

Policy for Granting of Conference Financial Aid For [Event Name]

[Template]

The purpose of providing conference financial aid is to provide opportunities for social fraternization as well as organizational and cultural cross-fertilization among study group leaders, Association leaders and students of *The Urantia Book* who aspire to be leaders to attend regional, continental and international Urantia Association events.

Conference financial aid may be available for persons needing assistance to attend [event name]. Funds will be limited to the amount raised for the restricted [Event Name] Conference Financial Aid Fund. Funds may also become available from the Urantia Association International Conference Financial Aid Fund if this event is approved by the Representative Council.

[Event name] conference financial aid is intended only for those persons who:

- are focused on study of *The Urantia Book*,
- can demonstrate active engagement in the mission of Urantia Association to foster study groups and disseminate the teachings of *The Urantia Book* in their local region,
- are willing to actively participate during the event,
- are willing to volunteer to help during the event,
- are willing to take what they learn back to their local area or home country to share with their local leaders and other students of *The Urantia Book*,
- demonstrate clear financial need.

Priority will be given to those who have not previously received financial aid from Urantia Association International or one of its constituent associations.

The [event name] Conference Financial Aid Sub-Committee will work with each approved applicant (Recipient) to determine what specific expenses will be approved from the following list of eligible expenses:

- airfare expenses, including any required overnight stay between flights;
- event registration fees;
- lodging and meals for the duration of the event only;
- airport ground transportation, transfer fees and taxes;
- early arrival and/or late departure a day before or after the event made necessary due to flight availability, will be considered on a case by case basis by the sub-committee.

Conference financial aid recipients are responsible for completing the following before any funds will be released:

- acquiring and paying for their own visa and passport. No funds will be released and no flights booked until verification of both have been received by the event committee,
- demonstrating fiduciary responsibility by acquiring their visa and passport as early as possible before the event. If airfare is being requested, it is strongly recommended to obtain the passport and visa 6 months or earlier prior to the event to take advantage of cheaper airfares,
- paying for and providing evidence of travel health insurance coverage for the duration of their stay in the event country,
- providing a fair portion of their expenses, when feasible, (in addition to payment for their visa, passport and travel health insurance) through individual, local study group and/or association fundraising activities,
- depositing the fair portion of their expenses, if any, in the designated Restricted Conference Financial Aid Fund as instructed by the [event name] Conference Financial Aid Sub-Committee. [Applicant-pledged funds do not qualify as a tax-deductible donation.]
- obtaining written approval from the [event name] Conference Financial Aid Sub-Committee for any expense before incurring it, by submitting a list with amounts requested to the event Conference Financial Aid Sub-Committee.

- submitting receipts for all approved cash advances for expenses to the [event name] Conference Financial Aid Sub-Committee; and
- agreeing to reimburse the [event name] Conference Financial Aid Sub-Committee for any advanced funds not supported by an expense receipt,
- agreeing to have airline travel arrangements made by a designated [event name] Conference Financial Aid Sub-Committee Travel Coordinator on behalf of the Recipient and payment for airfare to be made directly to the travel agency or airline only.

Each applicant will submit a formal application for [event name] conference financial aid using the form sent by email or available on the website at: [insert link to website page]. A sub-committee of the [event name] shall receive and evaluate applications for financial aid and recommend approval or denial to the sub-committee chair or the organizing committee of the [event name]. Approval for [event name] conference financial aid will be based on a number of factors as stated above, and will be primarily driven by the value of available funds.

Expenses not eligible for financial aid:

- visa fees
- passport fees
- personal health insurance coverage for the duration and country of the event.
- extra days beyond the actual event dates, unless necessitated by flight availability and preapproved by the [event name] Conference Financial Aid Sub-Committee.

The [event name] Financial Aid Sub-Committee shall comply with the following:

- Set up and promote a Restricted [event name] Conference Financial Aid Fund;
- Approve or deny applications based on the criteria stated above;
- Advise each approved applicant (Recipient) specifically what eligible expenses have been approved and their specific responsibilities;
- Maintain a record of all applications for financial aid;
Maintain a record of all approvals and disapprovals for financial aid;
Maintain a record of all amounts distributed including name, address of the recipient, plus method and date of payment;
- After the event, send items a, b, and c above to the Urantia Association International Central Office for archiving at email address: centraloffice@urantia-association.org
- Give priority to current Association leaders who have not been granted conference financial aid previously. Urantia Association International Central Office will be able to assist with this information.

Tips for Conference Financial Aid Sub-Committees (Do not include these in the event policy)

- Consult with Urantia Association International Central Office for list of previous financial aid recipients.
- The sub-committee should feel free to make exceptions to the policy when special circumstances arise, but only after the circumstantial facts are verified.
- Contact your country's visa issuing agency to determine the legal responsibilities, if any, your association will have for someone granted a visa to attend your event and take appropriate steps to comply and modify the Rules of Conduct accordingly.
- In some cases, registering your event with the host country's customs agency can help expedite visa approval.
- Advise groups planning to travel together to submit their visa applications separately at different times to prevent mass rejection.
- Never** indicate in any invitation, visa letters or other correspondence to governmental agencies or the Recipient that you will be "sponsoring" them or will be responsible for the Recipient in any way. You are providing financial aid only.
- Assign the Recipients to volunteer positions during the event to help your team.
- It is a good idea to develop Rules of Conduct for recipients of financial aid.
Some items to consider for Rules of Conduct are:
 - Conduct yourself at all times in an honest, ethical, and respectful manner, including

- a. refraining from asking attendees for money or inappropriate favors;
 - b. removing any items from the conference venue;
 - c. using respectful language at all times;
 - d. avoiding organizational political discussions, or any other disruptive conduct.
2. Behave in a manner that will enhance the safety, security, and good order of the [event name].
3. Comply with all the laws of the [country and city of the event]. This includes, but is not limited to, all laws concerning prohibition of the following:
 - a. Being under influence of illegal drugs;
 - b. Possession of any explosive devices, firearms, ammunition, alcoholic beverages, narcotics, dangerous drugs, or objects or materials or any kind, which might be used to compromise the safety and security of the event;
 - c. Theft of property;
 - d. Tampering with or damaging any fire alarms;
 - e. Damaging property of others.
4. Attend and participate in all scheduled sessions of the event beginning [start date and time and end date and time].
5. Arrive at meals at the appointed start time.
6. Remain on the event premises unless accompanied by a staff member.
7. Arrive on your scheduled flight and leave on your scheduled flight.