STUDENT TRAVEL AWARD & STUDENT INITIATIVE PROTOCOL

Table of Contents

STUDENT TRAVEL AWARD PROTOCOL 3
Introduction/Preamble 3
II: Purpose 3
III: Scope 3
IV: Definitions 3
V: Protocol 5
VI: Confidentiality and Transparency 13
VII: Appeals 13
VIII: Maintenance of Records 14
IX: Resources and Contact Information 15
X: Review 15
STUDENT INITIATIVE AWARD PROTOCOL 15
I: Introduction/Preamble 15
II: Purpose 16
III: Scope 16
IV: Definitions 16
V: Protocol 17
Student Initiative Application 21
VI: Confidentiality and Transparency 22

VII: Appeals 23

VIII: Roles and Responsibilities 24

IX: Maintenance of Records 25

X: Resources and Contact Information 25

XI: Review 25

STUDENT TRAVEL AWARD PROTOCOL

Introduction/Preamble

The SMSS will consider awards for professional travel compensation and student initiative awards twice yearly. This protocol shall outline the unbiased and confidential process by which applications for these awards are discussed, scored, and endowed. The SMSS committee responsible for awarding the Student Travel Awards shall be the SMSS Funding and Oversight Committee, and it, therefore, shall utilize this protocol. The Student Travel Awards are to help students attend conferences and other learning opportunities to enhance their clinical, research, and professional skills that will benefit them in their future medical practices.

II: Purpose

The purpose of this protocol is to outline:

1. The requirements of applicants applying for Student Travel Awards and;
2. The scoring process of the applicants and;
3. The roles and responsibilities of those doing the scoring and;
4. The transparency of process and confidentiality rights of applicants, and:
5. How appeals to the Committee's decisions may be made.

III: Scope

The scope of this protocol is entirely internal to the SMSS, involving our members (applicants) and Committee members. The protocol is intended for use by and governance over the SMSS Funding and Oversight Committee.

IV: Definitions

4.1 ***Student Travel Award****:* Refers to the monetary compensation with the expressed purpose being that the compensation is to be used only to lower the costs incurred related to travelling to conferences, etc.

4.1 ***Conference****:* Refers to a formal meeting of academics interested in discussing a specific area of medical knowledge. Such meetings can be public, private, sponsored, etc.

4.2 ***Presenter/Presented/Presentation:*** Refers to the imparting of learned information to one or more people. A member-applicant is considered a presenter if they are sharing information as an individual or part of a group. Forms of accepted presentations include but are not limited to:

- operated poster presentations
- academic lectures/talks (Oral presentations)
- paper presentations, etc.

4.3 ***Student Group Support/Affiliation:*** Refers to any SMSS recognized Student Group the member-applicant belongs to that supports the member-applicant's reason for applying for a Student Travel Award. For example, a member-applicant who belongs to a pediatrics-based student group can list that group on their application to attend a pediatrics learning event.

4.4 ***External Funds/Fundraising:*** Refers to funds requested and/or provided by groups not associated with the SMSS. All fundraising requests, regardless of whether funding was received, should be included.

4.5 ***Documentation:*** Refers to evidence supporting an applicant's claims. These include letters, emails, releases, and other documents, which are used by the Committee to verify the authenticity of all applications.

4.6 ***Funding Tier:*** The category under which a travel award application is classified based on the applicant's role and purpose at the conference. Applicants must indicate their intended tier when submitting an application. The tier may be adjusted at the discretion of the Funding and Oversight Committee.

Tier 1 – Presenting at a Conference: Applicants who will present (poster, oral, or invited presentation).

Tier 2 – Attending a Conference Pertaining to Research (Not Presenting): Applicants whose attendance is directly related to their research activities.

Tier 3 – Attending a Conference for Education and Personal Advancement: Applicants attending primarily for educational or professional development purposes.

V: Protocol

5.1 Information for Applicants

Student Travel Award applications are considered twice an academic year by the Committee. The decision meetings occur after three committee members have individually scored de-identified applications.

5.2 Travel Award Applications Timeline

5.2.1 Application Deadlines:

Fall Cycle (October 15):

- Conferences are eligible if they occurred 6 months prior or 9 months after October 15

Spring Cycle (April 15):

- Conferences are eligible if they occurred 6 months prior or 9 months after April 15

Application Decisions

- Fall Cycle: First week of November
- Spring Cycle: First week of May

Reimbursements

- Successful applicants will receive reimbursements after the submission of receipts following travel in accordance with 5.4.3.4 of this policy.

5.2.2 Prospective Funding

- The funding cycles in Section 5.2.1 are intended to be prospective, meaning applicants should submit their ***expected*** costs for pre-approval of funding that will be reimbursed retroactively.

