

FINANCIAL SUPPORT GRANT GUIDELINES
THROUGH THE AUSTRIAN STUDENTS' UNION

CORONA HARDSHIP FUND

1. General requirements

(1) For a student to be granted financial support through the Austrian Students' Union, they must be a member of the Austrian Students' Union. They must be a regular degree student (according to section 2 (1) of the Federal Act on the Student Representative Organisations (Students' Union Act 2014)), live in social need as set out in the definition below, be able to show appropriate success in their studies, and not receive sufficient support from any other public body.

Staff members of the Austrian Students' Union cannot be granted support.

(2) There is no legal entitlement to receive financial support through the Austrian Students' Union.

2. Social need

(1) Social need is defined as such when monthly expenses exceed the monthly earnings. Losses in earnings and other financial losses triggered by the coronavirus crisis are taken into account in processing the application.

(2) The total income, as set out by these guidelines, is the household budget of the applicant and, where applicable, their partner's and children's earnings, including income from gainful employment, income from renting out or leasing, capital investments, benefits from the Unemployment Insurance Act (AIVG), from the Parental Leave Act (KUG), from the Student Support Act (StudFG), from the Labour Market Service Act (AMSG), or from any other legislation, retirement benefits, annuities, contributions from federal, provincial or municipal levels and other entities such as:

- o government aid payments (i.e. housing benefit or family allowance for students and their children)

- o study grants or other grants

- o alimony payments (alimony for students and their children) as well as other financial contributions from parents or relatives

- o childcare benefits

Potential loss of income through job loss, parents' job loss, paid furlough, or, for those who are self-employed, loss of job assignments due to the coronavirus pandemic are taken into account.

(3) The following expenditures are considered in processing the application:

- a) actually incurred costs of housing
- b) expenses related to your studies, including non-refunded tuition fees
- c) phone, internet, broadcasting licence fees as well as household insurance
- d) childcare fees (excluding tuition fees for private institutions, but including expenses for babysitters)
- e) alimony for children not living in the same household
- f) medical insurance fees
- g) transportation costs to and from your place of study
- h) costs of living (food, clothing, drugs, recreation, sports, etc.)
 - i) courses related to your studies or language courses, even if they were cancelled in the wake of the coronavirus crisis or did not take place in their original format

Any other expenditures are to be explained in the application in writing.

3. Study success

(1) The student has proven appropriate study success according to these guidelines if the following academic progress has been achieved up to and including WS19:

The student has successfully completed a total of 16 ECTS credits, equivalent to 8 lecture hours ("Semesterwochenstunden") within the previous three semesters (= WS18, SS19, WS19), or they have completed a total of 8 ECTS credits, equivalent to four lecture hours ("Semesterwochenstunden") within the previous two semesters (= SS19, WS19).

Second-semester students only need to prove they have completed 4 ECTS credits within the last semester (= start of studies WS19).

Students who enrolled for the first time during the summer semester of 2020 must enclose their confirmation of enrolment ("Inskriptionsbestätigung").

Students who have been studying for more than three semesters require the above mentioned 16 ECTS points, equivalent to 8 lecture hours ("Semesterwochenstunden").

To prove appropriate study success, examination results from SS 2020 may also be included. Students with children and students with disabilities are only required to have completed half of these credit amounts within the same time frame.

(2) Notwithstanding points 1. (1) and 3. (1), non-degree students preparing to become regular degree students (through a university entrance qualification examination "Studienberechtigungsprüfung", a language course or similar route) may receive financial support if they present proof of exams successfully completed during their first semester.

4. Application

- (1) Applications to financial support by the Austrian Students' Union (ÖH) can be submitted digitally and uploaded to the homepage of the Federal Austrian Students' Union. Accuracy of the particulars contained in the application must be attested by a sworn statement ("Eidesstattliche Erklärung").
- (2) The application containing name, address and student ID number of the applicant, must also include:
 - a. application form including its attached statement on data protection
 - b. a copy of a valid photo ID
 - c. proof of income of the applicant and their partner in case of a joint household
 - d. confirmation of financial contributions from other entities or persons
 - e. confirmation of received alimony payments
 - f. if applicable, bank statements of all bank accounts held in the applicant's name showing the last three months, including the final account balance
 - g. proof of residency ("Meldezettel") of all family members living in the applicant's household
 - h. confirmation of continuation of studies ("Fortsetzungsbestätigung") as well as a student record sheet ("Studienblatt") for the ongoing semester and documentation proving academic progress
 - i. if applicable, confirmation of disability ("Behindertenpass", medical certificate)
 - j. if applicable, employer's termination letter, proof of paid furlough ("Kurzarbeit"), or parents' letter of termination
 - k. information on continued receipt of family allowance and/or study grants
 - l. confirmation of incurred costs of living, telephone and broadcasting licence fees, household insurance, health insurance and necessary transportation around and to and from your place of study, etc.

Should a document not be accessible due to the coronavirus crisis (i.e. quarantine), this must be stated and explained in the application.

(3) Should the applicant have received financial support in excess of €100.00 from any other student representative organization at an Austrian institution of higher education or financial support from any other fund of the Federal Austrian Students' Union (i.e. from any social fund "Sozialfonds") since March 14, 2020, it is not possible to receive an additional grant from the Federal Austrian Students' Union.

5. Procedure

- (1) Applications are processed using an automated system. Applicants must give explicit consent to the use of automated data processing.

(2) Decisions on applications are made jointly by the Office for Social Policy ("Sozialreferat"), the chair and the Office for Economic Policy of the Federal Austrian Students' Union.

Decisions are communicated to the applicant in writing and may, upon request, also be communicated to the social policy officer or to the chair of the local Students' Union at the applicant's academic institution.

(3) Grants paid as a result of inaccurate or incomplete applications, or obtained in any other illicit manner, must be repaid.

6. Grant Amounts

(1) The grant amount approved during the academic year is based on the available budget and depends on the social hardship of the applicant.

(2) Only one grant can be approved per academic year.

(3) Financial support is capped at 800 euros per academic year. In cases of extreme hardship, financial support up to 1,000 euros may be paid out. The grant amount depends on the level of social hardship.

7. Entry into force

(1) These guidelines enter into force on January 1, 2021.

(2) These guidelines expire on March 31, 2021; only applications received up to this date will be processed.