

1. Introduction

Welcome to the Princeton University Student Group Projects Board Guide, designed for student group leaders and event organizers who are considering or planning on applying for Projects Board funds. These pages contain the principles and guidelines the Board uses when deciding whether a group merits funding. The purpose is to educate you in advance so you know what to do to prepare and what to expect when you present at our meetings. Hopefully by applying our principles to your proposal, your meeting with us will be both short and successful! If you have any questions regarding this guide, please direct them to author and board member Jackson Murley '06 (jmurley@princeton.edu) or to the current board co-chairs.

2. The Funds

USG Projects Board – \$55,000 per yr

[ODUS](#) (Dean Dunne) – discretionary

Venture Fund – \$24,000 per yr

Publications – \$15,000 per yr

WWS (only public policy related) – \$10,000 per yr

[PACE Center](#) – variable

Note the [Bildner Fund](#) (diversity, new initiatives) and the [Trustees' Alcohol Initiative](#) (funding non-alcohol alternative events on Thursday and Saturday nights) and the [James Madison Program](#) (political issues) are three other major student group event funds with application & approval processes independent of the Projects Board.

3. General Guidelines

To avoid common mistakes and misunderstandings and help make the application process run for smoothly, keep these guidelines in mind.

- The Projects Board is a funding option of LAST RESORT. We expect you to have made a concerted effort at securing revenue elsewhere, whether from academic or administrative departments, foundations, corporations, ticket sales, advertising sales, alumni, or elsewhere. The Board is far more amenable to giving money to those who have made a valiant effort to raise funds from other sources, especially to those who have succeeded! [Click here](#) for a sample fundraising letter to a department (courtesy of Akwaaba).
- All events must be OPEN and ADVERTISED to the ENTIRE undergraduate student body.
- DO NOT COME TO THE BOARD AT THE LAST MINUTE. In the past year some groups came to us for last minute large requests, having already made purchases and signed contracts. In some cases we still made large budget cuts, leaving the group to scramble to secure emergency funding, go in debt, or cancel events. Coming at the last minute makes our cuts more painful both for us and for you; schedule your Projects Board meeting several weeks, if not months before your event!
- KEEP IT SIMPLE, student groups. You are free to make high cost proposals, including glossy full-color magazines, lavish banquets with a budget of thousands for decorations, or speakers and performers with sky-high fees, but if there's not a compelling reason to make those expenditures, expect us to make large cuts to your proposal. It's nothing personal; we have a large number of campus groups, many of whom struggle to be financially independent and make

ends meet, and a limited amount of funding available. We want to make sure Princeton events enrich as deeply as possible and reach as many as possible. We examine appropriateness of per person costs and of the venue selection. See our [meeting preparation page](#) for other criteria.

- USG funds do not go towards capital expenditures and food. However the other funds with which the Projects Board is affiliated (e.g. PACE center and ODUS funds) may pay for food, and on rare occasions capital expenditures, so you should still include them in your proposal.
- Itemize your budget as much as possible. BE SPECIFIC. The less specific your proposal, the more questions the Board will ask and the more uneasy it will be about giving funds.
- We like cross-group collaboration (e.g. joint a cappella shows, Seoul-Soul Food Study Break)! We encourage you to reach out to other groups in your event planning process.
- Don't make orders and expenditures for publicity before your Projects Board meeting. The Board allows up to 250 B&W copies for events. We provide ways to advertise your event on major Princeton websites, and often approve funding for newspaper advertising. Don't make purchases before consulting with us!
- Regarding advertising using color posters we have a 150/150 rule: the Projects Board may approve use of the USG color printer for up to 150 copies (e-mail the co-chairs for an exact allotment), or if the color printer is broken, may approve spending of no more than \$150 at Kinkos, Triangle, Pequod, Printek, etc. The criteria: usually multi-day events and new student groups get access, others at the discretion of the PB.
- What happens after your presentation to the Board? After all presentations for the weekly meeting the Board makes funding decisions. One of the co-chairs will inform you of the decision for your group via e-mail later that evening or on the following day. If you're not fully funded or are asked to revise your proposal (hopefully you came to the Board well before your event) the Board members will gladly help you find lower cost options.
- Finally, don't forget to fill out a POST-EVENT EVALUATION FORM, found on our website, www.princeton.edu/~pboard/!