5.3 Eligibility

5.3.1 Only students who have paid their membership fees are eligible to apply for travel awards

5.3.2 Students are eligible to be awarded travel funding from the SMSS only once every two (2) cycles - non-consecutively. Example: If you apply and win an award in the Spring 2024 cycle, you cannot apply for the Fall 2024 cycle; however, you can apply in the Spring 2025 cycle.

5.3.3 SMSS Travel Awards may not be used to fund attendance at conferences that are otherwise directly financed by the SMSS or the Dean's Travel Awards (e.g., CFMS AGM, CFMS SGM, Western Deans Meeting).

5.4 Application Process

5.4.1 Applications must be sent to the Chair of the Committee (the SMSS Student Groups Coordinator), who shall serve as the applicant's primary contact person. This is done via the SMSS website.

5.4.2 In order to award limited funding fairly, such that the most promising experiences are supported, the following pieces of information will be required from every applicant. Applicants are also required to include all relevant and requested documentation at the time of application submission. Incomplete applications may be subject to consequences, including an impact on scoring and potential dismissal by the Committee.

5.4.3 Compensation Information

5.4.3.1 Expenses must be fully documented with receipts provided and the appropriate Travel Funding Forms submitted.

5.4.3.2 Compensation shall be made in the form of an e-transfer or cheque.

5.4.3.3 If amounts used to calculate the budget are deemed too high, the SMSS has the authority to modify existing amounts to per diems set by the University of Saskatchewan.

5.4.3.4 To receive reimbursement, a request that includes itemized receipts must be made no more than 14 days after the end of a conference, or in the case of a conference that happened prior to the application deadline, 14 days after the applicant receives approval; and

5.4.3.5 All reimbursements must align with the guidelines outlined in the Financial Policy. If there is conflicting information regarding what is reimbursable, the Financial Policy will take precedence.

5.5 Required Application Information

5.5.1 An unaltered SMSS application form should be utilized. ALL applications shall require:

General Information

- The Applicant's name
- Applicant's student number
- Applicants NSID
- Applicant's year of study
- Primary email address
- Primary phone number
- Complete home address

Event/Activity Information

- Event title
- Events medical discipline
- Events location
- Events duration
- Applicant's role at the event

Budgetary Information

- Status regarding external fundraising and whether funding has been received
- Expected expenses
- Funding request
    - NOTE: the Committee shall **NOT** award an applicant funding beyond that which is requested

Required Documentation

- External funding documentation
- Relevance concerning ongoing projects
- To enhance their application and further outline the travel's benefits for the Committee's membership, applicants are also required to answer several short questions regarding the travel for which they are requesting funding.
- The application, as a formal funding request document, requires a dated signature. Failing to provide a signature will result in the immediate discarding of the application without the option for appeal.

5.6 Responsibilities of the Committee and Helpful Resources

5.6.1 SMSS Funding and Oversight Committee members are required to have a working understanding of how Student Travel Awards are scored and awarded. In other words, they are expected to familiarize themselves with this protocol. The Committee Chair can also serve as a valuable resource.

5.6.2 It is expected that the members assign their scores for each application and send them to the Chair at least one (1) day before the decision meeting, which will provide the Chair with time to summarize the scores.

5.6.3 To maintain objectivity and ensure the fairness of the application process, members are required to evaluate an application solely based on the information provided in the application and its supporting documents. A member who fails to do so has violated the confidentiality and transparency section of this protocol and may be subject to disciplinary action, as outlined in *Robert's Rules of Order*, at the discretion of the Chair.

5.6.4 Committee members who are themselves applicants for the Student Travel Awards are barred from scoring any application; they will be replaced by an individual designated by the committee chair. The rest of the Committee membership must, to the best of their ability, treat the application the same as all other applications; that is, bias in favour of or in opposition to the Committee member's application is not to be tolerated.

5.6.5 Committee members may re-allocate excess funds to other SMSS student supports, such as Student Group Funding or Student Initiative Funding.

5.7 Scoring of Applications

5.7.1 The same members shall all individually score each application following the template indicated in this protocol. These scores shall be compiled into a single document by the Chair and discussed at the Committee decision meeting.

5.7.2 The scores of each application, supplied by Committee members, shall be used to determine a mutually agreed-upon score. This will be known as the "application's aggregate score," and it shall be decided through a majority decision of the Committee. (Note: This may be minuted as an informal vote or a formal motion)

5.7.3 Scoring shall be used to assist the Committee in ranking applications. Funding should be awarded following discussion within the Committee. The committee shall award funding with attention paid to the limitations during each funding cycle.

