Section 1: About Student Media

What is a student media organization at AU?

Media represents the means of mass communications to deliver information in unique channels of general communication, information, or entertainment in society as newspapers, radio, print, digital, audio, or television. At AU, Student Media represents the same principles and follows the four functions of media to inform, persuade, entertain, and transmit culture.

The media organizations are completely student-run and open to all AU students.

Who is the Student Media Board?

The American University Student Media Board is a recognized, chartered student governance organization that is directly funded by undergraduate student activity fees. The Media Board is a student-run organization chartered by the American University under the direct oversight of Center for Student Involvement.

The Board's Oversight Organization Funding

As a steward of Student Activity Fees, the Student Media Board is required to make sure that funds are used fairly and equitably, and host events and opportunities that benefit the entire AU community. The Board allocates funds to recognized undergraduate student media organizations.
Section 2: Finance

This document has been edited to reflect virtual semesters or remote processes and will be updated each semester.

Memorandum: The budgeting procedures of the student governance organizations must include clear and concise budgeting instructions for member groups reviewed and approved by the appropriate faculty/staff advisors and also follows CSI Finance guidelines which include a statement of criteria for funding and step-by-step application procedures. Such procedures shall provide recognized student organizations with equal opportunity to apply for funding. The budget submission shall also include a review and evaluation of existing and proposed programs.

Understanding the Student Activity Fee

Student Activity Fees are charged to undergraduate students each semester. The funds are distributed amongst the student organization governance boards to facilitate programming initiatives for the AU student community.

Student activity fees CAN be used for the following purposes:
• Cultural, social, and educational enrichment experiences
• Recreational and social activities (under policy guidelines)
• Student media and publications
• Student organization travel (within prescribed limits)
• Other student services

Student activity fees CANNOT be used for the following purposes:
• Alcohol and tobacco
• Individual membership and dues
• Donations
• Personal gains
Media Board Funding Process

Allocation of funds happens at the beginning of each semester after budgets have been submitted and approved by Student Media Board members. Media organizations must meet the following criteria:

- Completed the Center for Student Involvement’s Annual Club Renewal and be a recognized student club/organization
- Adhere to the Student Media funding principles
- Submit organization budgets within the allocated time frame to be reviewed and voted on.
- Has closed all previous semester's purchase requests

Student Media Funding Principles

The following are the Student Media Funding Principles virtual/remote processes:

1. The event formats that can be funded are as follows:
   - Virtual Experience (Ex. Game Shows, Escape Rooms, Virtual Conference Registration)
   - Virtual Speaker/Small Performance (Ex. Speaker, Panel, Dance Instructor)
2. The non-event requests that can be funded are as follows:
   - Annual website domain, subscriptions, and other simple technology requests
     - Print magazines or any printed material or publication will not be accepted
3. Recognized media organizations must submit their purchase request within the allocated time frame to be reviewed. Only request submitted on Engage will be reviewed.
   - Virtual Experience- Minimum of 4 weeks prior to the event
   - Virtual Speaker/Small Performance- Minimum of 6 weeks prior to the event
   - Non-Event Simple Request- Minimum of 2 weeks prior to receiving
4. Media Board will not be able to consider budgets and funding purchases for:
   - Physical Resources- Merchandise, Food, Supplies, print materials, etc.
   - Physical Travel - Lodging, Flight, Car rentals, etc
5. All events funded by media organizations must be open to the entire AU community and all undergraduate students free of charge.
6. Price quotes or estimates are required with every purchase request submission.
7. All events are considered complex. As such, a representative from the media organization must schedule a meeting with media CSI Advisor.
8. All events require the completion of an event evaluation. If this form is not completed, you will not be eligible to receive future funding from the Student Media Board.
9. Any unused funds at the end of the academic year will be rolled into the Media Reserves Account for future use for student organizations. The Co-Chairs, along with the CSI Advisor as a resource, shall review the accounts of the recipient organizations as often as necessary, but least at the end of each semester, to assure that expenditures (past, present, and projected) are consistent with the purpose and intent outlined in the approved allocation and all receipts are submitted.
10. Media organizations can appeal their allocation. This must be done within two weeks of the allocation decision.
   • To appeal allocation, media organization must schedule a meeting with Co-Chairs and CSI advisor.
   • Must provide proof of cost by providing quotes or estimates.

How the Budget Submission and Voting Process Works

All budgets must be emailed to the Co-Chairs and CSI Advisor within the time frame allocated. This shall be within two weeks before or after the semester has started.

The vote on individual media organizations’ budgets will take place on the first Student Media Board meeting of the semester unless otherwise moved by Co-Chairs and/or CSI advisor.

Budget format must follow the approved Student Media Budget format.

Click here: Student Media Budget Form
**Steps of Budgets Approval**

- All budgets must be emailed to the Co-Chairs and CSI Advisor within the time frame allocated.
- The budgets shall include all information needed (description, vendor, amount, and supporting documentation)
- The Student Media Board shall vote as it is a responsibility of the Board to allocate funding and provide oversight as stated in the Media Board’s constitution.
  - Budgets need two-third vote to pass. Co-Chairs will not vote, unless in the need of a tie breaker. In case the decision still results in a tie, then the vote will be reset, and a second vote will take place. If no decision is rendered, The Board shall table the decision until next meeting.

**Special Fund Request**

Special fund requests are experiences that fall outside typical budget requests and must have exceeded all available funds within organization’s account.

Funds will come from the Student Media Operating Budget and will follow the same steps for a normal budget approval. However it must be submitted separately on a new budget request form and labeled special fund request.

**Obtaining Funds from the Student Media Reserve**

*Memorandum: Funds allocated in a designated semester must be used before additional funds can be distributed from Student Media Reserve Account. As such, the request must be approved by the Media Board and Student Media Advisor.*

Reserve funds can be used only for special projects, a one-time emergency, programs and initiatives that support all recognized student media organizations. The process for obtaining funds are as follows:

- All requests must be submitted to co-chairs and the media advisor for first review.
- If approved by co-chairs, the proposal will be voted on by the entire board during the next student media board meeting.

Funds take about 3-4 weeks to be available for use.
How to Complete a Purchase Request on Engage

The purchasing process is overseen by the CSI Finance team. Media organizations must complete a purchase request on Engage. To learn how to complete a purchase request, check out the tutorial below.

Click here: Purchase Request Tutorial

A few tips for purchase requests:
1. In the subject line, use the vendor name.
2. Submit one purchase request per vendor.
3. Enter all details under payee information.
4. Check the stages to see the status of your request.