

# **University of Washington, Seattle Services & Activities Fee Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Request**



## **Unit Leads**

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## Budget Request Highlights

1. **Salary & Benefits for Professional Staff: \$1,874.00** increase from the prior fiscal year regarding professional staff compensation.
2. **Department Operations: \$27,917.00** increased from the prior fiscal year. The significant increase highlights inflation costs that have been experienced in this current fiscal year, additive travel for professional development for student and professional staff, and anticipatory alteration of costs in venues, vendors, and contractual costs for student programming and events.

Our unit's request in FY22 was **\$201,208.00** and our award was **\$201,208.00**.

Our unit's request in FY23 was **\$237,078.00** and our award was **\$237,078.00**.

Our unit's request in FY24 was **\$267,978.00** and our award was **\$251,170.00**.

Our unit's request in FY25 was **\$283,670.00** and our award was **\$273,013.00**.

Our request for FY26 is **\$308,013.00**, which represents a **12.82% (\$35,000)** increase from FY25.

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### Wage & Benefits Increases

**\$1,874.00**

With alterations to state (GOF) funding for the Director position, and meeting merit increases and benefit load rates for FY26, we are requesting an additional **\$1,874.00** for wages and benefits increases. The total cost of the gap coverage of the Director position and full coverage of the Assistant Director and Office Manager represents **\$174,421.00** for salary and **\$52,675.00** for benefits, totaling **\$227,096.00** in coverage. This is based on a conservative estimate of 2% merit increases for all three professional staff positions and a 30.2% benefits load rate for FY26.

### Personal & Contract Services Increases

**\$12,000.00**

Due to increases in the cost of our typical vendors and venues, we are requesting a substantial increase in this funding. This is inclusive of significant University supported events such as Veterans Appreciation Week (anticipated increase of event costs is ranged to be between \$4,000 and \$6,000), Calling Home (anticipated increase of event costs is ranged to be between \$5,000 and \$7,000), and the Celebration of Excellence (anticipated increase of event costs is ranged to be between \$2,000 and \$3,500). These events are cornerstones to the student experience for those we serve, and we strive to provide a similar level of operation to previous fiscal years.

### Travel

**\$5,000.00**

There are several professional conferences that professional staff and student workers would greatly benefit from attending. In previous years, we have attempted to virtually attend or source information following these conferences, but it is not a long-term viable situation. Conferences such as the National Association of Student

Personnel Administrators (NASPA), Western Association of Veteran Education Specialists (WAVES), and the Student Veterans of America (SVACON) conferences, all benefit services, information, and resources for staff and students. The ability to have individuals or teams attend these conferences cannot be understated in terms of the value added to the University of Washington and our services to students.

### **Supplemental Funding for Supplies & Other Operations**

**\$10,917.00**

As stated in the Personal & Contract Services Increases section, there are substantial increases across the board for most of our events at the University of Washington. We typically can manage approximately a max of \$30,000 for Veterans Appreciation Week, Calling Home, Memorial Day, and Celebration of Excellence. However, based on conversations with vendors and venues, we are anticipating substantial increases in all portions of our events. An example is an increase for food catering for the Veterans Appreciation Week “Salute to Service” football game. In the past, we typically had a cost association of \$6,500 in total for this singular event during the week. However, this year we saw the cost of our catering increase to **\$6,212.00**, not inclusive of other portions of the event cost such as beverages, swag, materials, and venue costs. As such, we believe it is appropriate to request additional supplemental funding to meet the necessary portions of the student experience for our constituents.

### **Additional Information**

Our request is based on the best practices and assumptions established by the Office of Planning and Budgeting and Student Life Finance personnel. Our request conforms to the vision we hold for the Office of Student Veteran Life and the current needs of our constituents. We thank you for your consideration of our request.

## Full Budget Overview & Justification

*In this section, you will have the opportunity to explain your request in greater detail via the guiding question(s) below. You are encouraged to use graphs, charts, or other visual tools. Your goal for this section is to provide the SAF committee (and the public) with sufficient (and substantive) context and justification for the use of these funds.*

**1. How are expenditures distributed across the programs and/or services your unit offers? Please provide a general overview of how much spending is allocated to each category of expense, such as staffing, materials, etc., as is applicable.**

