

September 17, 2026

To: Finance Committee

Request: \$1,500 Staff Travel

Associated Students, Inc. (ASI) at Cal State LA serves an important role in supporting students and advancing programs and services that contribute to the university experience. As an auxiliary organization, ASI's continued professional development and engagement with the broader auxiliary community are important to maintaining effective operations, sound governance, and high-quality service to students.

Participation in the Auxiliary Association Organization (AOA) Conference provides a valuable opportunity for ASI representatives to engage with professionals from other university auxiliary organizations, learn about emerging practices, and gain knowledge that can be applied to ASI's operations. Funding attendance at the conference is therefore an investment in organizational development and capacity building rather than simply an individual professional development opportunity.

Professional Development and Knowledge Sharing

The conference provides access to educational sessions, discussions, and professional perspectives relevant to the management and governance of auxiliary organizations. Participants can gain knowledge in areas such as organizational leadership, financial management, compliance, risk management, student services, human resources, and emerging challenges in higher education.

The information and skills gained through conference participation can be shared with ASI staff, student leaders, and the Board of Directors upon returning to campus. This creates an opportunity for the benefits of the conference to extend beyond the individual attendees and contribute to the organization as a whole.

Strengthening ASI's Organizational Effectiveness

Participation in AOA allows ASI to benchmark its practices against those of other auxiliary organizations and identify opportunities for improvement. Conversations with peers can provide practical examples of policies, procedures, programs, and approaches that may be relevant to ASI's own operations.

Exposure to different perspectives can also help ASI anticipate challenges and consider innovative approaches to serving the Cal State LA student community.

Leadership Development

Conference participation supports the development of both professional and organizational leadership. Representatives have opportunities to strengthen communication, collaboration, strategic thinking, and decision-making skills while engaging with colleagues across the auxiliary community.

These skills are directly relevant to ASI's ability to effectively fulfill its responsibilities and support its mission.

Return on Investment

Allocating funds for conference participation should be viewed in terms of the knowledge, professional relationships, and organizational resources that ASI can bring back to Cal State LA. To maximize the value of the investment, conference attendees can provide a summary or presentation to the ASI Board and/or staff highlighting key takeaways, applicable practices, and recommendations for implementation.

This approach ensures that the conference experience produces an organizational benefit and that ASI's investment in professional development is shared broadly.

Conclusion

Funding ASI participation in the AOA Conference supports the organization's commitment to professional development, continuous improvement, effective governance, and responsible stewardship of resources. The opportunity to learn from peer institutions, build professional relationships, and bring relevant knowledge back to Cal State LA can strengthen ASI's operations and ultimately support its ability to serve students effectively.

For these reasons, allocating funds for ASI representatives to attend the AOA Conference is a reasonable investment in the continued development and effectiveness of the organization.