

**Association of Students of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Graduate Student Assembly**

Special Rules –Special Projects Grants Program

Section 1. Definition

The ASUN-GSA Special Projects Grants Program (SPGP) allocates funds from the GSA budget for activities, events, or projects organized by and benefitting graduate students at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Section 2. Objective

Funds from the SPGP shall promote professional development and networking opportunities for graduate students at the University. These funds shall support diverse programming of activities, events, or projects in the various academic, professional, and disciplinary fields represented within the University.

Section 3. Committee for Professional Development

1. The Committee for Professional Development (CPD) shall manage the SPGP.
2. The CPD shall be composed of no less than seven (7) members, of which one (1) shall serve as Chair elected by the GSA.
3. CPD members shall be disqualified from applying to and receiving any SPGP funds during the academic year they serve on the CPD.

Section 4. Grants

1. The value and number of grants will be determined by the SPGP fund budget annually and the funds will be allocated by the GSA.
2. Grants shall not exceed one thousand dollars (\$1000) each. This amount may only be altered by the GSA at the beginning of each academic year.
3. All recipients must acknowledge the funding received from ASUN and GSA in any publications, broadcasts, or advertisements pertaining to the activity, event, or project arising from the grant.
4. Per University regulations, grants may only be awarded to individual students and not to RSOs (e.g., departmental GSAs).

Section 5. Deadlines

The following periods and deadlines shall apply to the SPGP.

Event semester	Event Between	Application Form Due	Notification of Result	Expense Report Form Due
Spring	January 1 June 30	November 30	December 30	July 31
Fall	July 1 December 31	April 30	May 31	January 30

Section 6. Eligibility

1. No student or students from a University department or graduate program who has failed to appoint or elect and maintain a Departmental Representative to the GSA during the previous academic year shall be eligible to apply or receive any SPGP funds.
 - a. This requirement shall not be enforced during the first year of the SPGP (2016-2017).
2. Applicants must be enrolled in a graduate degree program at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and be in good academic standing.
3. All activities, events, or projects receiving SPGP funds must be open to all graduate and undergraduate students at the University.

Section 7. Application

1. All applications, as established in Appendix 1, and application materials will be available year-round on the GSA website and should be filed on or before the application form deadline.
 - a. The CPD may establish an electronic or paper filing procedure, but both mechanisms may not be used at the same time.
2. All applications must include:
 - a. A detailed description of the activity, event, or project.
 - b. An event timeline or agenda.
 - c. A budget that outlines estimated expenses and all other sources of revenue.
 - d. An endorsement of the activity, event, or project from an administrator in the department or graduate program where it will be held.
 - e. Assurance that the applicant has not received a refund for University Program and Facilities Fee (UPFF) Fund B.

Section 8. Evaluation

1. Applications will be blindly reviewed by a subcommittee composed of three (3) CPD members, which will be designated at the beginning of each application period by the CPD Chair.
 - a. Committee members may not review applications originating from their own department or graduate program.
 - b. An alternate subcommittee member will join the subcommittee to review an application if that application came from a subcommittee member's department.

2. The subcommittee shall review all the applications in a given application period to ensure consistency among the evaluations.
3. If a fund request exceeds two hundred and fifty dollars (\$250), the subcommittee may request additional supporting materials.
4. Special projects grant applications shall be evaluated on a one hundred twenty (120) point scale with each individual member of the subcommittee granting up to forty (40) points each, in accordance to the rubric in Appendix 2.
5. The CPD Chair will determine the eligibility of applications prior to forwarding them for review to the committee.
6. The CPD Chair shall refer all eligible applications to the subcommittee which shall return completed evaluation rubrics to the CPD Chair no later than ten (10) business days after receiving them.
 - a. If any subcommittee member fails to return their completed evaluation rubrics within the allotted time, a new subcommittee member may be appointed, with the stipulation that the evaluation rubrics must be returned in no more than five (5) business days.