5.7.4 A minimum aggregate score is required to receive funding as follows:

- Tier 1: 5.5/8
- Tier 2: 5/7
- Tier 3 5/6

5.7.5 Funding will be allotted based on the following example.

"All applicants will receive a score based on their application. Each score out of 8 will correspond to a percentage of the applicant's funding request, and each point will hold an arbitrary value of x, which will depend on the total funding available and the total aggregate score of all applicants in that cycle. An applicant is eligible to receive 75% of their funding request if they score 6/8 and so forth until an applicant scores 8/8 and is eligible to receive 100% of their funding request as long as it is below the total point value of their cycle. As an example, If the aggregate score of all applicants is 50 (totalling the scores of each candidate will result in an aggregate score of x) and the total amount of funding allocated to travel awards is $5000, then the value of each point scored is $100 ($5000/50). Therefore, an application that scores 8/8 is eligible to receive $1000 total or 100% of their funding, whichever number is lower. Similarly, applicants who score 6/8 are eligible to receive a maximum of $750 or 75% of their funding request, whichever value is lower."

5.7.6 The Committee as a whole may decide that an expense cited on an application does not fit the criteria or spirit of the Student Travel Awards. In these cases, the committee may vote to adjust the funding request of an application and then individually rescore (and create an aggregate score using those scores for) the application. Successful applicants who have had their applications modified in this way shall be notified by the chair as to the changes and given the chance to appeal the Committee's decision by providing documented reasons for why their original application should be reconsidered.

5.8 Feedback & Endowment

5.8.1 Following the cycle's Student Travel Award decision Meeting, the Chair shall contact the applicants. The chair shall:

5.8.1.1 Outline if the application was successful.

5.8.1.2 Outline the percentage of the funding request that shall be fulfilled (in Canadian dollar amounts).

5.8.1.3 If the application is not successful or has been modified, outline the circumstances under which the applicant can appeal the Committee's decision.

5.8.1.4 Outline when the applicant should expect to receive funding

5.8.1.5 The SGC shall collect all relevant supporting documents (including receipts and travel expense claim forms) from award recipients and submit these to the VP of Finance to facilitate the transfer of funds

5.8.1.6 An applicant who has to withdraw from the research symposium must contact the Chair as soon as possible. The Chair will inform the applicant of the consequences,

which may include but are not limited to lowering the amount of money awarded, requiring part of funding to be returned, or refusal to accept future applications from the applicant.

5.9 Scoring Breakdown

5.9.1 Tier 1: Presenting at a conference (Maximum Score: 8 points; Up to 100% funding):

Tier 1: Presenting at a Conference		
Criteria	**Points**	
Presenting a poster = 1 Oral presentation OR invited to present poster = 2		
External Funding Sought	Yes= 1	No= 0
Ongoing Project	Yes= 1	No= 0
Write Up		
Activity Clearly Outlined	Yes= 1	No= 0
Educational value explained	Yes= 1	No= 0
Value for student body explained.	Yes= 1	No= 0
Benefits to the College of Medicine explained	Yes= 1	No= 0
Total	**/8**	

5.9.2 Tier 2: Attending a conference pertaining to research but not presenting (Not Presenting; Maximum Score: 7 points; Up to 70% funding):

Tier 2: Attending a Conference Pertaining to Research		
Criteria	**Points**	
External Funding Sought	Yes= 1	No= 0
Ongoing Project	Yes= 1	No= 0
Write Up		
Activity Clearly Outlined	Yes= 1	No= 0
Educational value explained	Yes= 1	No= 0
Relationship of research/project related to the event clearly described	Yes= 1	No= 0
Value for student body explained.	Yes= 1	No= 0
Benefits to the College of Medicine explained	Yes= 1	No= 0
Total	**/7**	

5.9.3 Tier 3: Attending a conference for education and personal advancement opportunities only (Maximum Score: 6 points; Up to 50% funding):

Tier 3: Attending a Conference for Professional Advancement		
Criteria	**Points**	
External Funding Sought	Yes= 1	No= 0
Write Up		
Activity Clearly Outlined	Yes= 1	No= 0

Tier 3: Attending a Conference for Professional Advancement		
Educational value explained	Yes= 1	No= 0
Professional/Experiential value explained.	Yes= 1	No= 0
Value for student body explained.	Yes= 1	No= 0
Benefits to the College of Medicine explained	Yes= 1	No= 0
Total	**/6**	

1. Please note that attendance implies that you'll be presenting. Failure to present will result in penalties outlined in 5.3 of section V.

2. Scoring the write-up will be based on adequate completion of the components at the discretion of the committee members.

