

STUDENT IDEAS FUND

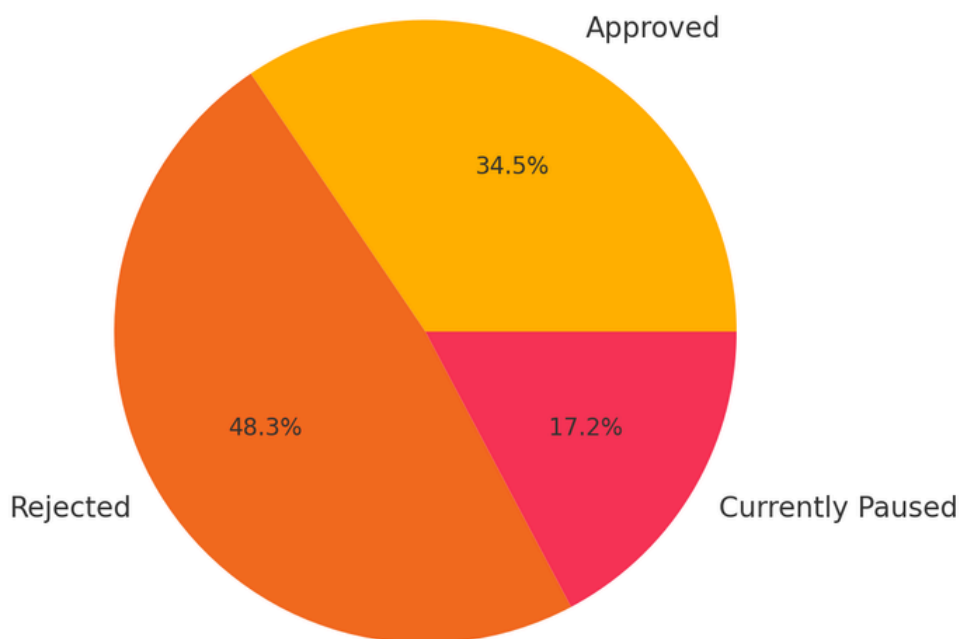
IMPACT REPORT 2025

INTRODUCTION

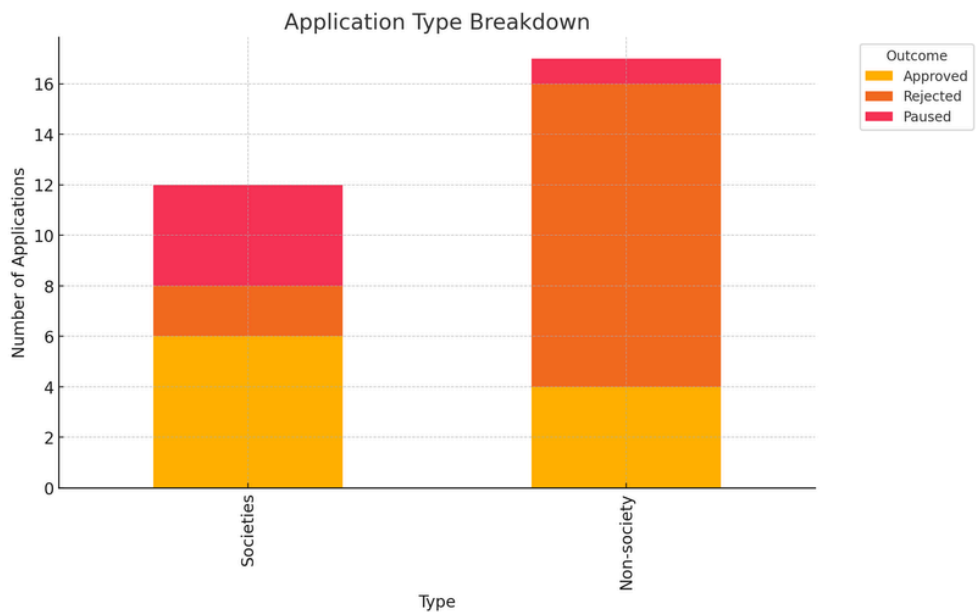
We received a total of 80 Expressions of Interest. From these, 46 were approved to proceed to the next stage, resulting in 29 main applications submitted.