- A.** Professional Staff Salaries and Benefits are **73.73%** of our total SAF request. Our staff have extensive knowledge of the U.S. Code (USC), Veterans Benefits (Education, Disability, Vocational Rehabilitation), City & County Veteran Programs, and other significant areas that benefit Veterans and military-connected family members that attend the University of Washington. Our staff also build and maintain fruitful relationships with local Veteran Service Organizations (VSOs) which often lead to financial sponsorship of our events, allowing us to supplement our SAF support to serve more student veterans and military-connected students. This percentage is a decrease of **7.53%** from the FY25 SAF support.
- B.** We are able to maintain lower budgets in comparison to other departments due to the use of federal programming benefits, such as the Veteran Affairs (VA) Work Study program. This allows us to employ, on average, 12-15 students each quarter that receive VA Educational Benefits, at no cost to the institution, SAF, or our office. The average contract offered from the VA for student workers is **286** hours per quarter at the state minimum wage (**\$16.28**), totaling **4,656.08** per student worker, covering **\$55,872.96 - \$69,841.20** per quarter, or **\$167,618.88 - \$209,523.60** per academic year (excluding summer quarter). These students are training in FERPA, suicide prevention, mental health first aid, CPR/First Aid, and other necessary programs and skills. Due to this program, we save approximately **\$200,000** in student wages annually.
- C.** Contracts, Travel, Supplies, and Other Operations make up the remaining **26.27%** of our SAF request. This reflects a total increase of **7.53%** from the prior fiscal year allocation and request. These funds are utilized for office supplies, office improvements, events, venues, vendors, and other programmatic needs that are requested or required for the Office of Student Veteran Life. These events and services are a hallmark of the college experience for many veterans and their family members at the University of Washington.

SAF funding is instrumental in serving our student veterans and military-connected students by providing resources, community, and engagement opportunities with not only our campus, but with UW Tacoma and Bothell. SAF has funded events such as resume building workshops, transfer courses, advising and orientation groups, indoor recreation programs spanning from board games, multiplayer games, and bowling. With SAF's support for our professional staff positions, we are able to assist in processing veteran disability claims, education claims, and expanding opportunities for many student veterans and military-connected students in their educational endeavors, allowing for a wider range of pursuits and fulfillment from their University experience.

Furthermore, through successful and sustained partnerships with other entities such as ASUW, UWAA, GPSS, The President's Office, UW Athletics, Waterfront Activities Center (UWREC), and various departments, we continue to increase our impact and reach of our SAF support through our keystone programs, which includes Veterans Appreciation Week, Calling Home, Memorial Day, and the Celebration of Excellence, as well as many other events conducted throughout the quarters.

We strive to reduce the costs on our operations at every turn of the academic year, whether that is through creative partnerships or finding alternative means to deliver a similar experience at a different venue or with another vendor. Some portions of our budget are mandatory costs such as I.T. costs, Workday, and other university administrative requirements.

**2. Please give a summary elaborating on how SAF Funding has been used to support students** *(Please refer to dollar amounts in this discussion when possible).*

- a.** In what ways has SAF funding been essential to supporting your unit's on-going services and role in the university?
  - i.** SAF funding has been instrumental in staffing our office and allowing it to act as a clearinghouse of veteran resources for the campus. The funding has assisted in resume building workshops, transfer courses, advising and orientation groups, indoor recreation programs via Dungeons and Huskies, Twitch streaming, YouTube, and indoor events (bowling, lazer tag, forging, as an example). Additionally, it has assisted in processing veterans' disability and education claims, thus expanding the opportunities for many student veterans in their endeavors within higher education. Furthermore, we have seen success with the use of funding to create partnerships with other entities on campus (such as ASUW, UWAA, and UW Athletics) to minimize

the impact on SAF and our office for keystone programs. Assisting veterans with their disability and educational disability claims removes a significant barrier of connecting with bogged down systems that may take months to respond. Furthermore, there are significant issues in this sphere of veteran disability claims, such as predatory companies that put veterans in a state of disadvantage through guarantees that they have no control over while charging the individual significant amounts of money to process their claim which is in violation of federal law.

- b.** How have your unit's services and programming changed over time, and how have you adapted the use of SAF funding?
  - i.** Services and programming have typically expanded over time to meet the growing needs of our student veterans and military-connected students. We are seeing requests exceeding those prior to COVID-19. We had to find a way to virtually meet the needs of our students, but we are reinventing the wheel for how we garner in-person participation. SAF has been instrumental in our ability to successfully execute our programs throughout the years.

