

Policy Document:

National SSAGO Expenses

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1. Overview:

- 1.1. Whilst volunteering as part of SSAGO, it is expected that reasonable expenses may be incurred. This policy outlines what may or may not be claimed back and the process for doing so.
- 1.2. This policy applies to all members and non-members and all committees and subcommittees undertaking volunteering on behalf of National SSAGO.
- 1.3. Clubs may follow their own expenses policies when reimbursing members from their own funds.

2. Personal Expenses:

- 2.1. SSAGO expenses can only be claimed where actual costs are incurred by an individual.
- 2.2. Expenses should be necessary to the efficient and effective operation of SSAGO's activities.
- 2.3. Expenses should provide a value-for-money way to achieve SSAGO's aims, and activities and costs must be competitive with alternatives with similar quality and suitability.
- 2.4. SSAGO may opt for a more expensive provider where the additional benefits to SSAGO demonstrably outweigh the additional costs, however these reasons should be justified.
- 2.5. Expenses may not be claimed back from SSAGO for any loss of earnings.

3. Event Expenses:

- 3.1. All expenses related to attending an event must be agreed in advance in writing with the SSAGO Exec. All reasonable efforts should be made to find and utilise the cheapest options.
- 3.2. Expenses relating to attending an event (e.g. event fees, accommodation and transport) may only be claimed back from SSAGO if the attendee is

there with the sole purpose of publicising SSAGO or attending a SSAGO Exec meeting, where it is important for that meeting to take place in person. Expenses can be claimed where food and accommodation are included in the event fee.

- 3.3. If the attendee is attending an event where the sole purpose is not publicising SSAGO or attending a SSAGO Exec meeting, where it is important for that meeting to take place in person but at which the majority of time is spent on either then a contribution, determined by the SSAGO Exec, towards expenses may be made. Receipts should be provided for all eligible expenses.
- 3.4. An allowance may be claimed for food where the volunteer is unable to eat at home due to the event and no meals are included in the event fee or provided accommodation. Reasonable costs will be reimbursed up to a limit of £5 for breakfast and lunch and £10 for dinner, and this may include non-alcoholic drinks. Limits are applied on a per-meal basis, and effort should be made to eat at home, pack food or cook where facilities are available.
- 3.5. An allowance may be claimed for accommodation if it is required due to the length of the event or if it reduces other expenses and is not included in the event fee. Accommodation should be budget in nature, and where events take place at a campsite it is expected camping is considered as an accommodation option if possible. SSAGO will not pay accommodation for any non-volunteer.
- 3.6. Travel expenses should be claimed in line with 4.
- 3.7. No volunteer may claim expenses for usual costs in attending a National SSAGO Event, but may claim for additional expenses, including travel beyond their direct journey, and receive gifts or uniform as set out in 5.

4. Travel Expenses:

- 4.1. All planned expenses related to travel should be sent in advance to the relevant committee Chair and Treasurer and give costs of the different identified modes of transport. Where the expenses are not already included in an agreed budget, they should be approved by the SSAGO Exec.
- 4.2. All individuals should make a reasonable effort to ensure value for money when planning travel by obtaining the best prices, booking early and considering alternate routes, public transport, combining journeys and car-sharing.