4. Publications

Student publications ideally enlighten, entertain, and expose Princetonians to new perspectives. Established, well-read student publications have achieved financial self-sufficiency through advertising revenue, subscription fees and/or donations from alumni and foundations. The Projects Board aims to steer innovative new publications towards self-sufficiency, and expects a full effort on the part of the publication to attract more revenue and donations. However, the Board realizes that in a smaller advertising market like Princeton, more often than not supply surpasses demand for advertising, particularly when overall economic conditions are weak. For this reason, and thanks to the lobbying effort of the 2003 co-chairs, in spring 2004 ODUS, the WWS department, and the office of the Vice President for Campus Life jointly established a Publications Fund, administered by the Projects Board, to support new or struggling publications. But even this is limited and the Projects Board in general only provides grants for meeting printing costs. Many publications are founded with a burst of enthusiasm and then wither away when the founders graduate. Putting together the first issue is only half the challenge; the other half is creating a lasting structure and recruiting committed underclassmen so the publication can endure. This is where Projects Board can help!

- Projects Board provides grants to publications depending on the soundness of its plan to achieve self-sufficiency, its means of distribution – we much prefer centralized distribution and an updated website to door to door – and amount of effort made to find other funding sources.

- Projects Board usually *only* provides grants to partially cover printing costs. We will *not* pay for capital expenditures like art materials, software, etc. Only ODUS funds can go towards capital expenditures. Debt relief is primarily provided through ODUS.
- We expect publications to maintain a website, have an active Business or Advertising Manager and have substantial underclassmen representation while receiving funding.
- The kiosk program is growing this fall, with several in Frist, and eventually in all the residential colleges. Placement of publications in kiosks is mandatory if you receive PB funds.
- Do *not* expect us to fully fund a glossy color magazine. It is true the Projects Board is more generous with new or resurrected publications, in order to allow them to attract a base of contributors and staff, but even then we make cuts as necessary to ensure the expenditures are not surpassing self-sufficient existing publications of the same type. This is to be fair to publication staffs expending a lot of effort to achieve self-sufficiency. Color and glossy paper, if funded at all, is usually restricted to the cover and back page. Black & White on newsprint (or other non-glossy paper) is standard for interior pages. Of course when you're self-sufficient it can be as fancy as you like!
- Publications are funded on either a semester basis or issue-by-issue basis. If we fund you issue-by-issue, it often is because we believe you could be making a more valiant effort to raise revenue/cut costs and we expect you to reduce your request by the next issue. If we fund you on a semester basis we expect you to make progress but we're satisfied with your short-term plan.
- Any events associated with a student publication are treated under event guidelines.

5. Performing Arts Groups

Princeton is lucky to include in its student body a diverse and talented array of performers, from singers to actors to dancers to jugglers and many more. Princeton also is home to many dancing and theatre companies and singing groups. Though the University provides general support for these groups (like providing rooms for the a cappella groups), student activities fees do not financially sustain these groups; rather the groups are expected to break even with their expenses by charging for performances either on or off campus.

- Where there are significant expenses for a performance, the Board usually expects the group to sell tickets. Often the ticket revenues cover expenses. For ticketed performances sometimes the Board will bail out groups if attendance (and hence ticket revenue) is unexpectedly low, but *only* if such an arrangement is made with the Board *prior to the performance date*. For example, if diSiac doesn't sell as many tickets as they expected, we aren't responsible. But, if they came to us before their show, and told us about this crazy experimental show they were doing that they didn't think would sell as well as normal, but was a really important artistic challenge for their dancers and would certainly expose their audiences to new forms of dance, then we would agree to make up their shortfall (often, only up to a certain dollar amount).
- For new performing arts groups the Board has provided support for initial performances, including permitting use of the USG color poster printer for publicity, funding initial capital expenditures and funding little refreshments (note the last two may only be funded by ODUS). Funded refreshments should be advertised along with performance publicity, as from our perspective their purpose is to bring in a greater initial audience.

6. Events– Speakers, Cultural Banquets, Parties, Heritage Months

Events, including banquets, speakers, parties, cultural heritage months and the like, make up the bulk of Projects Board funding. We fund events that deepen diversity (of thought, culture, etc.)

and have a positive effect on the undergraduate experience. Follow the below guidelines and preemptively separate the wheat from the chaff, and your proposal will likely be funded.

