2021 SSAF Grant Program Frequently Asked Questions

February 2021

Student Engagement | Student and Scholarly Services

General statement about COVID-19 impacting the Student Services Amenities Fee (SSAF) Grant Program in 2021

Due to the evolving situation of COVID-19 and expectation that the University adheres to the Victoria Government's restrictions and advice, there may be unexpected changes to the delivery of the 2021 Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) Grant Program depending on how COVID-19 situation progresses. Currently, the program is running as planned. If there are any significant changes to the program, updates will be available via the SSAF Grant Program website and emails will be sent directly to applicants.

SSAF Grant Program funding requests that involve projects being delivered on University grounds/campuses must adhere to return to campus guidelines and advice. We strongly recommend that alternative plans for projects are put in place due to the evolving nature of COVID-19.

Our first priority is maintaining a safe and healthy campus. When you are on campus, you must comply with the University COVID-19 health and safety protocols outlined on the University's return to campus website.

Am I eligible to apply for a SSAF Grant?

To be considered for a Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) Grant, your application must meet all eligibility criteria detailed in Section 3 of the SSAF Grant Program Guidelines:

- Applicants must be either a current University staff member or student.
- Applicants may be affiliated with or be a representative of a student organisation or other University associated organisation.
- Applicants must be able to complete the project/activity within a year from the date they have been granted the funds.
- All applicants listed must have provided an Acquittal Report (fully acquitted with no outstanding debts) for all previously awarded SSAF Grant Program funds. The project/activity must not be a repeat project that has been previously funded. Applications that are similar in nature to a prior project/activity must be explained in the application.
- Student applications must have the support from a University of Melbourne mentor (e.g. academic or professional staff member or a University of Melbourne Alumni). Staff applications must have the support from the Head of Faculty/Division/Organisation.
- The project/activity cannot be already completed when applying for grant funds. Funds will only be awarded to an activity in progress or yet to commence.
- What will not be funded:
    - An ongoing project/activity or day to day operations of a student club or group;
    - A project/activity that is for assessment (credit) for a subject or completion of a course (e.g. directly related to PhD);

        o   A project/activity that is primarily partisan or religious in nature.

- Projects must have a complete application, address one or more of the categories of the Australian Government's Higher Education Legislation and all the Key Selection Criteria detailed in Section 6 of the SSAF Grant Program Guidelines.
- Where a project involves an external partner organisation, details of the partner organisation's agreement and financial or in-kind support must be provided. A Partner Organisation Support Letter must be provided, if applicable (see the *Resources* section of the SSAF Grant Program website)
- The project/activity must not count towards academic credit; or be undertaken as part of assessment for a subject or course (including research).
- The applicant(s) must demonstrate their capacity to successfully undertake the activity and student applicants must be able to finalise acquittal prior to completing their degree otherwise sanctions may be imposed on their student records.

Is it possible to re-apply for a SSAF Grant based on a previous grant project/activity that was successful?

The SSAF Grant Program is designed for new student-focussed initiatives and not for repeat funding/programs. The Selection Committee can consider your application for a project that is similar in nature, if the project has a new component or if the project scope is expanded. Please refer to the Section 3.4 of the SSAF Grant Program Guidelines.

The Selection Committee will consider the submitted grant application based on set Key Selection Criteria and any previous project(s) must be fully acquitted before consideration is given to new requests.

How can I get assistance preparing my application?

We recommend you consult all available resources listed on the SSAF Grant Program website. You can also preview the 2021 SSAF Grant Program Application Form on SmartyGrants ahead of formally commencing an application.

I want to apply for a SSAF Grant, so I can attend a conference. Is this allowed?

The SSAF Grant Program offers funding for student-focused initiatives that contribute to meeting the needs of our diverse student population. Grants will be available for projects across a wide range of areas, including, but not limited to:

- student clubs and societies;
- student services;
- transitioning new students;
- supporting students' creative pursuits;
- supporting diverse student cohorts; and
- student engagement.

