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. If your project is already finished, consider applying for an Academic Project Support Grant.

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 (gsa.ucalgary.ca/financial-support/quality-money-program) 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 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
- Quality Money cannot be used to provide honoraria to speakers, guests, etc.
- Quality Money cannot be used to fund travel costs
DEADLINES

The GSA accepts Quality Money applications twice per year on the last Friday of July and the last Friday of October. 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.

QUALITY MONEY PILLARS

This section describes the GSA Quality Money Pillars which comprise the GSA Pillars, the Eyes High Priorities, and the University’s Strategic Research Plan as described below.

Vision

The GSA will be a recognized leader in graduate student representation in Canada.

Purpose

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

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 Students’ Union 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 Pillars and Eyes High Priorities document to provide guidelines for the GSA’s Board of Directors when reviewing Quality Money applications:
GSA Pillars

1. Communication and Collaboration
   • Effective communication and teamwork
   • Deeper understanding through co-operation

2. Accountability and Adaptability
   • Transparency to create understanding
   • Continuous learning, improvements, and assessments

3. Resilience
   • Organizational sustainability
   • Fiscal accountability
   • Environmental responsibility
   • Effective Governance

4. Student Engagement
   • Engage members and wider community
   • Create awareness
   • Advocate to government
   • Programs and Services that contribute to overall student success

5. Legacy
   • Creating lasting memories
   • Providing a foundation for future success

UCalgary Strategic Research Plan

• Match our strength with opportunities
• Increase our research capacity through people and platforms
• Create a dynamic research environment to promote research excellence
Eyes High Priorities

1. Sharpen focus on research and scholarship
   - Collaboration
   - Support
   - Translation
   - Results

2. Enrich the quality and breadth of learning
   - Quality of instruction
   - Engaging students in research
   - Broader student experience
   - Flexibility

3. Fully integrate the University with the community
   - Involve the surrounding communities
   - Leadership in city life
   - Pride
   - Alumni

Core Values

- Curiosity
- Support
- Collaboration
- Communication
- Sustainability
- Globalization
- Balance
- Excellence

Academic Priorities (UCalgary)

- Talent Attraction, Development, and Retention
- Teaching and Research Integration
- Interdisciplinary
- Leadership
- Internationalization
- Connection with Community
- Sustainability
EVALUATION CRITERIA

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

1. Strength of Connection to Eyes High (/10) - based upon Eyes High and Academic Priorities;
2. Size of Impact on Graduate Students Affected (/5) - based upon GSA Pillars;
3. Number of Graduate Students Affected (/5);
4. Reasonableness of Budget (/5); and
5. Overall Appeal of Project (/5) - based upon GSA pillars.

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 website. If you have questions or need clarification, email the Governance and Media Coordinator at gsacomm@ucalgary.ca

Requirements for success

The application phase:
The applicant needs to fill and submit the application form for Quality Money. A successful application will have well defined goals which are in line with the evaluation criteria. Moreover, the application should contain a detailed and reasonable budget and show how graduate students benefit as a result of the proposed project. The applicants are encouraged to view the Quality Money as “seed” money and seek to grow their project. Therefore, the application is encouraged to have other sources of funding.

The BoD will look at applications with the bonus components (marked below) more favorably, a successful application is encouraged to have the following:

- Reasonable impact on graduate students [essential component]
- Alignment with GSA Quality Money Pillars [essential component] (see page 3)
- Detailed and reasonable budget [essential component]
- Other sources of funding [bonus component]

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 logo on posters, photos of the event); and
- Seek additional sources of funding for the subsequent years (if applicable).

The reporting phase (detailed description on page 8):

In this phase, the applicant should fill the report form and provide a detailed account of how the requested budget was spent, and describe how the project met its goals. Successful projects are those that have the greatest impact upon the largest number of graduate students possible. Consider the impact of your project and how you 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 at gsa.ucalgary.ca/financial-support/quality-money-program

The minimum requirements for this phase are as follows.

