

QUALITY MONEY HANDBOOK

2021-22



GRADUATE
STUDENTS'
ASSOCIATION

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

Quality Money

In Partnership with the University of Calgary

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PURPOSE OF THE QUALITY MONEY PROGRAM

The Graduate Students' Association of the University of Calgary (GSA) is committed to providing a strong foundation for our members and community by offering valued services and programs that support and empower graduate students during and after their academic endeavors. Quality Money is one way that the GSA invests in the graduate student community. Emphasis is placed upon project applications that impact the graduate student experience while attending the University of Calgary (UCalgary) by promoting multidisciplinary interactions that align with the UCalgary's Eyes High strategy and the GSA's Strategic Plan to integrate sustainable initiatives.

There are various sources of funding for supporting graduate students, each with their own criteria and goal. Quality Money is geared toward projects that have not started yet.

HISTORY OF QUALITY MONEY

In 2002/2003 the University launched a unique partnership with the GSA and the Students' Union (SU) - "**Quality Money**"- giving the GSA and SU the opportunity to invest discretionarily in student initiatives and opportunities to enhance the student experience. As part of the yearly tuition consultation process, the University proportionally distributes this money by population to both the GSA and the SU. Each year, the GSA puts out a call for Quality Money applications in order to solicit project applications from interested parties across the University. See our website for a list of funded projects and application deadlines. These projects start as simple ideas and proposals from graduate students and from the GSA and have ultimately improved the graduate student experience at UCalgary.

ELIGIBILITY

Graduate students as well as university partners are eligible to submit applications for Quality Money. Projects that are already finished and student research projects are not eligible for Quality Money.

Policies regarding the budget lines that can be funded by Quality Money:

- Hiring an individual should be done through the designated Collective Agreement (i.e., GAT, GANT, and GAR). When hiring an individual for the project, graduate students should have priority;
- Quality Money cannot be used to fund the purchase of alcohol; and
- Quality Money cannot be used for honoraria, cash prizes, or gifts. Speaker fees are eligible, however, an invoice is required. All Quality Money expense items require an invoice or receipt.



DEADLINES

The GSA will accept Quality Money applications three times in the academic year: August 15, October 15, and January 15. Based on the availability of funding, the Board of Directors (BoD) of the GSA has the discretion to add extra intake cycles on a rolling basis if necessary. There will be at least one month between the day that the new intake cycle has been advertised to graduate students and the deadline of the newly added intake cycle.

No late or incomplete applications will be accepted.

QUALITY MONEY PILLARS

This section describes the GSA Quality Money Pillars which comprise the GSA Strategic Plan, and the UCalgary's Eyes High Priorities.

Purpose

The GSA supports graduate students by advocating on their behalf, addressing their needs, and providing services and programs to support their academic endeavours.

The UCalgary's Board of Governors (BoG) provides the GSA with Quality Money, in an amount defined by the BoG each year, to improve the experience of graduate students on campus. The BoG asks the GSA to utilize Quality Money in a way that follows the University's [Eyes High Strategic Plan](#) (2017-2022).

However, as the BoG provides funds to both the SU and the GSA, it is important to differentiate the ways in which projects are approved and funded. As the GSA represents graduate students, it is important that Quality Money allocations are aligned with the GSA's [Strategic Plan](#) and its own vision and priorities, as well as the University's.

As such, the GSA has developed the following GSA Quality Money Pillars to provide guidelines for the GSA's Board of Directors when reviewing Quality Money applications.

GSA QUALITY MONEY PILLARS

GSA Quality Money is intended to enhance the campus community and experience of graduate students. To that end, the GSA has developed the following three funding pillars. These pillars are inspired by the GSA's Strategic Plan vision and the UCalgary's 2017-2022 Eyes High strategy.

Successful applications must align with at least one of these pillars:

1. Student Engagement and Development

The Student Engagement and Development pillar focuses on projects that aim to engage graduate students in their communities or help graduate students develop their skills and abilities.

These projects may include, but are not limited to:

- a. Career exploration and skills development
- b. Symposia
- c. Conferences
- d. Leadership development
- e. Workshops
- f. Cultural events
- g. Speaker series
- h. Sports activities

2. Enriching Teaching and Learning

The Enriching Teaching and Learning pillar focuses on projects that aim to enhance the teaching and learning of graduate students, as well as opportunities for graduate students to improve their own teaching.