All services that SAF has funded continue to be available to students, and we are always expanding the context, content, and event sizes for students to meet continuing needs. We have not altered our events in the sense of adding/removing anything, but we find new partnerships, different venues, and better ways to integrate student involvement and success. We have initiated significant hybrid events for students as we have normalized educational attendance post COVID-19 pandemic and emphasized outdoor recreational activities to reinvigorate original programming. We have begun to further emphasize health & wellness programming due to student demand, and the programming has continued to be seen as an overwhelming success based upon student feedback.

- c.** Are there programs/services that SAF has funded in the past that your unit no longer provides?
  - i.** No – We are currently hosting all programs that have been funded by SAF in the past in every given academic year. We have expanded services and events for specific types (e.g., outdoor recreation, health and wellness, mental health) based on student requests. We continually evaluate program interest, investment, and attendance, and through this, we will alter programming to best fit events that students show excitement and need for.
- d.** Are you currently using your unit's allocation for new programs or

services that were not originally requested as an item in your SAF budget request?

- i. No – Only programs that have been discussed and approved in conjunction with SAF in previous budget requests are being executed during the academic year. We may have brought more robust partnerships or the expansion of the events themselves, but we have not introduced new programming and services at a base level.

**3. What is the nature of your reserves/fund balances? For what purposes do you hold reserves? How were they accrued?** (Reserves/Fund balances are termed and considered differently in every unit. If you are unsure of what these terms mean or would like clarification on anything, please reach out and ask.)

- a. We typically do not have any notable reserves, and any fund balances that carry over from a prior fiscal year are utilized in current year programming. Any monies that are allocated from university donors are typically earmarked for specific initiatives or programs and are also classified as salary-exempt, meaning we cannot use them for professional staff salaries.
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## Budget Breakdown

In this section, please include a breakdown of your requested revenues/expenses for FY26 and your unit's budget for FY25.

BUDGET BREAKDOWN				
	FY26 Request	FY25 Expected	FY25Actuals Notes	
REVENUES				
SAF Funding	\$ 308,013.00	\$ 273,013.00	As expected per request of SAF funding request.	
State/University Funding	\$ 103,456.00	\$ 99,096.00	As expected per GOF estimates of OFM.	
Self-Generated Revenue	\$ -	\$ -	N/A	
Grants/Subsidies	\$ 10,374.00	\$ -	Potential reimbursement grant for the Arts supporting student veterans (pending approval)	
Interest Revenue	\$ -	\$ -	N/A	
Other Revenue	\$ -	\$ -	N/A	
Total Revenue	\$ 421,843.00	\$ 372,109.00		
Change in Revenues	\$ 49,734.00	13.37%		
	FY26 Request	FY25 Expected	FY25 Actuals Notes	
EXPENSES				
Salaries & Wages:				
Classified	\$ -	\$ -	N/A	
Professional	\$ 253,880.00	\$ 248,902.00	As expected	
Graduate Appointments	\$ -	\$ -	N/A	
Temporary	\$ -	\$ -	N/A	
Other Salaries & Wages	\$ -	\$ -	N/A	
Total Salaries & Wages	\$ 253,880.00	\$ 248,902.00		
Retirement & Benefits:				
Classified	\$ -	\$ -	N/A	
Professional	\$ 76,672.00	\$ 75,417.00	As expected	
Graduate Appointments	\$ -	\$ -	N/A	
Temporary	\$ -	\$ -	N/A	
Other Retirement & Benefits	\$ -	\$ -	N/A	
Total Retirement & Benefits	\$ 76,672.00	\$ 75,417.00		
Operations:				
Personal Service Contracts	\$ 16,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	Increase in coverage due to venue/vendor price increases, maintaining current events	
Other Contract Services	\$ 16,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	Increase in coverage due to venue/vendor price increases, maintaining current events	
Grants & Subsidies	\$ -	\$ -	N/A	
Travel	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	Increase in coverage for conference attendance for professional staff & student workers	
Supplies	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 28,000.00	Approximate increase for general supplies purchases due to inflationary costs	
Other Operations	\$ 8,917.00	\$ -	Approximate increases regarding supplies, venues, and vendors.	
Total Operations	\$ 80,917.00	\$ 53,000.00	*We currently have been "awarded" a grant from ArtsWA, but are pending the eGC1 process of the University of Washington to receive the funds. This grant operates on a reimbursement period, and grant coverage ends June 30th, 2025. This grant is intended to cover Health & Wellness Art programming to include facemask painting groups, group process painting, and other events in conjunction with our SVL Mental Health Therapist liaison.	
Total Expenses	\$ 411,469.00	\$ 377,319.00		
Change in Expenses	\$ 34,150.00	9.05%		
Revenue - Expenses	\$ 10,374.00	\$ (5,210.00)		

