



**NCAA Division II Conference Strategic Priorities Fund
Guidelines and Principles
(last updated December 2023)**

Division II Strategic Planning and Finance Committee Authority.

1. Oversight. The Conference Strategic Priorities Fund is overseen by the Division II Strategic Planning and Finance Committee. Decisions made by the Strategic Planning and Finance Committee related to the Conference Strategic Priorities Fund are final.
2. Action by the Committee. The Strategic Planning and Finance Committee has the right to take action, including the withholding of funding of conference dollars and obtaining full reimbursement of sums paid to the conference, for such irregularities as unauthorized expenses, inaccurate or incomplete reports or other reporting problems.
3. Conference Strategic Priorities Fund “Watch.” The Strategic Planning and Finance Committee has the authority to place a conference on a Conference Strategic Priorities Fund “watch,” if Conference Strategic Priorities Fund Guidelines and Principles are not followed.
4. Focused Review. The Strategic Planning and Finance Committee can request a review that focuses on the prior year and current year Conference Strategic Priorities Fund information, in the event the conference submission is deemed as needing significant rewrite or improvements for two consecutive years. The focused review will be conducted by NCAA staff to offer education and assistance regarding program expectations.
5. Strategic Planning and Finance Committee Audits. The Strategic Planning and Finance Committee is authorized to perform audits of the program to ensure compliance with the program’s guidelines and principles by conferences. The audit may include a review of both conference and institutional records. Conferences are to maintain documentation used by the conference and member institutions related to the use of funds. At a minimum, this documentation should include invoices, cancelled checks and/or copies of bank or credit card statements.
6. Exemplary Enhancements. If a conference participates in an exemplary program, enhancement or special initiative and/or does a great job of documenting expenses in its annual report, the Strategic Planning and Finance Committee may, at its discretion, award up to \$10,000 to that conference (or conferences) to be presented and disbursed at the next Conference Commissioners Association meeting or through some other means of recognition.

In order for a strategy to qualify as exemplary, the initiative or program must be:

- a. A unique initiative conducted for the first time that had a substantial impact/benefit on student-athletes, an institution (or its personnel) or the conference as a whole.
- b. An initiative conducted previously with a substantial increased impact/benefit to student-athletes, an institution (or its personnel) or the conference as a whole.

When completing the report, conferences are to limit the exemplary designation for the conference to not more than one strategy for consideration by the Strategic Planning and Finance Committee.

In order for a report to qualify as exemplary, the conference must have documented expenses on its annual report in a succinct, yet detailed manner; having followed all the reporting requirements, as outlined in these guidelines and principles.

Allocation of Funds.

1. Allocation Amount. The allocation of Conference Strategic Priorities Funds shall provide for a base amount of \$110,000 to each active Division II conference in good standing and a premium amount based on the number of active Division II institutions in the conference during the previous academic year. Attachment A provides the premium amounts based on the number of active member institutions, as well as the total allocations by conference .
2. Enhancement Nature of Uses and Strategic Positioning Outcome Areas. The conference's allocation should be used for enhancements of the Division II or conference strategic plans. In addition, conference strategic priorities fund must be used to fund the five strategic positioning outcome (SPO) areas listed below. Attachment B provides a description of each of the SPO areas.
 - Academics and Life Skills
 - Athletics Operations and Compliance
 - Diversity and Inclusion
 - Game Day and Conference and National Championships
 - Membership and Positioning Initiatives
3. Minimum Allocation. A minimum of 10 percent (50 percent total) must be spent in each of the five SPO areas. The remaining allocation (50 percent total) may be spent in any of the five SPO areas, as determined by the conference.
4. Conference Ceases to Exist: If a Division II conference ceases to exist as an active conference, the Strategic Planning and Finance Committee may allocate premium dollars to the new conference(s) where institutions from the active conference (that ceases to exist) have moved.
5. Formation of a New Active Conference:
 - a. Eligibility. If a new active conference is formed, the conference shall be eligible to receive conference strategic priorities fund dollars in the academic year the conference is considered an active Division II conference by the Division II Membership Committee.

