

# An Overview of USC Gould Student Organization Funding Options

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## At a Glance

*There are 4 primary sources of funding*

- 1. GSG Funds:** Request funds directly from GSG if you are an RSO planning an event more than four weeks in advance that will be open to ALL graduate students, if you do NOT plan to serve alcohol, and if you DO plan to use a GSG-approved vendor. *Detailed below.*
- 2. SBA Funds:** Request funds at the start of the semester or on a case-by-case basis for all student organization events. Funds will be granted at SBA's discretion based on factors *detailed below.*
- 3. SBA Umbrella Funds:** Request SBA Umbrella Funds if your event complies with GSG guidelines and if you have been denied GSG funding. Event may be "closed." Requests must be made at least two weeks in advance. *Detailed below.*
- 4. Independently Sourced Funds:** Organizations are welcome and invited to independently source funds. Unlike other sources of funds, student organizations can use their independent funds without restrictions. Further, unlike other sources which are returned if unused, independently sourced funds will carry forward from year-to-year in the organization's account. *Not detailed below.*

## Helpful Links:

- GSG Finance Policies: [https://gsg.usc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2019/07/Finance\\_Policies\\_2019\\_2020.pdf](https://gsg.usc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2019/07/Finance_Policies_2019_2020.pdf)
- Additional GSG Financing Resources: <https://gsg.usc.edu/student-funding/finance-resources/>

## Definitions:

**GSG:** USC's Graduate Student Government.

**Recognized Student Organization (RSO):** Status obtained by completing the University Recognition process through Campus Activities. ALL organizations must be officially recognized to request funding from GSG or the Umbrella Fund.

**SBA Umbrella Fund:** The SBA Umbrella Fund can be used for "closed" events exclusive to Gould's student population. Organizations may access this Fund only by requesting an allocation from SBA for events that significantly benefit the student populations.

## GSG Funding

*The following is a simplified guide on how the GSG Funding process works. An organization can receive a maximum amount of \$2,500 per semester from GSG general funding (not including SBA Umbrella Funds discussed below)*

*A complete and detailed description on GSG funding can be found at the links below:*

- [https://gsg.usc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2019/07/Finance\\_Policies\\_2019\\_2020.pdf](https://gsg.usc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2019/07/Finance_Policies_2019_2020.pdf)
- <https://gsg.usc.edu/student-funding/finance-resources/>

### **General Policies (non-exhaustive list):**

- GSG only distributes RSO event funding to student organizations for programming planned and executed by students, for the benefit of the graduate student population.
- All student organizations applying for funding **MUST** be official RSOs.
- Events funded by GSG **MUST** be “open” to ALL graduate students. If an event is contingent upon a specialized skill, the event is not considered “open” (e.g. law pro-bono services to the community).
- GSG funds may not be used on alcohol.
- Must be an RSO with at least one member having completed the GSG Finance Orientation Assessment Overview (link below).
- Must be timely requested and approved.
- GSG funds can only be used with approved vendors:
  - Approved Catering Vendors:
    - <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1luDEOVC78qHd1ghJrWs2zkj9d-Uaw4mqrsbKvo7KiqA/edit?ts=59de5cfa#gid=0>
  - Approved Non-Catering Vendors:
    - <https://gsg.usc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2017/06/PVendorsEventServices.pdf>
  - *PLEASE NOTE: The above lists of approved vendors are continuously changing. Always double-check if a vendor is approved by emailing Monique Magbuhos ([mmagbuhos@law.usc.edu](mailto:mmagbuhos@law.usc.edu)) or Margarita Ochoa ([mochoa@law.usc.edu](mailto:mochoa@law.usc.edu)) from the Budget Office.*

### **Steps to be Eligible for GSG Funding:**

1. **Become an RSO (must be re-recognized each academic year):**
  - New Organizations
    - Must apply with Campus Activities to be recognized. Applications open October 1, 2019 and close November 3rd, 2019. Details may be found at the link below:
    - <https://campusactivities.usc.edu/new-student-organizations/>

- Continuing Organizations
  - Re-recognition Videos, Quiz (5 members), Re-register Form, Wait for Review
  - All Information to complete this step can be found using the link blow:
  - <https://campusactivities.usc.edu/organizations/recognition/>
- 2. **Complete GSG Finance Orientation Assessment Overview (1 member)**
  - [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfO9bqPAUZ7PIdq7\\_L7Me2r7hDh\\_-Ro9Dnk\\_N3ytOljxQOQlQ/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfO9bqPAUZ7PIdq7_L7Me2r7hDh_-Ro9Dnk_N3ytOljxQOQlQ/viewform)

### **Timeline:**

- Requests for Funding must be done four weeks in advance of the planned event (four Mondays).
  - The timeline for that month begins on the Monday after the application is submitted
    - Ex. If you submit application on Friday, that month in advance period will begin the following Monday
  - A detailed timeline for making requests can be found at the following link:  
[https://gsg.usc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2019/07/Cal\\_Sub\\_Dead\\_19\\_20.pdf](https://gsg.usc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2019/07/Cal_Sub_Dead_19_20.pdf)
- You should receive a confirmation email after you submit your funding request. If you do not, contact the Finance Director at [gsgfinea@usc.edu](mailto:gsgfinea@usc.edu). Applications are reviewed every Monday by The GSG Finance Committee.
- Application decisions are usually returned a week after their review.
- Post-event forms (if necessary) are due within 5 business days of the event.

