# Creighton Student Sustainability Action Fund Bylaws

Creighton University is committed to caring for our common home by promoting ecological justice at Creighton and within society at large, which includes advocacy for and implementation of sustainable practices. To fully live out this commitment, students must have opportunities to cultivate sustainability-focused projects and initiatives. As an institution dedicated to social justice and care for the marginalized, we must heed the words of Pope Francis:

"We have to realize that a true ecological approach always becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor."

The mission of The Creighton Student Sustainability Action Fund (CSSAF) is to contribute to building a culture of sustainability at Creighton University by enabling, supporting, and financing student-driven initiatives that collaboratively tackle interconnected environmental, social, and economic sustainability issues.

## Article 1 – CSSAF Governance Committee

### Section 1.1 – Powers and Voting

The CSSAF Governance Committee (referred to in the bylaws as Committee) has authority over CSSAF. A majority plus one vote of the Committee's full voting membership is required to make funding and any other official decision, except as provided for elsewhere in these bylaws. Apart from their normal function as a part of this Committee, a member has no individual authority.

### Section 1.2 – Membership, Representation, and Roles

The CSSAF Governance Committee shall consist of five student voting members and six non-student non-voting members. All members will be appointed as follows:

#### Voting

* One international student appointed by the Global Engagement Division
* One undergraduate student appointed by the Creighton Students Union
* One student appointed by the Sustainability Governance Committee
* One student appointed by the Creighton GreenJays
* One student with a background in environmental justice selected by the CSSAF Governance Committee after the other four members have been selected. This Environmental Justice At Large (EJAT) position is open to all undergraduate and graduate students via a student at-large application; see Appendix A.

#### Non-voting

* The Creighton Director of Sustainability
* One faculty member appointed by the Director of the Sustainability Studies Program and/or the Environmental Science Program
* One staff member appointed by the Associate Vice President for Facilities Management
* One staff member appointed by the Associate Vice President for Finance
* One staff member appointed by the Vice Provost for Student Life
* The CSSAF Coordinator

### Section 1.3 – Duties of Allocations Committee

The CSSAF Governance Committee is the decision-making body for The Creighton Student Sustainability Action Fund. The Committee decides which projects receive funding, approves changes to grant awards, and provides guidance for the CSSAF.

It shall be the duty of the voting Committee members to:

* Review grant applications and determine the allocation of funds
* Vote on issues that require Committee approval, such as project adjustments
* Manage maintanence of funds through marketing and/or other initiatives

It shall be the duty of the non-voting Committee members to:

* Provide advice and background information to the Committee during grant review
* Provide feedback to the Committee on issues that require Committee approval, such as project adjustments
* Invite subject matter experts to Committee meetings when necessary
* Provide insight to the Committee on University processes

It shall be the duty of all Committee members to:

* Attend Committee meetings
* Provide feedback to and help support all grantees and grant applicants
* Recruit and orient new Committee members annually
* Develop and run trainings and workshops for grant applicants and grant recipients
* Advise prospective grant applicants
* Coordinate with and understand campus-wide sustainability initiatives

### Section 1.4 – Chair

The Committee shall have one Chair. The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Committee, acting as facilitator and holding meetings to the agenda in a timely fashion. The Chair shall also develop and approve meeting agendas with the CSSAF Coordinator. The Chair will assist the Coordinator with their duties. At the beginning of each term of office, the Committee will take nominations and volunteers for Chair. Candidates for Chair will be selected first by majority vote of the voting Committee. Candidates for Chair are eligible to vote in these elections.

### Section 1.5 – Terms of Office

The Director of Sustainability and CSSAF Coordinator are permanent members of the CSSAF Governance Committee. Each of the other members of the CSSAF Governance Committee shall be appointed for one year – terms begin with the first official meeting. Committee members may serve no more than three consecutive terms, but the total number of terms they may serve is not limited. The CSSAF Coordinator will contact the appointing representative bodies for Committee member nominations by spring break in the semester prior to the beginning of their term. Position decisions should be confirmed by the last meeting of the Spring semester.

### Section 1.6 – Member Qualifications

All Student members of the Committee must be registered (full or part-time) Creighton students during their term of office. The EJAT position may be filled by registered (full or part-time) Creighton student. Students graduating at the end of the spring semester or a subsequent summer session are still eligible for committee membership, even though their student status may technically expire before the end of summer. Staff members of the Committee must be currently employed by Creighton; faculty may be currently employed or emeritus. All student Committee members must be in good academic and disciplinary standing with the University as defined by the Division of Student Life.