This chart illustrates the outcomes of the 29 main applications received. Of these, 34% were approved, while nearly half (48%) were rejected. A smaller portion (17%) are currently paused. This breakdown provides a clear view of the competitive and selective nature of the fund, while also highlighting opportunities to support applicants whose projects may still be viable with additional guidance.

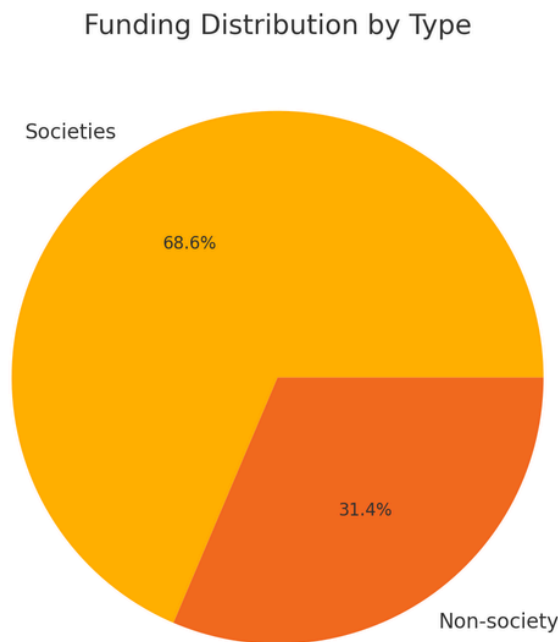
Main Applications Outcome



This chart displays the outcome distribution across society and non-society applications. Societies had a higher approval rate, with 6 out of 12 applications approved. Non-society applications saw more rejections, with only 4 approved out of 17. Interestingly, a larger proportion of paused projects came from societies, suggesting ongoing support or complexity in those initiatives.



The total approved funding of £10,316.74, this chart shows the allocation related insights. Societies received the majority share at 69% (£7,076.74), while non-society initiatives accounted for 31% (£3,240.00.)



Now let’s see what was the impact of the ideas SIF supported.

ESPORT VARSITY

INTENDED OUTCOME

To deliver a full-scale eSports Varsity headline event featuring semi-professional tournaments and open community engagement. The aim was to provide hands-on experience in the esports industry and attract a new demographic to Varsity through accessible, friendly competitions.

THE IMPACT

'The event saw strong participation with over 50 attendees in-person and 450 unique viewers online, peaking at 31 concurrent Twitch viewers. Students from University of Leeds, Leeds Beckett, Leeds Conservatoire, and Leeds Trinity took part. We collaborated with the Rainbow Laces campaign, and several students gained valuable experience in live casting—one submission was reviewed by a professional caster. Two student photographers were hired and paid, adding professional-quality coverage to the event. A charity raffle raised £194.50 for Special Effect, supporting accessible gaming. Overall, the event successfully broadened Varsity engagement and created real-world opportunities for students in esports'

ROLE OF STUDENT IDEAS FUND

The Student Ideas Fund played a critical role in bringing this event to life. Their support enabled Esport to:

- Secure professional-quality streaming equipment
- Hire and pay student photographers, providing them with real work experience
- Deliver a high-visibility Varsity event that reached new audiences and raised funds for charity
- Offer students hands-on involvement in casting, event planning, and live production



TEALIGHTS 20TH ANNIVERSARY

INTENDED OUTCOME

To plan a one-off, student-led comedy night to celebrate our society's 20th anniversary. Alumni will be reuniting with their old cast mates to perform sketches - some they wrote together whilst students and/or new sketches written for the event. Current members will showcase some of their own sketches and possibly perform alongside the alumni in the older sketches. It will be an all-day celebration, with the main focus on the big comedy showcase in the evening.

