

Imperial College Union Trips Funding Policy

Approved: 16th November 2023
Approved by: Clubs, Societies & Projects Board
Review by: November 2026

1. Definitions

Clubs, Societies and Projects (CSPs) are a collective of students who have agreed to become volunteers with the Union and deliver a subscription-based service to other students. Students purchase a membership and therefore become members of the CSP.

Clubs, Societies and Projects Board (CSPB) members are students on *Constituent Union* and *Management Group* committees who act as representatives of CSPs which fall within a specific area of interest.

Full Members are current students at Imperial College London who have purchased or are granted membership to a CSP.

Associate Members are students who are over 18 and are studying at other Higher Education institutions around the world, or current staff of Imperial College London, who have purchased or are granted membership to a CSP.

Lifetime Members are former students at Imperial College London who have purchased or are granted membership to a CSP.

Non-Members are members of the public who may opt to take part in the student activities. Sometimes they are Imperial College Alumni or staff who have just not purchased a membership.

The Trips Fund is the designated pot of funding allocated to Imperial College Union which is intended to support the trips and tours of student groups.

2. Policy Statement

Imperial College Trust (*ICTrust*) donates funding to the Imperial College Union (*ICU*) annually to support CSP trips. ICU is committed to ensuring that all resources including money is allocated to all CSPs fairly and recognises its responsibility under the following legislation:

- Education Act 1994
- The Charities Act 2011

The Union ensures good governance of the allocation of the Trip fund in 3 ways.

- Through **published criteria** which set out the activities the Union wishes to support in furtherance of the ICU's charitable objectives. The criteria also include activities which the trustees do not wish to support because they do not consider them to be in line with ICU's objectives. The trustees accept that they will on some occasions make grants outside published criteria but that in all such cases the activity supported will be charitable in law.
- Through **clear application processes** which set out how decisions are reached for awarding grants from the Trips Fund.
- High level **student leaders are delegated responsibility** for the decision of allocating grants, but all decisions are overseen by a trustee and a member of Union staff.

The responsibility of allocating the monies from the Trip Fund is delegated to the Clubs, Societies and Projects Board by the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee.

This policy must be read in conjunction with any other ICU or Imperial College policy or code of conduct (as applicable).

3. Introduction

This policy sets out the methods used by CSPB to allocate the Trip Fund and to ensure that CSPs who receive grant funding meet the ICTrust's expectations of the grant provided. The aims of this policy are:

- To define the allocation process for grant from the Trip Fund.
- To outline guiding principles in which grant decisions are made for the Trip Fund.
- To outline the expectations of CSPs who receive a grant from the Trips Fund.
- To ensure ICU meets the agreed expectations of the grant provided by ICTrust.

This policy applies to all CSPs of ICU who apply for a grant from the Trips Fund. CSPs may deliver a trip without securing funding from the Trip Fund.

4. Trip Fund Administration

a. Funding Rounds and CSP Information

The Union will facilitate at least three (3) funding rounds throughout the academic year, with at least one (1) per term. The Union will provide an information page regarding the trips fund, its criteria, an application process and the application schedule to CSP's at the beginning of each academic year. Further rounds will be at the discretion of the DPCS if funds are available.

b. Annual Funding Request

ICU will review the amount of Grant that is requested annually from the IC Trust. A paper will be provided annually to the ICTrust on behalf of the Union outlining the request in line with other grant requests from the ICTrust.

c. Decision Making & Panel

CSPB delegate decision-making power on trip funding applications to the Trips Funding Sub-Committee, chaired by the DPCS. Decisions will normally be made by a majority vote or consensus, but the final decision will be held by the DPCS. Union staff will screen applications before they are provided to the sub-committee, and applications that do not meet the criteria may be removed with the agreement of the DPCS.

A member of Union staff will provide all members of the panel with a communication channel at the beginning of each year to support communications throughout rounds. For each round, the panel will be provided with a copy of all applications including any attached information, comments, and budgets.

The Union will provide a platform for the sub-committee to record their comments and decisions for each application.

Panel members will be given at least two weeks to cast their vote on applications. If no vote is cast, the DPCS reserves the right to decide on awards without input from the panel member(s).

d. Transparency

Every applicant will be provided with reasoning for the sub-committee's decisions. A member of Union staff will update an information page following each round, outlining who has received funding and how much has been awarded in each round.

e. Funding Timeframes

Grants may only be used within the academic year they are applied for to enable the proper yearly auditing of the Union's financial accounts. As such, all funding for trips must be used by 31st July within the academic year awarded. Exemptions to funding timeframes may be granted at the discretion of the DPCS.

f. Amount Available to Award Each Funding Round

Funding will normally be distributed evenly over all rounds. If any rounds do not meet the amount of funding available to award, the left-over funding will be equally distributed in later

rounds to increase the funding available to award.

g. Handling of Grant Funding

At the end of July every year any unspent Trip Funding Grant that has not been spent will be returned to the central Trip Fund, except where an exemption has been agreed with the DPCS.

If a CSP receives a grant award they may only use the funds for the specific costs which were approved as part of their application. If a CSP would like to re-allocate funds to spend outside of the scope of what was approved, they must contact the DPCS to request this. The DPCS will review the request and may approve, reject or partially approve the request if it is within the parameters of the trip fund criteria.

Any group found to be misusing the funds provided to them by the Trip Fund will be liable to disciplinary action as outlined in the Bye-Laws and may be charged the total amount of funds that were misused from their accounts.