These projects may include, but are not limited to:

- a. Teaching and Learning projects
- b. Research Analysts
- c. Workshop series

3. Sustainability and Accessibility

The Sustainability and Accessibility pillar focuses on projects that aim to make programs more sustainable or accessible for graduate students.

These projects may include, but are not limited to:

- a. Enhancing graduate student spaces
- b. Journal digitization projects
- c. Design competitions
- d. Development of online materials and resources



EVALUATION CRITERIA

When evaluating QM applications, the BoD will be evaluating on the following criteria:

- Strength of Connection to the GSA Quality Money Pillars;
- Potential Impact on Graduate Students;
- Practicality of Timeline;
- Measurability of Outcomes;
- Project's Future Direction and Sustainability (if applicable);
- Reasonableness of Budget.

APPLICATION PROCESS

This section provides a short description of a successful application life-cycle. More detailed information about the requirements and criteria can be found in subsequent sections.

How to apply

Applications can be found at gsa.ucalgary.ca/financial-support/quality-money-program. Applications should be submitted through the GSA website's application submission link on the same page.

If you have questions or need clarification, please email the Governance and Services Coordinator at governance.gsa@ucalgary.ca

Requirements for success

The application phase:

The applicant needs to complete and submit the Quality Money application form. Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted. A successful application will have well defined goals which are in line with the GSA Quality Money Pillars. Moreover, the application should contain a detailed and reasonable budget and show how graduate students benefit from the proposed project. The applicant is encouraged to view the Quality Money as "seed" money and seek to grow their project. Therefore, the applicant is encouraged to seek out other sources of funding and include these in the proposed budget.

The operational phase:

Once approved and funded, the applicant should show financial responsibility and record measurable impacts of the project (e.g. number of graduate students attending an event compared to overall attendance). Also, the applicants are required to publicly recognize the GSA in their project by way of branding and/or other promotional mediums that recognize the GSA's contribution to the project/event.

The following is a list of minimum expectations:

- Financial responsibility (e.g. gather receipts and provide proof of spending);
- Record data regarding how the goals of the project are met (e.g., number of students attended/ impacted);
- GSA branding (e.g., GSA Quality Money logo on posters, web site, or photos of the event); and

- Seek additional sources of funding for the subsequent years (if applicable).

The reporting phase (detailed description on page 6 and 7):

In this phase, the applicant should complete the report form, and provide a detailed account of how the Quality Money was spent, and describe how the project met its goals. Consider the impact of your project and how it can benefit a large and diverse audience of graduate students. Therefore, the applicant should provide all the information that was recorded in the previous phase.

The applicants will be required to provide a short description of their project and its result which will be presented on the GSA website.

The minimum requirements for this phase are as follows.

- Report on how the proposed goals were achieved, including the impact on graduate students (e.g., using the supporting data recorded in previous phase); and
- Report on the actual budget and supporting materials such as receipts and proof of spending.

APPLICATION EVALUATION PROCESS

The GSA Board of Directors (BoD) reviews and is responsible for final decisions for all Quality Money applications. Applications are reviewed for completeness and eligibility. Incomplete and/or late applications will not be accepted. As funds are limited, this is a competitive process, and there is no guarantee an application will be funded or that it will be funded in full.

After the deadline of each intake cycle, the BoD will review each application and rate them based on the criteria described above. The applicants will be notified once a decision is made regardless of the decision. The GSA and successful Quality Money recipients will enter into an agreement with respect to the funding made available through the Quality Money Program. These funds will be used solely for the purpose for which the proposal is granted, or, if the original purpose is altered with the written consent of the GSA.

Projects that occurred prior to the intake deadline will not be considered. If an application is rejected, the applicant may re-apply for the next intake cycle. At the end of the project, the applicant is required to submit a report detailing their accomplishments and the actual expenses. If the actual expenses are less than the proposed budget, the applicant will be asked to return the difference to the GSA. Receipts and proof of spending must be submitted.

For projects that span more than one (1) year, the applicant needs to provide a budget for each year.

Note that the applications can only be approved for one (1) year. At the end of the year, the applicants are required to submit a complete final report. If the applicant wishes to receive funding for the next year, the applicant is required to submit a new application and reference their previous successful application. The chances of receiving funding for subsequent years is higher if the project met the intended outcomes in the previous year, and if the applicant demonstrates that the project is reducing its reliance upon Quality Money. However, it is important to note that the funding for subsequent years is NOT guaranteed.

