

## Applying to The Culture Board

The Culture Board constitutes 10 representatives elected by The Welfare Council. The board is responsible for allocating around 3.5 million Kroner of the semester fee to student associations like yours. Although this sum is high, we receive applications for far more than we can allocate funds each year. Therefore, The Culture Board must ensure that each kroner benefits students and their associations in a fair and balanced way. We have set up a number of criteria in order to evaluate and reach a decision. Here I will attempt to give you the applicant, an overview of how we evaluate applications, so that you have an understanding of what we are looking for in an application.

The following is based on the criteria found in The Welfare Council's statutes, grant eligibility criteria and our action plan. You can find these documents on our website.

## Application

When we receive an application, the first thing we do is read your letter of application. The letter gives us a first impression of your association. The letter should be about a page long and it should include who you are, what you do and who your target audience is. The more active SiO students you have as members, the more you benefit SiO students. The more diverse student environments you reach out to, the more likely that you get funding from us. If you are part of and play a crucial role in multiple environments, please include that in your application. An association that accounts for the majority of social events in an environment, or an association that covers an important niche is an important association. All associations are important but some are more beneficial to the wider public than others.

Your application letter should also be transparent about things that may seem to be incomprehensible to The Cultural Board. Examples for this are high expenses for renting venues, equipment or social costs, large equity and level of activity in the previous period in comparison the upcoming period. The rule of thumb here should be: is there anything in the application that an outsider may not understand? If that is the case, then you should clarify in detail.

In addition, the application must contain information about accounting, budget, and overview of activity in the last period and a plan for the upcoming period. When evaluating your application we specifically look at these documents to get an overall understanding of your association and its activities.

## Budget

The budget should give an overview of income and expenses of the association. Nearly all associations that apply for grant from The Culture Board must also apply for grant elsewhere. This could be from educational institutions, Frifond, Fritt Ord, Arts Council Norway, Student council, student parliament, student unions, The Faculty student council, ticket revenues, advertisement etc. If your association has no income, while other associations that resemble yours do, then you cannot expect to receive additional grant than those similar associations. If you have attempted to earn some income, but have not succeeded, include this information in your application as it might help us understand your financial situation better.

Budget set up with the expectation of deficits should be justified in detail. The same applies if you expect a high revenue. We are not inclined to increasing your association's equity but if you have solid reason for acquiring high revenue then this will not have negative impact on your application.

Do not add high, vague items and ensure that outsiders have an understanding of how you are spending your money. The eligibility criteria provides an overview of activities we cannot support. We advise that you look at it.

## Accounting

In addition to evaluating how much you are applying for, we also look at your application the previous year and how much you received. We evaluate the need for the grant you are applying for and thus will need an overview of your association's audit. If your association has an unexpected revenue, this will be perceived that your association did not need the grant you received previously from The Culture Board. Then we assume that we can deduct that sum from the grant you are to receive from us this year.

Finally, we also look at your association's equity in your bank account. Having some amount of capital is viewed positively, but if it exceeds more than 30 percent of the association's turnover, then it would be wise to include an explanation why this is the case.

## Overview of last period

This document shall give us an information about the association's activity level. Therefore, it is crucial that you include events that you have arranged, number of attendants and the kind of significance you have had in the student environment. Do not only attach documents from the general assembly.

## Plan for upcoming period

Semester or yearly plan should give us an overview of your association's plans for the upcoming period. All events should be included. How many students do you expect to attend your events? This should be in line with your budget. We look at how many events you arranged in the last period and compare it to events you plan to arrange in the upcoming period. If your level of activity has increased then you will possibly receive more funding. If your activity has decreased then you risk cuts in the funding you will receive. We thoroughly read the plans, reports, budgets and audits in order to ensure that these documents match.

## Summary

Before sending in your application, we advise that you look at it as an outsider would. What would you want to know and think of the application?

- The amount of grant you are applying for with respect to the association's level of activity. Does it sound reasonable?
- The amount of your association's equity. Is it defensible?
- The various budget posts, are they defensible? Is it reasonable that your association spends 20 000 kr. on dinner parties for its board members?
- Revenue/deficit from last year. Does it need an explanation?
- Discrepancy between the budget and audit from last year. Is it reasonable to set up your budget the way that you do?
- Is this association important for its student environment?
- Can we trust this association to use the funding it receives for the purpose it was aimed for? Has it done so previously?
- Does the association provide services that other associations do not? Does its service contribute positively to the majority of the student environment?

A good application gives the reader an impression that the association gives services that are going to benefit majority of SiO-students and that the funding will assist in achieving that.

The regulations that are put in place are meant to reflect how we think and evaluate applications. Although your association is not capable of reaching and benefiting all SiO students, you are still encouraged to apply for a grant and we will most probably provide funding to your student association.

Karl Kristian R. Kirchhoff. 17. August 2013