



Tips to Completing the Application

Welcome to the Alpha Phi Omega Friendship and Retention Grant Program! This program awards grants to APO chapters to enable them to perform fellowship activities benefiting the membership of the chapter. The goal of Friendship and Retention Grant funded projects is to encourage all members to become actively involved with their chapter once again. On any given campus there are numerous students who have been initiated into APO who are no longer involved with that chapter. This program is intended to motivate chapters to create an event that would invite these uninvolved members back for a fellowship activity in a welcoming manner. Your chapter is encouraged to apply for a grant.

The application instructions provide complete details of the procedure and project criteria, but here are some important points:

- All chapters of Alpha Phi Omega in good standing, as defined by our National Bylaws, may apply for an APO Friendship and Retention Grant. No chapter may receive an award more than two times in a five-year period. Maximum grant per chapter is \$500. Minimum is \$100.
- For a proposal to be considered it must conform to the specific subject area as described and must use the official grant application form or a copy. A single, complete PDF or Word file may be e-mailed to friendship@apo.org. In certain cases, a faxed copy may be accepted; please contact the National Office before you submit an application by fax. Mailed hard copies are also acceptable. Online submissions are available. Please contact the National Office if you do not receive confirmation of application receipt. Only one application, for one project or program, per chapter, will be considered each grant year. Submission of an application does not guarantee a grant of any amount.
- Proposed projects must focus on fellowship to all members of the chapter. The event should benefit all types of members of your chapter, from pledges to alumni, and members on campus who are no longer involved. It is our belief that many of these uninvolved members will be reminded of why they joined APO and then reconnect with their perspective chapter. Your chapter needs to be organized enough to complete the project even if the original brother who originally proposed the project is no longer around.
- The project may be one-time, short-term, or ongoing. However, the project receiving grant funds must be scheduled to occur between August 1st and December 15th. A written project report will be required by two weeks after the end of the project, or by January 1st, whichever is sooner. In addition to completing the grant procedure, these reports are further used to possibly include your project in the *Torch & Trefoil* and/or on www.apo.org. Chapters selected for grants that fail to perform the project must return the grant award to the National Office.
- A chapter's failure to submit the project and expense report will constitute a failure to fulfill a financial and/or administrative obligation to the Fraternity and will jeopardize the chapter's standing with the Fraternity. Chapters that are NOT in good standing are prevented from voting at the National Convention and could face other sanctions as prescribed in the National Bylaws.

Timeline for FAR Grant 2009

Completed and signed applicants due by May 1st to the National Office (*see address above)

Notification will be sent to chapters by May 25th.

Project execution after award, no later than December 15th, preferably during the first weekend in October, Friendship and Retention Weekend

Tips to help your chapter through the process:

Follow the FAR instructions and help the FAR Selection Committee focus on your plans, not your papers. You don't want anything to detract from your message about why your chapter should receive a grant.

1) FILL OUT THE APPLICATION FORM (or a copy). The form itself exists, in part, as a checklist and as a tool for comparison. Though much of the material is attached in essay form, don't make the review committee hunt for short answers like the name of your project, the dates, etc. Be legible, especially with names, phone numbers and e-mail addresses. The FAR Selection Committee relies on this information to resolve any questions about your application, which may be delayed or not fully considered if you cannot be reached.

2) CLEARLY IDENTIFY YOUR ATTACHMENTS. Each attached page should be labeled with the chapter name, college or university, section and region. Further, number each response, in order, and use the question or topic as a title. This way each answer is clear and to the point. For example, if the committee has to dig through five pages of text to infer the impact of the grant on your chapter, your proposal will be less effective. Though you may have created a single, elegant essay which encompasses all points, break it out according to the application. In this case, specific content is more important than the flow.

3) MAKE SURE THE APPLICATION IS COMPLETE. If you follow the suggestions above you will be less likely to miss something. **Of special note:** Item 6, the budget, requires A) an amount on the application, B) an attached, detailed budget that clearly shows how the grant money would be used, and possibly C) an additional attachment explaining other sources of funding. Item 7, fiscal operations, needs to know how the chapter handles money for service projects and other activities, e.g. who writes checks, how many signatures are required on chapter checks, how you record financial transactions, etc. Item 8, the most commonly forgotten attachment is the advisor's letter. That advisor must also sign the application itself.

4) QUALITY VS QUANTITY (AND NEATNESS COUNTS). Again, you want your message to come through loud, clear, and unimpaired. An organized application also infers that your chapter, and therefore the project, is well organized. Check spelling and grammar; have it proofread. Bulk for its own sake is not a desirable goal and may even be counter-productive, but do develop each point sufficiently.

5) CHECK TO MAKE SURE THAT YOUR CHAPTER IS IN GOOD STANDING WITH THE FRATERNITY AS DEFINED IN THE NATIONAL BYLAWS. This is one of the requirements for the grant, though it requires no specific attachment. The FAR Selection Committee will verify through records in the National Office the status of each chapter submitting an application. If in doubt about your standing, call or e-mail Heather Lehman at the National Office (816)373-8667 ext.22 or e-mail: heather@apo.org.

If you have any questions in preparing your application, contact your Regional Membership Chair: http://www.apo.org/show/National_Programs/Membership_and_Extension/Committee. You may also contact the National Office: friendship@apo.org, or by phone at (816)373-8667. Because you should be focusing on your own chapter and project ideas, the office staff will not provide you with the text of past "winning" applications, but can certainly help answer questions on how to fill out particular sections of your applications.