

Activity Grants Regulations for Cultural Organizations

Usva (the University Student Cultural Centre) and the Central Executive Board for Student Organizations (CUOS)

These regulations set out the conditions under which the CUOS awards activity grants to cultural student organizations whose members and participants are UG students. As of 2019, all applications for activity grants for cultural organizations will be submitted by Usva. The CUOS will decide whether or not to award a grant, taking into account the recommendations of the Usva Student Board.

Chapter 1 General provisions and conditions

Article 1. Definitions

1. Activity grant: the financial assistance provided to an organization for a period of one year, with the purpose of facilitating specific activities organized by that organization.
2. Organisation: a student organization with a cultural focus, possessing its own legal personality and full legal competence, and catering to the student population of the UG. It must have been established as a cultural student organization for a minimum of two years.
3. Student Board: the Student Board of Usva, part of the University Student Cultural Centre (USCC) department of the University of Groningen.
4. The CUOS: the Central Executive Board for Student Organizations of the University of Groningen.
5. Provisional activity grant: the grant that a cultural organization can receive under specific conditions, after the assessment of a grant application. If, during the procedure for establishing the definitive grant, it proves that the applicant has failed to meet the conditions, the definitive grant may be reduced.
6. Definitive activity grant: the grant that is definitively awarded to the grant applicant after reviewing the documentary proof and evaluation reports submitted by the applicant.

Article 2. General conditions

1. An activity grant is awarded to organizations whose objective is to encourage the active participation and development of students in Groningen in the domain of art and culture. Therefore, the organization's activities should primarily focus on students and contribute to the development of art and culture among students in Groningen.
2. In addition to the objective described in Paragraph 1 of this article, an organization shall only be eligible for an activity grant if:
 - a. The organization has a legal personality with full legal competence, which is demonstrated by:

- I. Articles of Association certified by a notary, and
 - II. an current registration at the Chamber of Commerce
- b. the Articles of Association include, at least:
- I. the objective of the organization;
 - II. the activities of the organization;
 - III. a statement to the effect that the organization operates on a non-profit basis;
 - IV. that the organization focuses on the student community of the UG or the Hanze UAS;
 - V. that the executive board of the organization consists of students or scholarship students; and
 - VI. that the organization is generally open to all students who are enrolled at the UG and the Hanze UAS.
- c. The organization has demonstrably made a valid contribution to the cultural student landscape for a period of at least two years (not necessarily in the form of a legal personality);
- d. At least 50% of the organization's executive board consist of UG students, Hanze UAS students, or PhD candidate;
- e. At least 50% of all participants in the activities organized by the organization are UG students;
- f. The organization contributes to the reputation of the UG and of Groningen as a university city;
- g. The organization prepares a budget, an annual report, and annual accounts every year.
- 3.** If an organization is dissolved, its Articles of Association are amended, there is a significant reduction in its range of activities, or if the organization no longer meets one of the conditions stipulated in paragraphs 1 and 2, this must be reported to the CUOS without delay.
- 4.** Activities with any of the following characteristics are ineligible for an activity grant:
- a. Activities with no relationship to art and culture;
 - b. Activities that are not generally open to or not intended for all UG students;
 - c. Activities with a commercial objective;
 - d. Activities that are entirely dependent on Usva funding;
 - e. Activities intended for only a very limited group of students or that will benefit only a very limited group of students;
 - f. Activities provided for individuals;
 - g. Activities that are closed to the public;
 - h. Activities otherwise unsuitable for the allocation of a grant.
- 5.** The Student Board retains the right to request additional information from the organizations that receive grant funding at any time.

Article 3. Financial conditions

- 1.** Financial support provided under these regulations is always considered to be complementary to other means of funding. The grant requested may never exceed 30% of the organization's total budget.

2. Financial support is only awarded insofar as it is demonstrated that there is a financial need for support. The need for financial support for the activity in question shall be assessed retrospectively.
3. No maximum amount applies to Usva activity grant applications.
4. An activity grant application may be rejected if the CUOS has insufficient funds available.
5. An activity grant application will also be rejected if the organization has been declared bankrupt or has been granted a suspension of payments, or a request for such has been submitted to the courts.