### Information on Other Revenues:

*If you have other sources of revenue, please give an overview of those revenues and how you anticipate them to change in the coming years. If relevant, include a breakdown of services & positions funded by SAF vs other revenues.*

*Currently, the Office of Student Veteran Life does not have any other sources of revenue other than that of state funding and SAF. We have had specific donations in the past earmarked exclusively for particular programs, so funding must go towards those which are not usually a standard event for SVL. We are in the process*



*of potentially receiving a grant of \$10,374 from ArtsWA in conjunction with their Wellness, Arts, and the Military (WAM) programming.*

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## Additional Questions

1.

- a. How would you adjust your operations if you did not receive your full request? Please elaborate on the potential impact on staffing and services.**

If our services were not fully funded, we would have to make the decision on what portions of events would need to be removed, reinvented, or altered. We have many capstone events that serve as a fundamental experience for student veterans and military connected students at UW, without them, we feel it would be a disservice to this population of students.

- b. What if you received an amount less than your FY25 allocation?**

If we receive an amount that is less than last year's request and award, we will likely need to remove a substantial amount of our programming. As we saw and discussed in previous SAF discussions, we had over expenditure in the previous year due to ballooning cost related to inflation and local increases due to supply and shipping issues that are being experienced nationally. This continues to be a concern in this coming fiscal year.

- c. What student services/programs are integral to your mission that you would not cut even if you received an amount less than your FY25 allocation?**

We would likely find some means to conduct the previously mentioned key events for the University of Washington (Veterans Appreciation Week, Calling Home, Memorial Day, and Celebration of Excellence). This may mean utilizing non-ideal venues or vendors that have lower costs or inferior products but attempting to find creative solutions to ensure our students gain the experience we have promised them.

- 2. If financial resources were not a restriction, what is one program/service your unit would add/expand on to enhance students' experience at the University?**

This is a difficult question, as we have always found ways to pivot when funding was restricted. However, we would likely expand the number of outdoor recreation events to include increasing the cap of participants (due to monetary considerations). Students continually are requesting more avenues to participate in outdoor programming such as camping, hiking, snowboarding/skiing, and other activities. This would fall within our Health & Wellness campaigns, as we see ecological

psychology as a primary protective factor for students' mental health, social welfare, and sense of community.

**3. How does your unit ensure that student fees do not subsidize non-student, academic, research, and other costs that are the primary responsibility of the University and its colleges?**

None of our funds are utilized to benefit non-students. Our primary goal is to benefit the University of Washington, Student Veterans at UW, and the military-connected family members at UW. Student fees that are awarded to our office go into specific salaries and events and are only utilized for those matters.

**4. How are you utilizing the SAF logo? In what ways do you spread awareness of your affiliation with SAF?**

The SAF logo is proudly posted throughout our office and on all of our marketing. We let students know when they first enter the University of Washington through our Advising and Orientation sessions that SAF is what funds our department and allows us to provide resources, events, and community to them.

**5. If you are projecting a net deficit for FY26, please provide additional context for this net deficit (e.g. reallocation of carryover funds from previous fiscal years, extraordinary expenses necessary to meet operational needs, etc.).**  
*(Optional – Answer “N/A” if not relevant to your unit)*

N/A

**6. When projecting out 1-3 fiscal years, what challenges, if any, do you foresee for your unit? How could SAF be helpful in navigating these challenges?**  
*(Optional – Answer “N/A” if not relevant to your unit)*

The primary challenge we typically face is ensuring that we have competitive wages for professional staff that are not covered under the GOF (state) funding. However, the GOF funding has yet to meet the full salary of the Director position, and we would like to petition the state to cover the entirety of the Director position to reduce the burden on SAF as well as streamline budget processing. In our fiscal year forecasts that are required each year by Student Life, GOF typically has some form of increase in funding, but this is not always guaranteed, as we have seen in previous years. We believe that SAF could potentially help us with petitioning for full coverage of the Director position from GOF. Furthermore, we are excited about the potential of a health & wellness fee being implemented at the University of Washington, potentially allowing a wider breadth of events and services for our constituents and housing our Veteran Liaison Mental Health Therapist under our Department to create a more accessible environment for students.