

How Funding Works

Here at Leeds University Union (LUU), clubs, societies, volunteering projects and all other Student Activities are entitled to apply to the Union for funding to help to support their activities. This year we received a budget of £147,000 to be allocated out in grant funding.

Details of how these funds were allocated can be found on the website.

All of the groups in the Union apply to one central pot. This makes the allocation system fair and means that every group is treated equally.

What funding is for

Union funding should only ever be a subsidy for an activity – it should never be the sole or main method of income generation. As student activities, there are many ways that you can generate income from membership fees to session fees to socials to balls to fundraisers.

If you can generate all the money that you need in order to pay for your activities, you shouldn't be asking for funding.

Where funding comes from

All funding that groups receive comes from the profits generated by the commercial services here at the Union – i.e. our Shops and Bars. If we have a bad year commercially, this has a knock-on effect for the amount of money that is available for groups.

This is one of the reasons that we work with groups to try and make them as self-sufficient as possible. In that way, their activities are not jeopardised if the Union isn't making enough profit from shops and bars.

Who funding is for

Funding is available for all of the 210 plus activities we support at LUU. However, there are two things to bear in mind:

1. It is a limited pot of cash – not an endless reserve.
2. All grant allocations are linked and affect one another.

So, if your group applies for £1,000 and you don't get that, it is not because we don't like your group or we're trying to make your life difficult. It is because we are trying to balance what is available with what people want.

All group allocations are reliant on each other. When you ask for funding to subsidise your holiday to Germany, or your flights to Singapore, you're not asking some faceless bank – you are asking every other student group in the Union to pay for it for you. The £1,000 you take is £1,000 that other groups can't have.

As has been stated above in the *What Funding is For* section, if your income exceeds your expenditure we won't give you any grant funding – because you don't actually need it. But other groups do, because they're not so fortunate as to be able to cover all of their costs with the income they can raise. This is not because these other groups aren't trying – it's may just be that they can only recruit limited numbers whilst other groups can recruit more members because their activities are more popular.

Why don't we allocate via number of members?

We take into account the number of members a group has but only to get a feeling about how a group is functioning and whether or not it needs more help from us.

We could split the grants pot and do an allocation on the basis of number of members. This would mean currently that:

- We have approximately 12,000 members of groups at Leeds University Union
- £190,000 divided by 12,000 = £16 (approx)
- Each group would get that amount per member

However, we don't use this system for a number of reasons.

Firstly, there are a number of groups who have large memberships by the nature of what they are – departmental groups especially. This means that they have a natural advantage over certain other groups.

Secondly, those groups with more members have more opportunity to generate income than those with few members – to allocate in this way would doubly penalise those groups.

You could also suggest that people would try and recruit as many members as possible even if their groups couldn't accommodate them simply to get more funding for the select few who could do the activity.

For a similar reason we don't simply take the pot and split it equally by the number of groups we have.

In conclusion all groups need to realise that they should be sensible and realistic when applying for funding – all of the time asking themselves, "Do I need this funding or could I generate it in other ways? If, by taking this, am I affecting someone else's ability to do what they want to do?"

As a Union, we would love to give you as much money as you feel you need. However, we need to realise that, with the best will in the world, there will never be enough funding to give everyone exactly what they want.