THE IMPACT

'Twenty's Plenty was a huge success and I believe achieved all of our aims. The Common Ground coffee morning allowed everyone to get to know each other before the day got fully under way. The ex-tealights made use of our union rooms and rehearsed all day until we did tech and rehearsed the sketch with everyone in it! The event sold very well with 175 tickets sold on universe and another 5 on the door. We had around 25-30 alumni who came and 20 who performed. The night was made up of stand up and sketches and more, with some ex-tealights doing a mini presentation. The after party allowed everyone to make real bonds with each other and make plans for future events or seeing each other at fringe in the summer. Overall it was a massive success and demonstrated the talent, ingenuity and comedic chops of the Leeds Tealights.'

ROLE OF STUDENT IDEAS FUND

The Student Ideas Fund was able to fund this celebration when the Activities Grant couldn't. The fund allowed the society to:

- Hire comedians, technicians and security for the event
- Host a Social Media campaign
- Print marketing including posters around Leeds



GRYPHON ARROWS

INTENDED OUTCOME

The intended outcome was to obtain equipment that could be reused by the team for subsequent drone projects.

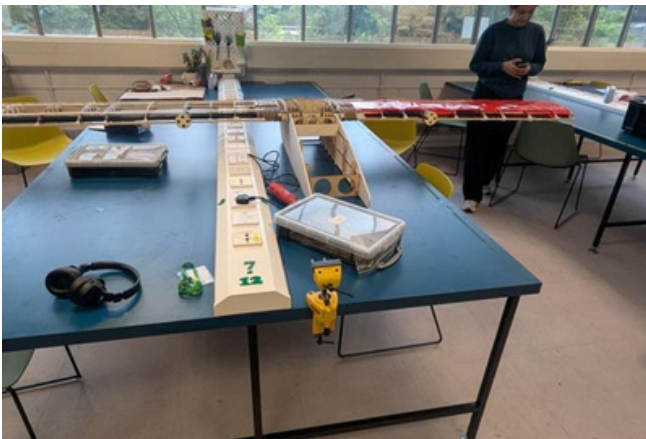
THE IMPACT

The idea for the formation of the drone team offered an opportunity for the team of students across the faculty of engineering to gain hands on experience. At its peak the team was 30 members large, with each member working on an aspect of the drone. With the university's continued commitment to the continuance of the team, it is expected that more students will get an opportunity to undertake engineering, business and leadership roles.

ROLE OF STUDENT IDEAS FUND

"The funds allowed for the purchase of flight controllers, motors, and tools such as heat guns, modelling irons all of which have sufficiently equipped the team to continue the project for next year. The components of the assisted launch system have also been manufactured and additional components required for assembly have also been purchased.

While students at university always dream to improve student life at the university, few have the resources like University of Leeds to do it. The Student Ideas fund is one such resource available with the Leeds University Union. The funding helped realise the pipe dream of having a drone team at the university that has already helped over 30 students at the university, and poised to benefit many more. A sincere thank you to everyone involved in disbursing this grant for seeing the benefits this would offer to the students."



BEYOND THE LAB COAT

UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

IDENTITY, PRIDE, AND RESEARCH

Centring LGBTQ+ Voices in STEM

A Symposium to Uplift Queer Stories in Science, Tech, Engineering, Medicine & Maths

Monday 16th June
Leeds University Union

Who should attend?
Everyone!
No matter your career stage, or whether you're LGBTQ+, an ally, a curious learner, or just supportive of inclusive research; you're welcome!

What to expect?

- Inspiring **talks** from queer researchers in STEM
- Honest **panel discussions** on challenges & change
- Inclusive **networking** and community connection

For more info and to register, scan here

With support from:
The Schools of Physics, Mechanical Engineering, Chemistry, Civil Engineering, Chemical & Process Engineering, Computer Science, and Molecular & Cellular Biology
The Faculties of Medicine & Health, and Engineering & Physical Sciences
Leeds University Union

INTENDED OUTCOME

To host a symposium celebrating LGBTQ+ lives within STEM fields, focussed on the barriers that queer and trans people face as scientists, aside from their research.

