STAR Program FAQs

What is the STAR Program?
The STAR (Support Training And Resources) Program was created to provide value to CFMA chapters and their members via a $3,000 annual subsidy which may be used toward the following items for 2019-20:

1. Chapter Administrative Services expenses
2. Chapter Marketing expenses (tradeshow expenses, brochures, ads, promotional materials, etc.)
3. Chapter Educational Program expenses – i.e., Suicide Prevention Summit, Education Day or educational event longer than a regular chapter meeting and offering more CPE than a chapter meeting (instructor, facility, workbooks, etc.)
4. CFMA Speaker Program and CFMA Education Programs (speaker/instructor fee, workbooks, facility, food & beverage, etc.)
5. All Chapter Strategic Planning expenses (facilitator, facility, food & beverage, etc.)

Why did CFMA create the STAR Program?
We believe the strength of CFMA is enhanced by vibrant chapters that provide excellent value to their members. This subsidy will provide additional resources to help chapters enhance their operations and offerings. The financial success that CFMA has experienced over the past few years provided the opportunity to continue this program for the 2019-20 fiscal year.

The STAR Program is an annual subsidy, will the program continue past the 2019-20 year?
Chapters often plan expenses well in advance so in 2017 CFMA’s Executive Committee committed to approve funds for the Program for the current year plus 2 years. The continuation of the Program is based on CFMA’s financial outlook each year so if it were determined that the Program would be discontinued there are funds set aside for 2 additional years. This gives chapters with recurring expenses such as a chapter administrator 2 years to plan for alternative funding.

What are the requirements to be eligible for the STAR Program?
Chapters must submit a completed 2019 Annual Chapter Affiliation Agreement (CAA) and 2018-19 chapter benchmarking data before becoming eligible to use the subsidy. A complete CAA includes the agreement signed by the Chapter President, an up-to-date balance sheet and proof of the chapter’s most recent tax filing. The CAA can be found on the Chapter Admin Tools page of the CFMA website. Chapter benchmarking information must be submitted each year. If your chapter has not submitted 2018-19 data it can be submitted on the Chapter Benchmarking and Awards page of the CFMA website.

How much is provided per chapter in the STAR Program?
Each chapter who complies with the eligibility requirements will be entitled to receive $3,000 in funding for the current fiscal year (4/1/19-3/31/20). All expenses reimbursed under the 2019-20 STAR Program must be incurred during the current fiscal year.

Why are chapters given a choice of ways to use STAR funds?
The original intent of the STAR Program was to provide funds for chapter administrators, however, we took into consideration the fact that some of our chapters may choose not to hire a chapter administrator. These modified elements of the STAR Program offer valuable options which will allow every chapter to take advantage of the Program while adding value and strength to the member experience. Nonetheless, we still believe the first and best use of the funds is for funding chapter administrative services.
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Why doesn’t the amount of the Program funds available to chapters vary by the size of the chapter? While a by-size chapter funding structure was considered, we felt $3,000 is a fair, equitable and beneficial funding amount to all chapters. It was determined by the Officers, Finance and Executive Committees that this approach was the appropriate decision under the circumstances.

My chapter is not interested in using the funds for any of these items. Can we use the $3,000 for something else? No, STAR Program funds can be used ONLY toward the 5 items specified as part of the Program. The CFMA Executive Committee feels these five items cover a viable range of options that every chapter may avail themselves of, and believes these uses will increase the chapter’s effectiveness. If there are items you feel should be added to the STAR Program for future years please contact Cathy Wasner to share your suggestions.

How does a chapter get reimbursed under the STAR Program? After the expense has been incurred, submit a copy of a paid invoice with the STAR Program Reimbursement Form approved by the Chapter President via e-mail to chapsubsidy@cfma.org or fax to 609-452-0474. The STAR Program Reimbursement Form can be found on the STAR Program page of the CFMA website.