The Selection Committee does not favour applications focused on attending conferences because the benefits generally lie with the applicant or the conference attendees and the use of funds reflect this. An application may still be submitted, but strong articulation of the outcomes to the University's student community is required to increase chances of the application being supported.

I am a staff member at the University of Melbourne can I apply for a SSAF Grant?

Although preference is given to student led and focused grant applications, University staff may still formally apply for a SSAF Grant in 2021.

How can I find a mentor, what if I cannot find one?

All student applications must nominate a University of Melbourne mentor and provide a signed Mentor Endorsement Form as part of their application (see the *Resources* section of the SSAF Grant Program website).

Once you have decided the focus of your activity, you should approach potential mentors as soon as possible. A mentor could be someone who has taught you during your studies, another University staff member (academic or professional) who has an interest or experience in your project/activity area or a University of Melbourne Alumni. If you are still unsure who to contact, we advise that you search the University's Find an Expert website or Ask Alumni.

A mentor can give support whether it is reviewing your application or providing specific guidance depending on their field of expertise/skills/study. They can be involved as little or as much as they choose. It is important to note that the ultimate liability of the awarded SSAF Grant Program funds will rest directly with the student, this also includes any reporting requirements (e.g. the Progress Report and/or Acquittal Report).

A Guide To Assist Mentors is provided on the SSAF Grant Program website (see the *Resources* section).

How do I approach a partner organisation?

Although not compulsory, finding the right partner organisation with aligned goals can further support and strengthen your application. When approaching a potential partner organisation, you should outline the benefits that your project/activity would provide to the partner organisation and the support you require.

Once you agree on the proposed project/activity with your partner organisation, they must endorse it by submitting a Letter of Support to the University outlining their contribution and commitment (see the *Resources* section of the SSAF Grant Program website).

Can I arrange for contractors to be paid to work on project? Do they require an Australian business number (ABN)?

If you are arranging paid contractors to work on your project, they must provide you with a valid ABN. ABNs are free of charge and can be obtained quickly. They can register as a sole trader or independent contractor (the same ABN can be used for other contractual type work outside of this project). Please ensure that the wages are arranged according to the National Minimum Wage as outlined by the Fair Work Act 2009 and the Fair Work Ombudsmen. Please ensure you keep all records or invoices showing the contractor's name, hourly wage, and description of paid services. These documents must be submitted in the Acquittal Report for the project outlining the use of the awarded SSAF Grant Program funds.

What about travel domestic/international travel and insurance?

Due to the evolving situation of COVID-19, we ask students to take travel restrictions and COVID-19 advice into consideration at the point of submitting their SSAF Grant Program applications.

Decisions about international travel and travel bans are based upon the regularly updated Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) Smartraveller travel advisories.

Travel insurance is compulsory for overseas activities and strongly recommended for interstate activities.

Risks associated with off campus activities, including international travel and activities such as field work, must be considered in accordance with the University's Health and Safety Policy (MPF1205).

How do I arrange for venue hire of events held on campus?

Most University activities will remain virtual throughout 2021. Please refer to the return to campus website for information regarding on-campus activity measures and guidelines. We recommend that alternative plans for projects are put in place due to the evolving nature of COVID-19.

Until further notice, it will not be possible to arrange venue hire or hold events on campus. Students are encouraged to stay engaged virtually while social distancing and using digital tools and services.

If events are approved to be held on campus, we advise that in the first instance, applicants consult with the University's Venue Management team, their mentor and/or student staff members at the University of Melbourne Student Union (UMSU) and Graduate Student Association (GSA) for further advice.

How will my application be assessed?

Your application will be assessed by a Selection Committee of University of Melbourne academic and professional staff members and student representatives using the Key Selection Criteria as listed in the SSAF Grant Program Guidelines. The same Selection Committee is used to assess all applications for consistency.

Each application will be assessed and ranked in the order of activities that align most with the Key Selection Criteria. A Mentor Endorsement Form (for student applications) or evidence of written support from the Head of Faculty/Division/Organisation (for staff applications), project timeline and proposed budget must be submitted with your application. Templates can be found under the *Resources* section of the SSAF Grant Program website.

