

Boston University School of Law



**2012-2013
Student Organization Handbook**

Call for Proposals

- The Student Government Association (“SGA”) provides a wide variety of programs and services to enhance the educational experiences of its membership, the students of Boston University School of Law. As part of this effort, we offer grants of financial assistance to student organizations. These grants are to be used for the production of events and activities that will meet the needs and interests of the student body. The SGA invites student organizations to request funding for campus events and activities.
- The money the SGA has to allocate is a percentage of BU Law student activity fees paid. The SGA strives to balance the number of anticipated attendees with the total cost of an event in order to justify larger allocations. Events must be potentially open to the entire school for SGA approval. In addition, we prefer groups and events that have considered all possible cosponsors such as other student organizations, the Student Affairs office, and the Career Development Office.
- A mandatory meeting shall take place September 13, 2012 from 1-2 pm in Room 1420 between the SGA treasurer, SAO staff, and all organizational presidents and treasurers (see below for more information about SGA liaisons) to be allocated monies in that budgeting period. The SGA treasurer shall explain the budgeting process, activity guidelines, dates of mandatory meetings, and deadlines for grant applications. Failure of an organization to send its president and treasurer to this meeting may be grounds for organizational disciplinary action and/or funding ineligibility.
- It is important to remember that the intent of awarding these grants is to assist student organizations in their programming efforts. The SGA cannot afford to be the sole source of financial support for student organization activities.

Funding Goals

- The SGA’s goals for the budget process are: (i) to allocate a balanced budget, (ii) to avoid sponsoring events that will likely not occur or are over-budgeted, and (iii) to avoid disproportionate spending.
- In light of the SAO’s spending restrictions, the SGA considers each item in a student group’s itemized budget, looking to avoid two equally unfortunate outcomes. First, organizations often budget for events that do not occur and allocated funds are not spent. Second, groups sometimes over-budget for activities. This reduces the opportunity for that money to be used by other groups that semester. **Generally, the greater detail provided for each event helps assure the SGA that an event will likely occur.** The more likely an event is to occur, the greater the likelihood of the event being funded. This information should be submitted on the given SGA budget forms. Groups which turn in their budgets late or incomplete may be denied funding in whole or in part. The SGA understands that grant applications are sometimes due many months prior to the event date and will take that under consideration when determining if the event is sufficiently planned.

Qualifications for Funding

Who We Fund

- All **university recognized** BU Law student organizations that are **currently registered** and not on probation are eligible for grants. Persons completing and submitting grant applications must be registered with the Student Activities Office (“SAO”) as officers of the organizations they represent. It is the organization’s responsibility to make sure it has complied with all of SAO’s registration requirements. Nothing SGA does or says should be interpreted to mean an organization is registered with SAO.
- SGA allocations are always as exact as possible, but in certain circumstances, you may overdraw on your account. Once you find out, you must obtain an Overdraft Form from SAO and seek approval for the remainder of your events from Dean Chris Marx.

What We Fund

- To ensure the funding process is viewpoint-neutral, the following set of basic criteria has been adopted to guide funding decisions:
 1. The organization must demonstrate how the activity contributes to SGA’s mission
 2. The organization must present a detailed plan about the activities for which it is seeking support
 3. The organization’s activity must not duplicate current offerings
 4. The organization’s activity must potentially be open to all students
 - SGA understands that not all events can accommodate every student who is interested in participating or attending. Grants will be approved for such events as long as the entire student body has an equal opportunity to sign up for such an event, even if only the first students to sign up can actually attend. This is what is meant by “potentially open to all students.” If this applies to your grant application, please include a description of the selection process in your event description.
 5. The organization’s proposal must be fiscally responsible
- Funding decisions will not be based on an organization’s primary mission or purpose. An organization cannot be denied funding simply because it advocates a particular opinion. Nonetheless, viewpoint neutrality does not mean that funding levels will be equal for all organizations. Different groups may be funded at different levels because different organizations require different amounts of money to function effectively on campus. Please be aware that an event having been approved by the SGA in the past is no guarantee that the same or similar event will be approved this semester.

