FAQs

General

What is SAFAC?

The **Student Activity Fee Allocation Committee**, more commonly known as SAFAC, is a committee of 18 undergraduate students and 2 administrative advisors that was established in 1967 to distribute the portion of the Student Activity Fee designated to registered student organizations.

What is the Student Activity Fee?

The **Student Activity Fee** is paid by all full-time undergraduate students dedicated to enhancing student life by promoting student organization programming, events, travel, and more. SAFAC receives a portion of the Student Activity Fee and distributes it to 300+ COSO registered organizations.

Who can apply for SAFAC funds?

All student organizations fully registered with the Committee on Student Organizations (COSO) are eligible to submit a budget for SAFAC's consideration. The organization's Treasurer is responsible for budget submission.

Does SAFAC fund graduate student organizations?

No. SAFAC funding is limited to undergraduate student organizations. Please refer to the **Graduate Activity Fee Allocation Committee (GAFAC)**** for any inquiries regarding the distribution of the Graduate Activity Fee for graduate student organizations.

How can I join SAFAC?

All students in good academic standing are welcome to apply to become a SAFAC delegate. Committee applications usually open at the end of the Spring semester; however, extraordinary appointments are sometimes made throughout the year. Keep an eye out on our social media and Engage portal for any announcement regarding open application.

Submission Process

How can my organization submit a budget?

- The first step in submitting a SAFAC budget is for the treasurer to complete Treasurer Training, found in SAFAC's Engage portal.

- After that, the treasurer may download the empty budget template from SAFAC's website and fill it with all requested items, while keeping track of necessary documentation.
- Once the budget is completed, the treasurer must attend any SAFAC delegate's office hours to submit the budget. SAFAC defines a budget as submitted once it has been sign by the president, treasurer, advisor, and the Student Activity and Student Organizations Department (SASO).
- If necessary, a treasurer may be asked to present their budget to the SAFAC Committee, who will then proceed to deliberate and fund the budget in accordance to the SAFAC guidelines.
- After about two weeks, the organization will receive their approved budget.

When does SAFAC meet?

SAFAC meets every **Wednesday**, between **2:15-5:00 PM**, in the **Iron Arrow Room** of Shalala. If you are to present to the SAFAC committee, the Student Activities and Student Organizations Department (SASO) will email you to set up a five-minute slot within this time interval.

How are budgets signed?

SAFAC uses **Adobe Sign** for the submission of budgets. When a treasurer attends office hours, the delegate in office will submit the budget on their organization's behalf. After doing so, the delegate will then send out the budget for signatures to the emails of the president, treasurer, and advisor of the organization, in that order.

The signature process is **sequential**, meaning that if any party fails to sign, then the next party in line will **not** receive the budget (i.e., if the president does not sign, then the treasurer will never receive a link to sign the budget). The final party in the signature process is SASO, the Student Activities and Student Organizations Department.

A budget is only considered as submitted when signed by SASO.

Once SASO receives a signed budget, they will contact the organization's treasurer to confirm receipt and, if necessary, schedule a presentation slot.

What is the Two-Weeks rule?

SAFAC will not approve any item requests pertaining to an event occurring within **two weeks** of full, and final budget submission. A budget is officially considered as submitted when signed by president, treasurer, advisor, and SASO (therefore, the submission date is the date when SASO signs the budget).

In the event that SAFAC is unable to process your request within its two-week period, organizations are allowed to start making **strictly necessary purchases**; reimbursement will however, only be an option for approved expenses. SAFAC is **not able** to reimburse organizations for any **unapproved expenses**; unapproved expenses are defined as any items not

reviewed by the SAFAC committee or were not approved by the SAFAC Committee upon review.

Be cautious when spending your own funds. Any money spent before your organization receives its budget back from SAFAC is **spent at your own risk**. This means that if you purchase an item that SAFAC ultimately does not fund, you **will not receive a reimbursement**.

In the rare event that SAFAC is not able to review your budget within 2 weeks of budget submission to SASO, it is possible your organization may need to make purchases without knowing what SAFAC has approved. **If that is your case, please reach out to the SAFAC Chair at safac@miami.edu for guidance.**

Why is SAFAC taking so long to review my budget?

While we do our best to deliver budgets in a timely manner, we acknowledge that delays are an inevitable part of the process.

- **Delays in budget scheduling**
  - **High Demand for SAFAC Budgets**

    SAFAC operates on a first-come, first-serve basis, meaning that budgets get scheduled for review in the order in which they are submitted - again, SAFAC defines a budget as submitted once it has been sign by the president, treasurer, advisor, and the Student Activity and Student Organizations Department (SASO).