The number of activities supported will be subject to the amount of SSAF Grant Program funds available. Applicants will be notified of your application outcome within six to eight weeks of the SSAF Grant Program application closing date.

Due to the evolving situation of COVID-19, applicants should also consider viability of their project should current restrictions and bans be in place six (6) months from date of applying.

What are the steps to receiving the awarded SSAF Grant Program funds?

For student applications

- Receive notification in writing of a successful outcome
- Completion of a compulsory online briefing module
- Check that your bank details and local contact address are up to date in the my.unimelb student portal. To receive payment, students must have an Australian bank account. For further instructions, please visit the ask.unimelb Scholarship – Bank Details FAQ. If these details are incorrect, your SSAF Grant payment will be delayed
- Receive the awarded SSAF Grant Program funding to your nominated individual bank account (as provided on your my.unimelb student portal). Please note, payments will be issued after completion of the compulsory online briefing module. The awarded SSAF Grant Program funds will be paid according to the University's fortnightly salary pay cycle. For more information, please visit the ask.unimelb Scholarship – Payment Dates FAQ

For staff applications

- Receive notification in writing of a successful outcome
- Completion of a compulsory online briefing module

- Provide the Student Engagement team the relevant Themis Account String/s for the payment to be processed by the University's Finance team. For more information, please refer to Section 10.2 of the SSAF Grant Program Guidelines

What if the awarded SSAF Grant Program funds need to go to a student club, society, organisation bank account?

For student applicants, the awarded SSAF Grant Program funds must be paid into a student's individual bank account as listed in the my.unimelb student portal.

For staff applicants, the awarded SSAF Grant Program funds must be paid into the nominated staff Themis Account String/s.

If you wish to transfer the SSAF Grant Program funds into a student club, society, organisation bank account, you can do so after the Project Leader has received the funds.

The Project Leader will be accountable for awarded SSAF Grant Program funds and will need to keep a record/receipts of expenditure items for the Acquittal Report.

Do I need to declare grant funds on tax returns?

No, the receipt of the SSAF Grant Program funds is not considered income, therefore you do not need to declare this on your tax returns.

What is in a Progress Report and/or Acquittal Report?

We are now asking all applicants to complete both a Progress Report (if your project carries over the calendar year) and an Acquittal Report as compliance step to receiving the awarded SSAF Grant Program funding.

1. **Progress Report** (if applicable): must be completed by **15 November 2021,** outlining spending and activities to date, as well as the activities and SSAF Grant Program funds that will be carried over into the following year.
2. **Acquittal Report**: must be completed by **30 June 2022**, involves completing a final report evaluating the completed activities and project outcomes and recording the project/activity's expenditure. This must be completed after the project/activity is complete. You will need to account for all awarded SSAF Grant Program funds spent and attach clear receipts as well as any feedback, surveys, photos, or videos documenting your project/activity. If any transactions were completed in foreign currencies, you must convert these using the spreadsheet provided in the Acquittal Report. You must obtain receipts for all transactions. It is recommended that Project Leaders make photocopies as the receipt ink may fade over time.

You will be able to preview both the Progress Report and Acquittal Report on SmartyGrants after receiving notification in writing of a successful SSAF Grant Program application outcome.

Do I need to submit a Variation Request Form?

If successful and you foresee the need to make a major variation to your project, including, but not limited to:

- Requesting an extension of the project/activity timeline;
- Changing the Project Leader/team members and/or partner organisation(s);
- Reallocating more than 10% of the total awarded SSAF Grant funding amount

Please contact the Student Engagement Team to setup a Variation Request Form. Please note a request for variation to the project after submission, will be considered if the variation is:

- Consistent with the objectives of the SSAF Grant Program, and the 2021 SSAF Grant Guidelines; and
- As close as is reasonable to the originally proposed program set out in the initial application and thereby funded.

For any further clarification, assistance and/or advice, please contact the Student Engagement Team:

ssaf-grants@unimelb.edu.au