

# Guidelines to receive funding from the Austrian Students Union

The directives apply to the social, children, housing and childcare funds, as well as to the fund for students with disabilities, for psychotherapy and for mediation.

## I. GENERAL SECTION

### 1. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- (1) The Austrian Students Union grants financial aid under the condition, that the student is a member of the Austrian Students Union, a regular student (in accordance with §2 (1) HSG 2014), lives in social deprivation as set in the present guidelines and does not receive sufficient support by any other public body. Employees of the Federal Austrian Students Union are exempt from application.
- (2) There is no legal claim on funding from the Austrian Students Union, any recourse to courts of law is excluded.

### 2. SOCIAL DEPRIVATION

- (1) Social deprivation is defined by the fact, that the applicant does not live with his or her parent(s) and the monthly expenses exceed the monthly income. Receiving the federal study grant excludes students from funding, unless the applicant doesn't receive the increased study grant for non-resident students as defined by the Student Support Act, in spite of living in his/her own residence.
- (2) The total income, as set out by the directives, is the household budget of the applicant, and where appropriate, his or her partner and child(ren) including revenue acquired through gainful employment, benefits awarded under the Austrian Labour Market Law, the Unemployment Insurance Act, the Maternity Protection Act, the Student Support Act and other legal frameworks, pensions or any other support received by the government (local or federal) or institutions such as:
  - State aid (e.g.: family allowance or housing benefits for the student and his/her children)
  - Study grants or scholarships
  - Alimonies (for the student themselves or his/her children), including financial aid from parents and/or family members
  - Childcare benefits
- (3) The following expenditures can be deducted with the subsequent maximum amount:
  - a) For actually incurred costs of housing a maximum of 550€ per household will be granted. For the partner and/or every child living in the same household, the maximum amount is increased by 200€ per person.
  - b) For expenses related to your studies, including tuition fees that haven't been refunded, a maximum of 200€ can be deducted if proof of cost is provided, otherwise a blanket coverage of 85€ will be payed.
  - c) Up to 90€ per month can be granted for phone, internet, broadcasting and television fees as well as household insurance.
  - d) For childcare up to 270€ per month can be authorized. This includes expenses for babysitters but excludes tuition fees for private institutions.
  - e) A maximum of 70€ a month can be granted for medical insurance.
  - f) For travel expenses related to your studies (e.g.: field trips, way to and from university) the least expensive public transportation fee can be reimbursed.
  - g) For costs of living (food, medical drugs, sports, etc.) a maximum of 350€ for the applicant, 260€ for the partner and another 260€ per child can be approved.

- (4) In certain instances, where a single urgent payment arises, 1/12 of the sum can be added to the monthly expenses. The payment will be only reimbursed if its necessary and if the applicant has a proof of payment.
- (5) In total, the limit of the calculated monthly expenditures is set to 900€ for the applicant, an additional 500€ for the partner and another 350€ per child that live in the same household. For single parents this amount is raised to 450€ . A maximum of 270€ can be added for childcare. Reimbursed cost for studying is limited to 200€ .

### **3. ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

- (1) The student has to provide an appropriate academic success, meaning that he/she completed a total of 16 ECTS credits, equivalent to 8 lecture hours (=“Semesterwochenstunden”, “SE” - in accordance with the preceding Austrian university credit system\*), within the previous two semesters. Students with children or disabilities may apply if they’ve completed half the required amount of credits within the same time frame.
- (2) This does not apply if the applicant exceeds the legally determined time of studies by a factor of two (e.g.: 12+ semesters for a bachelor degree). However, application is still possible if delays occurred due to full-time work, childcare, sickness, disability, delays connected to your academic career such as access restrictions or any similar, other unavoidable reason, under the condition that an adequate academic success can be proven prior and after the above mentioned circumstances occurred.
- (3) Non withstanding point 3. (1) , irregular students in their second semester preparing for university (e.g.: entrance qualification examination or language course) may apply if they can provide proof of completing a total of 8 lecture hours.
- (4) Students that have already completed a study program can only receive funding if the following education has a similar focus as the previous program or if by completing it, chances for employment are significantly improved.

\*In many cases, the number of lecture hours is higher than the ECTS credits given for a course. If you don’t have enough ECTS credits, please check if the number of lecture hours is sufficient.

### **4. APPLICATION**

- (1) Applications for funding by the Austrian Students Union (ÖH) can be submitted to the ÖH office of social policy at the academic institution the student is enrolled in.
- (2) The application must include, next to the name, address and matriculation number the following:
  - a) Copy of an valid ID, including a picture
  - b) Proof of income of the applicant and his partner in case of a shared household
  - c) Confirmation of support payments from other institutions or people such as family members
  - d) Copy of received or paid alimonies
  - e) Bank statements from the last three months
  - f) Proof of payments for expenditures such as costs of living, fees for communication services, household insurance, medical insurance, travel expenses related to your studies, etc.
  - g) Registration form (= proof of residency) of all family members living in the same household
  - h) Study documents such as the confirmation of enrollment, the transcript of records (=“Sammelzeugnis”) and the student record sheet (=“Studienblatt”)
  - i) Evidence of disability

- (3) By submitting the application form, the student confirms that he/she hasn't received aid from the social funds of the ÖH in the previous 12 months. Funding received for childcare is exempt from this condition.

## **5. PROCEDURE**

- (1) The applications will be automatically processed. To receive funding, the applicant has to agree to the declaration of consent.
- (2) Funding will be accepted/ declined by the chairperson of the executive board in consent with the head of the office of social policy and the head of the office of economic affairs of the Austrian Students Union (ÖH). The results will be delivered per mail as a written declaration. Upon request, we can also deliver the results to the office of social policy or chairman of the ÖH at the academic institution of the applicant.
- (3) Requests for reprocessing of rejected applications will be decided by a committee consisting of the head of office of social policy, a member of the Social Committee and the supervisor of the respective fund.
- (4) Funding received on the basis of false or incorrect information or similar malpractices must be reimbursed.
- (5) The ÖH is responsible for the lawful process of funding and has to act in accordance to the guidelines.
- (6) One third of the overall fund is covered by the Ministry of Education, Science and Research. In order to ensure that the application procedure is realized in accordance to the guidelines, staff members of the ministry are permitted access to granted applications.

## **6. LEVEL OF AID**

- (1) The amount of aid provided is determined by the available budget of the ÖH at the academic institution of the applicant and the urgency of the social situation. Additionally, the maximum amount can not surpass the difference between incurred expenses and revenue.
- (2) Except of payments received from the childcare funds, only a single payment per year can be granted.

---

## **II. SPECIAL SECTION**

### **1. CHILD CARE FUNDS**

- (1) To support students with children, the Austrian Students Union grants financial aid in accordance to the guidelines and available budgetary means.
- (2) Students legally bound to care for a child are eligible to receive funding.
- (3) The application must include, next to his/her name, address and matriculation number the following documents:
  - a) A birth certificate
  - b) A confirmation from the person/ institution taking care of the child(ren)

- c) Confirmation of the actually incurred monthly expenses for childcare (kindergarten fees, including fees for heating or crafting, but excluding fees for meals)
- (4) The amount of subsidy given depends on the scale of social deprivation of the applicant and the costs incurred for childcare. The monthly expenses are derived from the mean of all payments for childcare that arose within the past year. A maximum of 1.400€ per year and child can be granted.

## **2. HOUSING FUND**

- (1) The Austrian Students Union can provide aid to support students with housing costs, if the applicant meets the conditions set out by the guidelines. Funding is dependent on the available budgetary means of the ÖH.
- (2) To grant support, the applicant must live in his/her own household and must provide a signed rental agreement that is at least three months old. The size as well as the price of the housing arrangement must be appropriate for a student budget.
- (3) The average housing conditions for a student includes a single-room with approximately 20m<sup>2</sup>. For students with disabilities, these conditions do not apply.
- (4) A maximum of 1.200€ per year can be granted and depends on the scale of social deprivation as well as the applicants actually incurred costs of housing. For students with disabilities or with children, the limit can be raised to 1.400€ .

