

Selected Financial Policies as Set Forth in NYSBA's Finance Committee Financial Policy for Sections of the Association.

1. Annual section budgets should be submitted by mid-August each year to the Senior Director of Finance to be included in NYSBA's budget.
2. No section shall have funds or bank accounts of its own, as all financial transactions connected with section activity shall be reflected in the appropriate Association accounts.
3. Payment is not authorized for expenditures incurred by any section except as provided for in the budget of such section.
4. Sections should structure fees for programs and other functions, or augment fees by means of sponsorship income, to operate such events on a financially self-sustaining basis.
5. The Association will bear the cost, not to exceed \$3,500 for any one meeting of staff overtime and reasonable travel expenses. Sections will reimburse the Association for all such staff costs that exceed \$3,500 per meeting.
6. Sections may pay an honorarium to speakers at section programs, but only with the prior authorization from the Treasurer or Chair of the Finance Committee.
7. Sections may accumulate a reasonable amount of surplus funds which may be carried forward from year to year. Such accumulation should be for long-term purposes designed to benefit the majority of section members.
8. Authorization for the expenditure of surplus funds may be obtained from the Finance Committee for expenditures incorporated in the section's annual budget. In all other situations, by the Executive Director for amounts up to \$2,000, the Association Treasurer and Chair of the Finance Committee for amounts between \$2,000 and \$5,000, and by the Finance Committee for amounts exceeding \$5,000.
9. Each section may establish guidelines defining travel expenses subject to reimbursement and members eligible therefor, within the limitations as set forth in the financial policy regarding amounts, travel distances and allowable expenses.
10. Except as set forth in the financial policy, charitable contributions of Association funds by sections are unauthorized.

USES OF SURPLUS FUNDS

Some uses of surplus approved by the Finance Committee over the past several years:

1. Sections can use surplus to donate funds to The New York Bar Foundation to provide grants that are consistent with the goals of the Association and would benefit the Section's substantive area of interest.

Uses have included grants for scholarships, internships, and to assist public interest legal organizations. For instance, the Real Property Law section contributed funds to three NYC organizations that assist with tenant/landlord disputes.

2. International Law Section subsidized the registration fee for its younger members.
3. Many sections have contributed surplus funds to the Young Lawyers Section for membership initiatives such as the annual boat cruise.
4. Many sections have contributed surplus funds to the Commercial and Federal Law Section for its annual Smooth Moves program which promotes diversity.
5. The Trial Lawyers Section used surplus funds to provide networking and educational sessions with the justices in several judicial districts.
6. The Intellectual Property Section is using surplus funds to study advancing diversity within the field of intellectual property law which is dominated by white males.

BUDGETING TIPS FOR SECTIONS

1. Start early. Begin thinking about the section's budget even before the first draft is received in June.
2. Talk to your section liaison. He/she knows your section and will be very valuable in assisting in this process. Don't be afraid to enlist other staff members as well. Discussions with staff in the Meetings Department, the Newsletter Department, the Governmental Relations Department and the Membership Department are very helpful.
3. Budgets are for the calendar year – January 1 to December 31.
4. Consider the costs of meeting venues and budget accordingly. Don't forget to calculate and budget the revenue to be received from program registrations.
5. Plan for any new initiatives – membership campaign, member directory, executive committee retreat or other special function. These should all be included in the budget.
6. Balance the budget. Surplus funds accumulated from prior years may be used to balance revenue and expense.
7. Consider sponsorship for certain events such as receptions. Extra funds will then be available for other section activities.
8. Ask the accounting department for additional information. We are happy to give you any needed backup for expenses, as well as provide detail for each of you meetings.
9. At a minimum, review the final budget with section officers before submission to the Finance Committee. If possible, have the section's executive committee vote to approve the budget.