5.10. Funding Allocation Based on Score

5.10.1 For Tier 1 applications, an applicant scoring 8/8 is eligible for up to 100% of the allotted funding (e.g., a maximum of $1,000, if that is the cap), with prorated funding based on lower scores.

5.10.2 For Tier 2 applications, the maximum funding is capped at 70% of the allotted amount. For example, if the allotment is $1,000 and a student scores 7/7, they would receive up to $700, with prorated funding for lower scores.

5.10.3 For Tier 3 applications, the maximum funding is capped at 50% of the allotted amount. For example, if the allotment is $1,000 and a student scores 6/6, they would receive up to $500, with prorated funding for lower scores.

5.11 Disqualification

Students whose applications have been disqualified are not eligible to reapply for the same travel opportunity for that same academic year. Students who have had applications disqualified are eligible to apply for Student Travel Awards in the future for other travel opportunities. The Committee can disqualify an application for the following reasons:

4.10.1 Applicant is disrespectful or unprofessional on the application answers (this includes inappropriate language)

4.10.2 If the applicant altered the form in any way (deleted questions), used the wrong form (i.e.. outdated), or handed in an incomplete form

4.10.3 If the applicant does not disclose other funding received for an event/conference or activity

4.10.4 An applicant grossly overestimates their expenses claim or neglects to mention external funding

4.10.5 Consecutive award and application

VI: Confidentiality and Transparency

Overview:

The SMSS reaffirms its commitment to individual confidentiality as part of an unbiased process, as well as its organization's responsibilities to conduct itself fairly and maintain transparency with its membership.

6.1 Confidentiality shall be addressed in the following ways:

6.1.1 The "General Information" section of each application shall be de-identified to limit personal or professional bias. Therefore, each application will be evaluated on its merit alone.

6.1.2 The members of the Committee agree to keep information discussed as part of the scoring process confidential. The Committee meeting minutes and discussions shall be considered closed, with communications to general members being the responsibility of the Chair and, to a limited extent, the VP Finance (as part of the SMSS budget declarations).

6.1.3 Appeals shall be handled confidentially. Confidentiality is expected from both the Committee members and the appealing applicant during the appeal process.

6.2 Transparency shall be addressed in the following ways:

6.2.1 Funding award amounts and recipients will be published on the SMSS webpage by the SGC. This will occur no later than one (1) month after the decisions are finalized.

6.2.2 This protocol, as well as all relevant information regarding applications, shall be made available to general members for reference

VII: Appeals

Background

Appeals are made by applicants directly to the Chair of the Committee (the SGC). Appeals are considered formal requests, and as such, the process is clearly outlined below. The types of appeals that shall be considered, as well as the requirements that the applicant must fulfil before an appeal is considered, are outlined below.

7.1 Types of Appeals:

7.1.1 An applicant who received at least 1 out of 2 in the research works/presentation criteria and was unsuccessful due to a lower score in the 'write-up' criterion.

7.1.2 An applicant believes that a clear, factual, uninterpretable error was made in the review of their application.

7.1.3 Applicants may not appeal the amount of funding received

7.2 *Process and Requirements:*

7.2.1 Appeals shall be handled in a confidential and unbiased way. Applying for an appeal, regardless of the final decision, should not deter an applicant from applying for funding in the future for a separate event.

7.2.2 All appeals must be returned to the chair of the committee no later than one (1) week following the release of the decision of the committee.

7.2.3 Applicants wishing to appeal are required to complete the following:

- The applicant's name and contact information
- Identification of which application is to be appealed
- The amount of funding requested by the Committee
- The amount of funding provided by the Committee's decision
- Relevant and/or supporting information
- Applicant's desired outcome
- The communique from the Chair should be included

7.2.4 The Process of an appeal shall follow the outline below:

7.1.1.1 The Applicant shall provide the Chair with the above requirements.

7.1.1.2 The Chair may unilaterally dismiss the appeal if it is not eligible under the circumstances outlined in 7.1 Types of Appeals. The Chair must communicate this decision to the applicant and the committee

7.1.1.3 The Chair shall convene the Committee no later than two (2) weeks after the appeals deadline has passed. The Committee will discuss all appeals. If no appeals are received, this meeting shall not be held.

7.1.1.4 If the Committee requires a hearing to further discuss the appeal or documentation, the Chair may invite the applicant to address the Committee. These discussions shall be considered highly confidential and shall never be minuted.

7.1.1.5 The Committee's discussions and final decision regarding the appeal shall be conveyed by the Chair in a formal letter to the applicant no more than one (1) week after the appeal decision is rendered.

