



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH
School of Engineering

STUDENT INNOVATION FUND AWARD GUIDELINES

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WHAT ARE STUDENT INNOVATION FUND AWARDS?

Student Innovation Fund Awards are one-off contributions to support innovative projects and initiatives that will have a significant impact on the experience of students in the School of Engineering. The scheme provides funding to enhance students' social, academic, entrepreneurial, sporting or cultural development.

Student Innovation Fund Awards are only possible thanks to the generosity of alumni (former students), industry contributors, and friends of the University through their donations to the School Alumni Fund.

The scheme is co-ordinated and administered by the School of Engineering's Alumni Relations and Philanthropy Manager and decisions are made by a panel including staff and alumni.

AREAS OF SUPPORT

We award grants of up to and including £2,500 to support innovative activities, which enhance students' social, academic, entrepreneurial, sporting or cultural development.

Types of projects that we fund:

Community and outreach:

- Projects that will benefit people and communities living in Edinburgh and elsewhere;
- Projects that will support the Widening Participation agenda of the School.

Research, teaching and learning:

- Projects that will enhance research and development activities at the School;
- Projects such as field trips, in person or online conferences and events (organised by students or staff); or student group competitions. These must benefit the wider student community;
- Projects that will support teaching and peer-learning.

Student life and extra-curricular:

- Projects that will help kick-start initiatives with long-term impact;
- Projects that will support cultural activities, excellence in sport or the creative arts;
- Projects that will aim to enhance student support and wellbeing at the University.

COVID-19 GUIDANCE AND PROJECT FEASIBILITY

The impact of COVID-19 has had an unprecedented impact on all of our lives. Here are some things to consider and some additional guidance which may help you with your application.

- Please refer to the latest information and advice on Coronavirus (COVID-19) available on the University website: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/news/covid-19>. Please make sure you are following the latest guidance and keep up to date with the latest public health advice of the country in which you are currently residing and/or where the project will take place.
- Please consider the current circumstances with your project ideas, innovative ideas are actively encouraged.
- Projects which could help University communities adapt to the Covid-19 pandemic are welcome, but this is not a requirement.

- If successful, given the constant changing situation, we will be flexible for revised timelines and budgets.

Useful Websites for improving digital skills and running online events:

University of Edinburgh:

- Digital Skills and Training courses to develop your skills: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/information-services/help-consultancy/is-skills>
- Online and Digital Events Service giving advice and guidance for running online events: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/information-services/computing/comms-andcollab/online-meetings-and-events>
- Information on security when hosting online events: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/infosec>

External Websites:

- The National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement's Guide to creating and running online meetings and events: https://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/sites/default/files/publication/creating_and_runni ng_virtual_events_-_april_2020_v1.pdf
- The Association for Computing Machinery's best practices for virtual conferences: https://people.clarkson.edu/~jmatthew/acm/VirtualConferences_GuideToBestPractices_CURRENT.pdf

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible to apply, the applicants must fit at least one of the following criteria:

Applications from individual students

- Matriculated students (both undergraduate and postgraduate) of the School of Engineering

Applications from student groups

- Student societies, social enterprises and peer groups recognised by the Edinburgh University Students' Association (EUSA) with members from the School of Engineering;
- Sports clubs recognised by the Edinburgh University Sports Union (EUSU) with members from the School of Engineering.
- Student groups recognised as having connections with the School of Engineering should apply using the individual student route as above.

A society/club can apply for funding in every round, but the project needs to have a different purpose and benefit a different group of students.

Other funding:

Students who have applied for funding through the Student Experience Grants scheme are not eligible to apply with the same project through the Student Innovation Fund scheme.

Students who have applied for funding through the Go Abroad fund are not eligible to apply with the same project through the Student Innovation Fund scheme.

APPLICANT CONDITIONS

- You must be a matriculated student for the full duration of your project. This requirement may be waived for final year students who are applying for funding through the Student Innovation Fund scheme.
- We will not consider projects that:
 - have previously been submitted through the Student Innovation Fund scheme whether they were successful or not;¹ or
 - have already been completed.
- Awards are available to fund (among other costs):
 - travel expenses
 - accommodation
 - equipment
 - compensation of students
 - incidental catering costs.
- Grants are not available to fund:
 - course fees
 - salaries of applicants and University staff (including buying out teaching time)
 - equipment, software or projects that the school or department would normally be expected to provide or fund
 - individual projects that contribute to students' final assessment
 - individual conference attendance
 - activities abroad, if these can take place locally and have the same impact
 - core activities of societies and sports clubs, only specific projects
 - project merchandise
 - registration for third party venues when University venues are available for booking
 - project contingency.
- Grants must be used within one year from the date the results are announced or must be returned to the Grants team.

¹ Under exceptional circumstances a successful project may apply for funding a second time, if the initial project has achieved impact and there is a strong case that further benefits can be delivered.

SELECTION PROCESS AND CRITERIA

Steering panel

All applications are assessed by a steering panel that has representation from staff and alumni of the School of Engineering .