### Section 1.7 – Member Replacement

A Committee member may be removed by majority committee vote of the voting Committee members for unjustifiable absence, conflict of interest, or other appropriate reasons. If a Committee member is removed or resigns, the original appointing body will select a replacement. The new Committee member will serve the remainder of the original member's term.

The CSSAF Coordinator and Director of Sustainability have the power to designate a voting or non-voting Committee member for removal. All Committee member removals must be submitted as a written proposal to the CSSAF Coordinator. The CSSAF Coordinator will distribute the written proposal anonymously. Member replacement and/or removal votes will be anonymous.

### Section 1.8 – Conflict of Interest

The Committee shall conduct itself so that conflicts of interest are minimized, and all potential conflicts of interest are made public. Each Committee member must make public all campus groups and organizations of which they are a member. Where appropriate, voting Committee members should recuse themselves from voting on grant allocations for projects proposed by groups with whom they are executive members, or took part in the authorship of the proposal. Recused voting members can contribute to discussion.

### Section 1.9 – Quorum

All five voting members must be physically or virtually present to establish a quorum. If a voting member recuses themselves from a vote or a fourth or fifth voting member has not been selected, then quorum is reduced to four or three members physically or virtually present. A minimum of three voting persons is necessary to vote. In such a case, if three or more voting student members are recused, then the following non-voting members, in order, would become voting members on a particular proposal to establish a minimum of three voting persons – CSSAF Coordinator, then the Director of Sustainability, then the Vice Provost for Student Affairs nominated position.

### Section 1.10 – CSSAF Coordinator

The Office of Sustainability Programs Administrative Support position will serve as the CSSAF Coordinator. The CSSAF Coordinator's responsibilities include:

* Scheduling CSSAF Governance Committee meetings, recording meeting minutes, distributing meeting minutes to CSSAF committee for approval, and posting CSSAF meeting minutes on the CSSAF webpage
* Maintaining the CSSAF webpage
* Managing CSSAF budget
* Administering and distributing CSSAF funds based on CSSAF Governance Committee decisions
* Facilitating communication between project grantees, project applicants, and CSSAF Governance Committee
* Advising and supporting CSSAF Governance Committee
* Tracking progress of funded CSSAF projects, ensuring all projects are meeting CSSAF Grant and Program Policies
* Coordinating CSSAF-related speaking opportunities at on-and off-campus events
* Developing and maintaining all forms of CSSAF communications and publicity
* Providing sustainability fund consultation for fellow higher education institutions
* Documenting all CSSAF-related activity, co-authoring CSSAF's annual report with the Director of Sustainability, and maintaining CSSAF archives
* Submitting Infrastructure Grants to the University Space Committee after CSSAF Governance Committee approval

## Article 2 – Meetings

The Committee will meet monthly during each funding cycle at a consistent time that accommodates all voting members and the greatest number of non-voting members. Meetings of the full membership of the CSSAF will be open to any interested parties and shall be held at the discretion of the CSSAF, given that the meeting is announced to all general members at least one week in advance of the planned meeting. Meetings will be posted on the campus calendar by the CSSAF Coordinator.

### Section 2.1 – Attendance Policy

* A regularly scheduled meeting time must be approved before or at the first meeting of a new semester. This regularly scheduled meeting time shall be made publicly available and observed for the rest of the semester. A majority plus one vote of a quorum can alter the regularly scheduled meeting time. Meetings times must be changed at least two meetings in advance.
* Committee members who are unable to attend the regularly scheduled meeting time due to class or other semester-long previous commitments are excused but must still abide by the other requirements of active participation.
* Virtual participation is preferred to missing a meeting, but in person participation is strongly encouraged. Committee members should not attend a meeting in person if they are sick.
* Absences and tardiness are cumulative throughout each year and can lead to removal. Each member is allowed one unexcused absence and two excused absences per year. An absence shall be deemed excused if it is excused by university policy.
* Attendance for each meeting will be taken at the beginning and end of the meeting.

### Section 2.2: Establishing Rules of Order

Meeting will follow an abridged version of Roberta's Rules of Order. Committee members will be trained on the rules of order at the introductory meeting. A rules of order quick guide will be provided to all committee members at the introductory meeting.

## Article 3 – Allocation of Funds & Project Selection

### Section 3.1 – Allocation Types

The CSSAF supports two types of grants – Programmatic Grants and Infrastructure Grants. Programmatic Grants are limited to $2000. Funds from Programmatic Grants cannot be used on projects that modify campus infrastructure and therefore do not need to be approved by the Campus Space Committee.

Infrastructure Grants are limited to $10,000. Funds from Infrastructure Grants can be used on projects that modify campus infrastructure, but these projects must be approved by the Campus Space Committee, see Appendix B.

