

FAQs

of the Funding Request Form of the IEEE Technical Activities Board Committee on Standards (TCoS) Standards Association (SA) Discretionary Fund

Q1. Scope of the Seed Funding Opportunities

The intent of the program is to provide seed money to stimulate activities and projects that will lead to innovative standards-related products and services. Examples of those products and services include and may not be limited to the following:

- Pre-standardization
 - Organization of event(s)/workshop(s), which may be co-located with an IEEE Society or IEEE Council's (flagship) conference(s)/event(s) to raise the awareness and importance of IEEE SA standards, and to identify areas that may be appropriate for standards development.
 - Formation of an IEEE SA Industry Connection Group, which may help incubate new IEEE SA standards and related products and services.
 - Formation of a Standards Committee in an IEEE Society or IEEE Council to begin IEEE SA standards development activities.
 - Formation of an IEEE SA project authorization request (PAR) Study Group in an IEEE Society or IEEE Council, which evaluates whether an IEEE SA standard should be developed and, if so, to complete a PAR form for Standards Committee consideration.
- Co-standardization
 - Organization of event(s)/workshop(s), which may be co-located with your IEEE Society or IEEE Council's (flagship) conference(s)/event(s) to raise the awareness and importance of IEEE SA standards.
- Post-standardization
 - Formation of an IEEE Conformity Assessment Program, which may help accelerate market adoption of IEEE SA standards.

For examples related to sustainability topics, the applicants can consider to have study group activities set up in IEEE conferences that IEEE SA is a sponsor, for example, the IEEE Conference on Technologies for Sustainability (<https://iee-sustech.org/>).

A proposal unrelated to IEEE Standards Activities will not receive funding from this program. A proposal to subsidize an existing standards effort will not receive funding. A proposal for a new project in an area already well treated by standardization will probably not be funded, unless the proposed approach is notably innovative. ***In particular, the program does not intend:***

- ***to fund travel by IEEE Standards Committee/Working Group/PAR Study Group officers or members in order to perform the activities normal to the operation of the respective Standards Committee/Working Group/PAR Study Group. IEEE Travel Guidelines are followed.***
- ***to be used as a gift or donate to any non-profit organizations.***

Q2. What are SMART Objectives?

The Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Oriented (SMART) objectives are summarized in the following table:

Criteria	Proposal Objective Description
Specific	What will you achieve? How will you know when it is accomplished?
Measurable	What are your expectations regarding quantity, quality, frequency and cost? How will you objectively measure progress and success?
Achievable	What are the knowledge, skills, experience, resources need to achieve the objective? Are their external constraints that need to be considered?
Relevant	How does the objective relate to the goals of the call for proposals?
Time-Oriented	When will it be completed? What are the milestones toward completion?

The SMART objectives will be used by the committee at the following stages:

- **Evaluation:** Proposal grading will be based primarily upon the strength of the objective(s) as compared against the primary mission of the funding program.
- **Progress tracking:** Progress will be reported in terms of the objective(s).
- **Success measurement:** Success will be evaluated in terms of how well the objective(s) are met.

The time that you invest in formulating SMART objectives saves time for everyone involved in evaluating, executing and administering proposals, projects and results. Because the objective is “Specific” proposal evaluators can quickly grasp the essence of the proposal, while project leaders can focus their effort. Because the objective is “Achievable” and “Relevant” proposal leaders can demonstrate the desirability of the project and proposal administrators can evaluate accordingly. Because the objective is “Measurable” and “Time-Oriented” project leaders can easily report progress and project administrators can easily understand if the project is progressing. Finally, measurable results allow the project leaders to demonstrate success.

Q3. How are the Proposals Evaluated?

The proposals are evaluated by an evaluation ad-hoc committee of TCoS, composed of members with standards experience in various areas. If necessary, the ad-hoc committee will reach out to the entire committee or even beyond it to get the required expertise.

During the evaluation, the evaluation ad-hoc committee may contact you with the following temporary grading and ask for your rapid response:

- *Minor Revision:* The proposal is perceived as having merit but cannot be accepted in its current form. Guidance will be provided for improving the proposal. The improved proposal with point-to-point response to the committee's comments shall be submitted within 5 calendar days.
- *Major Revision:* The proposal is not yet satisfactory, but can be improved for consideration if certain specified shortcomings are resolved and the proposal is resubmitted. The improved proposal with point-to-point response to the committee's comments shall be submitted within 10 calendar days.

At the end of the evaluation, each proposal is given one of the following grades:

- *Approved:* The proposal is satisfactory as is.
- *Rejected:* The proposal does not meet the program's objectives or cannot be funded for other reasons.

Following grading by the evaluation ad-hoc committee, the results are sent to IEEE SA for their approval. So far in the program's history, IEEE SA has generally agreed with the decisions of the evaluation ad-hoc committee. Note that, as in all such programs, funding is limited and a good proposal might be rejected due to shortage of funding.

Q4. What Should the Proposed Cost be?

A proposal that asks for a maximum of USD\$20,000 for new IEEE SA standards proposals that impact sustainability for either our material universe, for instance, energy or climate change, or sustainability in our information universe, for instance, in internet safety, security, or usefulness.

A proposal that asks for a maximum of USD\$10,000 for other areas will fall into the range of what is expected. If your idea is really good and will cost more than that, then go ahead and propose it, but be aware that your proposal will have to be very convincing. If your idea would cost less than that because it is of small scale or you will spend the money efficiently, then propose that.

