**Funding Application Guidance.**

This short guide is here to help you prepare a Funding Application for the Society Grant Funding Panel (The Panel) with the best chance of success as possible. This ought to cover the following.

* What the Grant Funding was setup to do and who the Panel are.
* What the Funding cannot be used for.
* Top tips and tricks on how to make a successful application.

**What is the Society Grant Fund?**

The Society Grant Fund is an allocation of funds from the Dundee University Students Association (DUSA) to the Societies Team that is designed to help further unlock the potential and reach of all our Societies. This is a perk of affiliation to DUSA and can only be utilised by our affiliates themselves.

**Who Sits on the Panel and How does it Work?**

Since it was reformed in 2019/20, The Panel now works in a noticeably different way to before. There is no longer a smoke and mirror decision of the Panel just saying “yes” or “no” over a Messenger System. We now require in-person (or online where COVID is concerned) meetings to allow constructive conversation over the merits of applications rather than just deciding based on how you feel on the day. Whether or not an application succeeds qualitative feedback is provided on every application regarding why or why not a decision was made.

The Panel consists of 5 voting members, these are elected by the Societies Council at the first meeting of the year – usually in September. In addition, the Vice-President of Student Activities who chairs the meeting, the Student Opportunities Coordinator/Societies Officer, an additional member of the DUSA Executive from the Finance Committee and a member of the University of Dundee Student Funding Panel will sit in a non-voting capacity to help advise the Panel.

The extent of these advisory roles is varied. Those from the Societies Team will typically provide context as to how new a Society is and how many applications they have submitted, how they were spent etc. Whilst the additional Executive and Student Funding Panel members will merely provide advice on sensibility of the use of the funds and help the voting members to question, seek clarity or better understand matters at hand.

Ultimately, the non-voting members cannot influence a decision but merely provide information to help voting members come to their own conclusions.

The Panel has the discretion to award the whole amount requested, a partial sum, a loan, the amount in instalments or no funds at all. The final decision is with the Panel only and requires 60% of The Panel to be in complete agreement, no decision will be made on any less of an agreement and the application will be reviewed at the next meeting, hopefully with further clarity from the Society.

**What the Society Grant Fund Cannot be Used for:**

When The Panel was reformed, a stipulation was that the funds being requested could not be spent on certain types of goods or services, especially those that do not align with creating a Kinder, Greener, more Diverse, Global Student Community and DUSA’s values. This list includes but is not restricted to the following:

* Alcohol;
* Websites;
* Funds/deposits lost due to cancellation of events without insurance;
* Charity donations;
* Full Travel Costs and;
* Large/Expensive Social Events with no link to Society Objectives or Cultural Relevance.

For any item not explicitly prohibited above, The Panel will have the final decision and can amend these guidelines as time goes by.

**Tips on Creating a Great Application:**

The following are merely tips and advice from former members of The Panel for what makes a great application. However, following these tips will not ensure success as this is looked at on individual basis that changes based on the context of each Society’s application.

Tip 1:

Be concise and use simple language.

By creating a long essay of why your funds should be awarded and what money is spent on etc, it often causes confusion. Especially in run-on sentences!

Telling a story is not necessarily a bad thing (see Tip 2), but you need to do it in the right way. You can avoid confusion by trying to use bullet points to breakdown what is being asked for and how much it will cost at the end of the application, i.e:

* £20 x 3 – packets of “x”.
* £0.55 x 100 – individual “y”.
* £1.33 x 3 (rolls) of 5 metre “z”.

Tip 2:

Tell a story.

When explaining why this event or purchase of equipment is important and needed by your Society, explain the context behind it and make sure The Panel knows what you know.

Often people forget that Societies are first and foremost, a Community. One with dozens of stories and memories per member that will last a lifetime. What you do and how you do it will create a lasting effect on your members for years to come hopefully. Explain to The Panel and help them to understand why this money and what it will be spent on will help benefit your members.

Tip 3:

Be honest.

It is actually quite easy for The Panel to see through certain aspects of an application that are not genuine. This is because they are often poorly explained and lack any real thought and come across as just an excuse to ask for, and hoard monies. It might seem unbelievable but it has happened before!

For example, one of the most common pitfalls of any application is evidence of fundraising. Sometimes it just isn’t possible for a Society to fundraise, other times their events will flop. This can be the fault of the Society not advertising, or it can be no one attending because of poor weather etc. When applying to The Panel, be honest in your reflections and say that your fundraising on “A” date went really well as you raised “C” but the event on “B” went poorly due to unforeseen circumstances and you raised “D” less than expected etc.

Tip 4:

Finally, we’re only human and so are you - not everything will be perfect.

Keep in mind that the application doesn’t need to be perfect, but it does need to be genuine. If you show you really need the funds to make an event work and to reach out to a certain community or to enable others to attend an event, then it will show, and altruism usually prevails.

However, if an application unfortunately isn’t successful then don’t take it to heart. Take on board the constructive criticism and don’t be afraid to re-apply once you’ve taken the advice of The Panel onboard. Remember, we’re here to support you in creating an amazing Student Community that everyone wants to be a part of!

Tip 5:

Speak to the Societies Team.

If you feel like you’re struggling to find a place to start or would like some pointers on structuring the application or using good English then please drop me an email at vpsa@dusa.co.uk or swing by the office at the Hive.