

Social Fund Regulations (SFR)

As of 1 March 2025 (as at 1 May 2026)

The official language of the Student Council of the University of Bern is German. For this reason, only the German documents, regulations and provisions are legally binding. The English version of the Regulations of the Social Fund is only a translation without legal validity.

The Student Council,

based on Article 23 of the Financial Regulations¹,

decides:

1. Section: General provisions

Purpose

Art. 1

The fund serves to finance extraordinary social projects undertaken by the SUB. These include, in particular, expenses for student apartments and rooms, to bridge gaps in the state loan and scholarship system, and to help SUB members, preregistered SUB members, mobility students at the University of Bern, continuing education students at the University of Bern, and doctoral members of the Association of Mid-Level Faculty at the University of Bern (MVUB) in financial emergencies.

Financial composition
of the fund

Art. 2

¹ The fund's assets consist of annual contributions of the Social Fund Foundation of the University of Bern and other sources of revenue.

¹ ASS 1.11

² Sources of revenue are investment income and donations. The Student Council may allocate further funds to the fund.

2. Section: Organisation

Student Council

Art. 3

¹ Student Council decides on expenditures according to the purposes of the funds. Excluded are the cases of loans, support contributions and administrative costs in connection with the recovery of loans.

² The Student Council elects the members of the Social Fund commission at the constituent meeting and in the event of vacancies by means of by-election and approves the Social Fund Commission's annual report each year.

Social Fund Commission

Art. 4

¹ The Social Fund Commission, which is appointed by the Student Council, decides on the use of funds in the cases of loans, support contributions and administrative costs associated with loan recovery. This commission consists of three Student Council members, one member of the MVUB, and two SUB board members. In addition, a representative for the Board members, a representative for the council members, and a representative for the MVUB member are elected to represent the respective commission members in their absence.

² The commission decides on applications for grants and loans from eligible students. The commission may reduce the amount of a given grant.

³ If a member of the commission has a personal interest in the matter or if there are other reasons (such as friendship or enmity with the applicant) that could give rise to a presumption of bias, that member must recuse themselves.

⁴ The assistant may not participate in the decision-making process but may contribute their knowledge to the decision-making process.

Commission meet-
ings

Art. 5

- ¹ The Executive Director is the chairperson of the commission.
- ² If the Executive Director is unable to attend, a chairperson for the day will be appointed.
- ³ The commission meets at least once per semester.
- ⁴ If necessary, the Executive Director invites the commission to discuss current applications.
- ⁵ The commission has a quorum if at least three voting members are present, of whom at least one must be a SUB board member. The Social Fund's assistant may participate in the meeting in an advisory capacity.
- ⁶ The commission makes the final decision with a simple majority.
- ⁷ In the event of a tie, the Executive Director or the chairperson of the day makes the final decision.
- ⁸ The deadlines specified in Article 2a Paragraph 1 and 2 KAR do not apply.*

Executive Director

Art. 6

- ¹ The Executive Director is a member of the SUB board who is appointed by the SUB board.
- ² The scope of duties covers all administrative activities of the social fund. This includes in particular:
 - a. convening meetings;
 - b. requesting missing documents;
 - c. the recording of the minutes of the meetings;
 - d. correspondence with applicants;
 - e. drafting contracts and repayment terms;
 - f. monitoring the financial situation of the fund; and
 - g. drafting the annual report.
- ³ The Executive Director may engage an assistant for administrative matters with the approval of the Social Fund Commission.
- ⁴ All costs for the assistant are paid from the Social Fund.

Confidentiality
agreement

Art. 7

¹ The commission members and the assistant are required to sign a confidentiality agreement.

² Without signing the confidentiality agreement, membership of the commission and work as an assistant are prohibited.

3. Section: Procedure

Contributions

Art. 8

¹ The commission may grant contributions of up to CHF 6,000 as loans or support contributions as required.

² The accumulation of loans and support contributions is only permitted up to a total amount of CHF 10,000.

³ In emergencies, the Social Fund Commission may exceed the amount limit.

⁴ A plan for the repayment of the loan shall be worked out between the Executive Director and the applicant and presented to the commission at the latest upon termination or completion of the applicant's studies. At the request of the applicant, this can also be done earlier.

Modalities and obli-
gation to cooperate

Art. 9

¹ There is no legal entitlement to the granting of loans or financial assistance.

² The expenses are exclusively for the benefit of members or pre-registered members of the SUB, doctoral members of the MVUB, mobility students of the University of Bern, and continuing education students of the University of Bern.

