the specified payee.
  ○ A separate form must be submitted for reimbursements. See this form here.
  ○ Receipts **must** be preserved and uploaded along with the reimbursement request.
  ○ Additional information and verification may be required before
reimbursements are processed.

○ After your event, you are also welcome to share your experience with the Grad Council at one of our meetings during the academic year.

COVID-19 addenda:

Addendum 2: January 19, 2021:

We are now able to approve a food budget of $30 per attendee for events - subject to all the usual rules, as well as the following:

● Food must be ordered for take-out/pick-up/delivery - dine-in will not be reimbursed
● Cash payments will not be reimbursed. A receipt requires a proof of payment method (i.e., last 4 digits of the credit card used); receipt for the digital transaction must be submitted by each student applying for reimbursement, or these receipts must be collected and submitted by the event organizer
● In-person gatherings are still prohibited, and so each receipt must be for a single individual expense

Addendum 1: September 15, 2020:

All proceedings of the Academic and Professional Fund will be conducted virtually.

Members of our campus community who attend any gathering are expected to wear a face covering and maintain at least 6 feet of social distancing.

In light of COVID-19, the following are considered unsafe practices and will not be allowed:

● In-person tabling
● Student organization travel, including within the Chicagoland area

Additionally, the City of Chicago has prohibited gatherings and parties in private residences with more than 6 people who do not live in the household, and consequently the A&P Fund will not be able to fund such events.

For more specific questions, guidance, or resources, please email Aabir Abubaker Kar (VP of the Academic and Professional Fund) at aabir<at>uchicago<dot>edu.

Application Instructions

● Fill the form:
  ○ Fill out the application form here (ensure you provide your UChicago email address).
Carefully consider the listed questions and provide your responses.

**Detail your budget + other funding:**
- Please provide an Excel sheet for your itemized budget following the example given in the form. Failure to submit or follow proper format will result in an automatic rejection. A sample budget can be seen [here](#).
- You are required to disclose the existing balance in your student organization account and how much (if any) funds are already allocated for use in the current school year.
- Please list all other funding sources that you have applied for or received.
- We strongly encourage you to look for as many funding sources as are available.

**Add supporting documents (optional):**
- Please include any supporting documents (in PDF form) with your application.
- Note that these supporting documents are not requirements to fulfill the form, but their receipt by the committee may enhance the likelihood of funding.
  - If you have organized this event in the past - GC feedback form, proof of funding, receipts/invoices/etc.
  - If you are not an official student group as part of your division - a letter of recommendation from a division faculty member or administrator.
  - Any documentation related to your event/programming: i.e. list of speakers, literature on your event, invoice, etc.
  - If other funding has been received, please include any documentation of other funding you have received.

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**Sample applications for the Academic and Professional Fund**

- Kind of Problem a City Is: A Discussion ([link](#))
- Workshop on Decolonial Professional Practices ([link](#))

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**A&P Fund Rules**

**Applicant eligibility**

- An applicant **must** be a graduate or professional student at The University of Chicago. Graduate or professional student organizations at the university may also apply.
- The program/event must demonstrate a positive impact to the greater University of Chicago community.
- Divisional student governments **may not** apply for funding.
Application Rules

- **Timing of application:**
  - You may apply for funding at any time in advance if your event is scheduled for the 2020-2021 academic year.
  - There are 4 deadlines per quarter typically on the Fridays of week 1, 3, 6 and 8.

- **Guidelines of application:**
  - The itemized budget must include all expected expenses for the event and the itemized sources of funding that will account for them.
  - Further, the budget must explicitly identify the exact funds requested from Graduate Council and the exact goods and items they will be allocated toward.
  - GC Finance Committee highly recommends co-sponsorship, fundraising, corporate support, or other forms of subsidies, and will consider partial funding for such requests.
  - GC **WILL NOT** provide funding for discretionary funds, non-specific misc. expenses, emergency cash, petty cash, or non-specific maintenance requests.
  - GC **DOES NOT** fund services/gifts (e.g. speaker gifts, bartending, poster design).

Evaluation and results:

- The committee meets within two weeks of the application deadline to evaluate each application and render one of the following decisions: fund in full, fund in part, additional information required, or rejected.
- A representative from your organization **may** be asked to attend a (virtual if required) A&P Fund Committee meeting in order for your application to be processed. These meetings typically last approximately 5-15 minutes during which committee members will ask questions about your application.
- Rejected applicants are encouraged to apply again in the future, as early as the next academic quarter as long as your event/program has not passed.

Use of approved funds and reimbursements:

- Student groups/organizers may only use the provided funds for the purposes outlined in their application.
- Awardees will be granted funds as reimbursement of expenses, and awardees must submit receipt copies as documentation. These expenses must follow the rules of The University of Chicago.
• If there are circumstances that require GC to pre-fund certain items in your budget, please communicate this to the committee in the application. This is reviewed on a case-by-case basis and only granted in extraordinary circumstances.

• In order to receive the reimbursements, awardees MUST follow the directions provided to them upon notification that they have received the award.

• Awardees must submit reimbursement requests no later than 2 weeks after the last day of event/programming.

• Any violation of these rules or the application instructions to follow may result in your application or reimbursement request being denied.

Criteria for Application Evaluation

• Completeness of application
• Significance of event
• Cost of event per UChicago graduate or professional student attendee
• Impact on/inclusion of multiple divisions
• A specific advertising plan efforts, especially to encourage participation from students in other divisions
• Event impacts/comprises primarily UChicago graduate students
• Other sources of funding (including ticket sales, sponsorship) and attempts to secure additional funding significantly enhance funding likelihood
• If the applying organization is a Recognized Student Organization and is receiving / has requested funding from Student Government Finance Committee (SGFC)
• Completeness and appropriateness of the budget, including if there are any unapproved or ineligible line items

Speaker Funding Restrictions:

• There are strict university guidelines for paying an honorarium to a speaker.
• GC Finance Fund does not directly provide funds for speaker accommodations. Expenses for the speaker (such as travel costs and hotels) must be made by the speaker.
• For any award that includes an honorarium to an external speaker, the speaker must work directly with UChicagoGRAD to submit required documents and receive their reimbursement.
• GC Finance Fund may not fund honoraria or fees to University of Chicago faculty, employees or students
• GC Finance Fund may consider funding honoraria or fees to University alumni. However, GC encourages students and student organizations to request University of Chicago alumni to volunteer their time at the University of Chicago without charge.