



TREASURER'S MANUAL

For USC Student Organizations

We have designed this manual as a resource for student organization treasurers to better understand how to obtain, manage, and spend monies from the Student Activity Fund. As a treasurer, you will work extensively with the Student Government Treasurer and the Department of Student Life. The Treasurer's Manual contains information for all facets of student organization finance, including, but not limited to: submitting a budget request in Garnet Gate, preparing for travel, reimbursing expenses, and paying a vendor.

In addition to requesting and utilizing any organizational funds, you have the responsibility to keep all financial records up to date. You are also responsible for informing your President and membership of the organization's financial status and any policies and procedures that affect the use of these funds.

Please be aware that this is not an all-inclusive manual. It includes information about the procedures and transactions that are most frequently used by organizations.

What Are Student Activity Funds?

Student Activity Funds are appropriated from tuition and fees paid each semester by students. This funding supports student activities, programs, and support services. The amount of funding available is determined by the Associate Vice President of Student Affairs.

The Student Government Student Senate Finance Committee is responsible for the appropriation of the Student Activity Funds to Undergraduate Student Organizations. The Graduate Student Association is responsible for the appropriation of the Student Activity Funds to Graduate Student Organizations. Organizations that are classified as Pharmacy, Law and Sport Clubs have a specific, internal process within their respective areas. The funds allocated to an organization are intended to help support the financial aspects of the organization's activities, but they are not intended to fully fund all organization objectives.

The Student Senate Finance Committee [codes and guidelines](#) direct the allocation process for the undergraduate organizations, while the Graduate Student Association [guidelines](#) direct the allocation process for graduate organizations.

Eligibility for Funding:

A student organization is a student group that maintains active status on the University of South Carolina campus, has fulfilled all responsibilities of a student organization and represents a group of students who desire to come together to support a particular view, explore common interests or accomplish identified tasks. Student organizations must be student-initiated and student-led. Two types of student organizations exist at the University of South Carolina:

- **Associated Student Organization (ASO):** student organizations to which the University has delegated certain limited authority to perform specific tasks aligned with the University's mission. These groups are required to maintain a University Advisor who is acting within the context of their University employment. An ASO may serve as a governing body over other RSOs.
- **Registered Student Organization (RSO):** student organizations that are independent legal entities from the University, have no delegated authority from the University, and do not perform functions on behalf of the university. These groups are not required to maintain a University Advisor. The University views RSOs as private affiliations and does not endorse the mission, goals, or purpose of the organization.

Student organizations who meet the above definition are eligible to request funds from the Student Activity Fund unless they have already been funded by the Department of Student Life from the Campus Activity Fee.

Funding Categories and Requirements:

Funds are allocated to student organizations under three categories: **Programming**, **Conferences**, and **Tournaments**.

- **Programming** budget requests include any events or other social, recreational, or educational programs. Any programs paid for completely or in part by the Student Activity Funds must be free and open to all students.
- **Conference and Tournament** budgets may include any costs associated with that event such as registration fees. Requests for conference or tournament allocations must include current registration forms and information.

Student Activity Funds **must be used to:**

1. Promote a diverse array of programs and events
2. Facilitate intellectual engagement
3. Encourage collaboration between students and student groups, and/or foster campus community

Student organizations will not be denied funding nor given preferential treatment in funding based upon the viewpoint of the organization requesting funds, as outline by University policy and federal, state, and local law.

Preparing the Budget Request in Garnet Gate:

Any student organization, regardless of classification, **must** attend a Treasurer's Workshop for the current academic year in order to be eligible to request funding. These are offered through the [Office of the Student Body Treasurer](#) and primarily take place during the fall and spring semesters.

To aid your organization in completing the budget request, we have Comptrollers in place to work with you from beginning to end. Each undergraduate student organization has an assigned Comptroller. Graduate student organizations, as well as those under pharmacy and law may also utilize Comptrollers. If you have any questions about how to start the conversation with a Comptroller, feel free to reach out to the [Office of the Student Body Treasurer](#).

Once you have planned the needs for your budget and have collected documentation supporting each line item on the request, login to Garnet Gate using your individual username and password and navigate to your organization page. From your organization page, click on the menu button, click on *finance*, and then select *create a budget request*. If you do not have access to create a budget request, please request from the president of your student organization that you be added to the roster as treasurer. If you have any difficulties with this, please contact the [Leadership and Service Center](#).

Once you complete and submit your budget request, see below for specific steps for your organization:

Undergraduate Student Organization Process:

- Requests should be submitted at least 15 university days prior to the event date.
- We highly recommend that your organization work with a Comptroller. Not only will this help you get the most funding possible, but they are also a great resource if you have questions along the way.

- If the request is \$499 or under, the Treasurer is not required to meet with the Student Government Student Senate Finance Committee. The request will be reviewed and the updates on funding will be posted to Garnet Gate.
- If the request is \$500 or more, the Treasurer will need to sign up for a time slot to meet with the Finance Committee to review the request and engage in a budget dialogue meeting. This meeting is roughly 10 minutes long.

Graduate Student Organization Process:

- Requests should be submitted at least 21 days prior to the event date.
- If the request is \$999 or under, the Treasurer does not need to meet with the Graduate Student Association (GSA) Finance Committee. The request will be reviewed and the updates on funding will be posted to Garnet Gate.
- If the request is \$1,000 or more, the Treasurer will need to sign up for a budget dialogue meeting time with the GSA Finance Committee. This meeting is 10 minutes long.

Pharmacy, Law and Sports Clubs – Student Organizations Information

- Additional requirements will be communicated internally with their respective Governing Boards for the allocation of Student Activity Funds. Please contact the respective Governing Board for more information on budget requests and processes.

Tax Exempt Status:

The University of South Carolina is not tax exempt from sales or use tax except as allowed in **SECTION 12-36-2120** of the South Carolina Code of Laws.

Student organizations are not considered entities of the University; therefore, student organizations cannot claim tax exempt status.

External vs Internal Banking Accounts:

An external account is through a bank of your organizations choosing and consists of opening a business account with the organization's name and Tax ID. The organization would first need to complete an application with the IRS to acquire a Tax ID ([EIN application](#)) to be able to open an account. Monthly charges may apply because it is a business account. Each bank may require different documents, so you would want to research different institutions to see what fits your needs. The University does not get involved with off-campus accounts. It is on the organization to establish good governance and adopt control measures to oversee off-campus bank accounts. Additionally, if a bank suggests that you become a non-profit organization (501©(3)) – please note that the student organization itself cannot maintain its status as both a student organization and a non-profit. Registering as a non-profit is not permissible for a student organization.

The second option would be an internal University account. These accounts do not function like an external bank account. Because the funds are within the University system:

- the organization would have to follow all state and University policies and procedures
- Funds are not liquid, meaning you cannot simply withdraw cash like at a bank
- You can only pay invoices or reimburse (someone pays out of pocket and they get reimbursed from the account)
- There are no credit/debit cards, and you cannot use Venmo or other financial services.

Contact Information:

We are always here to help should your organization have questions!

If you are an undergraduate student organization and you have specific questions about that process, please reach out to:

Student Body Treasurer: [Hannah Augsbach Lamma](#)