5. Application Criteria

a. Eligible Groups

The Union will only accept applications for the Trip Fund from Clubs & Societies. The Trip Fund does not accept applications from the following:

- Projects
- Dormant or Inactive CSPs
- Any group that has been suspended or has frozen accounts.
- Management Groups
- Constituent Unions
- Any ICU Working Groups
- Academic Representatives/Networks
- Campaign Groups
- Liberation Networks
- Non-ICU Student Groups

b. General Criteria

General criteria and considerations for the Trips Fund include:

- Clubs and Societies may only submit one application per application round for only one trip.
- The Trip Fund will only consider applications for one-off trips which do not form part of a CSP's regular activities.
- Applications must not be penalised for seeking other forms of funding or finance from other sources.
- Applications must not be penalised for previous committees' actions, mismanagement, or lack of meeting previous expectations in relation to Trips Funding.

Grant requests which the Trip Fund will never support are:

- Trips that do not deliver activities related to the core aims & objectives of the CSP.

- Trips that only focus on delivering a social activity
- Funding for Non-Members, Associate Members, Lifetime Members or for students who graduate that year where the trip is after the 31st of July.
- Any applications that are for personal, committee only, or individual trips.
- Any food and drink, especially alcohol.
- Applications for which no trip proposal has been received.

Grant requests which the Trip Fund will not normally support are:

- Any trips that form part of a CSP's regular activity.
- Regular competitive fixtures inside or outside of London.
- Trips which could reasonably have been budgeted for in Annual Budgeting.
- Trips that have already taken place.
- Funding for trips that only focus on outgoing students or trips that are delivered outside of the academic year the application is for.

c. Request limits and restrictions

- The minimum grant request is determined as the higher of either £500 for a full trip or a subsidy of at least 10% per student, with a minimum grant request of £10 per student.
- The absolute maximum grant request is determined as the lower of either 15% of the total pot for a full trip or a subsidy of at least 40% per student, with a maximum grant request of £100 per student.
- A CSP may only request up to 15% of total pot for funding across all trips in one academic year,
- It is expected that if a grant request includes accommodation, that the request be of a reasonable cost and level of accommodation. If the sub-committee feels that a group is requesting funds for luxury accommodation, the request may be rejected.
- Sustainability is a priority for the Union, so where possible it is expected that requests consider their carbon footprint.
 - For trips within mainland UK (excluding Northern Ireland) no flights shall be subsidised by Trip Funding, as it is expected that other means of transport will be sufficient.
 - For trips within the European Continent, if the committee feels a more sustainable transport option is available to the committee, the request may be rejected.
 - Funding for flights will always be limited to a maximum of 10%.
- The Trips Fund will not provide funding for any social activities that take place on any funded trip.

6. Applications

a. Application Process

- i. *Trip Planning* – Before submitting a funding request all CSP's should complete a Trip Proposal Form and Trip Budget to the Union for review. All CSP's should plan their trips as if they are not receiving any funding, as funding is not promised so the budget should reflect this.
- ii. *Funding Application Planning* – It is advised that CSPs prepare what they want to apply for and meet with their relevant Management Group representatives to discuss their application for advice. They can also meet with the DPCS or a member of Union Staff.
- iii. *Application Submission*– Once trip proposals and budgets have been submitted, a Trip Funding application may be submitted. All Trip Funding applications must be seconded by a member of CSPB.
- iv. *Screening* - A member of Union Staff will screen applications to ensure they are in line with this policy and have all the necessary information. For applications that lack clarity, are missing information, or are outside of the scope of the fund, the application may be rejected.
- v. *Circulation* – A member of Union staff will circulate the applications for each round, a voting platform, a deadline for voting and the recommended amount of the funding for that round, to the sub-committee.
- vi. *Voting* – The sub-committee should vote on the outcome they would like to see for each application, including how much they think each application should be awarded with reasoning.
- vii. *Final Decision* – The DPCS will then review all votes, comments and allocations to determine the final allocations. The panel will be further consulted if a conclusion cannot be reached.
- viii. *Announcement* – A member of Union staff will then send the outcomes of applications to each applicant, with clear reasoning for the decision that has been made.
- ix. *Financial Transfer* – Funding will normally be credited to the CSP's account within 5 clear College days.
- x. *Trip Delivery* – The CSP must deliver the trip within the parameters of the Trip Fund policy.
- xi. *Trip Reports* – All successful applicants must produce a Trip Fund Report as detailed in Section 7.

7. Reporting

ICTrust requires all groups who are awarded funding to produce a report on the trip they delivered including the spending. The Union will provide an information page outlining when reports need to be submitted each year and provide guidance for leaders completing the reports.

a. Report Submissions

The Union will provide a submission form for all groups who need to submit a report as well as publish report deadlines for trip reports. Groups who need to submit reports will be given a reminder of when their trip reports are due within the submission process. Each submission will be given a receipt. The Union will review all submissions and if a report is not deemed of sufficient quality the leaders will be given one more chance to update their report to an appropriate standard.

b. Report Content

Reports must include the following:

- A full financial breakdown of the trip.
- A day-by-day account of what occurred i.e., activities etc.
- Number of members attending (full and not full members).
- Dates of the tour.
- How the trip achieved the aims and objectives as laid out in the proposal.
- Any changes made to the trip after the funding was allocated.
- Any major issues that arose whilst on tour.
- A diverse range of Members' testimonials of the trip.
- Lessons learnt on the trip.

c. Late/Missing Reports

Completing a post-trip report is a condition of the Trip Fund. If a group does not complete a trip report the Union reserves the right to reclaim funding.

d. Record Keeping

The Union will keep a record of all trip reports for up to 7 years. Reports may be shared with ICTrust and Imperial College upon request.

e. Presenting to the IC Trust

The DPCS and relevant members of Union staff will collate and present a selection of Trip Funding Reports annually to the ICTrust upon request.