Q5. How Will the Proposal be Funded?

Funding for the proposal is NOT a grant. All funding is provided as *reimbursement* for expenses already incurred and is provided in accordance with the usual IEEE financial practices. Your proposal must include specifics regarding planned expenses and your actual expenses must be consistent with your approved proposal. If you must deviate from the expenses listed in your proposal, you should seek approval prior to make the expenditure.

Note that IEEE aligns its fiscal year with the *calendar year*. Unspent funds are NOT carried over into subsequent years. If your project is delayed, you must discuss with your TCoS mentor to determine how the project is to be revised to accomplish its goals without carrying over funds to another year.

Reimbursement will not be granted if the project has failed to provide progress reports on the required schedule. See Q7 for a description of the content of progress reports.

Q6. Is Non-monetary Support Envisioned?

Yes, feel free to propose receiving modest staff support as well as "shepherding/mentoring" from IEEE Standards volunteers about the standards development process.

Q7. How is Progress Reporting Done?

Every project must provide a progress report prior to any reimbursement as well as a final report upon completion. Progress reporting must be included in the integrated schedule. Do not wait to be asked for a report; instead, provide it prior to any reimbursement.

In your progress report, we do *not* want subjective phrases describing your satisfaction with the progress. Instead, we want quantitative progress assessment based upon the SMART objectives. If you have taken proper care in writing your proposal, then this reporting should be easy. An example of the required form of a progress report is provided as follows.

Example of Progress Reporting:

This is an example of a progress report for a hypothetical and whimsical project. It is intended to show the desired format of a progress report. It is NOT intended to be an example of a sensible project.

A progress report should provide a copy of the SMART objectives, the funding profile and the integrated schedule as given in the original proposal. Those items should be red-lined to indicate progress and changes. Explanations of changes in plan may be provided if necessary. In the example below, the originally proposed text appears in black. The red-lined changes, indicating progress, appear in red.

This example illustrates a possible January 15, 2024 progress report for the hypothetical project.

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PROGRESS REPORT

January 15, 2024, by Project leader

Project code – Project title

1. Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Oriented (SMART) Objective(s)

Criteria	Proposal Objective Description
Specific	Create a Standards Club at Central High School with at least 25 members. <i>This remains our plan.</i>
Measurable	The club should elect officers, meet school requirements, and have at least 25 enrolled members. <i>Not yet measured.</i>
Achievable	We need: an advisor familiar with IEEE standardization as well as public education; and access to IEEE standards materials. The former has been recruited and the latter must be negotiated. <i>These have been achieved.</i>
Relevant	This project will create a cadre of bright students who look toward standards as they enter STEM-related programs in college. Success in the project will provide a template for similar areas in other communities. <i>We have modified our plan to produce a written manual for executing future projects of a similar nature.</i>
Time-Oriented	March 2024. Milestones include: obtaining school permission; obtaining suitable standards materials; arranging a student pizza-party to attract possible members; organizing an initial meeting; and electing officers. <i>See report of integrated schedule below.</i>

2. Itemization of Anticipated Expenses:

Expense	Amount	Description	Term
Purchase of 10 Raspberry Pi starter kits	1500 1350	Kits that can be programmed from a school-provided laptop to simulate IEEE 754 floating point arithmetic. <i>We obtained a quantity discount.</i>	
Purchase of pizzas for school pizza party	2000 2400	Pizzas to attract students to attend the introductory meeting. <i>Prices have gone up due to supply chain issues.</i>	

3. Integrated Schedule of Products, Milestones, Funding

Milestones/Tasks	Planned Date	Product	Cost
Initiate project	August 1, 2023		
Introduce school officials to the idea	September 15, 2023 <i>Completed: September 30, 2023.</i>	A copy of the presentation to the school principal and teachers.	0
Recruit faculty sponsor	October 15, 2023 <i>Completed: October 7, 2023.</i>	The identification of the teacher and his/her c.v.	0
Obtain standards materials	November 1, 2023 <i>Agreement obtained December 1, 2023 but copies have not yet been received.</i>	Agreement to provide copies of IEEE 754, Floating Point Arithmetic, and agreement in principle to provide copies of selected standards in the future.	0 – but requires agreement from IEEE SA.
Obtain school permission	November 15, 2023 <i>Completed: October 15, 2023. No paperwork was needed.</i>	Executed paperwork authorizing the club.	0 – but may need IEEE legal assistance. <i>Assistance was not needed.</i>
Order 10 Raspberry Pi 4 Starter Kits	November 30, 2023 <i>Completed: invoice submitted for reimbursement.</i>	Copy of invoice	1500 <i>Actual was 1349.50.</i>
Progress report	November 30, 2023 <i>Progress report submitted prior to imbursement.</i>	Progress report.	

Conduct pizza party	February 1, 2024 Rescheduled for February 7, 2024.	A report of the number of students attending and the number who “signed up”	2000 Estimate has increased to 2400 due to supply chain issues and school’s requirement for a vegan/gluten-free option.
Conduct first meeting of club	March 1, 2024	A copy of the presentation made to the students.	
Elect officers	March 15, 2024	A list of the elected officers.	
Final report	May 15, 2024	Final Report, including a written manual for executing future projects of a similar nature.	