Enhanced Student-Faculty Interaction (ESFI) Fund
Administration, Guidelines and Policies

I. Administration and Approval of ESFI Projects

The administration of ESFI funds is managed by the Provost's Office, overseen by the Vice Provost. Requests are reviewed as received and decisions are made as expeditiously as possible. Requests for repeated projects, events, etc., to be funded are welcomed, although after several years of holding the same event, departments should consider incorporating funding for the event into their regular budgets.

II. Policies

A. General

1. The fundamental reason for the existence of the ESFI funds is to foster face-to-face academic experiences between faculty and students to enrich academic life at the University.
2. Awards are given to faculty only.
3. Grants are non-competitive and are made on a first-come, first-served basis.
4. All full-time and part-time faculty are eligible to apply.
5. To qualify for an award, the proposal must meet the following requirements:
   a. The academic nature of the project must be its central feature. While a social aspect may also be fulfilled, it cannot be the primary reason to seek an award.
   b. The project must foster a closer intellectual interaction between faculty member(s) and student(s).
6. Award amounts may be granted up to a maximum of $500 per term per faculty or class or project. (See additional Restrictions below). Summer awards are subject to funding availability.
7. An individual faculty member may be awarded a maximum of $1,000 per year in ESFI funds. Collaborative projects with multiple faculty members and classes are limited to $1,000 total for each term.
8. Fall project funds may be requested from August 1 through the week before final exams. Requests for Spring activities may be made from December 1 until May 1 or when ESFI funds are exhausted. Summer requests may start on May 1.
9. Meal expenses should be reasonable and must not exceed $35 per person.

B. Submission of ESFI Proposal: Request for ESFI funds should be submitted online using the application link provided on the ESFI webpage. Required information in the application includes a description of the project, the nature of the faculty-student interaction and an explanation of how the proposed activity/project would enhance student-faculty interaction beyond the normal classroom setting, rationale for its academic value, a requested amount and explanation of costs, and anticipated date(s) of the event/project**.** Please note that submissions must be received at least one week prior to the date when funds are needed.

C. How to Obtain Your Granted Funds

All reimbursements or reconciliations should include the following for Provost's

Office's approval:
1. Copy of your ESFI Award Letter
2. All itemized receipts
3. Full names of all students/faculty/guests for events with 10 participants or fewer
4. Provost Costing: CC_00265 Provost, Cost Tag CC_0081 ESFI

Faculty Reimbursement: You may choose to pay for the event/project yourself and seek reimbursement after. Employees should complete an expense report through Concur for out-of-pocket expenses.

- *Specify in the comments section of Concur reports the ESFI awardee; for example, "ESFI for Jane Smith"*

USD One Card: If a USD One Card is used, please reconcile using Concur. Contact Kit Brawner (kbrawner@sandiego.edu) with any questions or concerns

Honorarium: If you are paying an honorarium to a non-employee, complete the New Supplier Setup form. Forward all paperwork for approval and processing to Kit Brawner (kbrawner@sandiego.edu).

Student Reimbursement: If a faculty member requests funds that will be spent by students, the student's expenses **must** be charged to a faculty or department USDOne card. Students may still request petty cash under the amount of $100.

Deadline: Concur reports must be submitted, with receipts, **no later than 60 days after the date of the event or by May 31**, whichever is sooner, or the funds will be reallocated, and you may not be reimbursed.

D. Permissible Funding

Funds may be used for the following activities. These are given as examples only; other possibilities certainly exist. Faculty are encouraged to be creative in proposing further ideas:

1. Development of or participation in student competitions that have faculty as mentors or advisors;
2. Structured, preplanned, but informal settings for discussions (e.g., mealtime) either connected with a particular course/class or not;
3. Projects to encourage non-traditional student interactions with faculty;
4. Projects involving faculty in student club activities (see Restrictions below);
5. Covering costs of performance tickets, museum admission, etc. involving faculty and students;
6. Recognition of student/faculty interactions (non-monetary awards, etc., $25 max per student); **Gift cards are not included as an allowable expense.**
7. Community involvement projects;
8. Attendance at/or presenting/co-presenting papers at conferences, etc. (see Restrictions below)

E. Restrictions

1. No research by faculty with students involved, or vice versa, will be funded. Where desirable opportunities exist for research, faculty members are advised to seek support via their respective deans under the Faculty Research Grants avenue and to include student participation in proposals made. **Faculty are also strongly urged to seek extramural funds**. Assistance in such efforts is readily available through the Office of Sponsored Programs.
2. Normally, no one student may receive funding and/or in-kind support in excess of $300. Exceptions may include situations where travel to attend or to present or co-present a paper at a conference would require more than $300. In such a situation, no fewer than two or more students (presenting, co-presenting, or merely attending) with a minimum of one or more faculty member(s) must be involved and **the $500 total award limit** will apply for the project. Normally, funds for the faculty member(s) involvement should come from their academic unit(s). **Rare** exceptions will be considered.
3. No funding for student club/organization banquets or purely social events is permitted.
4. Purchase of books, media, etc., of an academic nature, are acceptable if included in a project where clear academic value and student/faculty interaction is demonstrated. Typically, purchase of general supplies is not permitted, but exceptions will be considered when the academic nature of their use is demonstrated.
5. No stipends (for USD employees **or students**) are awarded under the ESFI.
6. As the rationale for ESFI is to *enhance* faculty-student interactions beyond normal situations, no funding will be permitted for initiatives which occur during regular class meeting times. Honorariums for visiting scholars, etc., will be considered for classroom visits, but other extra-classroom activities (socials, etc.) should be included in the project, as well.
7. **Class parties/celebrations and gift cards are not eligible for ESFI funding.**
8. **Alcohol is not an approved or reimbursable expense under the ESFI funds.**

III. General Notes

You are urged most strongly to indicate to the Provost's Office as soon as possible if there is any portion of your grant(s) that you expect is not going to be spent. Your efforts in this respect will aid other faculty members by allowing us to offer the maximum number of grants from this fund that is possible.

If your original, approved ESFI request needs to be modified, please email esfi@sandiego.edu about the change as soon as possible. Please do not spend ESFI funds until your project modification request has been approved by the Vice Provost.

If you do not submit your Concur report with proper receipts by May 31, you will be responsible for paying project expenses yourself. Funds will not be taken from the next budget year to pay for these expenses.

Please direct any questions concerning ESFI to the Provost's Office at esfi@sandiego.edu.

Last revision: July 2026 by the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs