The Graduate Student Government (GSG) Funding Policies and Procedures

The University of Alabama at Birmingham's Graduate Student Government (GSG) will allocate funding to registered graduate student organizations (GSOs) that <u>contain graduate students supported by GSG per the Constitution and that meet all the eligibility requirements.</u> The primary purpose of allocating funds to student organizations is to provide <u>professional development opportunities, educational support, mental health initiatives, and social activities</u> that benefit the UAB graduate student community.

Section A: Eligibility

Any student organization requesting funds from the Graduate Student Government must:

1. Be an organization that provides professional development opportunities, educational support, mental health initiatives, and social activities <u>primarily</u> for Graduate Students supported by the GSG constitution.
2. Be registered with the University through Engage during the semester when the organization requests the funds and plans to use the funds.
3. Have an active **GSO bank account and UAB iSupplier account.** GSG and Graduate School cannot reimburse purchases made by individual student bank accounts/debit cards/credit cards.

Section B: Requirements

1. Organizations must be in good standing with GSG and the university.
2. Organizations must adhere to GSG's Funding Policies and UAB's Expenditure Guidelines.
3. Organizations must submit monthly bank statements to the GSG treasurer and budget committee liaison.
4. Maintain a member's directory with member name, program name, email, and phone numbers.
5. Maintain an **annual account balance report** and submit it to the GSG with their funding application.
6. Maintain invoices for every transaction and submit them with the account balance report.

Section C: GSG Funding Application and Disbursement

1. The GSG funding application will be **due on the first day of class** during the Fall and Spring semesters as per the UAB Academic Calendar. The application will be open for at least seven (7) days before the first day of class.
2. The Budget Committee will meet at the end of the first week of class and notify the GSOs of the approved funding amount within two weeks from the first day of class.
3. If a GSO misses the application deadline, the Treasurer can accept the funding request application or extend the deadline, given the funding availability.
4. **Funding history:** The Treasurer shall rank GSOs based on funding history with GSG. The GSOs with a score of 80 or more, according to the GSG funding scoring system, shall be ranked higher for funding allocation (Section E).

Section D: GSG Funding Priorities

a. GSG Student Organization funding would be prioritized based on the following order:

1. Professional Development Events
2. Educational Support Activities
3. Mental Health Initiatives
4. Social Activities

b. Event Venue & Refreshments:
   1. GSG prefers to fund light refreshments (e.g., snacks, pizza, fruit/veg & dip, cookies) rather than meals. Our limited budget is best utilized to support more requests when focused on affordable options.
   2. During a funding cycle, GSOs are limited to obtaining financial assistance for one off-campus venue reservation.
      a. While GSG **strongly encourages GSOs to use free UAB venues**, GSG understands that the availability of free on-campus venues for larger events can be scarce.
      b. Funding for an off-campus venue shall not exceed 1% of the funding cycle's total allocation for organizations with at least 100 members. Organizations with fewer members can request up to 0.5% of the total semester allocation for such reservations.
      c. Allocations for off-campus venue costs will be evaluated individually, with preference given to events projecting attendance of more than 100 graduate students.
      d. Organizations are encouraged to co-sponsor off-campus events. Co-sponsored events may be eligible for up to 1.5% of the total semester funding.
      e. Organizations must match at least 50% of the funds allocated for off-campus venue costs.
   3. No funding requests for virtual events will be considered.
   4. A maximum of $12.00 per person for boxed food is allowed for the event expenditure plan on the funding application. In each funding cycle, this amount will be assessed based on the current inflation rate and funding availability.
   5. GSG will only consider funding for executive or general body meetings on a case-by-case basis.

c. Funding Restrictions
   1. Funds cannot be used for dining at restaurants.
   2. All payments must be made directly to event vendors and suppliers. **Reimbursements or payments cannot be made to GSO members or officers.**
   3. Funds cannot be used to purchase groceries for potlucks, baked goods, or other food/beverages prepared by GSO members. GSOs can request funds for supplies for any such event.
   4. Funds cannot be used to purchase equipment, electronics, or any items that become GSO property.
   5. Funds cannot be used for donations to charitable organizations or fundraising activities.
   6. Funds cannot be used for gifts, prizes, or giveaways exceeding $10 per item in value.
   7. Funds cannot be used for scholarships, stipends, or travel awards.
   8. Funds cannot be used for alcoholic beverages, tobacco, or any illegal substances.
   9. Funds cannot be used for gifts or payments to any UAB faculty/staff members.
   10. Funds cannot be used for lobbying efforts or political campaigning activities.
   11. Funds cannot be used to purchase equipment or sports goods and accessories.

d. Supplies and Swag:
   1. GSOs can request funding for supplies for events and activities.
   2. Swag items can be requested only once in a calendar year.
   3. Funding allocation for swag items must be approved by the budget committee and considered as follows:

Number of Members	Swag Expenditures
Less than 50	$200, max ($5 per active member, max)
More than 50	$400, max ($5 per active member, max)

e. Funding Allocation:
   1. No GSOs shall receive more than 20% of STEPP funding for GSOs in any Fall or Spring funding round.

Section E: Scoring System

a. <u>New Organization Scoring System:</u>
   1. All organizations will start with a score of 100 when being introduced to the GSO funding cycle.
   2. New organizations will be limited to a maximum of $250 for their first application cycle, $500 maximum for the second application cycle, $750 maximum for the third application cycle, and $1000 maximum for the fourth application cycle. If a GSO does not apply for funding in any application cycle, it will be considered a "new GSO."
   3. After the four consecutive successful funding cycles, these organizations will be considered under "Section E(b): previously funded organization scoring system".

b. <u>Previously Funded Organization Scoring System:</u>
   1. All organizations will start with a score of 100 points. Points will be deducted for the following criteria, which are based on the performance of the organization in the previous semester:
   2. GSG-funded graduate student organizations must plan and execute their event expenditures according to the "GSG Funding Policies and Procedures," "GSG Funding Agreement," and "UAB Expenditure Guidelines," signed by the organizations' Faculty Advisor, President, and Treasurer after funding allocation. **10 points** would be deducted per violation of the "UAB Expenditure Guidelines" or "GSG Funding & Expenditure Agreement." (<u>Example: if your GSO fails to complete the payment request form within five business days, we will deduct 10 points</u>)
   3. GSG expects that organizations will adequately use the allocated funds to conduct the events according to the plan submitted to GSG at the beginning of the semester. Failing to organize events for which funds have been awarded would cost organizations **5 points** per event.
   4. GSG encourages GSOs to notify GSG about any change to their pre-approved plan and get approval for the change on the plan under the guidance of the GSG Treasurer. Failure to re-purpose allocated funds for events one week before the planned events would be considered a violation and **5 points** would be deducted for this violation.

Section F: How to apply for GSG funding

1. Apply for an EIN online. (EIN provided immediately.)

2. Draft Meeting Minutes that detail that your organization wants to open a bank account with "said bank," who will be on the account, and their official titles.
3. Fill out and pick up the Official Letter of Registration Form for your organization.
4. Open a bank account with at least 2 of your organization's executive board members.
   a. You will need your official letter of registration form and valid identification.
5. Register for an iSupplier account.
6. Add a section on embezzlement to your organization's constitution or bylaws.
7. Submit bank account information and a link (from Engage) to your organization's amended constitution to the GSG Treasurer.
8. Submit funding application on the first day of class of fall and spring semesters via Engage.

If you are unsure of any policies or need clarification, contact the GSG Treasurer at jillur@uab.edu