### Section 3.2 – Allocation of Funds

As noted in Section 1.1, the Committee shall decide to allocate funds to submitted projects by a majority plus one vote of an established quorum. All Committee decisions are subject to the approval of the Sustainability Governance Committee. The Committee may elect to fund only a portion of a proposal. The Committee and the CSSAF Coordinator will determine the academic year total allocation amount at the first meeting of the semester, based on the amount of available funds.

#### Funding Rounds

The CSSAF Governance Committee will meet monthly during two funding rounds – Fall (August-November) and Spring (January-April). Allocations will be distributed on a rolling basis during both rounds.

### Section 3.3 – Applications

All applications must be organized as outlined in Appendix C and the Application Document. Applications must be submitted to the Committee via [Sustainability@creighton.edu](mailto:Sustainability@creighton.edu) at least one week prior to a meeting. If an application is submitted within a week of a meeting, that application will be considered at the following meeting.

Committee members will review each application at scheduled meetings. Voting members will vote on one of the following four outcomes for an application

1. Approve – the application is approved with no modifications necessary; funding is available immediately pending approval from the Sustainability Governance Committee (SGC).
2. Conditionally Approve – the application is strong, but minor changes are needed. The Committee will provide a list of changes to the applicant. Once the CSSAF Coordinator documents the changes, funding will become available pending approval from the Sustainability Governance Committee (SGC).
3. Revise and Resubmit – the application needs major revisions before funding can be approved. The Committee will provide general comments on the application to the applicant. The applicant may revise the application and resubmit for a future funding round.
4. Deny – The application is declined, no revision necessary.

### Section 3.4 – General Requirements for Proposed Projects

All projects to be considered for CSSAF funding must meet the following criteria:

* Individual students, student groups or any student organization may apply to the CSSAF.
* Each CSSAF Application must include a Project Advisor, who is a Creighton staff or faculty member. Project Advisors must complete the Advisor Letter of Support – see Appendix C.
* Projects must directly address environmental sustainability on Creighton's campus or in the local community.
* All proposed projects must have a clearly defined, measurable outcome.
* All Programmatic Grants must be complete within 12 months of approval. Infrastructure Grants will be assessed on a project-by-project basis.
* All programs are eligible for continual funding after 12 months – a new application must be submitted each year. Returning programs are required to provide fiscal and qualitative feedback prior to being awarded continual funding.
* Projects shall have received all necessary written approval by appropriate campus officials prior to consideration. A document outlining necessary approvals will be provided to all applicants.
* Funds will be disbursed as expenses are incurred. Expense documentation shall be submitted to the Committee for review and approval prior to reimbursement.
* All projects shall have a mechanism for evaluation and follow-up after funding has been disbursed. All funded projects must submit the required project updates and a final report.
* If a project is expected to have ongoing benefits such as annual cost savings, the project plan must include a mechanism for tracking, recording, and reporting these benefits back to the Committee on, at least, an annual basis.
* Projects must have publicity, education, and/or outreach components.
* Projects should have student involvement.
* Neither party shall be liable to the other for delay or failure to perform any of its obligations hereunder provided such delay or failure to perform is due to fire, storm, flood, earthquake, act of God, war, insurrection, riot, pandemic, governmental action, or other unanticipated event beyond the control of such party (an "event of force majeure").

### Section 3.5 – Preferences for Project Proposals

The Committee shall give preference and priority to project proposals that also meet the following criteria. However, meeting these criteria is not required for projects to be considered for CSSAF funding.

* Preference will be given to projects focused on environmental justice.
* Preference will be given to proposals coming from student organizations and campus departments with a focus on social equity and/or environmental justice; or those proposals that support underrepresented or marginalized students.
* Preference will be given to projects that map to the Sustainable Creighton Initiative.
* Preference will be given to projects with a strong student participation component.
* Preference will be given to projects that can obtain matching funds from sources other than CSSAF.

### Section 3.6 – Restrictions for Project Proposals

The CSSAF Governance Committee will not review any project that violates any one of the following restrictions:

* Funds cannot be used to sponsor field trips.
* Funds cannot be used to buy gift cards.
* Funds cannot be used to pay wages, salaries, or stipends.
* Final budgets are approved by the Sustainability Governance Committee (SGC) as part of the application process. SGC reserves the right to revise the proposed budget to fit within the scope of allowable expenses.
* All applicable University and School financial policies must be followed.

### Section 3.7 - Other Rules Governing CSSAF Funds

* Any funds not allocated in a given year shall remain in the CSSAF account for future use.
* Funds allocated to a project that are not spent within the project time frame shall be returned to CSSAF for reallocation unless the project has submitted and received Committee approval for a timeline adjustment.
* CSSAF funds are not to be used or reallocated for purposes other than those described in this document.

