



Louisiana State University A&M
Student Sustainability Fund
Ross Ziegelasch Sustainability Committee

Bylaws of the Louisiana State University Student Sustainability Fund

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Article I. The Student Sustainability Fund

Section 1.1 – The Ross Ziegelasch Sustainability Committee

Founded in 2016, the Louisiana State University Student Body voted to establish a Student Sustainability Fund (SSF) to be used for projects related to sustainability, which will be proposed by students, faculty and staff. The Oversight Committee of this fund is named after Robert “Ross” Ziegelasch, who was instrumental in the development of the Student Sustainability Fee. The Student Sustainability Fee is dedicated to the implementation of specific projects that increase environmental sustainability, biodiversity, and/or eco-friendly technologies on campus.

The term “sustainability” in this document refers to the concept and practice of reducing humanity’s impact on the environment so as not to deplete or irreparably damage natural resources necessary for long-term ecological balance.

The Student Sustainability Fee funds will be supplemental to currently allocated funds for sustainable infrastructure, technology, and initiatives. This fee will enhance, not replace, existing funds. This student recommended fee was approved through a campus-wide student referendum (Spring 2016). Consistent with the Constitution of the Student Government, any proposal to amend, repeal, or otherwise regulate this student self-assessment must be approved by a majority vote by members of the Student Body participating in a Fall or Spring Primary Election. Such proposals must comply with LSU System Permanent Memorandum Twenty-Nine (PM-29) and may be initiated by either a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Student Senate or a petition signed by ten percent (10%) of the Student Body.

Section 1.2 – Bylaws and Annual Evaluation

Bylaws are the official guidance for the RZSF regarding management, structure, procedures, and processes. It is mandatory that the bylaws be reviewed and updated as necessary every year. To amend, create, or repeal elements of these bylaws, a vote of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the Ross Ziegelasch Sustainability Committee is required, and all changes approved by the Committee must be sent to the Student Body President and Speaker of the Student Senate for review or adjustments if needed. Final records will be forwarded to Campus Sustainability.

The RZSF Committee members are also responsible for conducting an annual evaluation to review the performance, protocols, committee structure, and goals of the Fund. The RZSF Committee may then suggest changes based on this evaluation. The evaluation will take place as an official, dedicated meeting.

Meetings to update these bylaws and to conduct an annual evaluation of the Fund may coincide.

Section 1.3 – Voting and Powers

The Ross Ziegelasch Sustainability Fund (RZSF) Committee has authority over the Student Sustainability Fee. A majority vote of the Committee is required to allocate funds and make any other official

decisions. A majority of the Committee vote is 6 votes (2/3). The quorum necessary for RZSF business and voting is comprised of at least six (6) members of the committee; the quorum must include at least four (4) of the student members of the Committee and two (2) of the non-student members.

Committee members with anticipated and acceptable absences on voting days can send in their votes prior to deliberation through proxy voting. Their evaluation and vote will be accounted for in the final vote. A student must have another student as a proxy, preferably from the same entity as the member (i.e., the President of the Graduate Association is recommended to have a proxy from the Graduate Association, a member of Faculty Senate must have a proxy from Faculty Senate).

The Ross Ziegelsch Sustainability Committee shall conduct its business in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order and the procedures stipulated herein.

Section 1.4 – RZSF Committee Structure and Representation

The Committee consists of members across two groups:

- o the Student Body President or their designee who shall serve as Chair
- o Member of Campus Sustainability
- o a member of Facility Maintenance
- o a member of Planning, Design & Construction
- o a member of the Faculty Senate
- o a member of LSU Faculty appointed by the Faculty Senate
- o a member of the Staff Senate
- o seven (7) students including:
 - Speaker of the Student Senate
 - President of the Graduate Student Association
 - President of the Veterinary College Council
 - Two (2) other students to be appointed by Student Body President with Student Senate ratification

- Two (2) other students from groups with an environmental focus. These students may not be current members of Student Government.

(The members may designate others to represent them on an ad-hoc or regular basis.)