Examples of Qualifying Programs

- Events and activities that seek to accomplish the following objectives have been deemed to contribute to the SGA's mission and are examples of the types of programs the SGA seeks to fund:

- To develop professional, or career-related skills and networking opportunities;
- To promote discussion or debate of public issues from a variety of perspectives or viewpoints;
- To supplement or enhance academic preparation or development;
- To promote an awareness and understanding of the ideas, customs, arts, languages, and social contributions of specific cultures;
- To promote students' health and welfare; and
- To promote or sponsor public service to the surrounding community;

Prohibited Purchases

- In addition, SGA grants cannot be used for any of the following purposes:
 - 1) **Scholarships/Awards** - SGA grants cannot be used to pay for awards or scholarships.
 - 2) **Office Maintenance** - SGA grants cannot be used for the purchase of office supplies or for office maintenance, including phone bills, postage, or any other operating expense.
 - 3) **Banquets/Luncheons** - SGA grants cannot be used for any expense related to the production of a student organization's banquet or luncheon.
 - 4) **Donations** - SGA grants cannot be used to pay for Community Relations Activities including donations to charitable causes.
 - 5) **Faculty Compensation** - SGA grants cannot be used to compensate BU Law faculty for services rendered to an organization.
 - 6) **Speaker Fees** - SGA grants cannot be used to compensate speakers for lecturing at a meeting or conference held by an organization. However, SGA grants can be used to compensate said speaker for travel expenses, but this amount is limited to \$100 per speaker.
 - 7) **Ex Post Facto Contracts** - SGA grants cannot be used to make payment on a contract entered into after services have been rendered. Nor are reimbursements permitted. Check with SGA Treasurer before making any purchases without a purchase order, check request, or requisition.

Policy on Sponsored Activities

- Regardless of the type of grant requested, all programs sponsored with SGA funds must adhere to the following student activity policies.

Off-Campus Events

- Off-campus events are held to a higher standard than on-campus events and will be more closely scrutinized by the SGA. Examples of off-campus programs previously funded by the SGA include intercollegiate academic competitions, community service events, and programs for which campus facilities are inadequate or unavailable. A principal factor in making these decisions is the degree to which the proposed activity contributes to the educational and leadership development objectives of the university. If your organization requests funding for an off-campus event, a detailed explanation must be included in the grant application stating the reason the event cannot be held on campus.

Nondiscrimination Policy

- Grants will only be awarded to programs that are open to any student wishing to participate. The SGA will not award grants to any program that restricts or limits participation based on sex, disability, race, color, national origin, age, marital status, religion, or sexual orientation. Organizations that apply for and receive funding from the SGA do so with the expressed understanding that such discrimination is explicitly prohibited and that any violation of this policy will result in the forfeiture of SGA support and a suspension of all organization privileges for the remainder of the academic year.

Accessibility Policy

- The SGA further requires that no program or activity funded by the SGA exclude from participation, deny benefits to, or subject to discrimination, any individual solely because of his or her disability. To this end, the SGA requires that organizations receiving grants take affirmative steps to provide reasonable accommodations in all facilities and services to the known physical or mental limitations of any individuals wishing to participate.

SGA Budget Meeting and Grant Allocations

SGA Liaison

- Similar to last year, the SGA will correspond with organizations through SGA Liaisons. But we've changed this a little. This year, all organizations will have two SGA Liaisons – the organization's president and treasurer. The SGA Liaisons are responsible for all communications between the organization and the SGA. Further, the SGA Liaisons are the only people who should contact the SGA for all organization-related matters. Both the organization's president and treasurer must be included on all email correspondence with the SGA. For example, if the organization's treasurer is sending an email to the SGA Treasurer, he/she must CC

the organization's president, as well. If your organization needs to contact the SGA in person, it would be most beneficial if both the organization's president and treasurer can come in to the office together.

