



KALAMAZOO COLLECTIVE HOUSING

FUNDING COMMITTEE HANDBOOK

Last Updated: February 24, 2023

WELCOME TO FUNCOM!, GUIDING VALUES	p. 2
MEMBER AND STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES	p. 3
DECISION MAKING PROCESS, RECUSAL, COMMITTEE CONSTITUTION AND ELECTIONS	p. 4
MEMBER SUPPORT FUNDS - UNDER FUNCOM PURVIEW	p. 5
ANNUAL CALENDAR	p. 6
FUNDS NOT - UNDER FUNCOM PURVIEW	p. 7



WELCOME TO FUNCOM!

The Funding Committee (you can call it FunCom) is the body in charge of distributing Member Support Funds to KCH members and staff. The Funding Committee is made up of one representative from each Collective, elected by the members of their respective Collectives, and is supported by one non-voting staff member.

GUIDING VALUES

Because the committee distributes KCH's resources with members and staff who are in need, it must always center its values. Basing difficult decisions and conversations on our values gives us the best chance to develop and maintain a culture of equity and anti-oppression.

The Committee should remind itself of these values regularly, reflect on them, and update them as we grow.

Trust

We assume that members requesting funds are acting in good faith and with good intentions. We take members at their word when they express a need. We cultivate relationships and enter into conversions with curiosity and humility.

Stewardship

We will carefully manage Member Support Funds to ensure that they will be available for future members.

Authentic Relationships

We cultivate authentic relationships and enter into conversions with curiosity and humility. If we have questions about a request, we will ask.

Antiracism and Anti-Oppression

We will consider the impacts of structural and interpersonal discrimination during decision making, and prioritize developing our own personal anti-oppressive mindset. We will listen to and learn from each other.

Transparency, Honesty, and Direct Communication

We will always share information about our process, rules, and decision making, and current fund balances with all members or staff. We will be clear and direct in our communication, and receive feedback with humility.

Confidentiality

We will keep the identities and requests of members and staff confidential.

Impartiality

Knowing that we will receive funding requests from members or staff with whom we have close relationships, we will carefully consider our ability to remain impartial and recuse ourselves if needed.



MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

The Funding Committee is fully member-led and controlled, and all non-staff committee members are responsible for making sure the important work of the FunCom is done reliably and consistently.

Non-staff Committee Members are responsible for:

- Receiving, considering, and making decisions about funding requests from members and staff
- Scheduling and coordinating regular and emergency meetings of the Funding Committee, and any meetings with members or staff who are applying for funding
- Considering each request fairly and in a timely manner in accordance with the Committee's values and policies
- Providing information regarding decisions to the supporting staff member for implementation
- Designating one non-staff committee member who will notice emergency requests quickly, reply to them immediately, and coordinate scheduling an emergency Funding Committee meeting, if needed.
- Communicating with members and staff who are requesting funds clearly, quickly, and transparently.
- Maintaining, evaluating, and improving the Funding Committee's systems and processes, including:
 - The website where Funding Committee information and funding application is located
 - The communication channels through which members and staff learn about available funds, get updates and notices of process changes, and discuss requests for funding.
- Perpetuating the Funding Committee during periods of turnover, including recruiting and training new members.
- Publicizing to members that KCH has support funding available for them, what types of funding is available, and how to access it.
- Applying an antiracist and anti-oppressive lens to the work of the Committee
- Connecting the work of the Committee to the rest of the membership through regular updates and reports
- Participating in the annual budget creation process for funds under Funding Committee purview

ROLE OF KCH STAFF

One committee seat is reserved for a staff member, who does not have a vote during funding decisions and whose role is to provide administrative support for the committee's members.

Staff's responsibilities are limited to:

- Sending meeting reminders to Funding Committee members
- Communicating Funding Committee decisions to applicants
- Maintaining accurate records of past Funding Committee requests and decisions
- Processing approved requests
- Creating reports for the board and membership upon request
- Share end of year updates from the committee - year in review - aggregated data



DECISION MAKING PROCESS

The Funding Committee will use a consensus process when considering funding requests. All currently seated members on the committee will participate in the decision making process unless they have been recused.

In the event that a request has not reached a consensus decision after at least two attempts for consensus, the committee will make decisions using a $\frac{2}{3}$ supermajority vote.

All decisions (approved, denied, or requests for additional information or discussion) should be communicated clearly and quickly with requesting members or staff.

Requests marked as emergencies need to be considered and decided upon within one week after submission. The committee should choose one person whose responsibility it is to immediately alert the rest of the committee when an emergency request comes in. This person should either check their email every day or set up an alert on their phone, so that they are aware as soon as possible when that happens. They should also reply to the person making the emergency request letting them know that the committee is actively working on their request.

Emergency request decisions can be made over text or email, whichever is quicker for the committee, unless there is significant conversation that needs to happen in order to make the decision. In that case, committee members need to prioritize scheduling an emergency meeting to respond to that request. If the staff member supporting the Funding Committee is not present in the text/email thread or emergency meeting, the committee must notify the staff member of the final decision so they can process the request.

RECUSAL

Recusing yourself means that you are not able to participate in a final vote, but you are able to participate in conversations leading up to the decision-making vote. Recusals are important because they help maintain the trust of our community that decisions are being made fairly.

