

APUF 2026-2027 Budget Guidelines

The Access Programs University Fund (APUF) is a Provostial fund that supports access initiatives at the University of Toronto. The Access Strategy & Partnerships Office (ASPO) defines “Access Programs” as initiatives that support traditionally underrepresented groups with pathways and opportunities for post-secondary education.

Please refer to the following guidelines and parameters as you complete the APUF 2026-27 Budget Form.

Activities & Expenses

1. Services and vendors

We encourage you to propose the most economical options for expenditures related to travel, food, and accommodations, and other expenses. Use existing University of Toronto resources and services where appropriate, including technical support, vendors, and professional services.

- Refer to relevant U of T/public sector vendor [procurement policies](#) as you submit related expenses.
- Consider [Social Procurement](#), which supports typically underrepresented suppliers, by referring to the [Diverse Supplier Portal](#).

2. Faculty time

Include Faculty time as in-kind support in the budget. APUF does not cover financial costs for faculty participation.

3. Staffing costs

Overall, staffing costs must align with the scope and duration of your proposed activities. You must make a case for staffing costs, including One Time Only (OTO) requests. Hourly wages must be commensurate with job function and duties. The APUF committee may request justification for wages that exceed average compensation levels as outlined by University of Toronto policies.

- Consult your divisional CAO and/or HR Consultant for approval for the project staffing plans.
- For short term project staffing, visit the [UTemp](#) website for recruitment protocols.

4. Student stipends

Stipend amounts for U of T students who are supporting your initiative (e.g., mentors, advisors) vary across the institution depending on factors, such as the type of work and skill level required and previous experience and educational level of the student (e.g., undergraduate, graduate, professional program student).

- Refer to your departmental guidelines and/or consult your Business Officer for the appropriate ranges for remuneration for student stipend support before submitting your budget.

5. Honoraria and participant costs

Honoraria and participant costs are voluntary payments distinct from compensation and reimbursement.

- Refer to your departmental guidelines and/or consult your Business Officer about appropriate formats, ranges, thresholds, and tax implications, before submitting your budget.
- The combined amount of a) Honoraria and b) Participant Costs should not exceed 5% of the total APUF budget. If the combined amount exceeds 5%, please include a rationale and references for consideration.

a. Honoraria

An honorarium is a voluntary payment made to a person for services for which fees are not legally or traditionally required¹. This is a gesture of appreciation for guests of the University, like community partners, guest speakers, or focus group participants.

b. Participant Costs

Participant costs are eligible if they support equitable access to the initiative, such as instances where associated expenses may prove to be a barrier to participation. We recommend you review existing wrap-around supports as you assess the need and sustainability of participant costs.

6. Payment to Indigenous payees

Refer to the [Payments to Indigenous Payees Guidelines](#) for support with determining and managing payments for Indigenous payees like Elders, Knowledge Keepers, Traditional Teachers, and Indigenous community members. The guide includes recommended minimum amounts, a decision tree, templates and other resources to help reduce barriers to processing payments for Indigenous payees. Note that this guide does not include guidance around payments for Indigenous students and participants.

¹ Financial Advisory Services & Training Monthly Lunch & Learn Series. September 2024. [Understanding Honorarium Payments with FAST and Central Payroll Services.](#)

7. University application fees

APUF does not cover or subsidize fees for University applications.

- For more information about application vouchers, Contact the Office of Student Recruitment at future.access@utoronto.ca
 - To request application vouchers for Indigenous learners, contact future.access@utoronto.ca or book an appointment with Aaron Sinclair [via this link](#).
- Learn more about the [OUAC voucher program here](#)

8. Transportation and parking

Select the most economical means of transportation for participants. Parking is an allowable expense for off-site events related to implementation. Transportation and parking for staff is not an allowable expense.

9. Research, training, and dissemination

APUF does not cover research expenses. Costs associated with research, training and conferences that do not include or directly benefit participants of the access and outreach initiative are not permitted.

Student research opportunities may be eligible for funding if you can clearly articulate how student research supports the goals of access to postsecondary education (include in the initiative description and budget rationale sections of the application).

10. Conference funding

APUF does not cover conference attendance fees. We recommend that you look to other sources to fund student attendance such as the [School of Graduate Studies](#). For staff or faculty, there may be departmental or institutional resources that are available, such as the [Centre for Leadership, Learning, and Culture](#).

11. Group membership fees

APUF does not cover student or faculty organizational or association membership fees. If you have any questions related to eligible expenses, please contact ASPO.

12. Hardware and equipment

APUF does not cover hardware and equipment costs. If the purchase of hardware and equipment is essential to the proposed initiative, please submit a clear rationale for consideration. If approved, you will share a minimum of 50% of the cost and submit a plan for security and retention of hardware and equipment.

Budgeting Considerations & Practices

13. Terms and conditions

As a condition of funding, Project Leads will sign the APUF Letter of Agreement (LoA) which outlines formal terms and conditions and essential information to assist you in effectively managing your grant.

14. Unused funds and carry-over amount

By the end of the first year, you must have expended all costs except those related to project implementation. By the end of the second year, you must have expended all costs including those related to project implementation. You are required to return any unused funds (greater than \$500), as outlined in the final project report, to APUF to fund future projects.

Carry-over amount (Year 1)

To request funding extensions after 1 year (for funds other than implementation), e-mail access@utoronto.ca with a clear rationale for consideration **before the end of Year 1**. Late requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If a request for a funding extension is not made and/or approved, all unspent Year 1 non-implementation funding will be reabsorbed by ASPO for distribution to other initiatives.

15. Budget modifications

To request significant changes, e-mail access@utoronto.ca with a clear rationale for consideration. “Significant changes” are defined as: a) new activities or areas of focus that were not in the original application (and thus not approved by the Review Committee); b) budget modifications over \$2,500.

16. Sustainability

Given the ongoing nature of access initiatives, it is important to consider the needs and expectations your initiative may create.

- Will staff contracts be longer than APUF funding timeline?
- Will the funding from APUF develop a new support or resource in your division that participants may continue to expect and/or rely upon after the end date of your project?

It is important to consider these matters as part of your initiative completion and/or sustainability planning. The budget form includes “Confirmed” and “Unconfirmed/Anticipated” sources of funding. Please include how you plan to achieve sustainability in your application.