Why does a chapter need an administrator? Chapter leaders consistently share with CFMA Headquarters their challenges around the administrative tasks involved in running a chapter. Chapters currently using a paid chapter administrator consistently see the benefits of an increased level of efficiency, effectiveness and professionalism of the chapter. The chapter administrator serves as a centralized resource for the chapter; coordinates event management and marketing; keeps the chapter’s website updated; provides CPE compliance and certificates; ensures consistent communications; and many other duties. In summary, a chapter administrator allows a chapter board to focus on strategic issues and leaves the operational issues to the administrator.

Does CFMA have resources for finding a chapter administrator? Yes. CFMA HQ has a sample RFP, contract, and list of potential duties for a chapter administrator. Each of these can be customized to fit the specific needs of the Chapter and are available on the STAR Program page of the CFMA website.

Do Facebook ads qualify as a marketing expense? Yes. After the expense has been incurred, submit a copy of the email confirmation from Facebook as your paid invoice.

What qualifies as a reimbursable Educational Program expense? Educational Programs are programs offering CPE which are longer than a chapter meeting and offer more CPE than a chapter meeting. Examples of Educational Programs which can be reimbursed under the STAR Program are Suicide Prevention Summits and a Chapter Education Day. Many chapters offer CPE for regular chapter meetings, expenses related to a chapter meeting offering CPE are not reimbursable.

How can the STAR Program funds be used for CFMA Education Program resources? When placing an order for education course materials indicate on the request form that you plan to utilize the STAR Program for partial or complete payment. Once the course is complete, you will have the option to
allocate STAR Program funds to the balance of the invoice you receive. It is a requirement that the Chapter President MUST verify the chapter has agreed to use STAR Program funds for education either via e-mail or on the invoice. No up-front payment will be required with the order; the cost of the materials will be deducted from the chapter's available STAR Program funds balance and any remaining balance due will be billed.

**Are expenses other than course materials for CFMA Education Programs reimbursable?**
Yes they are. Workbooks ordered through CFMA will be deducted directly from your STAR Program balance. Additional expenses such as, instructor, room charges, food & beverage, etc. can be submitted for reimbursement. Invoices/receipts should be attached to a signed STAR Program reimbursement form.

**Can STAR Program funds be used in support of a Regional Conference that our chapter participates in?**
No. STAR Program funds may not be used toward expenses related to Regional Conferences. Regional Conference support is funded through the CFMA Principal Partner Program (PPP), with each Regional Conference eligible to receive a total of $6,000 in sponsorship by allowing and acknowledging the participation of our principal partners, Viewpoint and BKD, LLP. The STAR Program was developed to provide support directly to individual chapters through activities which help deliver member value. Contact Farah Iaia for additional details on PPP support for Regional Conferences.

**Can my chapter use only part of the funds for a particular purpose (for example: Can the chapter allocate $1,000 toward education, $1,000 toward strategic planning, and $1,000 toward an administrator)?**
Yes, the Chapter President may allocate funds across any items that are part of the STAR Program. On the STAR Program reimbursement form a total for each item should be indicated

**Will CFMA Headquarters still provide chapters with strategic planning facilitation free of charge?**
Yes. Contact Cathy Wasner (609-945-2432 or cwasner@cfma.org) to schedule your HQ-facilitated session.

**Does my chapter need to hold off on submitting for reimbursement until the total reimbursement is $3,000?**
No, the chapter can submit for reimbursement for expenses quarterly. A chapter may submit for reimbursement of some funds each quarter, there is no need to wait until the expenses total $3,000.

**Once my chapter has submitted for reimbursement, how long will it take to receive STAR Program funds?**
Funds will be sent to chapters via their quarterly ACH transfer. The payment schedule is below:
- Approved reimbursement requests received between 4/1 and 6/30 will be paid in July
- Approved reimbursement requests received between 7/1 and 9/30 will be paid in October
- Approved reimbursement requests received between 10/1 and 12/31 will be paid in January
- Approved reimbursement requests received between 1/1 and 3/31 will be paid in April

An e-mail will be sent to the Chapter President and Chapter Treasurer when the transfer has been made.