Chapter 2 Activity grant applications

Article 4. The application

1. An activity grant can be requested for either a) the CUOS's financial year, which runs from 1 January to 31 December, or b) the applicant's financial year, provided that at least 6 months of the applicant's financial year falls within the CUOS's financial year and that the organization has a budget and activity plan for that year.

Article 5. Required information

1. Applications for activity grants shall only be processed by the Student Board if the organization provides the following information:
 - a. A complete application form;
 - b. A cover letter detailing the background to the application;
 - c. A policy plan and an activity plan for the relevant year;
 - d. A current budget, drawn up in Microsoft Excel or a similar spreadsheet programme, with explanatory notes for the relevant year;
 - e. A communications plan for the relevant year;
 - f. An overview or appointment decision of the Board's membership (including details of their positions and their degree programme at the UG).
proof of enrolment at the UG for all those involved who are studying at the UG (a *proof of registration* manual can be downloaded from <http://www.rug.nl/education/nederlandse-studenten/inschrijven/verklaring-inschrijving>).
 - PhD candidates can provide a written statement from their affiliated organization as evidence of their appointment. Research assistants and research students are not considered as students for the purposes of these Regulations.
 - g. The last two approved annual secretarial and financial reports issued by the organization*.
 - h. The organization's certified Articles of Association*.
 - i. An extract from the Chamber of Commerce.
 - j. If applicable, an overview of the number of members of the organization, broken down by members who are UG students and members who are not, including an overview of the various possible forms of membership.

* If the Student Board already has the most recent versions of the documents described in subparagraphs h and i, then these documents do not have to be resubmitted.

2. If deemed necessary for an accurate assessment of the application, the Student Board may ask the applicant to provide further clarifications or supplementary details.

Article 6. Deadline for submitting applications

1. 31 January is the closing date for the submission of applications for activity grants.

Article 7. Processing the application

1. The Student Board shall only process grant applications if they meet all the conditions described in these Regulations, including articles 5 and 6.
2. The Student Board shall inform the applicant whether their application will be processed within two weeks of receipt.

Chapter 3. Decision on the provisional activity grant

Article 8. Assessment

1. When deciding whether to award a grant, the the Student Board shall consider the following:
 - a. The content and quality of the policy and activity plan;
 - b. The nature and feasibility of the organization's objectives;
 - c. The value of the relevant activities for students;
 - d. The quality (e.g. artistic quality) and level of the relevant activities;
 - e. The organizational approach (professionalism, feasibility, timeframe, etc.);
 - f. The continuity of the organization (its board and its board's work, annual activities);
 - g. The communication plan;
 - h. The costs and income, their justification, and the actual need for support in relation to the organization's existing financial resources;
 - i. The capability and dedication needed for the organization to generate its own income;
 - j. The ratio between the grant requested and the organization's own income and expenditure.
2. The Student Board shall not decide on the amount of the provisional activity grant until the conditions for the activity specified under point 1 have been satisfied. The following weighting factors shall apply in addition to the applicant's financial needs:
 - a. The discipline involved (e.g. 'dance', 'theatre', or 'multimedia'), whereby Usva will endeavour to support as many different disciplines as possible, and whereby multidisciplinary and interdisciplinarity will be valued particularly highly;
 - b. The target group for the activities, i.e. that the organization represents all students as a whole and emphatically not one particular faculty or student association;
 - c. The originality and innovativeness of the activities;

- d. The inspirational and motivational impact of the activities, i.e. that the activities encourage students to think differently about art and culture, or introduce students to forms of art that they would not normally consider;
- e. The value of the activities to the cultural life of students in Groningen;
- f. The opportunities that the activities provide for students to develop professionally or personally.

Article 9. Decision to award a provisional activity grant

1. The Student Board will inform the CUOS of its assessment. The CUOS will decide whether to award the grant in consultation with the Student Board and based on their recommendations.
2. The Student Board shall inform the applicant of the provisional decision regarding their application within six weeks of the deadline for submitting applications.
3. The CUOS retains the right to reject grant applications, stating its reasons, on grounds not mentioned in these Regulations, without exception.
4. The Student Board and the CUOS may decide to exclude certain costs from a grant, whereby they will inform the applicant of their reasons for doing so.
5. Subject to certain limitations, the CUOS may allocate a provisional activity grant.
6. A decision to award a provisional grant shall include:
 - a. The amount of the provisional activity grant;
 - b. The conditions that the organization must meet for the grant to be approved as definitive at the end of the financial year.
7. A decision not to award a provisional grant will include the reasons for this decision.
8. While the decision to deny a grant is considered final, the applicant does have the option of filing an objection against it.

