USC Grant Guide

For grant writing assistance and questions about the application, please contact Robin Kirk at rkirk22@uwo.ca.

Introduction

The University Students' Council of the University of Western Ontario values diversity and the personal, cultural, social and economic benefits it brings. The USC expects all organizations that receive USC grants to comply with the Ontario Human Rights Code which prohibits discriminatory practices because of race, ancestry, plac*e* of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, record of offences, marital status, same sex partnership status, family status, receipt of public assistance or disability.

One of the priority outcomes of the USC Grant system is to expose and educate students as to how grant systems work, how to write a grant application, and execute a grant project successfully. The USC feels that its grant system will provide student leaders with important skills that could be applied in the student's post graduate life. Specifically, the USC grant process will provide students with experience that will prove valuable where grant writing or grant review (particularly in NGO/NPO or social enterprise firms) is a necessary skill set.

General Granting Principles

1. The USC believes that volunteers play a critical role in building a healthy and vibrant campus community.
2. The USC Grants system endeavors to provide support to individual students and student organizations for initiatives designed to build a healthy and vibrant campus community. The USC will favour grant applications that focus on initiatives that support the arts, culture, leadership development, education, spiritual development, and wellness.
3. Respect for diversity, inclusion, collaboration and partnership and volunteerism should be key elements to any grant submitted to the USC. Clear community support for the project and volunteer involvement in the delivery of and decision-making of the project are key principles for USC Grants.
4. Projects funded by USC Grants should yield learning opportunities and create conditions for increased community engagement of people of all ages, abilities, and cultures.
5. There must be a clear rationale provided in a grant application why the USC rather than other organizations (i.e. the university) is the best choice to fund the initiative.
6. The USC Grants offers funding for time-limited projects proposed and led by undergraduate students at Western University.

About USC Grants

The USC initiated a grant fund for student projects in the 2010-11 school year. In the spring and early summer of 2013, the USC added more structure and guidelines to ensure the effective use of student funds when providing grants to student initiatives. The USC Grants has an annual budget of approximately $100,000, which are disbursed on a monthly basis over the course of the academic year starting in September and ending in April the following year. For more information about the schedule

of disbursement and specific regarding the size of the funds, contact the USC's Secretary Treasurer (secretarytreasurer@westernusc.ca).

How Do I Get A USC Grant?

1. Read this guide! It will offer information as to the type of activities USC Grants will consider funding and guidance as to how to fill out the on-line application form:
 https://westernu.collegiatelink.net/form/start/2794

Specifically, this guide will provide the following:
        a. The process for applying for a grant.
        b. How a grant is reviewed.
        c. How information will be communicated to you.
        d. The types of activities and projects that the grants committee will view favourably.
        e. The key information that is required in a USC Grant application.
        f. The information that the grants committee will expect to receive after a grant is
        approved. Providing a plan to the committee as to reports you will provide to the committee
        after receiving the grant will be a critical element to having your application approved.
2. Staff in the USC department, Robin Kirk, Compliance Coordinator, (rkirk22@uwo.ca), or Secretary-Treasurer (secretarytreasurer@westernusc.ca) are available to provide support to students seeking assistance with their USC Grant applications.

What Happens When A Grant is Submitted

When a grant is received, it goes through a review process. The USC Grant Committee is made up of Western undergraduate students and is chaired by the USC VP Finance. The typical period of grant review is twenty business days.   The review process is as follows:

Step 1: Receipt of the USC Grant application by the USC Secretary-Treasurer and the Compliance
        Coordinator
        a. Secretary-Treasurer reviews the application to see if the applicants – persons/organization –
           meet the basic eligibility requirements of USC Grant applications.
        b. Checks to make sure the application is complete and includes all the necessary attachments
           and information.
        c. Notifies the applicant if the application is incomplete and details the information required to
           complete the application.
        d. Close the file if, within seven working days after notification, all missing information is not
           submitted as requested.
        e. Where a student organization has applied for a USC Grant, the VP Finance will contact staff
           in the Student Organizations Supports department of the USC for a report as to whether the
           organization is in good standing with the USC and Western University.

Step 2: Review by the USC Grant Committee
        a. The committee reviews and assesses the grant application.
        b. The committee may direct the Secretary-Treasurer to contact the applicant and request
           additional information.
        c. The committee may consult with advisors, experts, or other organizations involved in and/or
           knowledgeable about the type of project proposed or who may be impacted by the

project. The USC considers the application to be confidential but may share information about it with internal or external advisors.

    d. The committee shall decide if the application merits approval and may:

    e. recommend approval of the full amount requested or grant only a portion of the grant requested, establish conditions under which the grant is approved including and not exclusively, how the grant is used, other organizations/individuals to be consulted and engaged, how the grant will be disbursed to the organization/individual, and the requirements as to reports to be filed during the execution of and/or on completion of the initiative being funded by the USC Grant system.