- Non-voting Advisors
 - Vice President for Student Affairs, ex-officio
 - the Program Manager for the Student Government
 - The Student Body President may also appoint ex-officio, non-voting member from his/her executive staff to serve as liaison to the Program Manager for the Student Government

A minimum of 14 voting members must make up the Committee.

Section 1.5 - Committee Member Replacement

When a student member graduates, resigns, or steps down for any reason, the President of the Student Body may appoint a new student member with a 2/3 majority approval of the Student Senate.

Each member is allowed one (1) unexcused absence. An unexcused absence is defined as an absence of a committee member where they did not provide an excuse to the Chair prior to the meeting and did not send a proxy. At the second unexcused absence, that Committee member will be replaced/reappointed by the Student Body President or the leadership of the unit/division the Committee member represented.

Section 1.6 – Conflict of Interest

The Committee shall form and conduct itself in such a way that conflicts of interest are minimized, and all potential conflicts of interest are made public. Each Committee member must declare current and past connection(s) to group(s) if said group(s) have put forth a proposal to the Committee. At the start of each semester, each Committee member will report their on- campus involvement and affiliations.

Where appropriate, Committee members are required to recuse themselves from voting on or discussing grant allocations for projects proposed by groups with which they are affiliated. For such votes, the “full Committee membership” as defined for voting majority purposes shall be decreased to account for the Committee member's recusal.

Article 2: RZSF Committee Member Duties and Responsibilities

Section 2.1 – Voting Committee Members Duties and Responsibilities

Committee members serve as the deliberating body on the use of the Student Sustainability Fund monies accrued from the Student Sustainability Fee. The full Committee is required to be in session beginning and ending with the academic calendar year.

All voting members of the Committee will be responsible for the following:

- Understanding the sustainability and climate goals of the University and applying these to make informed decisions on proposal funding and selection;
- Representing the student population and making decisions in the best interest of the student community and the University as a whole;
- Maintaining an unbiased approach to all deliberations and decisions – including freedom from both actual and potential conflicts of interest;
- Reading, understanding, and deliberating on submitted Proposals;
- Evaluating and adjusting RZSF operations & processes; and
- Communicating with the campus community about RZSF grant opportunities.

Article 3 – Project Proposal Application Process, Eligibility, and Selection

Section 3.1 – Proposal Applications

All projects will go through an application process. The timeline for submissions is **November 15th through March 15th**. During this period, the Committee will review all submitted applications and provide appropriate feedback. Following the review, applicants will receive an email with a scheduled time to present their proposal to the Committee. A second proposal period may be opened during the Spring semester with a 2/3 vote of the Committee's approval.

Section 3.2 – Application Process

Applications must be completed and submitted by the designated date to be considered for the funding cycle. All application requirements, eligibility, instructions, and submission dates are posted on the Sustainability tab on the Student Government website. (The formal application deadline is subject to change at the discretion of the RZSF Committee on a yearly basis.

All portions of an application must be completed before the due date or the Committee will not deliberate on the application. Once the window for completing applications closes, materials will not be accepted or considered.

Section 3.3 – Proposals

A call for proposals will be broadcast to the LSU community beginning in the summer and rolling into the fall and/or spring term. Proposals for funding by the Student Sustainability Fee may be submitted by any student, faculty, or staff member. Proposals written by multiple authors must identify a principal

implementer (PI). Students serving as PIs must identify an LSU faculty or staff member to serve as co-PI. This requirement is to facilitate the procurement of goods and/or services throughout project implementation.

Each proposal must specify which of the goals and objectives of the Student Sustainability Bylaws would be advanced should the proposal be implemented. Each proposal must also identify and quantify the primary and secondary beneficiaries among the student population. Proposals may include Student Sustainability Fee funds as leverage for gaining additional funds (e.g., as matching funds in grant applications); provided that, sums substantially in excess of those requested from the Student Sustainability Fee revenues would be invested in conformity with the goals, objectives, policies, and procedures of the Student Sustainability Fee Plan.

