North Sydney Girls’ High School P&C Association

Funding and Grants Policy

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1. Purpose of this policy
The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the allocation of P&C funds to support projects that are beneficial to the North Sydney Girls’ High School community which includes students, staff and parents.

The policy provides a transparent and accountable process for funding projects that are consistent with the objectives of the P&C (as expressed in the P&C’s Constitution) which are:

(a) to promote the interests of the school by bringing parents, citizens, students and teaching staff into close co-operation; and
(b) to assist in providing facilities and equipment for the school and in promoting the recreation and welfare of the students at the school.

2. Funding Principles and Objectives

2.1 Benefit to the school
The overriding principle is that funding will only be granted for projects that have a demonstrable benefit for the students and staff of NSGHS. The term “Projects” is used in a general sense in this policy and is taken to include: sponsorship to attend a conference or course, acquisition of equipment, renovation of existing facilities, provision of new facilities, improvements to school grounds, introduction of sustainability measures; engagement of professional consultants (eg architects, designers, engineers, landscapers) to prepare a brief for or scope a project.
2.2  P&C objectives
Consistent with the P&C’s objectives, applications for funding will be considered for projects which will:

(a) promote excellence in academic achievements and citizenship;
(b) promote the welfare, enjoyment and recreation (such as music, sporting and dramatic opportunities) of the students;
(c) enhance teaching and learning activities;
(d) enhance professional standards;
(e) improve the school’s facilities, grounds and surroundings; or
(f) promote innovative projects and services.

2.3  Equity and Access
This principle requires that in granting funding there is a need to ensure that students will have fair and equitable access to improvements, opportunities and benefits delivered by funded projects to ensure equity across the curriculum areas, recreational activities, between the years and between the Middle School and the Senior School.

2.4  Short term benefit
Funding will be considered for projects that have short term or immediate benefits for the current student cohort. It is acknowledged that the School Foundation has the mandate to fund longer term, more strategic projects. Funding will not be applied to pay ongoing school maintenance or operating costs (other than gardening and grounds services currently funded by the P&C).

3.  Who may apply?
The following categories of applicants may apply for P&C funding:

3.1  The Students
Either through the Student Representative Council (“SRC”) or as an individual or student club or other group of students with a limit of $1,000 per application from the SRC or other student group or club and a limit of $500 per application from an individual student. SRC or club applications should be for items that have a tangible or permanent benefit for the student cohort or seek improvements to facilities principally used by the students eg paying for a guest speaker; purchasing stationery for a mail out to former students; or providing additional amenities in the student change rooms and toilets.

If an application is made by an individual student, the student will have to identify how the project or grant will have wider benefits for other students eg raising the profile of the school, providing experiences that the applicant can share with other students. Grants are not intended as a bursary or scholarship.

3.2.  Professional staff
Full time or permanent part-time staff of NSGHS may apply. Staff applications will have to demonstrate how the project (eg, course or conference) will benefit their teaching and roles within the school. The annual P&C budget for staff grants is $10,000 with a maximum of $5,000 for any one applicant.
Except in exceptional circumstances an applicant must have been a member of staff for one year before applying for a grant.

Applications to cover expenses for a course or conference must be received at least 6 weeks before the course or conference and have the approval of the Principal. Staff members, who are not heads of department, must also have the approval of their head of department to attend the course or conference. A copy of the course/conference program will need to accompany the application. Application can be made for the cost of conference registration or course fees, materials required for the course, and reimbursement for reasonable accommodation costs actually incurred and reasonable travel expenses to and from the conference. Meal and incidental expenses will not be covered. Any other financial support must be disclosed.

3.3 The Principal
It is envisaged that a wide range of applications will be made by the Principal (or Deputy Principal in case of absence of the Principal) for projects that will benefit the school including specific projects to acquire new equipment or to re-furbish existing facilities, or provide new facilities. Improvement will be proposed for both the built and natural environment of the school. Specific and complete details of the scope, timing and cost of each project need to be included in application form together with details of who will carry the project out and who will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the project (eg a contractor, the Department, or a staff member).

Applications for expenditure of $500 or more will need to be accompanied by two quotes and where the project cost exceeds the sum of $10,000 three quotes must be provided.

The P&C will not fund on-going expenses or operating costs that are normally paid from the school’s budget.

3.4 P&C Committees such as the Music Committee, Library, Sports and Canteen (including sub-committees of any P&C committee).

Applications by P&C committees will need to be signed by the relevant committee convenor. Applications can include applications for new equipment or facilities and any fundraising by an individual committee towards the project cost must be disclosed. Applications must be accompanied by two quotes unless other supporting or explanatory information is provided eg the items sought are usually acquired from a nominated school or department supplier eg, new library books, musical equipment. This policy does not apply to payments usually made by the P&C to cover a P&C activity eg insurances for sporting teams, accident insurance.

4. How to apply
4.1 Application forms
Applications can be made by completing the appropriate application form attached to this policy - there is one form for students/SRC applications and another form for the Principal, staff and P&C committees. Copies of the policy and application forms are available from the Secretary of the P&C or a Funding Panel member. The P&C
President can advise the name of the Funding Panel members and who to send the application to.