- b. Premium Amount. The premium amount shall be determined based on the number of active member institutions in the conference in the academic year the conference is considered an active Division II conference by the Division II Membership Committee. Institutions leaving a current active member conference for a new active member conference shall not be counted in the current active conference's premium amount.

Conference Reports.

1. Review of Reports. The Division II staff will review reports to determine whether the conference has allocated dollars in a manner that supports the national priorities and initiatives for Division II, including the Division II Strategic Positioning Platform and Strategic Plan. Further, the staff will assess whether goals and objectives for each strategy/initiative were met and how such strategy/initiative reflects or assists in advancing the conference's and the division's strategic plans. If staff has any concerns with the reports, the Strategic Planning and Finance Committee will discuss such concerns and make final decisions.
2. Submission Deadline. On an annual basis, a conference shall be required to submit an electronic report no later than midnight (EST) June 30, for review and approval by the Strategic Planning and Finance Committee. The report shall outline expenditures from the previous year (July 1 through June 30 reporting period). The Strategic Planning and Finance Committee may also review expenditure reports from prior years to determine progress and achievement.
3. Fines. If a conference is late and submits its report between July 1 and July 7, the conference shall be fined \$5,000. For each additional week (as measured by seven consecutive days) that the report form is late, the conference shall be fined \$5,000 per week. The fine will be deducted from the total amount disbursed to the conference in September.

A conference will have the opportunity to appeal any fines assessed for late submission. A letter requesting appeal of such fines must be submitted to the Division II staff no later than 30 days after the system closes at midnight June 30. Requests for appeals will be reviewed by the Strategic Planning and Finance Committee during its August meeting; decisions by the Strategic Planning and Finance Committee are final.

4. Reporting Requirements. As part of the report, the conference shall provide the following:
 - a. The conference's current strategic plan;
 - b. Explanation of the process used by the conference to determine the uses for funds, including titles of the individuals involved in the process.

- c. When reporting uses that have been pre-approved by the Strategic Planning and Finance Committee, the conference will only be required to provide the total amount spent.
- d. When reporting a new use that has not been pre-approved by the Strategic Planning and Finance Committee, the conference shall provide for each strategy/initiative the following information:
 - (1) Strategy. This line should contain the title/descriptor of the strategy.
 - (2) Total Amount Spent. Include only dollars spent from conference strategic priorities fund and do not include dollars from other sources.
 - (3) Strategy Details. In this line, the conference should provide a short explanation (one to two sentences) on ‘what’ the conference spent the dollars on.
 - (4) Spending Breakdown. In this line, the conference should enter the dollar amounts for what was spent, which includes not only a list of the items that funds were used for, but the actual dollar amounts. The spending breakdown should equal the total amount spent. If a conference has more than one expense, it should add multiple lines to the spending breakdown. Conference should not group expenses on one line of the spending breakdown.
 - (5) An explanation on how the strategy supports the division’s and the conference’s strategic plans. In this line, the conference should provide the “why” and the rationale for the strategy. It should be succinct and provide a short statement of how this strategy ties back to the conference’s strategic plan and/or the division’s strategic plan.
 - (6) Outcome. In this line, the conference should explain “how” the conference, school or individual benefited from the funds. This section should not be a restatement of what the dollars were spent on or why they were requested.
- e. An indication on whether—from the conference’s viewpoint—the strategy is exemplary [See ‘Exemplary Enhancements’ for additional detail and explanation].
- f. In the event the conference has funds remaining from the total allocation, the conference will explain the reasons for the unused funds and note that the conference is requesting to carry over funds (or a portion thereof) for the next reporting cycle. Requests to carry over dollars will only be permitted beyond the minimum percentage requirement in each SPO.

- g. Approval of the report by the president who has chaired the conference's presidential group during the reporting year (even if the president has recently rotated off the chair role), as well as the conference commissioner.

Annual Conference Office Audit.