The Ross Ziegelasch Sustainability Committee requires all applicants to give a presentation on the proposed project. The Committee may also appoint Technical Review Committees as appropriate to assist in the evaluation of proposals. Proposals may be funded at the requested amount, or a partial amount deemed appropriate by the Committee. Project authors may submit subsequent proposals, regardless of the approval or disapproval of the original request. Additional and/or recurring funding for a previously approved project is not guaranteed.

If a decision related to funding must be made during an interim period between the Spring and following Fall semesters, when there is no appointed Committee for the following funding cycle yet, the Student Government Program Manager, Campus Sustainability appointee and SSF Oversight Committee Chair may work together to make a funding decision.

Section 3.4 – Proposal Requirements and Preferences

Proposal Requirements

- Proposals must directly address the environmental sustainability of Louisiana State University and directly or indirectly benefit the students at Louisiana State University
- Meaningful student leadership or engagement must be integrated into each proposal
- Proposals that, in the view of the Committee, inadequately or in a tokenistic manner involve students are likely to be not approved
- Proposals should have a comprehensive implementation plan
- Proposals must have a clearly defined, measurable outcome
- Project proposals based on social sustainability should incorporate environmental sustainability or climate action as a component of implementation, but these do not need to be the project's primary focus
- Partnerships or collaborations with other departments and/or external nonprofits, businesses, etc. must be evidenced by a signed Letter of Commitment/Collaboration
- Proposals must include how the RZSF Fund will be highlighted in the project's implementation

Section 3.5 – Selection Process

Once all application materials have been submitted, the RZSF Committee will review the full application and rate each submission individually. The official Evaluation Rubric for each project is based on the following criteria:

- Each proposal must specify which of the goals and objectives of the Student Sustainability Fee Plan would be advanced should the proposal be implemented.
- Each proposal must also identify and quantify the primary and secondary beneficiaries among the student population.
- Proposals may include Student Sustainability Fee funds as leverage for gaining additional funds (e.g., as matching funds in grant applications) provided that sums substantially in excess of those requested from the Student Sustainability Fee revenues would be invested in conformity with the goals, objectives, policies, and procedures of the Student Sustainability Fee Plan.

Project applications are reviewed by the RZSF Committee, evaluated using a standardized rubric, and deliberated on during Committee meetings. The Committee's decision to fund or not fund a project is informed by the overall score of the project combined with the discussion that emerges from the official Committee meetings dedicated to evaluating each project application.

Section 3.6 – Project Decisions

Project proposals will either be “Approved,” “Approved with Stipulations,” or “Approved with Partial Funding.” Proposals may be funded at the requested amount, or a partial amount deemed appropriate by the Committee. Project authors may submit subsequent proposals, regardless of the approval or disapproval of the original request. Additional and/or recurring funding for a previously approved project is not guaranteed. All decisions will be emailed to all applicants with the rubric attached explaining why they were or were not awarded funding.

Article 4 – Allocation of Funds

Section 4.1 – Auditing and Evaluation

No expenditures shall be made from the Student Sustainability Fee Fund except as authorized in the annual Student Sustainability Fee Program budget recommended by a majority vote of the Student Sustainability Fee Oversight Committee.

Following project approval, Principal Implementers will be instructed to coordinate with the Financial Coordinator for Student Government regarding the allocation of awarded funds.

Project funds will become available once the committee has approved the project and budget, and it must be expended by the end of the following fiscal year. As such, Principal Implementers will have approximately twelve (12) months to procure requested goods and/or services.

Allocated funds that are not utilized by the end of the implementation period shall be returned to the Student Sustainability Fee Fund for reallocation by the Committee.

Deviations from the approved project budget, involving a change in price/quantity or the addition/substitution of budget items, must be communicated to the Chair of the Committee as soon as possible.

Budget change requests will be reviewed by the RZSF Committee and either approved or denied. Such alterations may not cause the project budget to surpass the total amount included in the original proposal and should be consistent with the project's intended outcomes.