Applications should be addressed to the P&C Funding Panel and left in the P&C box or emailed to a Funding panel member with notification that an application has been lodged to the P&C President. Applications should be lodged 3 weeks prior to the next general meeting of the P&C if they are to be considered at that meeting. Urgent applications will be considered if lodged less than 3 weeks before the next meeting with the prior approval of the Funding Panel Convenor.

4.2 Preliminary discussions
This policy does not prevent preliminary discussions of a proposed project at a P&C executive meeting or a general meeting to test the level of support for the proposal or identify any concerns with a proposal. However funding approval for any such proposal, once fully devised, will need to be obtained in accordance with and subject to this policy.

5. Assessment of an application
5.1 Initial assessment
Applications will be assessed by a Funding Panel established by the P&C in accordance with section 6.

The Funding Panel will assess the application to determine whether the funding is sought for projects that fall within the scope of the policy and as against the funding principles outlined in section 2. The Funding Panel will also determine whether sufficient information including supporting information has been provided to clearly identify the project and may request further information from the applicant.

When considering an application the Funding Panel will consult the Register of Grants to determine whether there has been past funding for this or a similar project or whether any area or project has received a disproportionate amount of funding over the past 2 years. It may also consider the basis on which previous grants have been approved.

5.2 Recommendation for approval to the P&C
If after assessment the Funding Panel decides that the application meets the criteria outlined in section 2, contains the information required by section 3 and otherwise complies with this policy, it will make a recommendation to the P&C for consideration at the next general meeting for approval of the application either in full or in part and subject to any conditions as the Panel considers appropriate for the grant of funding. Such conditions may include additional reporting requirements at the completion or during the project and a project evaluation at the conclusion of the project.

The Convenor of the Panel will arrange for notice of the consideration of the funding application to be included in the agenda notice of the meeting at which the application is to be considered. For applications for funding in excess of $10,000 on any single project the Convenor must ensure that notice is given in accordance with clause 15 of the By-Laws of the P &C.
An applicant may, if they wish to do so, present on their funding request at the P&C meeting at which their application is to be determined. The Convenor or other spokesman for the Panel may also address the general meeting on the application.

5.3 Decline of an application
At the conclusion of the assessment, if the Funding Panel decides that the funding is not sought for projects that meet the funding principles or criteria in section 2, the information required by section 3 has not been provided or there is insufficient information to assess the project and any potential benefits, the Funding Panel may decline the application. The Funding Panel will advise the applicant accordingly and provide reasons why the application has been declined. The applicant may submit another application for consideration by the Panel provided that the reasons for decline of the first application have been addressed in any revised application.

5.4. Decision of the P&C
The Funding Panel Convenor will ensure details of the decision of the P&C and the date of the meeting at which the resolution either approving or declining the funding application was passed are recorded in the Register of Grants. If an application is refused by the P&C, a Panel member will advise the applicant of the reasons for refusal.

6. The Funding Panel
6.1 Composition
The Funding Panel will constitute a sub-committee of the P&C and will comprise 4 parents:
(a) 3 parents appointed by the P&C in accordance with section 6.2, at least one of whom must be a member of the P&C executive and one of whom must not be a member of the Executive; and
(b) the Treasurer.

6.2 Appointment
The first members of the Funding Panel will be elected at a general meeting of the P&C and will hold office until the next Annual General Meeting (“AGM”). Thereafter members of the Panel will be elected at the AGM each year and will hold office until the next AGM.

6.3 Casual Vacancies
Any casual vacancies may be filled by appointment by the President of the P&C and any appointee shall hold office until the next AGM.

6.4 Rotation
A Panel member may serve two consecutive terms on the Panel but then must step down for one year before being eligible for re-election to the Panel.
6.5 Role and responsibilities
The Funding Panel will:
(a) consider and make determinations or recommendations on applications for P&C funding in accordance with this policy;
(b) maintain the Register of Grants in accordance with section 7;
(c) report to the P&C at the AGM as required under section 6.7;
(d) make recommendations to the P&C about the operation of this Policy (including whether the monetary limits or grant terms should be reviewed) as it sees fit; and
(e) carry out any other tasks outlined in this policy or allocated to it by the P&C.

6.6 Meetings of the Panel
The Panel will elect one of their members to be the Convenor or spokesman of the Panel. A quorum will be 3 members.

The Panel will meet as and when needed to consider applications and may elect to do so formally or informally eg by telephone. Decisions will be made on a consensus basis but failing consensus on a majority basis.

6.7 Report to the AGM
The Panel will provide a report to the AGM each year on the funding provided during that year and on any other matters that the Panel considers should be brought to the attention of the P&C.

7. Register of Grants
The Funding Panel will maintain a register of applications (whether successful or otherwise) and will include any reports or evaluations provided in relation to successful applications. The Register will provide a background framework for approval and the bases for approval to assist the Panel in its assessments.

8. Accountability and reporting
8.1 Use of funds
The applicant acknowledges that any funds provided by the P&C are to be used for the purposes of the approved project and the applicant is accountable to the P&C for the proper application of the funds.

8.2 Reporting
The applicant will report to the P&C at the conclusion of the project (or at stages during the project if so stipulated by the conditions of the grant) on the costs of the project, the benefits and outcomes achieved. The applicant may report in person at a P&C meeting or by a written summary which will be circulated at a P&C meeting. Where the project involves funding of a staff member to attend a course or conference, the staff member is encouraged to report by way of a presentation at a P&C meeting.