➤ **Speakers:** We expect that you have negotiated the speaker to the lowest honorarium + travel expenses level possible, and that you have agreed to provide an honorarium only at the request of the speaker (don't offer when you don't have the money to back it up). Never forget *it is an honor for your speaker simply to be invited to speak at Princeton*; many reputable guests, such as Sandra Day O'Connor and Colin Powell, have come to speak at Princeton without receiving any honorarium. Note that Princeton professors are not supposed to receive any honorarium for speaking at Princeton in accordance with University policy. There is no absolute cutoff for maximum honorarium, but in general once your request of honorarium + travel expenses for a speaker surpasses \$1500, the benefits of bringing your speaker to campus versus the costs will undergo a high level of scrutiny. Depending on the reputation and prestige of your speaker, high-level scrutiny may be applied to smaller requests. As for paying for a hotel, note that with a voucher from ODUS speakers may stay at Nassau Inn for a reduced price.

➤ **Post-Speech Receptions/Dinners:** ODUS often funds small receptions after speeches, where more students can discuss the topic with one another and the speaker. To reduce costs we prefer you get your food from a supermarket like Wegmans. As for dinners, there are occasionally requests for the Board to pay for a small group of students (often the student organization's executive board) to go out with the speaker to eat at one of the most expensive restaurants in Princeton. We try to discourage this; to better fit the priorities of the Board we often ask that dinners be instead held in residential college private dining halls in collaboration with the college administration. The college might pay for the dinner or simply a dessert/fruit table, or the Board might fund a dessert/fruit table. This way the number of students impacted triples for the same cost!

➤ **Cultural Banquets:** Cultural banquets are inclusive events, an opportunity for an ethnic/cultural student group to share its culture with each other and all other interested undergraduates. The model banquet request: a cultural experience, with ethnic cuisine and student performance, educational panels or videos describing cultural traditions, and cultural garb and decoration; the setup and takedown work done by the student group; a well-itemized breakdown of the costs; and the total request under \$1500, with a per person cost well under \$7. We've had requests of over \$10,000, with minimal cultural experience, of which several thousand was allotted to decorations, silverware and gifts to the guests, without any cost breakdown! We don't like making massive cuts to unwieldy banquet proposals, so we've decided to present you with a banquet request meeting all criteria of our 'model' – [click here](#) (courtesy of SASA). Internal banquets are a different affair. They often consist of honoring group members, such as bidding farewell to seniors, and are not focused on spreading cultural awareness. Most often the students pay their own way for internal banquets and the Board does not fund them, as these events are often not open to the whole student body.

➤ **Parties:** Two important characteristics of Board-funded parties– 1. They have strong alternative cultural elements (by alternative we mean outside the U.S. popular mainstream culture). 2. They are non-alcoholic. Most such parties planned for Thursday and Saturday nights are paid for by the Trustees' Anti-Alcohol Initiative, which has a large endowment to support just such parties; if you qualify, you should apply to this fund before or concurrently with your Board application. If your party must be held on a Friday or your group holds multiple such parties each year it is likely you will need to apply to the Projects Board, which is less generous

in funding than the [Trustees' Initiative](#). Again, only ODUS can pay for food and capital expenditures.

- **Heritage Months:** Cultural Heritage Months require major planning efforts and often proposals to the Board are filled with fantastic events. While we mostly evaluate these months on an event-by-event basis, the overall expense of the heritage month is also a factor. If total heritage month expenses are well over \$10,000, you can expect the Board to set a cap on its contribution; if you want more events try in advance to secure more outside funding. Make your presentation well before your month begins.
- **Performers, Film Screenings, etc.:** The Board funds many other types of events that student groups propose. As a general guideline, try to keep your costs as low as possible and report to the Board ways in which you've cut costs!

7. Community Service

In a recent addition to Board procedure, a representative from the PACE center, which is focused on funding events and projects with community service aspects – even by groups which are not primarily community service groups (e.g. performing arts groups) – attends the first meeting of every month to hear community service proposals. The fund was created to enable student groups to do community service activities as part of their mission. The PACE center has looser rules on funding food and capital expenditures than the Board-administered funds. The PACE center also has fewer restrictions as to where the events may be held (all Projects Board sponsored events must be on campus); however, the center is especially eager to support projects that impact the local community. The Board listens to the presentations and makes recommendations to the PACE representative, who makes the final funding decision. Recently funded projects include KASA's PALS program and the annual stream clean up of Water Watch (whose main goal is raising awareness).