- Some common responsibilities of the SGA Liaisons include submitting grant applications, submitting advertisements to the Monday Morning E-mail on behalf of the organization, maintaining all matters related to SAO form completion and submission, requesting fund transfers from SGA, acting as the SAO's point of contact, etc.
- If you plan to hold a large number of events throughout the year, please be sure that the SGA Liaisons understand the time commitment required for all of these responsibilities for each event.

Submitting the Grant Application

- All applicants must use the current version of the SGA Grant Application forms. These forms will be available online to the SGA Liaisons once room reservations are available (August 20) and must be submitted online. Any relevant supplemental information in the form of Word, Excel, and PDF documents may be uploaded with the grant application. Supplemental information is encouraged for large, complex programs. Failure to follow instructions will result in the rejection of your application.
- Buildings & Grounds ("B&G") is responsible for the maintaining and cleaning the entire law tower. Depending on the time and location of the event, there may be an additional B&G fee. If the event is in a classroom during a weekday, there is no fee, regardless of the time. If the event is in Barrister's Hall, Room 1270, or the Law Auditorium, **AND** the event ends after 4pm, there will be a B&G fee. The fee is \$168 for the first four hours and \$42 for every additional hour. That means, for any event in those three rooms that ends after 4pm, there is an automatic \$168 fee for B&G. If you are requesting B&G for an event, the SGA asks you to seriously consider whether it is necessary to have your event in such a large space and/or at that particular time. It is solely within the discretion of the SGA to request that events be moved to other locations and/or times. However, **if you expect to need funding for B&G, you must include that request in your initial grant application.** If you do not, we may not have any funding left to cover the B&G fee.
- The SGA has authority to make funding for any particular event contingent on the student organization moving the time of the event, the date of the event, or the location of the event.
- For all programs, you will be required to upload your room reservation confirmation in PDF format as part of your application. Please see the section on room reservations below.

Room Reservations

- Room reservations can be made beginning August 20th and are available on a first-come, first-served basis. To make a reservation, a member of your organization must go to the Student Affairs Office. This must be done in person. Please do not call or email the Student Affairs Office to request a room. Upon approval, you will be provided with a room reservation slip. You then need to take that slip to the office across from the registrar's office to finalize your room reservation. Please ask for a room reservation confirmation. **The SGA will not transfer funding to your organization's account unless we receive a copy of the room reservation confirmation.**
- Dean Chris Marx will have the final say as to which organizations and programs will be granted room reservations.
- As stated elsewhere in this handbook, you will be required to upload a copy of your room reservation confirmation as part of your grant application. If you do not have a room reservation at that time, **your grant application will be considered incomplete** and will be treated as though it was not turned in on time.

Grant Application Deadlines

Grant Application Deadline*	For Events Scheduled
August 24, 2012	September 6, 2012 – October 31, 2012
October 5, 2012	November 1, 2012 – February 28, 2013
January 17, 2013	On or after March 1, 2013

*All deadlines are effective as of 5:00pm

- In addition, **any group requesting more than \$1,000 for an event** must submit the grant application for that particular event by September 15, 2012 (even if that event is after February 28, 2013). If you are requesting more than \$1,000 for an event prior to November 1, 2012, you must still meet the August 24, 2012 deadline.
- No grant applications will be reviewed until after the respective deadline has passed. Therefore, there is no advantage to applying early. Furthermore, grant applications may continue to be modified or deleted up until the deadline.

Budget Meeting

- Two separate budget meetings shall be held at the beginning of each semester for the bulk of the allocations for that semester. The aggregate amount allocated for grants to organizations each semester is at the discretion of the SGA President and Treasurer, but should take into account the total annual allocation less the cost of SGA events. The amount allocated to organizations for the first semester should not exceed 50% of the total budget. Funds shall only be allocated for specific events with a properly submitted grant application, not on a general group basis.