- Report on how the proposed goals were achieved (e.g. using the supporting data recorded in previous phase);
- Report on the actual budget and supporting material such as receipts and proof of spending; and
- Report on how the GSA was promoted.

APPLICATION EVALUATION PROCESS

The GSA Board of Directors (BoD) reviews and is responsible for final decisions for all Quality Money applications. Only fully completed applications will be reviewed. Applications are reviewed for completeness and eligibility. Incomplete and/or late applications will not be accepted. Funding priorities may limit the number of applications and/or the amount approved in a given year. This is a competitive process and therefore 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 GSA Quality Money Pillars (page 3). The applicants will be notified once a decision is made regardless of the decision. The GSA and the Quality Money recipient 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 funded. If an application is rejected, the applicant may address the issues and re-apply for the next intake cycle. At the end of the project, applicants are required to submit a report detailing their accomplishments and the actual budget. If the actual budget is less than the proposed budget, the applicants will be asked to return the difference to the GSA. Receipts and proof of spending must be submitted.

The projects may span more than a year. If the project spans more than a 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 applicants wish to receive funding for the next year, the applicant would be required to submit a new application and reference their previous successful application. The chances of receiving funding for subsequent years is higher if the previous year was a success, 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 can have a large impact upon a small group of students or a small impact upon a large group of students. The applicants are 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 applicants are expected to provide a detailed budget for their application. The template for how to present this projected budget is provided within the application form. Please include other sources of funding in your detailed budget, not just anticipated Quality Money funding. Successful applicants are expected to spend the Quality Money according to the proposed budget as closely as possible. As will be discussed in reporting phase (page 8), the recipients of the Quality Money must report the “actual” budget in the same manner as the proposed budget. In case the actual budget is less than the proposed budget, the recipient of the Quality Money will be required to return the difference to the GSA as outlined herein.

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.

**REVIEW & 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 allocate the funds as set out in the Quality Money contract. 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 contract. 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 funds 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’s 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 and proof of spending, will be submitted to the GSA (gsacomm@ucalgary.ca) within **30 business days of the end of the initiative**. This 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;
- 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.
## APPENDIX A: SAMPLE BUDGET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item description</th>
<th>Unit cost</th>
<th>Year 1 cost</th>
<th>Funding source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Room booking</td>
<td>$300.00</td>
<td>$300.00</td>
<td>Faculty of Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaker Hotel</td>
<td>$150 per night, 2 nights per event</td>
<td>$150.00</td>
<td>Department of English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaker per diem expenses</td>
<td>Up to $75 per day for 2 days</td>
<td>$150.00</td>
<td>EGSA DGA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event refreshments (excluding alcohol)</td>
<td>$200.00 per event</td>
<td>$200.00</td>
<td>GSA Quality Money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event AV services</td>
<td>$300.00 per event</td>
<td>$300.00</td>
<td>GSA Quality Money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>$500.00 in first year and $250 per year after</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
<td>GSA Quality Money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSA branding - use of logo on presentation</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1600</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- $300.00 Faculty of Arts
- $150.00 Department of English
- $275.00 EGSA DGA
- $1500.00 GSA Quality Money
APPENDIX B: APPLICATION LIFE CYCLE

1. Submit the application
2. Applications evaluated by Board of Directors
   - Approved
     - Operational phase
     - Year end report
   - Rejected
     - Fix the application
     - Appeal
3. Review financial standing and terms of contract
4. Extra funds returned to the GSA
5. If extra years remain
6. Update application with the result of project and new budget
APPENDIX C: STEPS FOR APPLICATION SUBMISSION

1. Cool idea that benefits graduate students
2. Read Quality Money Handbook
3. Does the idea:
   - Align with Eyes High?
   - Connect with GSA Pillars?
   - Adhere to the evaluation criteria?
   - Yes
   - No
     - Check out other funding sources at gsa.ucalgary.ca
4. Do you have other sources of funding?
   - Yes
   - You can still apply!
   - No
5. Prepare a detailed budget
6. Fill out the application form and submit
7. Great! The Board of Directors will look at your application more favourably