Step 3: Communications Regarding the Grant Application

    a. If the application is approved, the applicant shall receive a Letter of Agreement via email which they can choose to accept or decline. If the applicant requires more information and has questions, the applicant should contact the USC VP Finance via email.

    b. If the application is denied, the applicant shall receive written notice via email. Applicants are encouraged to discuss the reasons for the decline of their application with the VP Finance so as to receive guidance with respect to any future applications.

    c. The USC makes every effort to contact applicants as soon as possible after a decision is made but it is important to note that the process is "student-driven" and hence impacted by the academic work load of those student committee members.

Step 4: Execution of the Grant

    a. After the USC has awarded a grant and received a Letter of Agreement signed by the applicant, the applicant should meet with the Secretary-Treasurer to arrange for receipt of the grant funds.

    b. All grant recipients are required to report on the progress and outcomes of project/initiative for which they are receiving the USC Grant. The Letter of Agreement will specify the committee's expectations as to the nature and timing of these reports. Failure to submit a report could delay receipt of further installments of the grant or result in various actions by the committee. The lead contact identified as the grantee in the Letter of Agreement is expected to keep the USC VP Finance informed of any changes that affect their projects. Grantees can seek assistance from the Student Organization Support department should they have questions or concerns about the reports and other requirements of the USC Grants.

    c. Applicants who receive grants must submit a Final Report at the end of the grant and project. Failure to submit a final report may have an impact on the ability of an organization to receive future USC funds. The USC Secretary-Treasurer will review all reports and may request further information if she or he has further questions or concerns.

Application Deadlines

1. Proposals Due: The **10th** day of each month, typically from October to April, with an earlier deadline in December to accommodate exams.
2. Successful and Unsuccessful Applicants Notified: Within 3 weeks of application date.
3. Memorandum of Understanding indicating conditions and deliverables of grants signed: At the latest, on the 1st day of every month in the academic term.
4. A schedule for receiving grant funds will be included in the Memorandum of Understanding.

What Are The Goals of the USC Grant System?

1. To assist in the development of student skills.
2. To assist in the building, strengthening of the campus community.
3. To support the diversity and inclusivity of the campus community.
4. To provide students with innovative and real life opportunities to create learning opportunities and community building activities.

General Terms and Conditions of USC Grants

1. Funding is available for USC Grants for one-time activities or activities with a defined time frame. Project grants may be for only a single year, not multi-year projects.
2. Applicants must be enrolled as undergraduates in a minimum of two full-time courses at Western University.
3. The USC Grant program generally supports grants for proposals that have primarily a local impact.
4. Grant applications are preferred where:
   a. There is clear community support for the initiative for which funding is being requested.
   b. A clear rationale for why the applicant believes that the USC is the best choice to fund the project rather than any other organizations (i.e. Western University).
   c. The sponsoring organization/individual provides a commitment/plan to contribute from its own resources, ten percent (10%) of the total amount requested of the USC for the grant.
5. All funded projects and associated advertising or promotional materials must recognize The University Students' Council (University Students' Council of The University of Western Ontario, USC) as the funder. A package of approved graphics/logos shall be provided upon award of the grant.
6. All funded projects must be executed and within the academic school year.. Completion of the project must include submission of all receipts, revenues, and reports regarding metrics evaluating the success of the project. Receipts not submitted within this time period will not be refunded.

Grant Funding Restrictions

1. to organizations whose purpose is related to political activity (federal or provincial political parties) as defined by the Canada   Revenue Agency,
2. to "For-profit" organizations or private foundations,
3. where funding is duplicating funding received from another funder,
4. to cover existing budget deficits
5. for religious activities including renovations to a place of worship unless it is also used for community activities used for the general benefit of the community,
6. for political and/or advocacy activities, such as partisan activities or activities that promote a biased viewpoint or a political position on issues of public concern,
7. for activities that could be deemed discriminatory as defined by the Ontario Human Rights Code,
8. for dollar for dollar replacement of government funding,
9. for medical research or medical equipment,

10. for direct contributions to annual fundraising drives, capital campaigns or special fundraising events/campaigns,
11. for construction of new buildings,
12. for the purchase of land or buildings,
13. for activities completed or costs incurred before approval of the USC Grant,
14. for capital grants to cover costs for renovations and equipment purchases including those for improved accessibility, enhancement of community spaces, increased energy efficiencies or "green" innovative technologies.