

# Academic Societies - Guidelines

(February 19, 2021)

## §1. Terms

1. **Academic Societies** are student-led organisations affiliated with a specific academic department or specific departments/programmes relevant to their purposes.
2. Every Academic Society must have at least one **Academic Advisor** from the affiliated department(s)/programme.

## §2. Ethos

1. Academic Societies are required to maintain academic integrity in all their endeavours.
2. Academic Societies are required to conduct themselves in line with CASH, CADI and ARC guidelines.

## §3. Registration/Confirmation of Societies

1. **New/aspiring Academic Societies** must prepare a proposal for registering as an Academic Society according to the points listed in Art. 3 below.
2. **Existing Academic Societies**, too, must prepare a document covering the points listed below.
3. The proposal/document should contain the following elements:
  - a. **Manifesto**, stating the aims of the Society,
  - b. **Written approval of the Academic Advisor(s)** from the relevant department(s)/programm. (Existing Societies should provide a confirmation from their Academic Advisor(s).)
  - c. **Overview of the Society's structure** - core team, leadership (if applicable), membership criteria (if any).
  - d. **Two concrete ideas for events to be held** once the Society is formed (for existing Societies: concrete plans for the next 12 months).
4. All proposals/documents must be submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs (OAA). Doing this initiates the process of seeking approval for the registration as an Academic Society / the process of seeking confirmation of an existing Academic Society as still eligible for the OAA's annual Society budget (see §5 below).

#### §4. Maintaining Academic Societies active / expected performance

1. It is recommended that all Societies maintain **at least one flagship event** (for example, publishing a journal, news column, conferences, hunts, etc.) to ensure that the life of the Society is dependent on something other than the incumbent core team.
2. All Societies are required to conduct **at least 5 events** in an academic year to be eligible for Merit Awards. The nature of the events is at their discretion. These 5 events can include flagship events, but are separate from and do not include the Academic Societies' Fair and the Ministry of Academic Affairs' Orientation Week activities.
3. Apart from the minimum 5 events, **Societies are expected to**
  - a. participate in the Ministry of Academic Affairs' **Orientation Week activities**, with the aim to introduce themselves to the incoming batch,
  - b. host an event during the **Academic Societies' Fair**.

Failure to do so may have a negative impact on the Society/s prospect for renewal.

#### §5. Communication and publicity

1. Academic Societies are to plan for events such that their request for **event venue bookings** when on campus is submitted to OAA at least ten days in advance of the date of the event [[academicbookings@ashoka.edu.in](mailto:academicbookings@ashoka.edu.in)].
2. If an Academic Society requires **technical support**, e.g. in the form of the generation of zoom meeting links, they should reach out to IT from their official society email account and CC OAA on the request. It is recommended that such a request is submitted to IT at least 10 days prior to the event.
3. Academic Societies may **communicate** with the student body (and audience in general) using mail or social media - via the Ministry of Academic Affairs or Society owned media platforms.
4. Communications from Academic Societies must not violate the **Ashoka University Brand Guidelines**.

#### §6. Budget

1. Societies are entitled to 5000 INR from the OAA per academic year. This amount is provided solely in the form of reimbursements for expenditures accruing from the Societies' activities.
2. To ensure that the expenditure will be reimbursed, Societies should reach out to the OAA and inform them of the upcoming costs and seek approval. This will enable smooth processing.

3. To **claim reimbursement**, a member of the Society must send the official receipts of the expenditure from the society email account to the OAA **within 30 days** after the expenditure has been accrued.

## **§7. Merit Awards**

1. To be **eligible** for the Merit Awards, Societies must have conducted 5 events in the year (as per §4, Art. 2 above) and must submit an annual report to the OAA, which will then be appraised by the OAA.
2. To stand for the Merit Awards, Academic Societies must **nominate** themselves via a form circulated by the OAA prior to the submission of the annual reports.

## **§8. Annual Report**

1. The Annual Report of an Academic Society serves to document its activities between March of the year prior to the Merit Awards and March of the year the Merit Awards to be awarded.
2. The Annual Report must include
  - a. detailed reports on any activity the Society may have conducted after having submitted the reports on March 15 of a year and that cannot then be considered for that year's Merit Awards (which will be conducted in April), including activities during the Summer break of that year, the Winter break and any mid-term breaks, until mid-March of the next year
  - b. in case of a fundraising event: how many funds were raised and how they were utilised.

## **§9. Appraisal Policy for Academic Societies**

1. The Appraisal for Academic Societies shall be solely decided by the OAA, with consultation with other academic or non-academic departments' expertise if and when deemed necessary. The appraisal will be based on the Annual Reports submitted.
2. The OAA will adjudge winners of the Merit Awards in the following two categories:
  - a. **Best Academic Society**: given to the Society which has worked consistently throughout the year, through external and internal engagement, and has made significant contributions to the enhancement of campus culture.
  - b. **Most Enterprising Society**: given to the Society that has undertaken the most innovative and interesting events throughout the year, that have showcased an academic discipline in unique ways.