If funding is allocated to a project by the RZSF committee, the project is ineligible to receive funding through other Student Government funds like the Program, Support and Initiatives Fund and the Organizational Relief Fund.

Section 4.2 – Progress Reports

A progress report will be completed by the Project Implementor in December. Project Implementors will additionally complete a final report due on 30 June.

The Progress Report allows the Committee to track the progression of the approved projects and to ensure they are meeting requirements and advancing. Project Implementors must regularly track both qualitative and quantitative information pertaining to pre- and mutually defined metrics that measure project accomplishments. Progress Reports will be public-facing and can be accessed by the campus community should they be interested in the progression of a project. The Progress Report forms will be made available on the LSU website under the Student Government Sustainability tab.

The Progress Report submitted in August will be considered the Final Progress Report and will provide a final record of total expenditures, unused funds, and more detailed, comprehensive qualitative and quantitative measures of project accomplishments.

Failure to provide a Progress Report within a month of its deadline without communication with the Chair of the Committee may result in disqualification from CSF funding opportunities for up to one fiscal year. Repeated failure to provide Quarterly Progress Reports by their required deadlines may result in unused funds being rescinded.

Section 4.3 – Communication and Coordination with the RZSF Committee

Approved projects will be supported by the RZSF Committee. The Chair of the Committee will be the Project Managers' primary point of contact for the duration of the project should the Managers need help submitting Quarterly Progress Reports or require other support for the project. Each Committee member will be available to facilitate project needs, provide administrative support, and assist with other relevant duties as they arise. Project Managers must notify the Committee of upcoming events, presentations, and other outreach opportunities at least two weeks in advance.

Section 4.4 – Project Extension

If a project manager requires an extension, they must submit a formal request via email to the Committee Chair. The request must include a clear explanation of why the extension is needed, along with any extenuating circumstances that prevented the project from being completed on time.

If the extension request occurs during the summer or while the Committee is not in session, it must be submitted to the Student Government Program Manager. In these cases, the decision will be made jointly by the Program Manager and the Campus Sustainability Manager.

Section 4.5 – Project Termination and Accountability

If a project is deemed by the Committee to not be making satisfactory progress based on Progress Reports or other reliable reporting and communications, the Committee will determine the most appropriate course of action, which may include rescinding funds. The Committee will always prioritize project reform over termination. The Committee members will seek to have meetings with Project Managers to support the project rather than resorting to terminating it. After deliberation, the RZSF Committee should provide a recommendation to continue the project, continue with changes to the project, or terminate the project and reclaim any remaining funds following an official vote.

Rescinding funds will only be considered if one or more of the following instances are applicable AND if rescinding funds and terminating the project will not have adverse effects on Louisiana State University, or the greater community:

- The project has not begun within 3 months of the original project timeline;
- The project is very unlikely to achieve a significant portion of its intended progress based on Progress Reports;
- Evident misuse of funds;
- Failure to submit one or more Progress Reports satisfactorily without communication;
- The scope of the project has deviated, without approval, significantly from that given in the initial application and Letter of Agreement; or
- Failure to meet terms indicated in the Letter of Agreement.

Article 5 – Reporting and Accountability

Section 5.1 – Annual Reporting

Along with publishing funded projects, funding amounts, and budgets on the SSF page of LSU's website, the Fund will report projects and their statuses/ successes on an annual basis. These reports will highlight the achievements of the Fund and provide transparency on the use and distribution of funds accrued from the Student Sustainability Fee.

Section 5.2 – Records

The RZSF will keep and maintain the following:

- Project evaluations and project feedback summarized from meetings;
- Project Progress Reports and Project Alteration Requests; and
- Records of projects funded and their allocated funds.

Section 5.3 – Accountability to the Student Body

The RZSF Committee prioritizes accountability and transparency relative to the student body and the wider University community. The RZSF Committee is committed to making all approved project records available to the public, being accessible for meetings and feedback, publishing clear reports on funds allocated and utilized, and engaging with the larger student body to become more accessible and streamlined.