THE IMPACT

'Many of those who attended were enlightened by the different experiences that other within the queer community live(d) through. The general vibe of the event was warm and encouraging, and contributed nicely to Pride Month. The wider scientific community will benefit from vocal inclusion, to better make accommodations for those who struggle to feel like the space is for them.'

ROLE OF STUDENT IDEAS FUND

The Student Ideas Fund and wider LUU Supported this event. From the events team offering Pyramid Theatre for a subsidised cost to Terrace catering the event.

PGCS CONFERENCE

INTENDED OUTCOME

- To host a conference and summer ball for postgraduate students associated with the School of Chemistry.
 - To provide an opportunity for second and third year-PhD students to present their work
- Offer an environment in which students can discuss their research and share their ideas, skills and knowledge to gain insight into the diverse areas of research at Leeds, which we hope will allow for networking and future collaboration.
- Continue developing a supportive and cooperative chemistry network at Leeds that is friendly and sociable, and ultimately improve student success, wellbeing and happiness.
- Host a Summer ball, an evening event with a three-course meal, a photographer and a band. To provide PhD students with a great event to look forward to and the opportunity to socialise with colleagues outside of a formal work setting.
 - Support local and student communities
 - Host a charity raffle

THE IMPACT

The conference and the summer ball was a success. All aims and ideas for the ball were achieved. We were able to have a photographer and a band and a great evening was had by all. The conference was a big success with all participants being well engaged with the presentations. The charity raffle was a huge success with over £500 being raised for mind.

ROLE OF STUDENT IDEAS FUND

The funding allowed our vision to come to fruition; to have a band, a photographer and other small touches at the ball, which would otherwise not have been possible, these things really made the event a great evening and a night to remember. Most importantly the funding allowed the ball to be affordable for all PhD students, for which myself (and of course everyone else) is incredibly grateful for and meant that no one has to miss out on the chemistry social event of the year. I will forever be grateful for the support that SIF funding/LUU has shown towards supporting student wellbeing in the form of student-organised events in Chemistry.



CINEMA AVADORO

INTENDED OUTCOME

To run two cinema screenings showcasing the work of renowned Polish filmmaker Wojciech Jerzy Has in celebration of his 100th birthday. This will include talks before each film on the life and works of Has, in order to improve the audience's understanding and appreciation of his films. This will be part of a wider project to screen esoteric and avant-garde films within Leeds, bringing together the student and community film communities.

THE IMPACT

'The film screenings exposed many film fans in Leeds to the works of Wojciech Has and surrealist cinema in general. From the discussions that I was involved in after the screenings, it seemed like attendees were keen to discover more of his films, helping to bring greater prominence to an underappreciated director from outside Hollywood or Western Europe. Attendees were also interested in exploring more surrealist and avant-garde films and were interested to hear when I would be screening more films of that nature. The talks before each screening were well received, with attendees remarking on how it gave essential context to what they would later see on screen, context which they wouldn't have had access to if they watched these films on their own at home. Finally, from the discussions taking place after the films it seemed that bonds were being formed between student and non-student film fans.'

ROLE OF STUDENT IDEAS FUND

This idea was already in motion and SIF was used to get rights to the films shown.



REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

INTENDED OUTCOME

To raise money for a charity associated with supporting reproductive rights and to widen the reach of our society. To create a fun and welcoming environment for people to get to know the committee of our society. Contacting other societies and encouraging them to join to widen reach across campus, showing everyone they have a place to go if they need help and support. We will be measuring the success of our event through the number of tickets we sell and also through responses of attendees during and following the event.

THE IMPACT

The society raised £700.50 for the Center of Reproductive Rights. "This especially feels like a great achievement as we only founded the society at the end of 2024." The feedback we also received from attendees and the bands on the night were very positive. We are hoping to put on another similar event in the future due to the success.