VIII: Maintenance of Records

The Chair of the Committee shall hold all received applications and communiques (original and de-identified applications, email exchanges, etc.) on the SMSS SGC account from the time they are received, throughout the awarding process, and for a maximum of one (1) year after a compensation

decision is made. Once the Committee has made a decision regarding applications only the SGC (Chair), VP Finance, and individual applicants are able to request access to the records. This may be subject to change in the event of a decision appeal or the presence of unidentified extenuating circumstances.

IX: Resources and Contact Information

Resources:

1. *SMSS Policy: The SMSS Funding and Oversight Committee*
2. *SMSS Constitution*
3. *Robert's Rules of Order*

Contacts:

1. SMSS Student Group Coordinator: smss.sgcoord@gmail.com (General Information, Primary Contact, Committee Chair)
2. SMSS Vice-President, Communications: smss.vpcommunications@gmail.com (Transparency inquiries)
3. SMSS Vice-President, Internals: smss.vpinternal@gmail.com (General information, SMSS and Governing)

X: Review

This protocol is subject to review and approval by the SMSS Council. Restructuring the protocol shall be the responsibility of the SMSS Funding and Oversight Committee unless otherwise specified by the SMSS Council. This protocol is to be reviewed one year after its inception (i.e. in 2019) and every three years thereafter (i.e. 2022, 2025, 2028, etc.). Restructuring shall follow the same schedule as needed.

STUDENT INITIATIVE AWARD PROTOCOL

I: Introduction/Preamble

The SMSS reaffirms the importance of the FRCPC CanMEDS framework in the training of scholarly and inquisitive medical professionals. The SMSS regards its members as the scholars and practitioners of the future and believes in our members' abilities to contribute to medical knowledge. As such, the SMSS pledges to award monetary compensation to deserving members and/or recognized Student Groups that pursue academic pursuits and/or are devoted to improving clinical practices in the form of novel initiatives within the scope of medicine at the University of Saskatchewan. All SMSS members and recognized Student Groups shall be able to apply for these awards using a standardized application form and process outlined herein.

The SMSS pledges to consider grants for Student Initiatives twice yearly. This protocol shall outline the unbiased, confidential process by which applications for these grants are discussed, scored, and awarded. The SMSS committee responsible for awarding the Student Initiative Grants shall be the SMSS Funding and Oversight Committee, and it, therefore, shall utilize this protocol. In closing, the Student Initiative Grants aim to support students in pursuing scholarly and/or practical knowledge for their own learning and/or for the benefit of the SMSS membership. These initiatives can include, but are not limited to, holding conferences, developing medical innovations, and undertaking stand-alone projects.

II: Purpose

The purpose of this protocol is to outline the requirements of applicants applying for Student Initiative Grants, the scoring process of the applicants, the roles and responsibilities of those doing the scoring (i.e. members of the SMSS Funding and Oversight Committee, hereafter referred to as "the Committee"), and the transparency of process and confidentiality rights of applicants. The protocol shall also outline the process for appealing the Committee's decisions.

III: Scope

The scope of this protocol is almost entirely internal to the SMSS - involving our members (applicants) and Committee members (scorers). The protocol is intended for use by and governance over the SMSS Funding and Oversight Committee as it endeavours to fairly award Student Initiative Grants.

IV: Definitions

4.1 ***Student Initiative Grant****:* Refers to the monetary compensation provided by the SMSS to a successful member-applicant, with the expressed purpose that the compensation be used solely to offset the costs of participating in an academic pursuit or a beneficial clinical innovation.

4.2 ***Student Initiative:*** Refers to a selected topic in medicine that a student or group is interested in improving through their own innovations or a topic of knowledge that a student or group wishes to share with others, such as organizing a conference. An acceptable initiative is novel in the sense that it has not occurred within the College of Medicine before and/or has not received SMSS Student Initiative Grant funding before.

4.3 ***Student Group Support/Affiliation:*** Refers to any SMSS recognized Student Group the member-applicant belongs to that supports the member-applicant's reason for applying for a Student Initiative Grant. For example, a member-applicant who belongs to a world health-based student group can list that group on a grant application for an innovation or pursuit related to world health.

4.4 ***External Funds/Fundraising****:* Refers to funds requested and/or provided by groups not associated with the SMSS. All fundraising requests, regardless of whether funding was received, should be included.

4.5 ***Documentation:*** Refers to evidence supporting an applicant's claim. These include letters, emails, releases, and other documents, which are used by the Committee to verify the authenticity of all applications.

4.6 ***CME Accredited: This refers to all conferences, events, retreats, and other similar activities that the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education accredits***.

