Indian Student Association

January 24, 2013

Student Services Fee Request for 2014 - 2015 Academic Year

Indian Student Association (#10), Room 126, 300 Washington Ave. SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455

Address

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Phone Fax Email

“We acknowledge that the Fees Committee does not award actual dollars, but rather a penny fee that earns dollars based upon student enrollment levels. Any differences between anticipated and actual income resulting from changes in enrollment are the responsibility of the student organization, not of the Fees Committee.”

Dip Shukla Divya Palanisamy

Preparer’s Name Co-Preparer’s Name
Is your organization an IRS 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit?  Yes ________  No ________ X

If yes, please provide proof of your organization’s 501(c)(3) status.

Funds are being requested for (check all that apply):

- General Operating Support:  X
- Start-Up Costs: 
- Capital: X
- Project / Program Support:  X
- Technical Assistance: X
- Other (List):

Budget

Dollar Amount Requested  $ 8,565.00
Total Annual Organization Budget  $ 18,462.00
Total Program Budget (apart from General Operating)  $ 17,232.00
Section 1: Narrative

■ Summary of Organization History:

The Indian Student Association (ISA), previously known as Indo Am Students Association, was the tenth student group that was ever established at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. Existing since the start of the University, Indo-Am was re-established and reformed in 1983. Since then, the organization has been successfully carrying out its intent of promoting and preserving Indian and South Asian culture on campus. This mission is reflected in its events and activities.

■ Organization mission / vision statements, inclusive of organizational goals

The Indian Student Association operates as a non-profit, non-political, non-religious organization, with intent to preserve and promote the Indian culture in the University of Minnesota Community to South Asians and non-South Asians alike (Guideline 5).

■ Describe your organization’s relationship with organizations of like mission

We strive to create and preserve relationships with other student groups that improve cultural awareness and collaboration. ISA stresses on improving these relationships through open discussion. We invite other organizations and their members to provide helpful feedback, participate as active members in our events, and collaborate with our organization.

We work with other student organizations that follow our mission by involving students from those groups in the planning, organization, and execution of our events. One example is our annual Fall Show - celebrated in honor of Diwali or the South Asian Festival of Lights. For this event, in the past, we have involved student groups that work to promote South Asian culture (such as the Bangladeshi Student Association, the Pakistani Student Association, the Sri Lankan Student Association, Fraternities and Sororities such as Beta Chi Theta and Delta Phi Omega etc.) to help us with the promotion of the event through fliers and word of mouth, ideation and planning of the workings of the event (such as catering, arranging performers, organizing auditions and rehearsals), and also involving student performers from these groups in the show itself. In the process, ISA and its fellow organizations build on their commonalities and simultaneously showcase their uniqueness, thereby benefitting the organizations, the plethora of students that attend, and connecting together the University as a whole (Guideline 3, 4, 5).

ISA is proud to have a wide variety of international, local, undergraduate, as well as graduate students as general members. In order to expand our existing general member population of students, and to spread our mission to a wider and wider audience, we are privileged to co-sponsor events with umbrella organizations such as the Asian Student Union (ASU), the Minnesota International Student Association (MISA) etc. Being official affiliates of these larger organizations, we are able to elevate our events in scale,
reach, and quality. By collaborating with these organizations, we are able to get help with promoting our events, finding volunteers, and increasing the awareness of Indian culture that our organization aims to do (Guideline 1, 2).

**Illustrate the need for your organization within the university community, inclusive of how your organization meets this need**

With the continuously growing population of South Asians in the Minnesota community, as well as the increased interest in Indian culture, food, and traditions among Indians and non-Indians alike, there is an evident need for a strong presence for Indian culture on campus. For Indians in Minnesota and on campus, ISA plays a vital role in creating a home away from home on campus and in the community. Providing the traditional cuisines, games, and music, and furthermore, a strong interpersonal network for Indian Students on campus, we create a sense of unity among local Indian students as well as international students. We also serve as a bridge between Indians and non-Indians, and allow a wide variety of students to learn from each other by sharing the similarities and differences in their cultures. By providing a platform for open discussion between these students, we spread the awareness of not only the Indian culture, but cultures from all around the world. We believe that increasing discussion increases understanding, and increasing understanding eventually leads to increasing tolerance and peace (Guideline 1, 5).

**Detail the student benefit derived from your organization, whether or not students utilize services**

Involvement in the Indian Student Association provides several benefits. These can be measured in three levels: to the student community, to the University as a whole, and to the world. ISA provides a platform for open discussion among students. Whether first generation immigrant from Indian descent or a non-Indian, ISA provides a commonplace for open conversation. When cuisine is served or music is heard, Indian students are able to relate to their roots and feel proud of their heritage; non-Indians who have experienced Indian culture, or who have Indian friends are immediately reminded of their close encounters with the culture; and non-Indians who are new to Indian traditions get a chance to learn something new and to compare the similarities and differences between their own culture and Indian culture.

The chance for open discussion at ISA events allows similarities and differences between cultural practices to be in the limelight. By discussing these commonalities and unique traits, there develops an understanding between students of different backgrounds. This understanding draws together a university community as large as that of the University of Minnesota, filled with more than 50,000 students. With this friendship and understanding among students, the University no longer seems as foreign, populous, and overwhelming as it is. The University becomes a backyard, and the student group
becomes a home. With a close-knit University community, the University of Minnesota students and faculty can begin collaborating with other Universities across the US and across the world, in order to fulfill common goals. When the university population is more aware, it promotes tolerance and understanding. There is strength in unity and this unity in diversity of cultures is what ISA seeks to promote (Guidelines 1, 5, 6).