### **Submitting GSG Funding Application:**

1. Create a new account on Pluto (the platform GSG uses to process fund requests).
  - a. <https://gsg.knack.com/pluto#home/portal/new-funding-application2/>
2. Fill out Pluto Form with Funding Requests.

### **Additional Information on GSG Funding:**

- <https://campusactivities.usc.edu/organizations/sources/>
- <https://campusactivities.usc.edu/files/2015/05/GSG-Finance-Handout.pdf>

### **GSG Funding FAQs Answered:**

- <http://gsg.usc.edu/finance-faq/#UncertainSubmission>

## SBA Funding

*SBA approves budgets for Gould Organizations at the beginning of each semester. SBA Funds are best used for closed events and events where alcohol will be served.*

**General Policies and Considerations:** *The approval for club budgets is based on numerous factors including historical use of club's funds and attendance of the club's events, reasonableness of the expenditures, timeliness of budget submission, and the value of the events to the law school community:*

- The number of students the event reaches.
  - Historic attendance;
  - Predicted attendance (reasonability); and
  - “Exclusiveness” (publicity to students, membership requirements for attendance, etc.).
- Availability of GSG funding or SBA Umbrella Funding.
- Efficiency in the use of allocated funds.
- Previous semester allocation.
  - Amount actually used; and
  - Reasonableness of expenditures.
- Substantive value of the event.
  - Contribution and value added to law school experience, learning and community.
- Informational meetings *will not be allocated* any funds.
- SBA *will not* fund student organization leadership meetings or retreats.
- Co-sponsored/co-organization events are viewed favorably.
- \$3-4/ attendant for lunch-time event and \$10/attendant for dinner events.
- Panels are typically allocated \$60 to cover guest parking, supplies, and panelist appreciation gifts.
- Fundraising.
  - Funds to be issued as a “loan;” and
  - SBA to recover prior to the organization's receipt of profit.
- Organizational Status.
  - Probationary Organizations (\$100/semester cap);
    - New organizations are probationary for two semesters after formation;
    - Organizations can be put on probationary status for serious violations of calendaring and budgetary policies.
  - Organizational history (taking into account patterns of org dormancy);
  - History of overdrawn account (3X amount overdrawn deducted);
  - Timeliness of budget submission (\$50 deduction for late budgets);
  - Attendance at Org Leader Training (\$50 deduction for absence);
  - Willful non-compliance with SBA administrative policies (\$50 deduction to putting org on probationary status, dependent on circumstances).

### **Timeline:**

- Within the first two weeks of the semester, the SBA Treasurer will distribute fund proposal forms to presidents and treasurers of all Gould student organizations;
- Student organizations will have one week to complete the budget proposals and return them to the SBA Treasurer;
- The SBA Executive Board then review and approve a semester budget for each requesting student organization;
- Student organizations will be informed of their preliminary approved budget within 5 days of the SBA Executive Board approval and no later than three weeks after the start of the semester.

### **Post Approval - Requisition and Reimbursement:**

- Before the event, students may initiate the requisition process if using an approved vendor (please contact Gould's Budget Office for additional details on this process);
- Post event, submit all required documentation to USC Gould Budget Office. The applicant is responsible for ensuring the timely submission of all required documentation. Required Forms:
  - <https://mylaw2.usc.edu/assets/docs/students/SBA-Expense-Form.pdf?122819171336>
  - If missing original receipt for reimbursement:  
[https://chan.usc.edu/uploads/resources/Missing\\_Receipt\\_Declaration.pdf](https://chan.usc.edu/uploads/resources/Missing_Receipt_Declaration.pdf)
- Details regarding the requisition and reimbursement process can be found here: [https://mylaw2.usc.edu/assets/docs/student\\_organization\\_budget\\_procedures\\_2012\\_2013.pdf](https://mylaw2.usc.edu/assets/docs/student_organization_budget_procedures_2012_2013.pdf)

### **FAQs:**

- **What if our student organization does not receive all of the funds we requested on our budget proposal?**
  - See if the event can be funded in full or in part by GSG Funding or by SBA Umbrella funding. If alternative funding is not possible, contact the SBA Treasurer directly at [sbatreasurer@lawmail.usc.edu](mailto:sbatreasurer@lawmail.usc.edu) to discuss funding options.
- **What if our student organization wants to plan a last-minute event or if we need more funding?**
  - While SBA cannot guarantee funds, we encourage you to (1) seek funding from GSG, (2) seek funding from SBA by emailing the SBA treasurer at [sbatreasurer@lawmail.usc.edu](mailto:sbatreasurer@lawmail.usc.edu) at least two weeks prior to the event, or (3) request SBA Umbrella funding.