V: Protocol

5.1 Information for Applicants

Student Initiative Grant applications are considered twice an academic year by the Committee. The decision meetings occur after each member of the Committee has individually scored de-identified applications.

There are two deadline dates for Student Initiative Grant applications. Events/initiatives taking place between October 1 and following May 31 need to be applied for by ***October 15th***. Events/initiatives taking place between April 1st and following November 31st need to be applied for by ***April 15th***. Events or initiatives occurring in October or November and April or May (or ongoing) can be applied for in either of the two funding cycles. NOTE: These funding cycles are meant to be prospective, meaning applicants should be sending in their EXPECTED costs for pre-approval of funding that will be reimbursed retroactively

5.2 Student Initiative Applications Timeline

5.2.1 Application Deadlines:

Fall Cycle (October 15):

- For events/initiatives occurring between October 1 and May 31

Spring Cycle (April 15):

- For events/initiatives occurring between April 16 and November 31

Either Date:

- For events/initiatives occurring in October, November, April, or May either funding cycle may be chosen.

Application Decisions

- Fall Cycle: First week of November
- Spring Cycle: First week of May

Reimbursements

- Successful applicants will receive reimbursements after the submission of receipts following travel

5.2.2 Prospective Funding

The funding cycles in Section 5.2.1 are intended to be prospective, meaning applicants should submit their ***expected*** costs for pre-approval of funding that will be reimbursed retroactively.

5.3 Application Process

5.2.3 Applications must be submitted to the chair of the Committee (the SMSS Student Groups Coordinator), who will serve as the applicant's primary point of contact. This is done via the SMSS website.

5.2.4 As per 5.2.1, the deadline for the Fall Term Student Initiative Grants is October 15th, and the decision meeting will occur before the end of October. Applicants should expect to receive feedback from the Student Groups Coordinator (SGC, also referred to hereafter as the "Chair") by the first week of November and compensation, if successful, shortly thereafter.

5.2.5 Applications should be made in a manner that accurately portrays the applicant's need for compensation related to initiative costs. Applicants who are found to have requested and received funding in excess of their actual expenses shall be required to return the excess funding and may be barred from applying for further funding at the discretion of the Committee.

5.4 Application Requirements for Applying Members

5.4.1 In order to award limited funding fairly, such that the most promising experiences are supported, the following pieces of information will be required from every applicant. Applicants are also asked to include all relevant and requested documentation at the time of application submission. Proper documentation is a crucial part of a complete application. Incomplete applications may be subject to consequences, including an impact on scoring and/or dismissal by the Committee.

5.4.2 **ALL** applications shall require (see Standardized Application Form):

General Information

- The Applicant's name
- Applicant's student number
- Applicants NSID
- Applicant's year of study
- Primary email address
- Primary phone number
- Complete home address

Budgetary Information

- Status regarding external fundraising and whether funding has been received
- Expected expenses
- Funding request
  - NOTE: the Committee shall **NOT** award an applicant funding beyond that which is requested

Initiative Description

- An explanation of how the initiative will benefit students, the College's/SMSS mandate, or improve healthcare in our community

Letters of Support

- Name of supportive person
- Supporter's role in academia or the community
- Supporter's email address/contact information

Required Documentation

- The application, as a formal funding request document, requires a **dated signature**. **Failing to provide a handwritten signature will result in the immediate rejection of the application, with no appeal option available.**

5.5 Responsibilities of the Committee and Helpful Resources

5.4.1 SMSS Funding and Oversight Committee members are required to have a working understanding of how Student Initiative Grants are scored and awarded. In other words, they are expected to familiarize themselves with this protocol. The Committee Chair can also serve as a valuable resource.

5.4.2 It is expected that members assign their scores for each application at least two (2) business days prior to the decision meeting, which will provide the Chair with sufficient time to summarize scores in accordance with this protocol.

5.4.3 To maintain objectivity and ensure the fairness of the application process, members are required to evaluate an application solely based on the information provided in the application and its supporting documents. A member who fails to do so has violated the confidentiality and transparency section of this protocol and may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order at the discretion of the Chair.

5.4.4 Committee members who are themselves applicants for Student Initiative Grants are barred from scoring their own applications. They are required to identify when the committee considers their application and remove themselves from the meeting while their application is being discussed. The rest of the Committee membership must, to the best of their ability, treat the application the same as all other applications (i.e. bias in favour of or in opposition to the Committee member's application is not to be tolerated)

5.4.5 Committee members may re-allocate excess funds to other SMSS student supports, such as Student Group Funding or Student Travel Awards.

5.5 Scoring of Applications

5.5.1 Therefore, the same members shall all individually score each application following the template indicated in this protocol. These scores shall be compiled into a single document by the Chair and discussed at the Committee decision meeting.