### Section 3.8 – Project Adjustments

#### Budget Reallocations:

For Programmatic Grants, the CSSAF Coordinator may approve changes for:

* Budget reallocations that do not change the intent of the grant and compose less than 50% of the grant amount.

For Infrastructure Grants, all budget reallocations must be approved by a majority plus one CSSAF Committee vote and reported to the Campus Space Committee.

#### Timeline Adjustments:

For timeline adjustments, the CSSAF Coordinator may approve projects which:

* Have delays or changes due to circumstances out of their control (i.e., projects waiting for approval).
* Cumulative delays less than two months.

The CSSAF Coordinator must include any approved adjustments in project progress reports sent to the Committee.

## Article 4 – Accountability, Records and Reports

### Section 4.1 – CSSAF'S Accountability to the Student Body ​

CSSAF shall be accountable to the student body and therefore shall:

* Make all its records available to the public via the CSSAF webpage and Annual Report to the Creighton Students Union.

### Section 4.2 – Accountability of Projects ​

* All projects funded by CSSAF shall submit project updates to the CSSAF Coordinator. All projects will also submit a final report upon completion of the project. The final report must include a budget detailing the spending of all funds and answer the questions stated in the "Final Report Guidelines."
* Upon review of the Final Report, the CSSAF Coordinator shall judge whether the funds were spent within the scope of the project. If the Coordinator feels the funds were spent outside of the project scope, the Coordinator may recommend that the Committee require the return of some or the entire grant funds to CSSAF.
* Projects who consistently fail to submit the required documentation by the set deadlines may be required to return funds to CSSAF and will not be eligible to apply for and receive future funds from CSSAF. The Committee may require such projects to complete additional reporting processes.

### Section 4.3 – Records and Reports​

CSSAF must keep the following on record:​

* Minutes of all meetings of the CSSAF Governance Committee indicating the time and place of holding such meetings, the names of those present, and the proceedings thereof.
* Adequate and correct books and records of account, including accounts of its properties and business transactions and accounts of its assets, receipts, disbursements, gains and losses.
* All applications received each year. Funded applications will be displayed on the Sustainable Creighton webpage.
* Records of projects selected each year and the funds allocated to each project.
* Update and reports submitted by CSSAF funded projects and all annual reports received from projects with ongoing benefits.
* Copies of all annual reports which CSSAF has issued.

## Article 5 – Amendment of Bylaws

A majority vote by the Committee may amend, create, or repeal portions of these Bylaws unless doing so would materially and adversely affect the mission of CSSAF, as determined by the CSSAF Coordinator.

## Appendix A – At-large CSSAF Committee Selection Process

As stated in Section 1.2, one student with a background and/or passion for environmental justice will be selected by the CSSAF Governance Committee after the other four members have been selected. This position is open to all undergraduate and graduate students via a student at-large application. The EJAT CSSAF Governance Committee position will be selected as follows:

1. Information regarding the application for the at-large seat will be posted on the Office of Sustainability Programs website for a minimum of two weeks prior to the application deadline.

2. Applicants for the at-large seat will send a completed application to the CSSAF Coordinator by the deadline determined by the Committee.

3. The application form may be altered by the Committee at any time by a majority of a quorum.

The Committee will select the EJAT member by considering four different categories—their passion for sustainability, novel cultural contribution to the Committee, environmental justice experience, academic excellence.

## Appendix B – Grant Approval Process

Applications will be accepted during either funding round – Fall (August-November) and Spring (January-April). Applications must be submitted at least one week prior to a Committee meeting to be considered during the upcoming meeting.

## Appendix C – Application Requirements

All CSSAF Applications must be submitted via CSSAF google form <https://forms.gle/23qGLN57RWrAm8qe8>.

The CSSAF governance committee reserves the right to request additional information as needed. Submit application forms and questions to [sustainability@creighton.edu](mailto:sustainability@creighton.edu) no later than one week before a CSSAF Governance Committee meeting. Applications submitted within a week of a Committee meeting will be reviewed at the following meeting. More detailed application information will be provided on a separate application document.

### Brief Description of Project

A brief proposal that includes specific goals of the project.

### Budget

A budget template will be provided to all applicants.

### Schedule

List major tasks and milestones chronologically and estimate how long each task will take to be completed.

### Advisor Letter of Support

A template will be provided for advisors to complete.

### Space Committee Request (Infrastructure Grants Only)

A Space Request Form (SRF) is required for all Infrastructure grants.