SFSS Accessibility Grant Guidelines

The SFSS Accessibility Grant is used in two ways. It is used to make events more accessible. Or it is used to carry out accessibility projects. The funds can be spent on any of the following.

* One-time purchases
* Accessibility services
* Short-term accommodations

You have to provide the following information when you apply for the SFSS Accessibility Grant.

* Information on the event or project
* What accessibility services or funding is needed
* How much you expect to pay for it

Please note that the SFSS needs at least 10 working days to process an Accessibility Grant request. This does not include the day you put in the request and the day of the event. **You cannot submit a request for funding after an event has happened. You will not be paid back for an event after it has happened.**

This document outlines the process for using the Accessibility Grant. This includes the following documents.

* Application
* Criteria
* Appeal form
* Post-event report

The process is meant to be easy to understand and follow. If you have questions or feedback, please contact the Accessibility Assistant at accessibility@sfss.ca.

The grant is intended for the following type of events.

* Events that are either online or in person
* Events that are short or long, from a few hours to many days
* Events such as workshops, seminars, conferences, socials, protests, and other student-run events

The grant is intended for the following type of projects.

* Projects that will make a permanent space on campus more accessible
* Projects that need accessibility services while they are being carried out
* Projects that need accessibility considerations and accommodations when they are finished

The SFSS is committed to accessibility. We want to ensure that events and projects are as accessible as possible to as many people as possible. [You may find our accessibility standard policy on our website.](https://sfss.ca/about/documents/)

# Application Form

In this section, you are asked to give information in the application about the event or project and the accommodations you need. The SFSS can then make sure that student money is going to help those who need it.

Applications must be submitted with at least 10 working days of notice before the event or project date. This allows for time to secure the funding or make an appeal. Fill out the form as thoroughly as you can. Watch for email on the status of your application.

If you are working with one of our vendors then you can just put that cost in section 3 of the application form. You can estimate the cost by checking [the list of vendors on our website for estimates and contact information](https://sfss.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Accessibility-Vendor-List-Apr-20-2021.pdf).

If you are working with a vendor not on our list then you need to **attach documents of the projected costs**.

## 1.1: Applicant Information

In this section, the SFSS collects information on the application form and uses it in the following ways.

* Your name is used to identify you.
* Your SFU ID number is used to confirm that you are an SFSS member.
* Your email address is used to communicate with you.
* Your phone number is needed only as a backup for communication.

You will be asked if you have any accessibility needs when receiving a response from us. This can include any of the following or other kinds of accommodation.

* An email response in large text
* An email response that is screen reader-friendly
* Phone call response rather than email response
* Extra time to submit an appeal (you would usually have two working days)

## 1.2: Event or Project Information

In this section, the SFSS collects information about the event or project. This includes the following information.

* Date
* Location
* Start and end times
* Name of organizing group
* Name of the event or project

If a field on the form does not apply then write ‘N/A.’ If the event is online then write ‘online’ for the location.

You will be asked to describe the event or project. You will be asked for the names of any groups that will be working with you on the event or project. You can give as little or as much information as you like. But please state the barriers you are working to remove or reduce. This information helps us to make sure your event or project follows the guidelines. It can also help get your application approved without the need to appeal the decision.

This section also asks what your relationship is to the event. You may be attending the event, organizing the event, or both. If you are attending only then you will be the contact person for the accommodation. But if you are also the organizer of the event, it is important for us to know.

## 1.3: Accessibility Grant Request Details

In this section, you will make the request for accommodations. You will be asked if you have read the Accessible Events Checklist. Your answer to this question does not affect your application. But this checklist is a helpful resource for the types of supports that people might need.

This section is where you name the vendors you want to work with and look at costs. [The SFSS has a list of vendors we prefer to work with for accessibility services](https://sfss.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Accessibility-Vendor-List-July-20-2021.pdf). If you work with a SFSS vendor, you can request that the vendor bill us directly. This means you don’t have to pay for it yourself and wait to get paid back.

But you can also use the funding to work with whatever group you want. If you use an external vendor, the cost of the accessibility service you are requesting must be reasonable. You will also need to pay the cost yourself and get paid back. If you are working with a vendor not on our list then you need to **attach documents of the projected costs**.

This is also where you can let us know if you need our help. We can help you connect to vendors. You may be able to get an estimate from [the prices listed on our website](https://sfss.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Accessibility-Vendor-List-July-20-2021.pdf), but need help contacting the vendor. Or you may not be able to get an estimate from the list and need help to contact a vendor.

The Accessibility Assistant can connect you by email. They can confirm that you can begin to organize and receive the services. If you are not able to get an estimate from and need help contacting one of the vendors, please email the Accessibility Assistant at accessibility@sfss.ca or call the SFSS at 778-782-3870.

After this, you will fill in the accommodations you are requesting. This includes the accommodation, the projected costs, and any other details. Additional details may include the number of a given accommodation or an explanation of extra costs.