- 4.3. SSAGO's preference is to pay for the cheapest identified method of travel. More expensive methods should only be paid for where they provide significant time savings, additional flexibility around travel times, avoid travel at unreasonable hours or allow the volunteer space to undertake other work.
- 4.4. Where a member chooses, at their own expense, to upgrade or change their method of travel, they may only be reimbursed up to the lower of the amount identified in 4.3. and the amount they paid, and the claim should include proof of purchase for the altered journey.
- 4.5. Where reasonable effort is not made to book travel early, SSAGO will only repay the amount travel would have cost had the booking been made two weeks after the travel could have been foreseen.
- 4.6. Train travel should be in standard class and consider the use of advance tickets.
- 4.7. Travel made by Oyster Card or in the London Contactless Zone, or any similar travel zone, should be evidenced by a printed journey history available by registering the card with TFL. Oyster top-ups are not reimbursable.
- 4.8. SSAGO may reimburse fees to amend travel due to changes to an event or due to personal reasons as agreed by the SSAGO Exec.
- 4.9. Air travel may be used when it is cost-efficient, with preference given to budget carriers.
- 4.10. Hire vehicles may be used where this is more economical, and SSAGO should ensure that full insurance is in place. If SSAGO will be liable for paying the excess on the vehicle, this should be reasonable, or an additional excess insurance policy must be included in the costs.
- 4.11. Where travel is done in a personal vehicle, mileage may be claimed back at any agreed rate up to a maximum of the recommended government rate for jury service: <https://www.gov.uk/jury-service/what-you-can-claim>
- 4.12. Where personal vehicles are used, it is the driver's responsibility to ensure the vehicle is insured for voluntary use, taxed, roadworthy, and they hold a valid driving licence.
- 4.13. Drivers of personal vehicles should provide evidence of the actual number of miles travelled, and should provide details of the number of passengers and items transported, and dates/times the journey was made.
- 4.14. Parking costs may be reimbursed, however cheaper alternatives within reasonable walking distance should be considered.

- 4.15. Tolls and congestion charges may be reimbursed where they are solely incurred as the result of SSAGO volunteering, and where it would not have been practical to avoid them.
- 4.16. Parking fines, penalties or damage relating to an accident or breakdown will not be reimbursed unless there are exceptional circumstances, and it is agreed by the National Exec. Penalties for speeding or traffic violations will never be reimbursed.
- 4.17. Travel by Taxi or other private hire vehicle is acceptable in emergencies, or where cost-effective; however, reasonable efforts should be made to use any more cost-effective method of transport where possible. Planned travel should be booked in advance on a fixed-cost basis.

5. Uniform and Gifts:

- 5.1. Volunteers for SSAGO should not receive financial benefits; however, in some situations, SSAGO may authorise small payments towards uniform or gifts to recognise the end of an appointment or exceptional service as set out in this section.
- 5.2. Members of the SSAGO Exec or Assistants are entitled to claim one free branded SSAGO uniform item according to their role up to a maximum value of £30. Individuals should pay for any additional items and any costs above £30. They may only claim this once per role, but may claim again if they are appointed to a different role, or for Assistant roles a new claim can be made after three years of appointment.
- 5.3. Subject to prior agreement of the SSAGO Exec, any volunteer at a National Event may receive a branded event uniform item (e.g. necker, badge or equivalents) up to a maximum contribution of £10. Such benefits should be generally available to any participant of the event, although this may be through electing to help with specific aspects of the event.
- 5.4. SSAGO members volunteering who are not able to participate in at least 50% of the offered activities may receive further thank you gifts or uniform items, with the total value of these items not exceeding any of:
 - 5.4.1. 50% of the event base cost,
 - 5.4.2. base cost minus costs spent on the venue and food,
 - 5.4.3. £30.
- 5.5. Payment towards event uniform and gifts under 5.4. May only be made when:
 - 5.5.1. Event after deducting the expenses, the event still makes a surplus,

- 5.5.2. The total spend does not exceed 2% of the total event income.
- 5.6. Organising committees are permitted to keep, or distribute as they see fit, any perishable food items, which could not be reasonably returned, and any decorative items that have no or limited future value to SSAGO.