5.5.2 The scores of each application, supplied by each Committee member, shall be used to determine a mutually agreed-upon score. This will be known as the "application's aggregate score," and it shall be resolved through a majority decision of the Committee. (Note: This may be recorded as an informal vote or a formal motion)

5.5.3 Scoring shall be used to assist the Committee in ranking applications. Funding should be awarded following discussion within the Committee. The committee shall award funding in consideration of the limitations of available funding during each funding cycle, as well as the aggregate score determined by Committee majority.

5.5.4 A score of 5/6 is required for initiatives to be considered for funding. The funding allocated to each initiative will be at the discretion of the SMSS Funding and Oversight Committee, which will consider the initiative's funding request in conjunction with the current student initiative budget.

5.5.4.1 If an application is unsuccessful in receiving 5/6, the committee will send back revisions for the organizers to incorporate before further funding discussions can occur.

5.5.4.2 To be successful, an application must meet the faculty/community support criteria, specifically by submitting two letters of reference. The Committee may decide that an expense cited on an application does not meet the criteria or spirit of the Student Initiative Grant (e.g., an extra cost incurred by an applicant when they had the opportunity to opt for a more cost-efficient alternative). In these cases, the committee may vote to adjust the funding request of an application and then individually rescore (and create an aggregate score using those scores) the application. Successful applicants who have had their applications modified in this way will be notified by the chair of the changes and given the opportunity to appeal the Committee's decision by providing documented reasons why their original application should be reconsidered.

5.6 Feedback and Award Endowment

5.6.1 Following the cycle's Student Initiative Grant decision meeting, the Chair shall contact applicants. This shall be done no later than six (6) business days after the Committee has convened. The Chair shall:

5.6.1.1 Outline the success of the application.

5.6.1.2 Outline the percentage of the funding request that will be fulfilled (in Canadian dollar amounts).

5.6.1.3 If the application was not successful, outline at least one reason why the Committee decided not to fund the application (e.g., it was an incomplete application, the application was unsigned, etc.).

5.6.1.4 If the application was not successful or if the application was modified, outline how the applicant can appeal the Committee's decision.

5.6.1.5 Outline when the applicant should expect to receive funding

5.6.2 The SGC shall coordinate with the SMSS VP Finance once decisions regarding all Student Initiative Grant fulfillments have been made. This will include a formal request document that will be submitted to the VP Finance and retained by the VP Finance for SMSS Budget purposes.

5.8 Score Breakdown

Student Initiative Application		
Criteria	**Points**	
Educational Enhancement: The application demonstrates strong benefits for students who participate in the initiative and for the larger student body.	Yes= 1	No= 0
Justification of Project: ● Score of 0 if the initiative is a duplication or deemed unnecessary/ not applicable to the community ● Score of 1 if the initiative is unique and/or addresses a need of the community	Yes= 1	No= 0
Sustainability of the Initiative ● Score of 0 if the initiative is a one-time event ● Score of 1 if the initiative is likely to carry on in subsequent years and have effects amplified over time	Yes= 1	No= 0

Student Initiative Application		
Faculty/Community Support • 0 for no supports • Score of 1 for both letters from faculty/community members. (mandatory) NOTE: Letters may not be from fellow students, relatives, or current applicants	Yes= 1	No= 0
Overall Quality - Score at the discretion of the committee	0-2	
Total	**/6**	

5.7 Disqualification

5.7.1 Students whose applications have been disqualified are not eligible to reapply for the same opportunity for that same academic year. Students who have had applications disqualified are eligible to apply for Student Initiative Grants in the future for other opportunities. The Committee can disqualify an application for the following reasons:

5.7.1.1 Applicant is disrespectful or unprofessional on the application answers (this includes inappropriate language)

5.7.1.2 If the applicant altered the form in any way (deleted questions), used the wrong form (i.e. outdated), or handed in an incomplete form

5.7.1.3 If the applicant does not disclose other funding received for an event/conference or activity

5.7.1.4 An applicant grossly overestimates their expenses claim or neglects to mention external funding

VI: Confidentiality and Transparency

The SMSS reaffirms its commitment to individual confidentiality as part of an unbiased process, as well as its organization's responsibilities to conduct itself fairly and maintain transparency with its membership.

6.1Confidentiality shall be addressed in the following ways:

6.1.1 The "General Information" section of each application shall be de-identified to limit personal or professional bias. Therefore, each application will be evaluated on its merit alone.

6.1.2 The Committee members agree to maintain the confidentiality of any information discussed during the scoring process. The Committee meeting minutes and discussions shall be considered closed, with communications to general members being the responsibility of the Chair and, to a limited extent, the VP Finance (as part of the SMSS budget declarations).