The Strategic Planning and Finance Committee requires conferences to provide confirmation that an annual conference audit has been performed. The audit must include all conference funds.

1. Definition of an Audit. An audit is an independent assessment of the fairness by which a company's financial statements are presented by its management in accordance with U.S. generally accepted auditing standards.
2. External Auditor. The audit must be performed by competent, independent and objective person(s) known as an external auditor.
3. Management Letter. A copy of the signed management letter from the auditing firm confirming the performance of the audit must be submitted to the Strategic Planning and Finance Committee during the conference grant reporting process, as well as any required management action plan, if applicable.

Uses of Conference Strategic Priorities Fund.

1. Permissible and Prohibited Uses. Attachment C provides a list of pre-approved and prohibited uses of the Conference Strategic Priorities Fund dollars, broken out by SPO area.
2. Subgrants.
 - a. Within each SPO area, the conference may designate a portion of its total allocation in the form of subgrants to one or more of its member institutions for specific programs identified by the conference.
 - b. The conference shall keep on file any documentation used by the conference and member institutions related to the conference's subgrant process.
 - d. It will be at the conference's discretion as to whether to permit institutions that are members of the conference and going through the Division II membership process to receive subgrants from the conference strategic priorities fund.
3. Positions in the Conference Office.
 - a. Part-Time Staff/Interns. Conference strategic priorities funds may be used to fund part-time or intern salaries during a particular year, provided the conference can tie the use of funds in this way directly to at least one of the five SPO areas.

- b. Full-time Positions. Full-time positions being funded or created as a part of the conference strategic priorities fund must include a connection to at least one of the five SPO areas. The conference is required to include a timeline to move the position to the conference's base budget. Funding for the position by conference strategic priorities fund may not exceed more than five consecutive years.
4. Consortium. Conferences may establish a "consortium" with one another in one or more of the SPO areas by pooling funds and conducting joint programs.

Annual Discussion by the Conference Commissioners Association.

The Conference Commissioners Association (CCA) will conduct an annual discussion regarding strategic priorities fund reports and report writing, including the sharing of ideas and best practices.

Key Contacts.

Conference Strategic Priorities Fund: Maritza Jones (msjones@ncaa.org) or Jill Waddell (jwaddell@ncaa.org)

Graduation Rates: Sadie Martinez (smartinez@ncaa.org)

Inclusion Office: Amy Wilson (awilson@ncaa.org)

Timeline.

<u>May</u>	Electronic report form made available to conference offices.
<u>June 30</u>	Deadline for conference to submit its annual report, noting expenditures from the previous academic year.
<u>Early July/August</u>	Division II staff reviews annual reports from the previous year. If questions arise regarding reports submitted by a conference, the Division II staff will discuss questions with the Strategic Planning and Finance Committee and the committee may hold a decision for such conference until all questions are resolved.
<u>Mid-August</u>	Teleconferences and/or e-mail communication with conference offices to discuss feedback from the staff and committee (e.g., comments on report forms); any fines; upcoming deadlines; and next steps.
<u>Mid-August</u>	Electronic report system is open for conferences to make revisions to their reports.
<u>Mid-late Sep.</u>	Strategic Planning and Finance Committee convenes via teleconference to make final decisions regarding the conference strategic priorities fund.

Division II Conference Strategic Priorities Fund

Guidelines and Principles

Page No. 7

Late Sep./Early Oct. Conference offices receive notification from the Strategic Planning and Finance Committee regarding conference allocations. Disbursement of checks/electronic deposits to conferences from the NCAA will occur.