# SBA Umbrella Funding

## **What is SBA Umbrella Funding:**

- GSG has an Umbrella Funding Disbursement Program that gives money to Umbrella Organizations per student in the organization. SBA is the Umbrella Organization for Gould, so SBA has access to this money to be disbursed to Gould RSOs for exclusive activities for Gould students.

## **When to Request SBA Umbrella Funding:**

- If your event is “closed” (not open to all USC graduate students) and complies with all other GSG guidelines);
- If you are unable to request GSG funds because you missed a deadline; or
- If you have already requested GSG funds or SBA Funding and been denied.

## **Application Guidelines:**

These guidelines are only for events that are not considered to be joint events with SBA:

- Funding applications must be submitted at least two weeks in advance of the event date. If you do not submit your application in time, your application will not be reviewed.
- All requests/applications must comply with University Policies, GSG Finance Policies, as well as SBA-specific guidelines.
- The organization applying for funds must be an official RSO.
- The applying RSO must be related to SBA or must indicate that at least 50% of the attendees of the event will be fee-paying graduate students represented by SBA.
- The SBA Executive Board’s decision of whether to approve the application is final and non-negotiable.
- Durable goods that are not treated as prizes or giveaways (e.g., appliances, tools, furniture, clothing) shall not be funded.
- In compliance with SBA guidelines, SBA Umbrella funds may not be used toward fundraisers.
- We strongly encourage your RSO to exhaust all other funding opportunities (GSG and SBA) before applying for SBA Umbrella Funds. You may NOT receive funding from both GSG general event funding sources and SBA Umbrella Funds for the same event.
- Please refer to the GSG RSO Event Funding page for resources describing vendor choices and payment methods:
  - <https://gsg.usc.edu/student-funding/rso-event-funding/>

### **Application Procedure:**

Applicant must email a funding application (template below) at least two weeks prior to the event date. Emails should be sent to BOTH [sba@lawmail.usc.edu](mailto:sba@lawmail.usc.edu) and [sbatreasurer@lawmail.usc.edu](mailto:sbatreasurer@lawmail.usc.edu);

- Funding applications will be reviewed at weekly SBA Executive Board meetings on Tuesdays (applicants may be requested to attend for review of their proposal);
- Funding decisions will be communicated no more than three days after the SBA Executive Board Meeting at which the funding application was reviewed;
- Should the funding request fail to meet requirements or if there are insufficient funds, SBA reserves the right to deny funding.

### **Post Approval:**

- Post approval and prior to event:
  - Appropriately display GSG's name and emblem, and SBA's name on all promotional materials for the event;
  - Promotional materials must be visible to all Gould students.
- After event occurrence:
  - Submit all required documentation to USC Gould Budget Office. The applicant is responsible for ensuring the timely submission of all required documentation.
  - Required Forms:
    - <https://mylaw2.usc.edu/assets/docs/students/SBA-Expense-Form.pdf?122819171336>
    - If missing original receipt for reimbursement:
      - [https://chan.usc.edu/uploads/resources/Missing\\_Receipt\\_Declaration.pdf](https://chan.usc.edu/uploads/resources/Missing_Receipt_Declaration.pdf)

*[SBA Umbrella Funding Application Template on Following Page]*



## SBA Umbrella Fund Request Template:

*Please make sure you are in compliance with the above guidelines. If the application is approved for funding, you will be asked to turn in official quotes. Please have this information ready for timely issuance of funding. Final receipts/invoices and additional paperwork may be required post event.*

In your email request for funding, please include the following at a minimum:

<b><u>General Contact Information:</u></b>	
Email Address:	
Contact Person:	
Full RSO Name and Abbreviation:	
<b><u>Event Information:</u></b>	
Event Name:	
Purpose of Event:	
Date of Event:	
Time of Event:	
Event Venue:	
Expected attendance:	
Percentage of Attendees from Gould?	
<b><u>Funding Request</u></b>	
Expense Type? <i>(the expense you would like funded)</i>	
Have you requested GSG Funding or SBA Already?	Yes/No, <i>explain</i>
Amount Requested?	
Payable to? <i>(Vendor)</i>	
Vendor Address?	

Vendor Phone?	
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