Section 9. Ranking, Awarding, and Notification

1. The CPD Chair shall consider the final score of all applications in the ranking process, with the highest ranked application receiving the requested funds, and proceeding downwards until all monies have been allocated.
2. Provided two or more applications are tied for the last funds to be allocated the CPD shall determine the recipient by a simple majority vote, with the CPD Chair breaking any ties.
3. Recipients shall be notified electronically via email on or before the notification deadline, and shall be required to formally accept or decline the grant within five (5) business days.
4. If a recipient declines a grant, or is unable to pursue the activity, event, or project, they must notify the CPD within five (5) days. The CPD may re-grant the funds for that period to the next qualifying applicant.
5. Any grants that are not formally accepted or are declined by the recipient within five (5) business days will be forfeited and shall be made available to the next suitable applicant from the applicant pool.
 - a. Individuals who do not formally accept the funds within five (5) business days will be contacted to inform them that their awarded funds have been forfeited.

Section 10. Disbursement and Expense Reports

1. The CPB subcommittee responsible for an application period shall also be responsible for following the awards through to completion by filing final expense reports and reimbursement forms with ASUN.
2. Approved and accepted grants shall be used to reimburse individuals for the expenses incurred in carrying out the activity, event, or project.
 - a. Some costs may be payable upfront by the ASUN administrator with an invoice; costs that cannot be invoiced will be processed only as a reimbursement with appropriate documentation.
3. An expense report shall be submitted to the CPD no later than thirty (30) days from the conclusion of the activity, event, or program.

- a. Expense reports will include itemized expenditures, as well as the associated receipts.
- b. For payment for hourly work dedicated toward the project, the applicant must provide 1) a proof that the pay is not higher than that of an average University employee would charge for the services, 2) a time log detailing the hours worked on each part of the project along with what those hours were allocated towards and the end results of that work, and 3) a formal invoice/receipt that can be submitted for reimbursement.
- c. Any SPGP funds awarded but not spent will be returned to the SPGP fund.
4. The CPD subcommittee that awarded the grant will be responsible for ensuring recipients submit all required forms and reports, and will be responsible for reviewing these items.
 - a. The subcommittee shall verify that all claimed expenses comply with University, ASUN, GSA, and SPGP regulations, and verify that no expense has been claimed more than once.
5. The CPD subcommittee shall have thirty (30) days to process the recipient's expense report.
6. The CPD subcommittee shall report to the Assembly after all expenses have been verified and approved, and all remaining funds have been reallocated to the SPGP Fund.
7. Special provisions shall be taken if the activity event, or project occurs close to the end of the fiscal year, so that the granted monies are disbursed from the appropriate budget.

Section 11. SPGP Fund Regulations

1. Funds may only be used as approved by University policies and as set forth by the CPD.
2. The recipient will only receive funds to cover the exact expenditures, and only up to the amount awarded.
3. Special Projects Grant funds may not be used to fund the following:
 - a. Anything found in violation of law and/or University rules, regulations, policies and procedures.
 - b. Personal expenses.
 - c. Personal travel.
 - d. Items and expenses not included in the original application.
 - e. Purchase of beer, wine or other alcoholic beverages.
 - f. Plaques, prizes, scholarships, awards, trophies or medals, or other related gift items.
 - g. Payments to invest in or provide capital for any business or commercial enterprise, or any activity intended to generate profit.
 - h. Telephone, electronic facsimile, Internet, cable or communication device charges.
 - i. Prohibited purchases include:
 - i. Firearms, weapons, or ammunition.
 - ii. Tobacco or tobacco related products.
 - iii. Illegal or illicit substances or devices.
 - iv. Controlled substances
 - v. Pornography or other products that are demeaning or degrading to people.
 - j. Any court actions.
 - k. Costs or litigation against the University, of its employees in fulfillment of their duties, or against its students.

- l. Association dues.
 - m. Strictly social events.
 - n. Departmental or graduate program publicity, brochures, or operating expenses.
 - o. Food, supplies, or any other items required for regular departmental or organizational meetings.
 - p. Services already provided by the University, ASUN, or GSA.
 - q. Recurring events or activities (e.g. annual department seminar series).
 - r. Research purposes, unless an activity for professional development has a research component built into it.
4. Any funds that are allocated by the GSA budget but not awarded during the given application period shall roll-over to the following application period. Any funds that are awarded but are refunded by the award recipient to the CPD shall roll over to the following application period.
 5. Funds not allocated during the academic year shall roll over to the SPGP the following year with the authorization of the GSA.
 6. No SPGP funds may be used for any other purpose than those set in the application, and no grant may be awarded any later than ten (10) days past the notification deadline.