2024-25							
(Based on 2023-24 Active Membership)							
Conference	# Schools	Base Amount	Premium Amount	Fines/With holding	Carryover	Total Allocation	10% of Total Allocation
California Collegiate Athletic Association	12	\$110,000	\$48,000			\$158,000	\$15,800
Central Atlantic Collegiate Conference	12	\$110,000	\$48,000			\$158,000	\$15,800
Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association	13	\$110,000	\$54,000			\$164,000	\$16,400
Conference Carolinas	14	\$110,000	\$60,000			\$170,000	\$17,000
East Coast Conference	9	\$110,000	\$30,000			\$140,000	\$14,000
Great American Conference	12	\$110,000	\$48,000			\$158,000	\$15,800
Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference	10	\$110,000	\$36,000			\$146,000	\$14,600
Great Lakes Valley Conference	14	\$110,000	\$60,000			\$170,000	\$17,000
Great Midwest Athletic Conference	13	\$110,000	\$54,000			\$164,000	\$16,400
Great Northwest Athletic Conference	10	\$110,000	\$36,000			\$146,000	\$14,600
Gulf South Conference	13	\$110,000	\$54,000			\$164,000	\$16,400
Lone Star Conference	17	\$110,000	\$78,000			\$188,000	\$18,800
Mid-America Interc Athletics Association	14	\$110,000	\$60,000			\$170,000	\$17,000
Mountain East Conference	11	\$110,000	\$42,000			\$152,000	\$15,200
Northeast-10 Conference	12	\$110,000	\$48,000			\$158,000	\$15,800
Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference	15	\$110,000	\$66,000			\$176,000	\$17,600
Pacific West Conference	10	\$110,000	\$36,000			\$146,000	\$14,600
Peach Belt Conference	9	\$110,000	\$30,000			\$140,000	\$14,000
Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference	18	\$110,000	\$84,000			\$194,000	\$19,400
Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference	15	\$110,000	\$66,000			\$176,000	\$17,600
South Atlantic Conference	12	\$110,000	\$48,000			\$158,000	\$15,800
Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference	13	\$110,000	\$54,000			\$164,000	\$16,400
Sunshine State Conference	11	\$110,000	\$42,000			\$152,000	\$15,200
	289	\$2,530,000	\$1,182,000			\$3,712,000	

# of Active Member Institutions during the Previous Academic Year	Premium Amount
6	\$12,000
7	\$18,000
8	\$24,000
9	\$30,000
10	\$36,000
11	\$42,000
12	\$48,000
13	\$54,000
14	\$60,000
15	\$66,000
16	\$72,000
17	\$78,000
18	\$84,000
19	\$90,000

Division II Strategic Plan

2015-21

The Vision: To prepare student-athletes to graduate and thrive in their lives and careers.

Division II intercollegiate athletics seeks to provide value and significance for its members by supporting the mission of higher education and striking a balance among academic excellence, athletics competition and social growth while its colleges and universities prepare student-athletes to graduate and thrive in their lives and careers.



Academic and Life Skills: *Student-athlete well-being comes first.*

Stresses the importance of student-athlete success and graduation; provides leadership opportunities for student-athletes; protects student-athlete well-being; and develops positive societal attitudes through contributions to community.

Athletics Operations and Compliance: *We serve best when we are at our best.*

Commits conferences and institutions to engaged and functioning compliance and athletics operations, stressing the importance of providing leadership and professional development opportunities, as well as tools and resources to ensure engagement at all levels.

Diversity and Inclusion: *All together.*

Supports the importance, value and benefits of establishing and maintaining an inclusive culture for student-athletes and career opportunities for coaches/administrators from diverse backgrounds. Stresses the importance of commitment by all stakeholders to be champions of this culture.

Game Day and Championships: *An experience of a lifetime.*

Emphasizes the need to promote and enhance a quality student-athlete experience in Division II athletics competition and conference and national championships and to ensure game environments are competitive, safe, positive, respectful and entertaining.

Membership and Positioning Initiatives: *Moving forward with a purpose.*

Supports a commitment to fiscal responsibility and to allocating athletics funds and resources that are consistent with the Division II identity. Emphasizes the importance of attracting and retaining members who support the strategic position and philosophy of Division II; promoting the division's identity through collaborative partnerships/relationships; and strengthening the public's knowledge and appreciation for Division II.