## 1.4: Additional Details

In this section, you can add any additional accommodation requests that could not fit into the previous section. If you need more space, please email the Accessibility Assistant at accessibility@sfss.ca.

This section also provides space to give any other details about your application. You do not have to give any extra details. But if there is any additional information that might be of use to SFSS, it should go here.

## 1.5: Application Summary

This is a summary of the application process.

**Section 1**: Fill out personal information and state accessibility needs.

**Section 2**: Fill out all event or project information and details.

**Section 3**: Fill out list of accommodations requested with costs.

**Section 4**: Provide any additional details.

Remember to **attach documents of the projects costs if using an external vendor**.

# Review Process

The SFSS tries to make sure that all accommodation requests for members are granted. Applications are not excluded based on the number of guests or attendant requests that are already in place. But we still need to evaluate and understand where student money is going. We need to make sure it is used effectively. These are the criteria (or conditions) we use to evaluate applications.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **Description** |
| Is the applicant a member? | Only SFSS members can apply for the grant. Non-SFSS members can use the accommodations. |
| Was the application submitted with 10 working days notice? | Grant applications need to be submitted with 10 working days notice to be processed. |
| Is the application completely filled out? Are all the important details covered?\* \*The SFSS may contact applicants if information is missing or unclear. An appeal with the missing details can be submitted. | The following details need to be included. * All applicable event info
* Anticipated barriers
* Requested accommodations
 |
| Are cost estimates close to those expected for the type of accommodation? | Unexpected costs will not result in a denial of the request. But the SFSS may contact to clarify these costs. |
| Does the event follow Accessibility Policy Principles? | The grant cannot be used for events that exclude people with disabilities or promote hate. |
| Do stated groups or guest speakers follow Accessibility Policy Principles? | The grant cannot be used for events with associations that exclude people with disabilities or promote hate. |
| Does the accommodation address the stated barrier? | The SFSS trusts applicants to know what accommodations are needed. But the SFSS will contact the applicant to clarify details on accommodations if needed. |

Your application is reviewed to see if it meets these conditions. Requests for $3,000 or less go to the Assistant to evaluate. Requests for $3,000 or more go to the Committee to evaluate.

Your application can be denied if one or more of the conditions are not met. In this case, the Assistant will contact you. The Assistant may give you advice or consult with you. The Assistant may invite you to submit an appeal, as described in section 3.

Whether your application is approved or denied, it will be presented to the Accessibility Committee. The Assistant presents your application. They include the criteria and any appeals. This may be done before, during or after the event or project. This does not affect your application. This information is used to evaluate how the Assistant handled your application. This will help improve the process for future applications.

# Appeals

An appeal of your application can be made. In the case of error or misunderstanding, you may be invited to submit an appeal. The process is described below for applications received with 10 workings days notice.

The SFSS will return your denied application with at least five working days notice before the event. The application will have the criteria attached. This will show you where the error is. The Assistant may offer advice or speak to you to make sure the issue is corrected.

If you want to appeal then **you need to submit the appeal form** with at least three working days before the event. **You should also attach your original application to the appeal form**.

The appeal form has a large box for text. Please write any and all changes you want to make to your application. Please make the information as clear and complete as you can. You may not be able to make a second appeal.

# Post-Event

When your application is approved, you will get a post-event report form. You need to submit the post-event report in order to be reimbursed, or paid back. This report makes sure the accommodations were used and were effective. It also gives you the chance to give feedback on the process. Your feedback will not affect being reimbursed for costs.

You will need to attach proof of payment to your post-event report. This will give us a record of the money spent. Once your report is submitted, the SFSS will reimburse you as quickly as possible. You will be notified when the request is approved and the cheque has been mailed to you.

Sometimes there will be changes to the setup of events. These can happen between the time the application is submitted and the time the event occurs. In most cases these changes do not affect the amount of funding for the event.

But **the amount of funding may change in the following two cases**.

1. The changes mean that the event no longer meets the conditions in the Accessibility Grant Application Evaluation Criteria.
2. The cost or presence of accessibility services has changed.

In the first case, the SFSS reserves the right to decrease or withdraw funding for an event. The SFSS may choose not to use this right and allow the event to receive the requested funding.

In the second case, the SFSS reserves the right to adjust the funding. This may be done to meet the costs of the accessibility services that were present at an event. They may increase funding if costs have increased. They may decrease funding if costs have decreased. Again, the SFSS may choose not to use this right and allow the event to receive the requested funding.

Some changes will not disqualify you if your event still meets the criteria and the cost of accessibility services has not changed. The following changes will not affect your application if it is already approved.

* Change of event date
* Changes to the speaker list or groups involved
* Changes to the event schedule or other changes
* Whether the accommodations were effective or used

If you have any questions or concerns about any of these guidelines, please contact the Accessibility Assistant at accessibility@sfss.ca