6. Other Expenses :

- 6.1. Individuals may claim expenses for postage, including stamps, envelopes and other stationery. Where an individual is expected to undertake a reasonable volume of postage, SSAGO may purchase stamp books and envelopes at cost for this, with any unused items returned to SSAGO on request. Reasonable efforts should be made to reduce costs, including the use of alternative couriers, where the same level of service can be provided.
- 6.2. Individuals may claim expenses for printing or photocopying. This may be reimbursed at the cost charged by an employer/university where their facilities are used, or at a per-page rate agreed by the SSAGO Exec (determined by the nature of what is being printed) when using a personal printer. Reasonable efforts should be made to reduce these costs, including the use of the SSAGO printer.
- 6.3. Individuals may claim expenses for phone usage (e.g. calls from the SSAGO Hotline, international charges or business calls). Expenses can only be paid where excess charges are incurred, and no reimbursement will be made if calls were covered under an individual's existing contract. Expenses should be evidenced by phone bills highlighting SSAGO calls. If expenses can be foreseen, then efforts should be made to reduce costs; for instance, a dedicated phone plan or contribution to an upgrade.
- 6.4. Individuals may be reimbursed where they have personally paid an invoice or other bill for National SSAGO, and this spending is approved under the SSAGO Finance Policy. Such reimbursement is not classed as an expense, but as part of SSAGO's general expenditure.
- 6.5. Individuals may claim expenses relating to training for the role they hold, subject to prior agreement from the National Exec.
- 6.6. Individuals may claim additional expenses, where these are required, to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate their disability while completing their volunteer role, subject to prior agreement from the National Exec.
- 6.7. Individuals may claim reasonable expenses for childcare or care of dependants where they would normally provide this but are unable to due

to SSAGO volunteering commitments, subject to prior agreement from the National Exec.

- 6.8. Where expenses are authorised and paid for, but no longer required, reasonable efforts should be made to obtain a (partial) refund, avoiding penalties and charges. Unless there is a legitimate personal or organisational reason for cancelling, such charges will be the personal liability of the individual.
- 6.9. Where expenses are incurred in a foreign currency, these will be repaid in GBP, unless the member and SSAGO agree to repayment in cash and SSAGO currently holds petty cash in the correct currency. The amount in GBP should be the actual amount paid, evidenced by bank or card statements or a receipt for cash exchange, and may include any fees incurred. If this is not possible, then it should be paid using the exchange rate on the day the transaction was made.
- 6.10. Individuals may be permitted to claim back expenses for any cost incurred at the discretion of the SSAGO Exec. These must be agreed in advance and in accordance with this policy document and the SSAGO Finance Policy.
- 6.11. Any other expense not covered by this policy should be discussed with the National Exec in advance.

7. Expenses Claim Process:

- 7.1. In order to claim expenses, an Expense Claim Form must be completed and submitted to the SSAGO Exec with a receipt or suitable evidence.
- 7.2. On submitting a claim form, members agree that the expenses they are claiming are accurate and represent actual costs they have incurred while conducting SSAGO business which are claimable under this policy. Where a member knowingly files false expenses, this will be investigated in line with the SSAGO 'Complaints' Policy.
- 7.3. For reasonable out-of-pocket expenses, SSAGO may agree to advanced payment of the expense; however, any sums unspent must be returned to SSAGO promptly along with evidence the expenditure was made.
- 7.4. SSAGO expenses should, in the first instance, be repaid by BACS in GBP. SSAGO may repay in cash if required or where it is maintaining petty cash in a foreign currency, and such payments should be in accordance with the SSAGO 'Finance' Policy.
- 7.5. Approved expenses for National Events may be repaid in-kind, by payment of the event fees or offer of merchandise, as long as these have the same value as the expenses claim, using prices available to any member of

SSAGO. These may also be offered as an advance reduction; for instance, for potential expenses due for uniform in 5.4. subject to any overpayment being repaid subject to 5.5.

- 7.6. Where a volunteer has incurred legitimate expenses but does not wish to claim them, they should notify SSAGO of their intention to waive their claim. The expense should be included in the budget matched with the waiver recorded as unrestricted income.
- 7.7. Alternatively, where there are a large number of claims, an alternative system of recording evidence of expenses may be used, as agreed with the SSAGO Exec.
- 7.8. All expenses must be claimed within three months of the cost being incurred. Claims made after this point will only be reimbursed at the discretion of the SSAGO Exec, and where there are exceptional reasons for the delay, or where it has been pre-agreed by the relevant committee.