Article 10. Accepting a provisional activity grant

1. If, within two weeks of the receipt of the decision as described in Article 9, Paragraph 5, a grant applicant fails to reject a provisional grant awarded to it, the provisional grant will be deemed to have been accepted and the grant year will enter into application.
2. By accepting the provisional grant, the grant applicant commits to the following:
 - a. All of Usva's promotional materials, including flyers, posters, and programme booklets, should include the Usva logo in the appropriate colour, as described on the website <http://www.usva.nl/subsidies/download-logo/>. They should also be in a clear and readable format.
 - b. The Usva logo must be the same size as any other logos appearing, and in any case no smaller than one percent of the total surface area of the flyer, poster or page.
 - c. The Usva shall be referred to as the Usva Student Cultural Centre, whereby Usva may not be written in capitals.

Article 11. Changes during the term of the provisional grant

1. An organization that has received a grant shall consult with the Student Board if any of the activities described in the activity grant change substantially, or if any of the following occur:

- a. More or fewer activities will be conducted during the grant year;
- b. The amounts or cost items in the budget change significantly;
- c. The organization faces major financial or organizational problems;
- d. The organization is dissolved or changes its Articles of Association.

2. In the event of a substantial alteration, the Student Board can provide fresh recommendations to the CUOS, which may re-evaluate the provisional grant decision.

Chapter 4. Decision on the definitive activity grant

Article 12. Required information

1. Once a grant has been awarded, the organization shall provide a conclusive report (via cuos.aanvraag@rug.nl) to the Student Board and the CUOS no later than 1 February of the following year. The final report must in any case include:
 - a. The organization's most recently approved annual report;
 - b. A substantive evaluation of the activities organized in the grant year, including at least the following items:
 - I. whether or not the objectives were achieved;
 - II. the quality of the activities;
 - III. the audience reached by the activities;
 - IV. the performance as regards to the predetermined timeframe and work plan;
 - V. the organizational processes (division of tasks);
 - c. An overview of the total number of participants for each activity, or the number of members and the percentage of UG students among them;
 - d. An annual financial report, including the result for the year in which the grant was awarded to the organization, along with a breakdown of the awarded funds;
 - e. Copies of all promotional material used;
 - f. If the Student Board established additional conditions or restrictions for the provisional grant as described in Article 9, paragraphs 3 and 5, the organization must also provide additional justification concerning these (insofar as these have not already been addressed).
2. The Student Board has the right to request additional documents from the organization, such as receipts for costs, in order to assess the use of the grant.

Article 13. Decision to award a definitive activity grant

1. The CUOS will decide on the definitive grant in consultation with and based on the recommendations of the Student Board, within 4 weeks of receipt of the documents described in Article 12. This decision will be made known to the grant recipient along with the following information:
 - a. The amount of the definitive activity grant;
 - b. If the amount of the definitive grant differs from the amount of the provisional grant: a justification.
2. The CUOS may reduce the final grant compared to the provisional grant or set it to €0 for any of the following reasons:

- a. The documents described in Article 12 are submitted to the Student Board too late or if they are incomplete;
 - b. The activity for which the provisional activity grant was awarded was not or only partially carried out;
 - c. In the opinion of the Student Board, the activity failed sufficiently to meet the objectives described in the grant application;
 - d. The organization did not properly account for or justify the activities carried out and the associated income and expenditure;
 - e. The organization provided incorrect or incomplete information and the provision of correct or complete information would have led to a different decision regarding to the award of the grant;
 - f. The determined grant amount was not justified and the organization was aware of this or should have been aware of this;
 - g. The activity did not meet the obligations attached to the grant.
- 3.** If the CUOS reduces the definitive grant compared to the provisional grant or sets it to €0, the provisionally awarded grant will be partially or fully recouped.

Article 14. Starting date

These regulations shall enter into force on 1 September 2022, replacing all prior Regulations pertaining to Activity grants for Cultural organizations.