The Quality Money projects are expected to have a reasonable impact upon graduate students. For example, they may have a large impact upon a small group of students or a small impact upon a large

group of students. The applicant is expected to describe the scope of their project and the resulting outcomes for graduate students, to help the BoD better decide on their application.

Moreover, the applicant is expected to provide a detailed budget for their application. A budget template is provided in the application form. Applicants must include other sources of funding in the detailed budget, not just the anticipated Quality Money funding. Successful applicants are expected to spend the Quality Money according to the proposed budget as closely as possible. In the reporting phase, the recipients of Quality Money must report the actual expenses in the same manner as the proposed budget. In case the actual expenses are less than the proposed budget, the recipient of the Quality Money will be required to return the difference to the GSA.

Since Quality Money is to be viewed as “seed” money, the applications which have other sources of funding and a sustainable plan for project continuation may receive more favourable treatment over those solely dependent upon Quality Money. Ensure that a list of other funding sources is provided in your project application.

Where possible, please submit letters of support (financial and otherwise) with your application.

REPORTING PROCESS

The recipient of Quality Money will provide the GSA with the necessary information required to enable the GSA to determine whether the recipient is complying with the conditions on which the Quality Money was provided. It is imperative that the recipient spend the funds as set out in the Quality Money application. The recipient of Quality Money will permit a representative of the GSA to examine any books or records to determine whether the Quality Money has been used as set out in the Quality Money application. If the recipient does not comply with the terms and conditions for which the Quality Money was given, or if the information provided by the recipient to obtain the Quality Money is determined by the GSA to be false, misleading, or inaccurate, the GSA may require that the recipient repays all or part of the Quality Money fund immediately to the GSA.

The recipient will recognize, and permit the GSA to recognize the contribution from the GSA for this project. The recipient will place the GSA Quality Money logo, which will be provided in order to meet the requirements of the GSA’s style guide, on all publications and documents pertaining to the project.

A final written report, including the submission of the final budget, expenses, and proof of spending, will be submitted to the GSA Governance and Services Coordinator at governance.gsa@ucalgary.ca within 30 days of the end of the initiative. Unspent funds are due at this time as well. The report shall include:

- An overview of the status of the initiative;
- A detailed spending report for all expenditures related to the life of the initiative with proof of payment (i.e., receipts and invoices - itemized and tallied);
- An assessment of the outcomes and impacts of the initiative, for example, the number of graduate students impacted, photos of graduate student participations, written feedback from students, etc; and

- Suggestions for the future of the initiative, and where possible, will include student feedback that measures the efficacy of the initiative.

EXTENSION REQUEST

An approved QM project can request an extension if the awarded QM fund are not totally spent, and the project end date has passed.

The applicant is required to fill out the Quality Money Extension Request form. The complete Extension Request form must be sent to the GSA Governance Coordinator within 30 days of the project end date together with the Quality Money Report form.

If the Extension Request is approved by the GSA Board of Directors, the applicant must sign a contract for the extended portion of the project, and must fulfill requirements like any other regular approved QM projects.

An approved QM project can only be extended once, and the extension will only be granted up to one (1) full calendar year.

No cheque will be reissued for QM extension request, and the applicant must use the remaining fund grant from the original QM approval.

SPECIAL SITUATIONS

If the approved project is greatly delayed due to unexpected reasons, the applicant can submit the Extension Form without the Quality Money Report.

If there is a drastic change to the original approved QM project and cause misalignment of the project with the Quality Money Pillars, the applicant must inform the GSA so that the GSA can make a decision on whether to continue QM funding for the project.

APPENDIX A: SAMPLE BUDGET

Item description	Unit cost	Year 1 cost	Funding source
Room booking	\$300.00	\$300.00	Faculty of Arts
Speaker Hotel	\$150 per night, 2 nights per event	\$150.00	Department of English
Speaker per diem expenses	Up to \$75 per day for 2 days	\$150.00	EGSA DGA
Event refreshments (excluding alcohol)	\$200.00 per event	\$200.00	GSA Quality Money
Event AV services	\$300.00 per event	\$300.00	GSA Quality Money
Advertising	\$500.00 in first year and \$250 per year after	\$500.00	GSA Quality Money
GSA branding – use of logo on presentation	\$0.00	\$0.00	
	Totals	\$1300	
		\$300.00	Faculty of Arts
		\$150.00	Department of English
		\$150.00	EGSA DGA
		\$1000.00	GSA Quality Money