To decide if you should recuse yourself from deciding on a particular request, consider your relationship with the member or staff person applying for funding. Recusal is mandatory if you are a close friend, romantic partner, or in active conflict with an applicant, or are yourself requesting funding.

Committee members can also voluntarily recuse themselves for any reason if they determine it appropriate.

In rare circumstances, some members of the Funding Committee may believe that another member should recuse themselves. In this case, all members except the member subject to the recusal decision should vote to recuse the other member using consensus.

COMMITTEE CONSTITUTION AND ELECTIONS

Each active KCH Collective will elect a representative to the Funding Committee using simple majority. Elected members will serve a one-year term, with terms starting on September first of each year.

Currently, a full Funding Committee would have six members, one from each of the following Collectives:

- Meristem
- Periwinkle



- Perennial
- Nimblewill
- Wall Street
- Sheshko

Additionally, one representative from the staff will support the Funding Committee in a non-voting capacity. Their role will be to support the work of the committee in the specific ways described above..

To ensure that funding decisions are being made fairly and to reduce member burnout, the committee must always have representatives from at least two-thirds of the active KCH collectives. Staff representation is not required for the committee to convene or do their work.

Member Support Funds

Each of the Member Support Funds has its own fund balance. As requests are awarded, the corresponding fund balance will be spent down. Additional funds may be allocated a) at the beginning of each fiscal year, if budgeted, or b) when outside donations or grants for a specific fund are received. There are no automatic or guaranteed contributions to any of these funds, so we have to take care to use them wisely!

Financial Aid Fund

Purpose: To support members who have unexpected financial needs.

Criteria: For members. Waivers for Membership Charges for months more than 3 months in the past will not be approved (for example: if it is June, you cannot request a waiver for charges from March or earlier), and will cover a maximum of 50% of the total charges per month.

Examples: Membership charge waivers (“rent” waivers), medical supplies, utility bills, car insurance, food assistance

Food Security Fund

Purpose: To support developing systems for food security.

Criteria: For members.

Examples: Supplies for gardening, chickens, canning and other food preservation supplies

Co-op development fund

Purpose: Money for collectives to improve systems or culture at their co-ops. Requests must be submitted by collectives, and the collective members must gain consensus about the request before submitting.

Criteria: For members.

Examples: Trainings/workshops, infrastructure like bike garage or solar panels,

Solidarity fund

Purpose: Bail and legal fees.

Criteria: For members and staff.

Examples: Bail for if you get arrested! Small legal & court fees associated with charges related to protest & solidarity work.

Professional development fund



Purpose: To support members to pay fees and expenses associated with their paid work, or to help start up a small business. For artists, self employed folks, and those who would like to start doing stuff for money.

Criteria: For members.

Examples: Licensing and fees for professional certifications, business expenses for phone and website services, ISBN # fees for self publishing a book, etc.

Beautification fund

Purpose: To support the creation of visual culture within the KCH community.

Criteria: For members.

Examples: Murals on or in our houses, signs, permanent art projects, etc.

Wellness fund

Purpose: To support the resilience, wellbeing, and healing of our community.

Criteria: For members and staff.

Examples: Climbing gym memberships, happy lamps for houses, bodywork and healing arts,

Events fund

Purpose: To support members in organizing events for KCH and the wider community.

Criteria: For members.

Examples: Trainings and workshops, music and art shows, retreats, etc.

Accessibility fund

Purpose: Funds improvements to our houses and systems to remove barriers to access.

Criteria: For members.

Examples: Physical accessibility improvements (ramps, fixtures, etc), systems improvements (application process revisions, etc).

ANNUAL CALENDAR

There are a few important projects and deadlines for the Funding Committee each year.

August: Plan a training session for new Funding Committee members who will join in September.

September (before first committee meeting): Host a training session for new committee members.

September (at first official committee meeting): Answer the following questions:

- Who will be responsible for noticing newly submitted emergency requests right away, quickly responding, and scheduling an emergency Funding Committee meeting, if needed? Non-staff committee members or the staff representative on the committee?
- Based on current fund balances and recent usage, will the committee set limits on fund usage? If so, who will be responsible for communicating these new limits to the membership (via email and by updating the website)?
- Will the committee make any other changes to existing processes, criteria, etc? If so, who will be responsible for communicating these changes to the membership (via email and by updating the website)?



March: Review past fund usage, current fund balances, and consider making process or criteria changes that may be needed in order to preserve remaining funds.

March: Participate in the annual budgeting process by meeting with the board treasurer and staff. Contribute the committee's experience in managing member funds to the annual budgeting process.

OTHER FUNDS NOT UNDER FUNDING COMMITTEE PURVIEW

KCH has several other budgeted funds that are not the responsibility of the Funding Committee. For reference, those funds and their associated decision-makers are:

- Cooperative Education Fund - Cultural Committee
- Anti-Racism / Anti-Oppression Training - Cultural Committee
- Conflict Resolution Training - Conflict Resolution Committee
- Outside Conflict Resolution Trainers - Conflict Resolution Committee
- Amenities Funds - Individual Collectives decide how to spend, submit requests to staff
- Grounds Fund - Maintenance Committee
- Maintenance Funds - Maintenance Committee
- Tool Library - Maintenance Committee