NCAA Division II Conference Grant
Program Ideas

Strategic Positioning Outcome Area—Academics and Life Skills

Ideas/Possible Uses:

- Academic Advising
- Academic Honor Banquets and Awards
- Academic Awards
- Academic Initiatives
- Championships Community Engagement/Event Support
- Community Engagement
- Community Engagement/Volunteer Tracking App
- Conference SAAC Meeting Expenses (e.g., travel, meals, lodging, speakers)
- Conference SAAC Recognition Awards/Gifts
- Conference Scholar-Athlete of the Month/Year Program
- Freshman Orientation and Life Skills Management
- Gambling Education
- Grants for Degree-Completion
- Grants for Summer School
- Health and Safety Education and Resources
- Institutional SAAC grants
- LifeSkills Programming Topics/Workshops (e.g., travel, meals, lodging, speakers)
- Mental Health Support for Student-Athletes
- Motivational Speakers
- Needy Student-Athlete Assistance Fund
- NIL Allowed Services and Education for Student-Athletes
- Nutrition Initiatives
- SAAC Mentor Program
- SAAC Programming
- Senior Awards
- Student-Athlete Leadership Training Expenses (e.g., travel, meals, lodging, speakers)
- Technology/Equipment for Academic Support (e.g., laptops, internet access)
- Tutorial Expenses
- Work-Life Balance Seminars

Strategic Positioning Outcome Area—Athletics Operations and Compliance

Ideas/Possible Uses:

- Annual Retreat Expenses
- Athletic Trainers' Enhancements
- Athletic Trainers' Meeting Expenses
- Campus Visits
- CCACA Meeting Attendance (e.g., travel, meals, lodging, speakers)
- Coaching Seminars
- Compliance Assistant Training
- Compliance Reviews
- Conference Information Directors Association Meeting
- Conference Meetings
- Compliance Meeting Expenses
- Consultants to assist with Risk Management
- Consultants to assist with Strategic planning
- CoSIDA Convention Attendance (e.g., travel, meals, lodging, speakers)
- FAR Conference Meeting Expenses (e.g., travel, meals, lodging, speakers)
- FAR professional development
- FARA Convention Attendance (e.g., travel, meals, lodging, speakers)
- Health and Safety Education and Resources
- Internships
- Make Game Day Yours Training Session Expenses
- NAAC Convention Attendance (e.g., travel, meals, lodging, speakers)
- NACDA Convention Attendance (e.g., travel, meals, lodging, speakers)
- NATA Convention Attendance (e.g., travel, meals, lodging, speakers)
- NCAA Convention Attendance
- NCAA Eligibility Center Education at Selected Events
- NCAA Regional Rules Seminars Attendance (e.g., travel, meals, lodging, speakers)
- NIL Allowed Services and Education for Student-Athletes
- Production and Distribution of Compliance Best Practices
- Professional Development for Athletics Administrators
- Professional Development Funding
- Regional Compliance Seminars
- SID Meeting Expenses
- Sports Media and SID Enhancement
- Sports Medicine Enhancement
- Strategic Plan Development
- SWA Conference Meeting Expenses (e.g., travel, meals, lodging, speakers)
- Women Leaders in College Sports Convention Attendance (e.g., travel, meals, lodging, speakers)
- Women's Leadership Symposium Attendance (e.g., travel, meals, lodging, speakers)
- Women Leaders in Sports Professional Development
- Technology (e.g. scanners, laptops, videoconferencing, web page development)

Strategic Positioning Outcome Area—Diversity and Inclusion

Ideas/Possible Uses:

- ADID Meetings
- Assistant Coach Diversity Grants
- Development of Recruiting/Hiring/Retention of People of Color Speakers and/or Best Practices Guides
- Diversity and Inclusion PSAs
- Diversity PSAs
- Diversity Workshops
- Fund for Cultural/Diversity Programs
- Funds for Minority/Female Positions
- Internships
- LGBTQ speakers
- Minority Coaches Seminar
- NCAA Inclusion Forum Expenses (e.g., travel, meals, lodging, speakers)
- Postgraduate Scholarships for Minority Student-Athletes
- Postgraduate Scholarships for Minority Student-Athletes
- Professional development for minority/female administrators
- Professional development for SWAs
- Speaker/Training on Gender Equity Planning
- Speaker/Training on Diversity Planning
- SWA-Female Student-Athlete Brunch
- SWA Meetings and Travel
- SWA Web page on Conference Website
- Title IX Investigator Training
- Title IX Training
- WeCOACH Professional Growth and Leadership Development Program
- Women in Sport Career Seminars
- Women Leaders in Sports Programming
- Women's Leadership Symposium Expenses (e.g., travel, meals, lodging, speakers)
- Work-Life Balance Seminars

Strategic Positioning Outcome Area—Game Day, Conference and National Championships

Ideas/Possible Uses:

- Bands and Cheerleaders Travel Expenses
- Banquet/Community Engagement Activity in Conjunction with Conference Tournament
- Bat Compression Testing Machine
- Destructible Bat Stickers
- Championships Awards
- Championships Neutral Site Expenses
- Concussion Testing and Software
- Conference Awards for Academic Achievement
- Conference Championships T-Shirt Program
- Conference Game Environment Award
- Conference Tournament Expenses
- Conference Trophies
- Community Engagement on Campus
- Community Engagement/Volunteer Tracking App
- Creation of Conference-wide Athletic Training Standards Manual
- Crossover Events
- Drug-Testing Expenses
- Fan Giveaways
- First-Aid/CPR Training
- Game Environment Mailings and Educational Materials
- Game Environment Public Service Announcements
- Game Environment T-Shirts
- Game Program Ads/Inserts
- Half-Time Events
- Health and Safety Posters
- Increased Signage at Conference Championships
- Make Game Day Yours Training Session Expenses
- Officials' Assignment Software
- Official's Recognition Program
- Officials Sideline Vests
- Officials Training and Evaluation
- Officiating Crew Manuals
- Officiating Clinics
- Preseason Officiating Meetings
- Portable AED Units
- Professional Development for Trainers
- Schedule Cards
- Sickle Cell Trait Testing
- Statistics Software for SIDs
- Training Equipment
- Travel Expenses to Support In-Region Contests
- Weather Tracking Systems
- Webcasting/Televising Championships
- Websites

Strategic Positioning Outcome Area—Membership and Positioning Initiatives

Ideas/Possible Uses:

- Additional Funding (e.g., subgrants) for the Division II Purchasing Website
- Advertisements in the Local Newspaper, Radio Show, etc.
- Awards for Achievement in Community Engagement
- Conference Branding and Marketing
- Conference Directory
- Conference Magazine
- Conference Promotional Materials
- Consultants to Assist with Strategic planning
- Division II Identity Initiatives
- Expenses for Conference and Institution-Related Community Engagement Activities
- Feature Writer for Conference Website
- Funds to Support Membership Stabilization
- Internet, Radio, and Videostreaming
- Institutional Branding and Marketing
- Internships
- Marketing Consultant
- Marketing Software
- Media Day Activities
- Member Schools' Website Management
- Membership Consultant
- Mobil Marketing
- Public Service Announcements
- Technology Subgrants
- Television Production Costs
- Uniform Patches
- Videos for Website
- Webcasting

Non-permissive Uses

- Administrative Fee(s)
- Capital Improvements (*e.g., structures, facilities, backstop padding for fields*)
- Commissioner Travel
- Dollars to Supplement Items in the Overall Division II Budget (*e.g., NCAA championships; Division II Strategic Alliance Matching Grant; Coaches Enhancement Grant*)
- Entertainment Expenses at Professional Sporting Events
- Funding for the Conference Required Audit
- Game Tape Exchange
- Hospitality Costs at Events
- Increase Countable Grants-in-Aid for Member Schools
- Insurance Premiums
- Officials' Travel Expenses (*e.g., fees, travel arrangements, lodging, per diem*)
- Professional Dues (*e.g., NACDA membership; Women Leaders in College Sports membership*)
- Ticket Giveaways