

CSP Grant Allocation Proposal 16/17

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Background

Club, Society & Project (CSP) budgeting takes place during January to March of each academic year. The process is separated from organisational budgeting owing to the pressures on club volunteers during their exams, which take place during April-June of the current year.

A meeting of the Finance and Risk committee discussed an early draft of this paper on 15 December 2015. There was a recognition that an increase would break a standing habit, and it was requested that the Committee have sight of a redrafted paper prior to coming to the Trustee Board. This has, unfortunately, not been possible, however, as the process will start to take place from Tuesday 19 January, there is a pressing need for the Trustee Board to make a decision.

The existing Grant allocation

Original Budget 10/11	342,706.25
Original Budget 11/12	359,200.00
Original Budget 12-13	322,380.00
Original Budget 13-14	318,280.00
Original Budget 14-15	331,226.80
Original Budget 15-16	331,607.78

In the last academic year, the Trustee Board awarded £331,607.78 to the CSP budgeting process, a slight increase on the amount allocated for the past three years. This allocation, owing to the presence of just under 350 budget holders, regularly underspends by c. £15,000 in a given year. Unspent funds are recalled to the Union's general reserves.

Historic Grant allocations have been significantly higher, with the amount available significantly reduced in 2012/13, perhaps owing to the pressures on the organisation as a whole. Recent years have slightly increased the allocation, but not yet to the level before the 2012/13 session.

Using the CPI rates from the past few years, the following 'equivalent subsidy' figures are obtained.

Year	Grant Allocation	Interest corrected Grant 16/17
2012	£322,380.00	£345,057.18
2013	£318,280.00	£331,293.17
2014	£331,226.80	£336,163.53
2015	£331,607.78	£331,707.26

In other areas, such as the increases to staffing in the Student Development, Marketing, and Systems department, the Board have seen fit to increase the level of expenditure. Club & Society turnover & activity has increased significantly in recent years, with little commensurate increase in funding available.

Destination of the funding – CSPB-B

The CSPB-B funding pot is allocated to clubs where the activity is used to develop members past what is required for the club to run. This could include participation events, attendance at conferences, additional training for club volunteers, among a wide range of other activities.

During budgeting for 15/16, a total of **£12,923.17** was allocated to 56 clubs, out of applications for funding totaling **£83,161.55** from 216 distinct clubs.

The budgeting mission statement passed by the Trustee Board in October 2014 states: "... Participation is our primary goal...", and also contains reference to assisting our members in achieving their potential and supporting the physical and mental well-being of our student membership.

A piece of research into Sports provision at Imperial was commissioned in November 2015, and the results fed back on 11 January 2016. It highlighted a general priority from the student body to "make sport more available for everyone to play", with a secondary priority from some groups of "providing greater support for existing sports teams".

The feedback from the research is being worked into a joint sports strategy between the Union and Sport Imperial over the next few months, but there are significant barriers in terms of time, cost and distance to Imperial students' participation in sport.

Although the research focussed mainly on sports provision, anecdotal contact with club officers has shown that this is matched in non-sports clubs.

As it is anticipated that there will be goals within the strategy of supporting clubs better to run more participation and development events, it would be useful to consider increasing the subsidy available for this type of activity. There is therefore a clear destination for a inflation-matched increase of funding – to allow more new, inclusive activity to take place in CSPs.

CSP Printing Costs

Last year club printing was free for CSPs. This year we moved over to a credit-based system where the Union guaranteed free printing for black & white core club activity. This was achieved by initially allocating £10 per club, with additional requirements met on an *ad hoc* basis.

There have been some teething issues with the new process, with some clubs reporting delays in print credit being assigned and difficulties accessing the system (which requires a club login).

There has been some under-reporting, resulting in difficulty measuring the actual load of club printing. In talking with the Head of Finance & Resources and the Administration and HR Manager, we generated an estimated full year cost to the Union of CSP printing of around £8,000-10,000.

The service we provide to CSPs in this respect is highly valued, and the effect of the new system appears to have encouraged far more responsible use of the printing service.

Allocations to clubs for printing will be decided in a separate round of the CSP budgeting process, which will allocate only additional funding that has been secured for CSP printing.

I would propose that the Trustee Board allocate an initial increase to the CSP Grant allocation of £8,000 for CSP printing, to be reviewed by the Head of Finance, DPCS & DPFS on receipt of CSP requests.

Recommendations

That the Trustee Board approve:

- **A general CSP Grant allocation of £345,000 to be allocated in accordance with the CSP Budgeting Policy.**
- **A preliminary allocation of £8,000 to be allocated to CSP Printing, with the amount to be reviewed after CSPs have submitted their budgets**