ROLE OF STUDENT IDEAS FUND

SIF helped this event by funding:

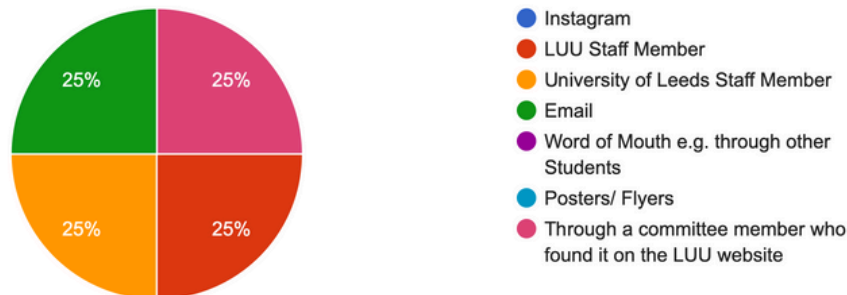
- the hire of comedians, technicians and security for the event
- a Social Media campaign
- and print marketing including posters around Leeds



PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

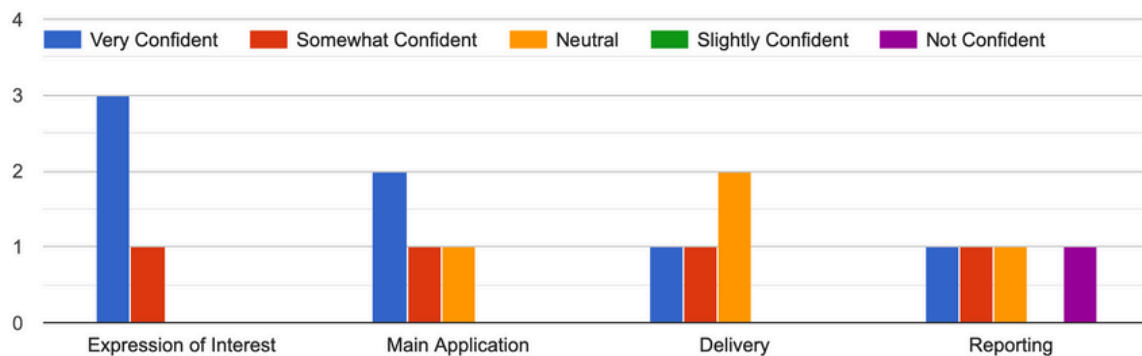
How did you find out about the SIF?

4 responses



There is a decent spread of how students are finding out about the project, so we should continue our current marketing. We could possibly increase the amount of instagram and social media marketing.

How confident did you feel completing each stage (Expression of Interest, Main Application, Delivery, Reporting)?



This chart shows that students lose confidence as the process goes on. Students have access to a staff support who is available to help them with their projects. Maybe there needs to be more guidance on how staff can be there to support student.

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

WHAT COULD WE IMPROVE OR DO DIFFERENTLY WITH THE SIF NEXT YEAR?

I think that it would be helpful to have a bi-monthly check in with a supervisor.

It is the student's responsibility to reach out to their supervisor for meetings but they are also welcome to contact the SIF team via the inbox, perhaps this needs to be clearer.

This isn't something easy to improve, but having SIF contacts that are more readily available would be extremely helpful. Both project contacts worked minimal hours each week, so the time for responses and turnover was unfortunately really slow. It may be worth employing a full-time SIF manager for all/most projects, as it became increasingly frustrating to have to wait days/a week between responses as the events drew closer.

When possible, both Student Programmes Supervisors resolved enquiries but it is difficult to be there to support applicants when we are unfamiliar with what stage they are at. Ensuring students keep their live tracker up to date to help all members of staff have an understanding of where a project is at.