    During our weekly 2.5-hour-long Committee meetings, we review about 25-30 budgets. Consequently, whenever there is an excess in demand for SAFAC reviewing time-slots, the next available time for a budget to be scheduled may be no earlier than one, two, or even three weeks from submission.

    For this reason, we strongly recommend planning in advance and submitting your budget as early as you can - particularly if the request is time-sensitive.

  - **Errors in Budget**

    SAFAC delegates work with organization treasurers to ensure that their budgets are correctly formatted before submission. However, content mistakes may delay the scheduling process.

- **Incorrect Contact Information:** if the emails of either the president, treasurer, or advisor are incorrect or have a typo, the budget cannot be fully signed, and therefore, will never reach the SASO inbox for scheduling. Please double check that all contact information is correct and accurate before submitting a budget. If you suspect that this may have happened to your organization, contact the delegate whose office hours you visited and have them check the signature status of your budget.
                - **Wrong Template:** if the budget is submitted using an old template from prior academic years, SAFAC may not review it and, once fixed, will defer it to the next available time slot. Please ensure that the template you are working with is labeled with the current academic year.
                - **Lack of Previous Budgets:** if the budget does not contain previous approved budgets submitted earlier in the year, SAFAC may not review it and, once fixed, will defer it to the next available time slot. Before building your new budget, make sure any **approved** Early or Regular 1 is included. This does not apply to Travel budgets.
- **Delays in budget return**

    After every SAFAC committee meeting, the group of budgets on that day's agenda undergoes a thorough re-reviewing stage, therefore ensuring that all financial decisions and funds transfers are correct, to the last cent. This process includes the SAFAC E-board, as well as multiple members of the administration, who double check and ratify committee's decisions. Budgets are not distributed back to student organizations until all parties have given their approval.

    Budget reviewing generally lasts for around one to two weeks. Due to the comprehensive nature of this review, some weeks may take longer than others. We appreciate organizations' patience whenever this stage of the budget request process takes longer than anticipated.

Appeals, Adjustments, Substitutions

Could SAFAC reconsider a budget decision?

Yes. If you believe that SAFAC has made a mistake, you can submit an **Egregious Error Appeal** through our Engage form. You will submit any necessary documentation, and explain why you think SAFAC is mistaken and should reconsider your request.

If SAFAC has denied you due to lack of/insufficient documentation, submit a **Lack of Documentation Appeal** using the same Engage form. You will submit the new documentation and explain to which line items it pertains.

We will review the appeal, and you will receive a notification via Engage once it's approved or denied.

🚨 **You can only submit an appeal within two business days of receiving your approved budget back from SAFAC.**

What happens if a price changes after the budget was approved?

If there is a price fluctuation outside of your control that affects your approved budget., you may submit an **Adjustment request**. You will submit the new documentation and explain the situation. Then, we will review the adjustment request, and, if everything is in order, will edit your budget to reflect the price change. You will receive a notification via Engage once the request is approved or denied.

Can I swap an item in my approved budget for another?

If your organization wants to switch an approved item for another comparable one, you may submit a **Substitution request**. You will submit the new documentation and explain why you need to make the change. SAFAC reserves the right to decide whether the new item is a comparable replacement to the original approved request. We will review the substitution request, and, if everything is in order, will edit your budget to reflect the price change. You will receive a notification via Engage once the request is approved or denied.

Spending

How can I spend SAFAC funds?

🚨 **SAFAC is a student-led committee in charge of fund distribution, and therefore, does not manage any part of student organization spending, nor is the correct point of contact to raise spending issues to. For all spending related inquiries, please contact** sasofinance@miami.edu**.**

Every student organization has both a SAFAC and a non-SAFAC account. Naturally, all approved SAFAC funds are deposited in your SAFAC account. There are two main ways organizations can retrieve money from their SAFAC account.

- **Advisor Spending**

  The organization's advisor may apply for a P-Card or T-Card (purchase card or travel card), through which they can make purchases on behalf of the student organization. These cards get reimbursed by funds in the organization's SAFAC account in WorkDay, and are not linked to the advisor's personal finances. Students may not make use of a P-Card or T-Card.

- **Student Reimbursement**

A student may make a purchase with their own money on behalf of their organization and submit a reimbursement request, as long as SAFAC has approved the item in question. If that is the case, please keep all itemized receipts related to the purchase, as well as any supporting documentation on the event or purpose for which the purchase was made (i.e., an event flier, a picture of the event).

- o Please note that services (i.e., DJ's, rentals) are not eligible for reimbursements. Please don't pay for a service yourself!
- o Venmo, CashApp, Zelle, and other similar payment platforms are not accepted as receipts when applying for a reimbursement.