SGA Budget Meeting Process

- First, the SGA Executive Board shall meet and review the grant applications prior to the SGA Council Budget Meeting. The Board may request additional information from organizations. Next, the entire SGA Council shall meet and review the grant applications. The Board will make a recommended allocation to the SGA Council at this meeting. (Note: A grant application will not be submitted to the SGA council if all four SGA Executive Board members unanimously agree that the grant application is inadequately submitted for failure to follow the guidelines set out in this handbook.)
- After these two budget meetings, the SGA Treasurer will notify all SGA Liaisons about what grants were approved. All organizations will have the option of attending an Appeals Meeting. The Appeals Meeting shall begin with the SGA President calling parliamentary procedure. The President should act primarily as a moderator and shall only vote in the case of a tie. The SGA Treasurer will begin each organization's consideration by informing the organization's representatives in attendance of what the SGA Council has preliminary determined is the appropriate level of funding for the event. At that time, the organization is free to further explain the grant application and need for certain budgets. After the discussion, which will be moderated by the SGA President, the SGA President will open the floor for motions. At this time, and not before, all other SGA Council members may make a motion to allocate the monies previously recommended, or a different amount. This motion must be seconded by another member of the SGA Council, excluding the President. All Council members should follow the SGA recusal policy set forth in Article IV section 2 of the SGA Constitution.
- The final allocations shall be made public within 48 hours of the budget meeting.
- The Treasurer will inform all SGA Liaisons as to the dates of the Appeals Meetings at least five days prior to the meeting. The SGA recommends that the SGA Liaisons attend the Appeals Meetings.

Allocations after the Budget Meeting (Rolling Allocations)

- An organization's best chance to receive funding from SGA is to submit their grant application(s) in time for inclusion in the budget meeting. During each of the three budget meetings (one per deadline) the SGA will look at all the grant applications and attempt to allocate the available funding in a fair manner. However, organizations shall be permitted to submit grant applications throughout the semester for events not planned in time for the budget meeting. Please note there are no guarantees to the amount of funding available for these additional allocations. Properly submitted and completed "rolling" applications (e.g. applications not submitted in time for the budget meeting) are first reviewed by the SGA Executive Board. If all four SGA Executive Board members approve a grant application unanimously then the grant application is approved. If any SGA Executive Board Member dissents the application goes before the entire Council for discussion and voting. Motions, discussions, and voting shall take place online and the SGA Liaisons may be contacted for additional information. Organizations shall be notified once a decision is reached.

Allowable Expenses and Maximum Subsidy Limits

- The following document provides a description of the allowable expenses that can be included in your grant application, the formulas for determining the maximum amount of funding the SGA will provide, and any special considerations or restrictions that you must observe. ***You are REQUIRED to read and use this information in the preparation of your applications.***

Accessing and Spending Grant Allocations

Accessing Grant Allocations

- Allocated monies will be held in the SGA account until all planning for the event is complete. To access the money, the group must:
 1. Fill out all appropriate SAO forms.
 2. Bring all forms to the SGA Treasurer.
 3. The Treasurer will complete a Funds Transfer Form for the amount approved for the event and notify the SGA Liaison via email to come pick up the forms in the SGA office.
 4. The organization is responsible for submitting all forms to the SAO.

Spending Grant Allocations

- Organizations are expected to spend money responsibly. For all purchases, organizations are expected to compare prices and find good deals. At any time, the SGA Treasurer and/or the SGA Executive Board may inquire in purchases they deem questionable or excessive. If abuse is found, the organization may be subject to disciplinary actions. All expenditures must follow the rules and procedures set out in the SAO Programming Handbook.
- SGA funding is approved only for a specific event. An organization CANNOT use surplus funding from one event for another event. All surplus monies and deficits in an organization's account at the end of the semester will be swept back into the SGA general account except those raised from fundraising. The surpluses and deficits will be considered in the following semesters allocations. Groups should aim to have neither of these.

Type of Expense	Description	Maximum Allowable Subsidy, Limit, or Formula	Remarks
Peer Advisors	Each 1L will be assigned to a peer advisor. Peer Advisors do not need to submit a grant application	\$10 per advisee per semester + \$10 for the advisor per semester	Advisors must submit itemized receipt to be reimbursed. Alcohol may not be purchased with funds nor appear on the receipt. A reimbursement will be issued only once per advisor per semester.
Organization Meetings	Each organization is automatically allocated funding for one general meeting per semester.	\$150 Total / \$75 per semester No grant application necessary	The SGA Liaisons must request this funding at least 2 weeks prior to the meeting.
Printed Materials	Handouts, outlines, programs, brochures, etc. that are provided to persons attending an event	Each group shall have a \$10 budget per semester.	Organizations may make special requests for additional funds
Program Supplies	Miscellaneous materials which are instrumental to producing an event or activity. Includes postage and office supplies.	Because of the wide variety of materials included in this category, no Maximum Allowable Subsidy has been established*	SGA will only fund program supplies that it considers essential and necessary to the program's success (case by case basis). Requests must be itemized
Film and Media	Funds should not be allocated for items the school or library already owns	N/A	Organization should only show movies where viewing rights have been granted. This can be arranged through the SAO.
Travel Expenses	Travel and parking for honorary speakers at BU Law.	Maximum of \$100 per speaker + SAO parking passes	No travel expenses for students will be covered
Refreshments for Speakers or Panels	Incidental snack foods, non-alcoholic beverages, and disposable serving supplies provided to participants of an SGA-funded event or activity.	Estimated Attendance x \$3.50.	Funding for catering may be granted if provided with an itemized request from the Catering Guide. The expected attendance student groups present to the SGA will not necessarily reflect the figure used to calculate funding.
Refreshments for Networking/Alumni Events	Provided for Networking and Alumni events (must be 1 practicing attorney for every 5 students), also for cultural events where outside catering is necessary.	Estimated Attendance x \$5 Plus cost of supplies (chaffers, etc)	Itemized request with researched estimates must be provided at time of submission - SGA does not fund alcohol at these events
Conference Fees	Fees paid for attending professional conferences, academic seminars, etc. The conference must relate to the purpose of the organizations.	Number of Individual Participants x \$100 Maximum of \$100 per student per conference and can only be used for registration costs.	A maximum of 2 students per group per conference will be covered by SGA funds unless the conference costs less than \$30/person. The same student should not attend more than 1 conference per year.
Equipment Rentals	Amounts paid for the rental of equipment used in connection with an event or activity	Will cover cost of equipment rental through BU *	See FitRec for pricing
Facility Rentals	Building and Grounds fees are required for events not in traditional classrooms that end after 4pm and on weekends	Will generally cover B&G (\$168 minimum for first four hours, \$42 for each additional hour) if the selected location/time is deemed necessary	Off-campus facility rentals are not funded by SGA
Service Contracts	Formal written agreements made with individuals or organizations to compensate them for performing a service connected with an event or activity	N/A	SGA does NOT fund the payment of speakers or performers (but see Travel Expenses)
Equipment Purchases	Physical resources such as machinery, furniture, and fixtures that are critical and necessary to the successful production of an event or activity	Half of purchase price. The SGA will only fund equipment purchases on a "matching funds" basis. Organizations must raise one-half of the total purchase cost through their own fundraising efforts.*	These allocations are on a case by case basis, determined by the funding needs for the budget year.

- Any allocations outside the general guidelines will require a 2/3 majority vote for approval
- Although this chart describes what SGA will approve, the organization is still ultimately responsible for ensuring that the event and all purchases related to the event are within the SAO university guidelines. Typically SGA only approves grants for events that fall within SAO's guidelines, but not always. Please be sure to discuss all details of your event with an activities consultant at the SAO.
- **No reimbursements will be issued under any circumstances without the written prior approval of the SGA Treasurer. NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE MADE.**