

## RSO Fiscal Management: Spending (AY 2021- 2022)

Hello and welcome to part two of Student Involvement's Fiscal Management training. Now that we have reviewed the funding sources for your RSO activities, let us discuss how your RSO can spend its money. Please note that the instructions and forms for all of the spending methods that we are about to go over can be found online via the RSO Self-Service Center.

Let us begin with some spending basics. First, the president and treasurer of your RSO are the only individuals authorized to spend money from your RSO account. Their approval should be obtained prior to the submission of any spending request. Second, your RSO will be assigned a six-digit organization code (also referred to as the account number) that starts with "61" with the last four digits unique to your RSO. This organization code (or org code for short) will be used by your RSO to spend both its SFB funding and on-campus self-generated revenue. Additionally, your RSO will use the same spending methods for both SFB funding and on-campus SGR. In other words, there is no difference in how your RSO will spend these funding sources. You just need to make sure you have secured the funding (either SFB or on-campus SGR) before committing to or paying for an expense.

The first spending method that we will discuss is on-campus charging. Your RSO may provide its organization code to certain on-campus offices to charge goods and services directly to its budget. These offices include: Parking Services, Event Services, Print Services, the Catering Office, and Police Services. By providing these offices with your RSO organization code, you are authorizing them to access your RSO account to deduct the final cost of the good or service that they are providing. For this reason, you should try to avoid sharing your RSO organization code with unauthorized users, who may use it for expenses that do not belong to your RSO. Although we will make every attempt to work with these offices to refund any fraudulent charges, it is sometimes impossible to prove that an expense was not authorized by your RSO.

The second spending method available to your RSO is the purchase order (or PO). Some local vendors will accept a Mason purchase order in lieu of a cash or credit card payment at the point of sale, thus saving you from having to pay out-of-pocket for an expense. Please note that all POs must be obtained prior to the receipt of a good or service. This means that you cannot request a purchase order for an expense that has already occurred or has been received. With this in mind, we ask that all PO requests be submitted at least 5 business days before they are needed. Please note that University policy forbids POs from being used to purchase prohibited items, such as alcohol, gifts, gift cards, or any items of a personal nature.

If a vendor does not accept a Mason purchase order or your RSO does not have enough time prior to your event to request one from Student Involvement, then one of your RSO members will need to pay out-of-pocket for the expense and seek reimbursement afterwards. Please note that reimbursements may only be issued to Mason faculty, staff, or students; they must be submitted within 45 days of the purchase or event date; and, they must include itemized receipts. Since Virginia sales tax is not a reimbursable expense, please have the payee e-mail [sibudget@gmu.edu](mailto:sibudget@gmu.edu) to obtain a copy of the University tax-exempt certificate, which should be used upon checkout. As is the case with purchase orders, reimbursements cannot include prohibited items, such as alcohol, gifts, gift cards, or any items of a personal nature.

There may be times when your RSO would like to thank an individual for providing a professional service, such as giving a presentation or judging a competition, by issuing a monetary token of

appreciation referred to as an honorarium. Although an honorarium is an allowable expense, there are several restrictions to its use. First, honorarium recipients cannot expect compensation or charge a fee for their services. Second, they cannot be issued to current or recent Mason employees, and their recipients should be distinguished in their respective fields. Third, they may not be paid to organizations or businesses, only to individuals. Finally, their amount must be under \$2000. In the case of a presenter, an RSO may include an additional amount to help defray the cost of any travel expenses that were incurred by the honorarium recipient. Students should never pay out-of-pocket for a presenter travel expenses.

Often when collaborating on events, your RSO may find that it needs to provide funding towards or share the cost of an expense with another RSO or Mason office. When this occurs, your RSO should submit a journal voucher, or JV, request. A JV transfer is simply an internal movement of money between University accounts.

For detailed instructions on the spending methods that we just went over, please visit the online RSO Self-Service Center. Please note that the RSO Self-Service Center can answer most of your budget questions, such as: How do I submit a purchase order to pay a vendor? How do I get reimbursed for supplies that I purchased for my RSO event? How do I pay for my conference registration fee? In addition to fiscal matters, the RSO Self-Service Center contains information on funding, room reservations, advertising, the event checklist, Mason360, and many other topics. Ideally, the RSO Self-Service Center should be your first stop to get the information you need. If, however, you require further budget assistance, please feel free to email [sibudget@gmu.edu](mailto:sibudget@gmu.edu), and we will try to respond to your inquiry within 2 business days.

This concludes part two of the Fiscal Management training.