Improve communication once the tracker has been completed - I still haven't had any confirmation

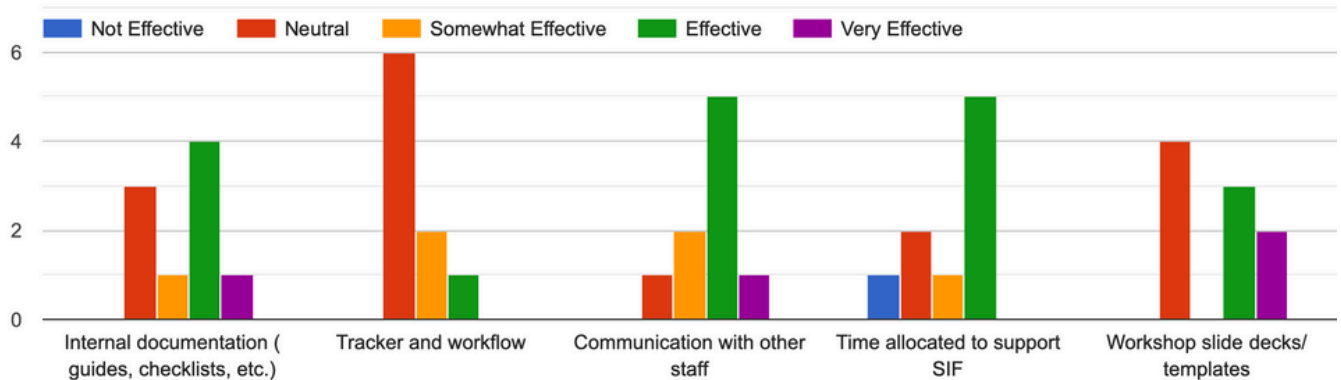
This student wasn't aware that they had to input expenses to receive reimbursements, we contacted and processed their expense.

Better advertising for it, we only found out due to a staff member telling us when planning the Varsity, and hadn't heard of it before

Alongside the insights provided from feedback, we hope with SIF being open for longer will allow more promotion opportunities.

STAFF FEEDBACK

How effective do you feel the following tools/resources were for staff support?



This chart shows that staff feel that documents used to support SIF could be improved.

What would be the best way for you to receive and engage with SIF Applications moving forward?

9 responses



Staff seem to feel happy using teams so we will continue to use it.

STAFF FEEDBACK

ANY SUGGESTIONS FOR HOW WE CAN IMPROVE THE SIF PROCESS OR YOUR EXPERIENCE NEXT YEAR?

Some more guidance on how we support the groups once they have been allocated funding (although this might just be down to the fact that the group I was supporting were super independent and got it all done efficiently!!)

Stronger and firmer guidelines on being proactive with SIF, a better understanding of how much everyone involved actually can be involved. Perhaps it would be better if we ask for a more 'cooked' initial idea approx 100- 150 words. Some were just a sentence, some were far too long and made it over complicated.

I feel like the Microsoft teams space was like this, but a SIF Hub that staff can refer to and keep up to date on.

It might be good to categorise the applications slightly and ask specific people to support with specific categories so I can read the sport ones and comment properly and leave the rest to others?

For the more complex or unusual ideas I wonder if it's helpful to have a quick meeting to help the decision making?

I would focus marketing efforts on targeting small projects - so like I want to organise a cooking class for students to introduce my culture, it'll cost me £300 in ingredients and food hygiene training (building on that Give it a Go side); remove reference to sustainability, projects should be one-off; potential rename? Need firm commitments from each team involved (either granular like x amount of hours, or the digital route where each team has a SIF champion?). The Student Groups team focus will switch more to only the club and society part of SIF, and we can help with marketing this. Although I liked the copy approach to marketing, I don't feel the visual side really represented what it was about (the piggy bank), I'd please suggest looking at new design

Clarity around what can and can't be and the initial feedback criteria

as before, email and @ us in the team. I'm happy to help

IMPROVING SIF

Reviewing the feedback provided by staff and students, we have three areas we are looking to improve for next academic year.

GUIDANCE

Ensure our guidance is up to date, relevant, clear and comprehensive.

COMMUNICATION

*Continue clear and open communication for staff and students.
Ensuring everyone is notified and aware of deadlines.*

REBRAND

We may consider a rebrand of our marketing for next year to ensure it is clear what the student ideas fund is and who can apply.