Section 12. Compliance

1. It is the responsibility of all graduate students seeking SPGP funds to read and understand the policies and procedures of the University, the Graduate School, ASUN, and GSA. Individuals that receive SPGP funding must be in compliance with all policies and procedures at all times. Individuals that are found to be in violation of any policy of the University, the Graduate School, ASUN, GSA, and/or SPGP must reimburse any and all funds they received during the time they were in violation of these policies. Furthermore, individuals that attempt to defraud or mislead the University, the Graduate School, ASUN, GSA, and/or SPGP will be subject to disciplinary review, and individuals may be held individually responsible and criminally liable for any funds received illegally or under false pretenses.
2. Any applicant may request the CPD permission to review their application and evaluation materials, but at all times the confidentiality of the reviewers shall be maintained.

Appendix 1. SPGP Application

Primary applicant information

Name	NU ID		
Email	Phone	PhD	Master's
Department	Degree (circle one)		

Secondary applicant(s) information

Name	_____	NU ID	_____
Name	_____	NU ID	_____
Name	_____	NU ID	_____
Name	_____	NU ID	_____

Activity, event, or project information

Name: _____

Location: _____

Date: _____

Please attach:

1. A detailed description of the activity, event, or project
2. A timeline or agenda
3. A budget that outlines estimated expenses and all other sources of funding secured or requested for the project.

Budget and funding information

Funds requested: \$ _____

1. Have you (primary applicant and/or secondary applicants) applied for a GSA special project grant in the past? (circle one)
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
2. Have you (primary applicant and/or secondary applicants) been granted a GSA special project grant in the past? (circle one)
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

If you are awarded the funds, will you be requesting any costs to be paid upfront? (Only expenses that can be sent as an invoice may be paid upfront.)

- a. Yes
- b. No

If yes, please indicate which expenses you wish to have paid upfront.

Primary applicant

I certify that I have read and agree to the current rules and directions for the Special Projects Grant Program (SPGP) and certify that all information I have provided in this application is accurate. I further grant permission to the GSA Committee for Professional Development and the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska to verify my status as a graduate student in good standing at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and my eligibility for the special projects grant competition. I verify that, to the best of my knowledge, I have not received a UPFF Fund A refund.

Signature _____

Date _____

Departmental graduate chair

I certify that I have read this special projects grant application, including the budget, that the applicant is a graduate student in my department and at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in good standing, that all information in this application is accurate to the best of my knowledge, the budget is realistic, and this student and/or students are likely to organize the aforementioned activity, event, or project.

Signature _____

Date _____

Appendix 2. Rubric for reviewing applications

Criteria	0-3	4-6	7-10	Points
Impact: Priority will be given to projects that will benefit the largest number of graduate students.	Project benefits a small number of graduate students (a subset within a department).	Project benefits a moderate number of graduate students (all those in a department).	Project benefits many graduate students (more than a single department).	/10
Need for project: Priority will be given to projects that explicitly highlight that the project is fulfilling an unmet need of graduate students.	A similar service is available through Graduate Studies or some other office on campus.	Applicant makes a weak case for how the project is meeting an unmet need for graduate students.	Applicant makes a strong case for how the project is meeting an unmet need for graduate students.	/10
Financial need: Priority will be given to projects that have secured matching funds and still have a need for additional funds.	No matching funds were sought.	Matching funds were requested and may or may not be secured.	Matching funds were requested and are secured.	/10
Preparation: Priority will be given to projects that are well-organized and have clear leadership to ensure a positive outcome of the project.	Poor project planning and unlikely that the project will succeed.	Project planning could be improved but is likely to succeed.	Project is well thought-out and planned appropriately and have a high chance of success.	/10
Total				/40