³ Alternative financing options must be examined in advance. The Social Fund Commission decides whether all options have been exhausted.

⁴ Applicants for loans or financial assistance must provide evidence of their financial and personal circumstances and submit the necessary documentation.

Submission of the
application

Art. 10

¹ The application must be submitted to the Executive Director together with the necessary documents. The Executive Director shall set a deadline for the submission of any missing documents.

² Submissions may be made electronically or by mail.

Required
documents

Art. 11

¹ The following documents must be enclosed in the application for a contribution from the social fund:

- a. A completed application form or equivalent documentation of personal circumstances, secondary employment, study status, expected graduation date, and proof of efforts to obtain financial support from other sources and their response;
- b. a budget sheet;
- c. a brief report on the origin of the hardship;
- d. the tax certificates of the applicant;
- e. Confirmation of enrolment;
- f. Proof of SUB or MVUB membership or the invoice for the study and semester fees and for the SUB or MVUB membership fee. MVUB members must also prove that they are doctoral students;
- g. a current bank statement; and
- h. Current salary statements.

² The Commission may request further documentation if necessary.

Protection of pri-
vacy

Art. 12

¹ Applications shall be treated confidentially.

² All documents shall be stored in such a way that unauthorized persons cannot access them.

³ Data shall be anonymized for accounting and annual reports.

Presence at

Art. 13

negotiations

Applicants may be invited to attend the commission meetings or, if they wish, may present their case in person.

Notice to the
applicant

Art. 14

The decision must always be communicated to the applicant in writing. If the requested amount is not granted or the application is rejected in its entirety, the decision must be justified.

Reclaim

Art. 15

Contributions must be refunded with interest if the applicant has obtained contributions by providing false information or concealing facts, or if they are not used for the specified purposes.

Appeal

Art. 16

¹ The applicant may appeal against the decision of the Social Fund Commission within 30 days to the Appeals Committee of the SUB.

² The procedure is governed by the Appeals Commission Regulations².

4. Section: Loans and financial assistance

Interest rate

Art. 17

Loans are interest-free, except in cases specified in Article 15.

Loan agreement

Art. 18

¹ Loans must be repaid no later than two years after completion or discontinuation of studies.

² The repayment terms shall be set out in a written agreement signed by the applicant and two members of the SUB Board.

Fixed-term loan agree-
ment

Art. 19

² ASS 1.03

¹ If the documents submitted are insufficient, namely missing and pending results from alternative sources of financing or missing proof of SUB membership of the pre-registered SUB members, but the financial situation is too precarious to wait for them, the Commission has the option of concluding loan agreements with the applicant for a limited period of six months.

² After this period, the applicant must have submitted the missing documents and the commission shall decide on the continuation or immediate repayment of the loan.

³ If the documents are missing after the deadline, the loan shall become due immediately.

Reports on the financial situation

Art. 20

¹ The loan recipient must provide proof of enrolment by the 14th day after the start of each semester and submit a report on their financial situation and study progress. Changes of address must be reported immediately.

² If proof and/or reports are not provided, the loan will be terminated after a prior warning, subject to a notice period of three months.

³ If a loan must be terminated due to missing reports, the Social Fund Commission must be informed in advance. In exceptional cases, the Social Fund Commission may waive the termination of the loan.

Repayment delay

Art. 21

¹ If the loan recipient is in arrears with repayment, they shall be granted a payment period of 30 days.

² If this period expires without payment being made, the loan recipient shall be invited to appear before the Executive Director to give their opinion. The loan agreement shall be amended if necessary.

³ In special cases, due repayments may be deferred for a maximum of five years.

Conversion into support contributions

Art. 22

¹ At the request of the applicant, loans may be converted retrospectively, in whole or in part, into support contributions.

² The amount limit for support contributions must be observed in this case.

Support contributions

Art. 23

Contributions are granted as support contributions if the Commission concludes that the applicant's financial situation cannot be improved in the long term by granting loans.

5. Section: Final provisions

Resolution

Art. 24

A two-thirds majority of the Student Council decides on the dissolution of the fund.

Earmarking

Art. 25

Even after the fund has been dissolved, the assets of the social fund shall remain linked to the purpose set out in these regulations.

Audit

Art. 26

The annual financial statements are audited by the auditors and approved by the Student Council.

Änderungstabelle - nach Artikel

Element	Änderung	Inkrafttreten	Beschluss
Erlass	Totalrevision	01.03.2025	13.02.2025
Eingefügt	Art. 5 Abs. 8	01.01.2026	02.10.2025
Änderung	Art. 6 Abs. 1	01.05.2026	23.04.2026

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