
Document 20210106

Explanation Activism Grants Distribution procedure (2020) *OSb & ABC committee*



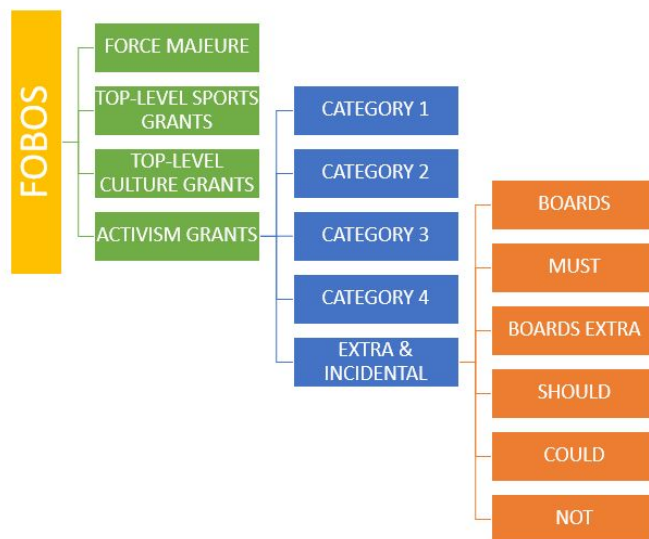
During the OS-GMA of December 17th, 2020, a distribution of activism grants for 2020 has been approved by the GMA. As this decision proved controversial, the OS board received a letter from several chairmen indicating that they had their reservations regarding the approval of this document. After a response from the OSb and ABC, another letter by Daedalus chairman Maarten Smit was received saying that what had happened was still not clear and some questions still remained unanswered. This document serves to explain the scenario that took place, discuss the choices that have been made and the alternatives that were possible (including their pros and cons) and answer the question posed by Maarten in his latest letter.

Requesting a sixth board member

Grants for a sixth board member have been a discussion point for some time already. Previous academic year, the OS associations asked the OS board to discuss with the Student Union (SU) and other umbrellas whether extending the activism grants for board members to include a maximum of six board members was feasible. In principle, the OS was in favour of extending category 2 to include grants for a maximum of six board members instead of the current five. This proposal was discussed with the SU and the other umbrella organizations and the outcome is described in more detail in the paragraphs below.

The SU model

To give a clear explanation of the course of action taken, we have to explain the model and course of action the SU uses for distributing activism grants. The FOBOS model of the SU consists of several categories for which at this time only two are relevant: category 2 and Extra & Incidental (E&I). Category 2 has higher priority than E&I and includes grants for (the original max of five) board members. Important to note is that grants will only flow to category E&I after category 2 is satisfied.



At the beginning of the year, all umbrellas deliver an overview of the requests they have received in E&I for that calendar year. Requests are assigned a priority, for which the order previously was as follows: BOARD, MUST, SHOULD, COULD, NOT. This order within a category is uniform for all umbrellas. Next, the umbrellas discuss the priority of the requests and look critically at the requests of other umbrella organizations. After all, if another umbrella has activities placed higher in priority, this would mean your umbrella would receive less grants, as the total available grants is finite.

Sixth board grants in E&I

At some point, it became clear that the majority of sixth board member grants would have to be issued to the OS. If these would have been included in category 2, this would have meant that grants that would have previously flowed through to E&I are now reserved mostly for OS. For other umbrellas, this was unacceptable, as this would decrease the number of grants some of their MUST activities - which are core activities of the association - would receive in E&I.

The solution that was proposed was to include grants for a sixth board in the Extra & Incidental category under a new priority label, 'BOARDS EXTRA'. This priority was placed between MUST & SHOULD, meaning that MUST was to be filled first, before any extra board grants were made available. The reasoning for this is that, though a sixth board member is very welcome for study associations, it is not essential for the association to function as usual. Due to this priority division, other umbrellas' MUST activities were guaranteed grants before the OS would receive more grants for sixth board members, and the other umbrellas accepted this proposal.

First erratum

After all umbrellas had agreed upon the final decision for grants within E&I, the OS would receive 162 grants in total in E&I. Technically, this total is already split up in a division that was agreed upon by the umbrellas and the SU. However, within the OS we have our own activism grants model in which we redistribute grants, something that was tolerated by the SU in previous years, but is technically not allowed. In this case, fifty out of 162 grants were reserved for the category BOARDS EXTRA. In the first erratum, the ABC chose not to include any sixth board member grants in the division for now, because the committee felt it was the responsibility of the Student Union to make sure sixth board members were also rewarded. The committee also felt that in order to include these grants, the current OS activism grants model would first have to be updated. As not enough time was available before the 2020 deadlines, this was only a possibility for future years.

Second erratum

As the SU representative was preparing for the GMA of December 17th, it became clear that we had not handled in line with decisions made earlier at the E&I meeting by simply giving grants to other activities even though the umbrellas had collaboratively decided to award these to sixth board members. The SU informed us that it was highly unlikely this division would be approved by the E&I meeting and thus recommended us to change the proposal to include the fifty grants awarded to sixth board members. As a consequence, the ABC prepared a second erratum which was sent to the GMA as soon as possible, some 18 hours before the GMA. Given the circumstances, the ABC strived to make a new distribution. The main principles used for this distribution were that giving more activities *some* grants was better than some activities receiving *no grants at all*, and that it was more important to compensate activities that had taken place than to compensate cancelled activities. The reason that an erratum was sent at such short notice was that if we hadn't, the whole process would have been delayed by one month for sure. Additionally, the OS could have had to be forced to accept the set distribution as agreed upon by the E&I meeting due to missing deadlines. Lastly, the OSb and ABC felt it was appropriate to let the GMA decide on this matter.

Decision of the GMA and its consequences

At the GMA, we put the matter in the associations' hands: vote for the first erratum or the second one. Approving the first erratum would, as said by the SU, result in a discussion with the other

umbrellas at the E&I meeting in which it was very unlikely that they would approve. This would probably have had the consequence that the 50 grants would have been fully withdrawn and OS would have had to adapt erratum 1 to a total of only 112 grants. Approving the second erratum meant that we followed the decision of the E&I meeting and - sadly - had to cut back on other activities. Either way, a lower number of grants for the activities in category A-D was implied.

Future steps

The OSb and ABC have recently had a fruitful discussion with the SU representative about this matter which has resulted in a better common understanding of the situation that played out. We also discussed possibilities to solve this issue and others in the future. In the beginning of February, the ABC will discuss these possibilities and they hope to provide the associations with a document at the GMA of February. As to prevent uninformed discussion, we will not go into these possibilities in detail at this GMA and kindly ask that the ABC is given the necessary time to work this out as well as possible.