## **3. SOCIAL FUNDS**

- (1) For students faced with an financial emergency the Austrian Students Union can grant funding in accordance with the guidelines and dependent on the available budget. A financial emergency is defined by the fact, that the student got into the situation of hardship without being at fault.
- (2) A maximum of 1.400€ per year can be granted and depends on the level of urgency of the situation.

## **4. FUND FOR CHILDREN**

- (1) If an unexpected one-off payment arises with the purpose of providing for the applicants child(ren) or if faced with other extra financial burdens (e.g.: costs of medical care, therapy, furniture for children, etc.) the ÖH can grant funding as set out by the guidelines and according to the available budgetary means. Payments for childcare are not included. Funding can only be granted once per child.
- (2) The maximum amount of funding is limited to 1.400€ a year and is dependent on the available budgetary resources, the scale of social deprivation of the applicant and the actually incurred costs.

## **5. MEDIATION**

- (1) For students that don't receive the lawfully granted maintenance claim from their parent(s), the Austrian Students Union offers mediation between the student and his/her family member(s).
- (2) The ÖH sponsors the costs of the mediator for the first three sessions, but limits funding to a maximum of 500€ .

## **6. PSYCHOTHERAPY**

- (1) Students in financial hardship and in need of psychotherapy can apply for funding from the ÖH in accordance to the guidelines and dependent on the available budget.
- (2) Funding is only possible, if the academic education of the student had to be put on hold or was strongly obstructed by the medical condition. To receive funding a certificate from your doctor or psychotherapist must be submitted. Additionally, the student has to proof that the health insurance acknowledges the necessity of the medical treatment and covers part of the expenses.
- (3) Before funding is granted the Austrian Students Union is obliged to inform the applicant about the free psychotherapy programs available to students.
- (4) The actually incurred costs of therapy are to be considered in accordance to Z 2. A maximum of 1.500€ can be granted.

## **7. FUND FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

- (1) For students with a degree of disability of at least 50% , the Austrian Students Union offers special financial as well as emotional assistance tailored to the needs of the applicant. Information and consultation is carried out in coordination with the Disability Representatives and the ÖH of the academic institution of the applicant.
- (2) For students with a degree of disability of at least 50% , and for whom visiting lectures comes at an substantial additional effort, the ÖH can grant funding in accordance to the guidelines and dependent on the available budgetary resources.
- (3) A maximum of 4.500€ can be granted per year.
- (4) Condition to receive funding is, that the student must have applied to all other available government initiatives (e.g. financial support from: Federal Office for Social Affairs and Disabled Persons, other federal or local institutes). The condition of social deprivation as defined by point 2. does not apply to this fund. Other received funding has to be declared and will be deducted. If funding is needed in advance, the applicant must provide a financing plan, explaining his/ her expenditures.

## **8, REPORT**

- (1) The Austrian Students Union is obliged to send a report about the granted funds of the last academic year to the Ministry of Education, Science and Research by the end of December of each year.
- (2) The report must include the assigned and appropriated funding of the budget year, the approved and rejected applications, as well as an explanation, consisting of the reason of funding (social funds, fund for accommodation, childcare fund, etc.), the academic institution, the study program and the gender of the applicant.

## **9. ENTRY INTO FORCE & EXPIRATION**

- (1) The guidelines were approved on the 7th of November 2018 with GZ.54.201/0054-IV/12b/2008 by the Ministry of Education, Science and Research and will enter into force on the 30 March 2020.
- (2) The directives approved with GZ.54.201/0062-I/8a/2009 will be repealed on the 31st of December 2018.