6.1.3 Appeals shall be handled confidentially. Confidentiality is expected from both the Committee members and the appealing applicant during the appeal process.

6.2Transparency shall be addressed in the following ways:

6.2.1 Following the Committee's decisions, a list of total funding amounts shall be made accessible to general members. This will occur no later than one (1) month after the decisions are finalized.

6.2.2 This protocol, along with all relevant information regarding applications, shall be made permanently available to all general members.

VII: Appeals

Background:

Appeals are made by applicants directly to the Chair of the Committee (the SGC). Appeals are considered formal documents, and as such, the process is clearly outlined below. The types of appeals that shall be considered, as well as the requirements that the applicant must fulfil before an appeal is considered, are outlined below.

7.1 Types of Appeals: Regardless of the type of appeal, the process shall be the same.

7.1.1 General Appeal: Most appeals will be general appeals. These include but are not limited to appeals for incomplete applications or unfunded applications.

7.1.2 Modified Application Appeal: An appeal to the Committee's decision to modify the application funding request. These appeals are rare.

7.2 Process and Requirements:

7.2.1 Appeals shall be handled in a confidential and unbiased way. Applying for an appeal, regardless of the final decision, should not deter an applicant from applying for funding in the future for a separate event.

7.2.2 All appeals must be returned to the chair of the committee no later than one (1) week following the release of the decision of the committee.

7.2.3 Applicants who wish to appeal should be aware that the outcome may result in an increase, decrease, or no change in funding.

7.2.4 Applicants wishing to appeal are required to complete the following:

- The applicant's name and contact information
- Identification of which application is to be appealed
- The amount of funding requested of the Committee
- The amount of funding provided by the Committee's decision
- Relevant and/or supporting information
- Applicant's desired outcome
- The communique from the Chair should be included

7.2.5 The Process of an appeal shall follow the outline below:

7.1.1.1 The Applicant shall provide the Chair with the above requirements.

7.1.1.2 The Chair shall convene the Committee no later than two (2) weeks after the appeal letter is received. All appeals will be reviewed by the Committee.

7.1.1.3 If the Committee requires a hearing to further discuss the appeal or documentation, the Chair may invite the applicant to address the Committee. These discussions shall be considered highly confidential and shall never be recorded.

7.1.1.4 The Committee's discussions and final decision regarding the appeal shall be conveyed by the Chair in a formal letter to the applicant no more than one (1) week after the appeal decision is rendered.

VIII: Roles and Responsibilities

8.1 SMSS Student Groups Coordinator (SGC)

8.1.1 Chair the Committee

8.1.2 Receive and distribute Student Initiative Grant applications in accordance with this protocol

8.1.3 Counsel potential applicants regarding their applications and interpretation of this protocol as requested

8.1.4 Communicate decisions of the Committee to applicants, regardless of application success

8.1.5 Maintain records in accordance with this protocol

8.2 SMSS Vice-President Finance

8.2.1 Participate as a member of the Committee

8.2.2 Coordinate with the SGC to ensure successful applicants receive compensation promptly, in accordance with their role as SMSS VP Finance

IX: Maintenance of Records

The Chair of the Committee shall hold all received applications and communiques (original and de-identified applications, email exchanges, etc.) on the SMSS SGC account from the time they are received, throughout the awarding process, and for a maximum of one (1) year after a compensation decision is made. Once the Committee has made a decision regarding applications only the SGC (Chair), VP Finance, and individual applicants are able to request access to the records. This may be subject to change in the event of a decision appeal or the presence of unidentified extenuating circumstances.

X: Resources and Contact Information

Resources:

1. *SMSS Policy: The SMSS Funding and Oversight Committee*
2. *SMSS Constitution*
3. *Robert's Rules of Order*

Contacts:

1. SMSS Student Group Coordinator -> sgcoord@gmail.com (General Information, Primary Contact, Committee Chair)
2. SMSS Vice-President, Communications -> smss.vpcommunications@gmail.com (Transparency inquiries)
3. SMSS Vice-President, Internals -> smss.vpinternal@gmail.com; vpregina.smss@gmail.com (General information, SMSS and Governing)

XI: Review

This protocol is subject to review and approval by the SMSS Council. Restructuring the protocol shall be the responsibility of the SMSS Funding and Oversight Committee unless otherwise specified by the SMSS Council. This protocol is to be reviewed one year after its inception (i.e. in 2019) and every three years thereafter (i.e. 2022, 2025, 2028, etc.). Restructuring shall follow the same schedule as needed.