Each application is assessed on its individual merit according to the selection criteria outlined below.

Aims and objectives

A proposal should express clearly what it aims to achieve and describe the change it aims to bring about or its intended impact, as well as the results it hopes to deliver.

Benefit to the student experience

- Proposed projects should enhance students' social, academic, entrepreneurial, sporting or cultural development.
- Projects that aim to benefit to a wider group of students, beyond those involved directly in the project, will be of particular interest.

Innovation

- Innovation does not mean inventing something completely new and ground-breaking; innovation and invention are not the same thing.
- Invention is creating something from scratch; innovation is taking something and improving it.
- Innovation can involve taking something that exists and using it in a different setting or context.
- Innovation doesn't have to involve a moment of genius; it can simply be finding a better way of doing something.
- A tweak or marginal improvement in something can count as innovation.
- Innovation can come from addressing a problem and finding a new solution, or noticing a problem others are experiencing and finding a better way.
- Invention is also welcomed!

Feasibility

- A proposal should set out how the project will be carried out, the resources needed and the timeline that will be followed.
- It should show that it is feasible for the project to be successfully completed within the given timeline and proposed budget.

References

To be eligible an application must be supported by a referee competent to verify that the project idea has merit. The referee will be nominated by the applicant and should be appropriate for the type of application being submitted.

- For students – the referee provided in the application should be the personal tutor, or research supervisor or another relevant member of staff.

- For sports clubs – the referee provided in your application should be the current president of the Edinburgh University Sports Union.
- For student societies, social enterprises or peer groups – the referee provided in the application should be a staff member from the Activities Office at the Edinburgh University Students' Association.

Once the application has been drafted, the applicant should send an email to the referee with an outline of the project, its aims and objectives, the benefits to the student experience, what makes the project innovative and the feasibility of the project. The applicant may wish to cut and paste appropriate text from their application for this purpose.

The applicant should ask the referee to review the project and to confirm that they believe it has merit and the proposal is sound.

If the referee is unable to support the proposal, they may choose either to decline the project altogether, in which case the application would not proceed, or to suggest areas for improvement. Applicants should therefore allow sufficient time for referees to consider their proposal ahead of the end of the application period.

Assuming the referee is happy to support the application, they will confirm that to the applicant and provide a few lines explaining the reasons for their support (supporting statement).

The applicant will add the referee's details and the supporting statement to the application and by completing the section 'Referee details' they will confirm that the referee has reviewed the application and has their support.

The applicant(s) will be responsible for final submission of the fully completed application and should retain the email from the referee in case it is needed by the fund team at a later date.

Applications without referee statement will not be considered by the steering panel.

INFORMATION FOR SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

Use of grant funding

- Awards must be used for the purpose awarded.
- Awards must be used within 12 months of application deadline or must be returned to the Awards team.
- Any funds remaining must be returned to the Awards team.

Reporting

- All successful applicants are required to complete a report, which includes project feedback and detailed expenditure. The report should be completed and returned, along with receipts, within one month of completion of the project and no later than 12 months since the application deadline, unless written permission is sought.
- All equipment or fixed assets purchased should be used for the specific project and will remain the property of the University of Edinburgh after the project is completed.

SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

Applications can only be submitted online using the Student Innovation Fund website (with Your University Login). You can access the website here: <https://www.eng.ed.ac.uk/alumni/support-us/engineering-student-innovation-fund/application-form>

Please ensure you have answered all the questions and submitted the application online by the deadline. This deadline is strictly enforced and late or incomplete applications cannot be accepted. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure it is received complete and before the deadline. Once the deadline has passed, the website will not allow you to submit an application, even if it has already been started.

If you need guidance on how to complete the online application form, please refer to our online application guide by visiting <https://www.eng.ed.ac.uk/alumni/support-us/engineering-student-innovation-fund/guidelines>.

DEADLINE

The deadline to submit an application for the first round of this scheme is Thursday 26th November 2020. Further rounds will be announced in 2021.

RESULTS

Shortlisted applicants may be invited to a committee meeting at which they will pitch their proposal.

Applicants will be informed of whether their proposal was successful by Friday 18 December 2020.

AWARD ACCEPTANCE AND PAYMENT

- A grant acceptance form and a grant confirmation email will be sent to all successful applicants soon after the results have been made available. Please ensure you provide us with your payment details and return your completed acceptance form to alumni@eng.ed.ac.uk at your earliest convenience as we cannot make a payment to you without receiving it. The grant acceptance form must be returned within three months of receipt or the award may be withdrawn.
- No grant disbursements will be made in July.
- A payment confirmation email will be sent out to successful applicants once the grant disbursement has been made.
- A grant report will be provided electronically via email after the payment has been processed. We ask you to complete the report and return it to us by email at the end of your project and no later than 12 months since the application deadline, unless written permission is sought.

FURTHER ASSISTANCE

If you need further assistance, please contact the Awards team at alumni@eng.ed.ac.uk