

COGS GSO Support Funding Guidelines

Revised March 19, 2025

1) Purposes of Funding

The Council of Graduate Students (COGS), as elected representatives of graduate and professional students, uses the funds collected through taxation to partially support various graduate activities and organizations. COGS discretionary funding is used to enhance, encourage, and promote the academic, social, cultural, and economic aims of graduate and professional students. COGS seeks to support events which integrate socially, culturally, or intellectually diverse groups, and those which benefit the greatest number of graduate and professional students. Such events provide the most enriching aspects of graduate education. To ensure that funds are readily available throughout the year, the total amount allocated for award funding shall be divided between the Fall and Spring semesters at a ratio of 50% each semester. Fall semester will be defined as months July – December and Spring semester will be defined as months January – June. Each event funding award will be charged to the semester in which the event takes place.

2) Eligibility For Funding

Any current MSU (Michigan State University) Graduate Student Organization (GSO), defined as a Registered Student Organization (RSO) with at least 75% of the members being graduate or professional students, or an RSO that holds a COGS full council seat filled with an active member, may apply for funding. Because funding is disbursed through university accounts, applicants must have an account with a valid RSO University account number (*number starts with either AR or AU). COGS will not fund revenue positive and/or fundraising events. See next section for more regulations and restrictions.

3) Regulations And Restrictions

- a. All funds dispersed from this award must be used for any combination of the following purposes:
 - a. serving as a minimum deposit to establish a University Account for the GSO.
 - b. organizing activities that contribute to the establishment or long-term stability of a GSO. Examples of eligible activities include, but are not limited to, meetings to elect a COGS representative for a GSO, meetings to transition leadership positions within a GSO, initiatives to recruit new members into a GSO, meetings to reregister a GSO with MSU, or meetings to strategically plan future GSO activities.
 - c. promoting a sense of graduate and/or professional student belonging within a given department, program, or GSO including the promotion of an inclusive culture, sense of appreciation of graduate and professional students, and sense of community for graduate and professional students. Examples of eligible activities include, but are not limited to, gatherings that promote fellowship and comradery among graduate and professional students within a GSO; department; or program, or gatherings that celebrate the accomplishments of an individual or a group of graduate and professional students.
- b. COGS will not fund revenue positive events or fundraisers, except charitable events.
- c. COGS will not consider funding activities that support political issues, referenda, or candidates for elected office.

- d. COGS will not consider applications submitted after an event has passed.
- e. Every reasonable effort must be made to make sure all funded activities take place in an accessible (ADA compliant) location. This requirement includes providing necessary interpreters and other special accommodation if requested by a participant with due notice. All advertising or promotional material must include accessibility information.
- f. Each funding application must be complete and include an itemized budget of anticipated expenses and revenues and include the source(s) of the estimates.
- g. Requests for salaries, wages, compensation, registration fees, conference fees, or travel (including, but not limited to, air fare, rental of vehicles, tolls, fares, fuel, and lodging) for persons who are members of the requesting group will be denied.
- h. In recognition of COGS support, all advertising, brochures, pamphlets, etc., produced for the event must visibly display the COGS logo or acknowledgement COGS support as a sponsor. Violation will result in full or partial reduction of funding.
- i. Funding approval does not guarantee payment; payment may be withheld if any of these guidelines or additional stipulations are intentionally violated.
- j. The maximum amount that will be approved for any one group in an academic year is \$150.
- k. NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES WILL BE FUNDED.
- l. Graduate and professional students must receive a reduced rate or not be charged for events sponsored by COGS.

4) Application and Submission of Requests

- a. All funding requests are to be completed and submitted online. Applications must be submitted before the event occurs. Once an application is submitted on time, it will be reviewed by the Finance Committee. If the Finance Committee recommends approval of the funding request, it will submit the application to the COGS Full Council for action. No funding will be distributed without COGS Full Council approval. Applications for group funding should be submitted well before the event and at least two weeks before the next regularly scheduled Full Council meeting.
- b. Only applications received at least two weeks prior to the COGS Full Council Meeting can be considered for any given month. See the table of deadlines provided on the Funding page of the website (www.cogs.msu.edu).
- c. All applications must be submitted on a COGS Funding Application form. COGS Funding Application forms and the dates of COGS Full Council meetings are available at the COGS website (www.cogs.msu.edu).
- d. The COGS Finance Committee will meet regularly throughout the semester (as per COGS By-Laws Section 8.2.1.1.1) to review funding requests and will report its recommendations to the COGS Full Council for approval.
- e. The COGS budget is a finite resource. Once funds allocated for funding requests are depleted, no more requests will be granted.

5) Requirements for Reimbursements

- a. Prior to reimbursement, satisfactory evidence of payments made (e.g., canceled checks and receipts) and a copy of all printed materials must be submitted to the COGS Office before 5:00pm on the 30th business day after the event, or on the last Friday of June, whichever comes

first. An extension may be granted only if extenuating circumstances exist, and it is approved by the COGS Treasurer prior to the above stated deadline.

- b. Funds are expected to be used according to the submitted budget and any revisions, stipulations or changes made by the COGS Full Council.
- c. Any changes to an approved application (i.e., date, location, budget, etc.) must be approved by the COGS Treasurer for that application to remain eligible for reimbursement.
- d. Reimbursement of allocated funds will be made through the GSO's University account. Reimbursements must be made to University accounts, and the COGS Office is unable to provide reimbursements in any other form.
- e. Payment of a portion of the requested funds may be made before the event but only after the application has been approved by the COGS Full Council and authorization has first been obtained from the COGS Treasurer.
 - a. Authorization will only be given for services provided by MSU entities (e.g. Union/Kellogg CTR/University printing charges.) COGS will NOT allocate funds directly to the group but will transfer the funds only to the MSU entity's university account.
 - b. If the event is canceled and advance payments have been made, it is the requesting group's responsibility to reimburse COGS for all funding that has been disbursed.
- f. The COGS Treasurer shall prevent disbursement of funds until and unless the group has met all funding conditions. Groups that receive funding from COGS must not make a profit from the event. If a group's event budget changes, COGS will not fund over the total amount of the event.

6) Acceptance of Conditions for Funding

- a. It is understood that the Organization will, at its own expense, protect and hold harmless COGS, its officers, representatives, members, boards, employees, and agents from all claims, damages, costs, law suits and expenses, including but not limited to, all costs arising from administrative proceedings, court costs and attorney fees, that COGS may incur as a result of any act, omission, or negligence of the Organization or any of its officers, members, employees, agents, subcontractors or independent contractors which may arise out of this funding request.
- b. The liability, if any, to COGS, its officers, representatives, members, boards, employees, and agents with regard to the funding of the Organization for any claim, costs, damages, losses, and expenses for which COGS is or may be legally liable, whether arising in negligence or tort, contract, or otherwise, shall not exceed the amount of funding provided by COGS to the Organization. In no event shall COGS, its officers, representatives, members, boards, employees, and agents be liable for any indirect, special, or consequential damages.
- c. The Organization shall not transfer any right or interest in this request without the prior written consent of COGS.
- d. The Organization agrees to abide by all applicable federal, state, and local laws and ordinances, as well as all student rights and regulations set forth by Michigan State University.