- **Describe student involvement within your organization**

  Students get involved in Indian Student Association events in a variety of ways. Firstly, ISA encourages volunteering and giving back to the community. This past summer in 2013, ISA put together a large volunteer effort for University Students to help out at the Warrior Dash Marathon in Hastings, Minnesota. Warrior Dash is sponsored by St. Jude Children's Hospital, and the marathon itself works to gather financial support for medical research. ISA was pleased to gather student volunteers in order to help execute this marathon event. Students participated in providing water and amenities for the runners, manned the information and ticket booths, and helped sell warrior dash merchandise in which all proceeds went towards St. Jude's Children's Hospital research. All us students enjoyed the fact that we got the chance to spend the day working with our friends and were giving back to the community all at the same time (Guideline 7).

  Furthermore this year, we increased our community involvement by volunteering with Flint Hills International Children’s Festival in conjunction with the India Association of Minnesota (IAM) to introduce kids to Indian culture by giving henna tattoos, among other things. We also became involved with the South Asian interest group at Boston Scientific to assist with their Diwali celebration. Involvement included assisting to teach Dandiya-dance, and volunteering to help with performances. Volunteers are also needed for each of our events. From passing out fliers to serving the delicious food, each ISA event runs successfully only because of our student volunteers.

  Secondly, ISA encourages student to get involved in performances and acts to showcase their unique talents. For example, for our largest event of the Fall 2013 semester, the Indian Student Association put together a cultural performing arts show that was dedicated to Diwali, or the festival of lights. Students from several backgrounds (both Indian and non-Indian) were provided a chance to learn Bollywood and classical Indian dances in preparing for a series of 2-5 minute performances, called the Fashion Show. Students from non-Indian backgrounds definitely had a blast wearing (for some, never-before-seen) traditional Indian clothing, learning the complicated dance steps, and ultimately getting to perform those dance pieces on stage for a crowd of over 900 people in Ted Mann Concert Hall. Several students described this event as a wonderful chance to get to know the Indian community on campus and to get an understanding about traditional Indian culture (Guideline 5, 6).
Section 2: Organizational Structure

Since ISA’s main priority is to serve its general members, they are at the bottom of organizational structure and act as the foundation for the whole structure itself. The general members, being the reason for ISA's existence, are of the utmost importance to ISA. Up from the foundation is our ISA board that plans events that serve our general members. Every event planned by ISA has committees consisting of about one to two board members that execute their assigned responsibilities to ultimately produce a successful event. At the top of the board hierarchy lays the executive board consisting of the President, Vice-President, and Treasurer. These are at the top of the pyramid to show that although the executive board may make the final decision, they are strongly supported by and are upheld by the rest of the board. An event would not be a success without each and every one of these board members. The board works closely with affiliate student group members in order to ultimately produce events that benefit the general members - University of Minnesota students (Guideline 4, 5). Input from general members is incorporated by the board to improve events.
### Section 3: Performance Reports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event Name</th>
<th>2011 - 2012 term</th>
<th>2012 - 2013 term</th>
<th>2013 - 2014 term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>ISA and TCB</td>
<td>40 (2 day event)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISA's Welcome back picnic</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Garam Grillout</td>
<td>25 (1 day event)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small World Coffee Hour with ISA</td>
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<td>ISA’s Garam</td>
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<td>Light Up the Night with ASU</td>
<td>497</td>
<td>Night with ASU</td>
<td>405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Jazba’ - ISA Spring Show</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>ISA Diwali Fall</td>
<td>767</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISA Culture Day with MISA</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>Show (named</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISA High Tea with ASU</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>‘Roshni’ in 2012</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISA’s Chit Chat Chai</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>‘Rangeela’ in 2013</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISA's Peace Out Grill Out</td>
<td>40 (rained-out)</td>
<td>ISA Cook-off</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>with MISA</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>ISA High Tea</td>
<td>101</td>
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<tr>
<td>ISA's Chit Chat Chai</td>
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<td>with ASU</td>
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<tr>
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<td>N/A</td>
<td>ISA's Chit Chaat</td>
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<tr>
<td>ISA's Peace Out Grill Out</td>
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<td>Chai</td>
<td>Event Pending</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charity Ball Formal</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>Event with Bharat</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of Year</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>Event Pending</td>
<td>Event Pending</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Several events will follow for the 2013-2014 school year that have not yet been conducted in years past. Attendees include a mixture of undergraduate and graduate students. Certain events, like the Fall Shows also attract many non-university attendees. Attendance tabulation was conducted via headcount, food item counts, and social media RSVPs (Guideline 3). Specific methods per event are detailed in the “Program Breakdown” tab of the budget excel.

The involvement of our members over the 2011-2012, 2012-2013, and 2013-2014 years has varied considerably, each with its successes. However, we did observe a trend of increasing membership and participation. This year, ISA again engaged in the community by participating in St. Jude’s Warrior Dash Fundraiser. It was a great activity for member bonding and organizational fundraising; involvement in this event was lower due to a reduction on the number of days it was held this year. We anticipate an increase in participation next year. ISA, as a board, also participated in various community engagement activities, such as the Flint Hills International Children’s Festival, and the Boston Scientific Diwali Celebration. We hope to continue community engagement via these venues and seek to open up this opportunity to general members in the future.

Attendance to the Welcome Back Picnic has historically been strong, as it is an event catering to returning members and new university students. Due to the timing of the event (within the first week of the semester) and intensive recruiting and advertising efforts, we had a greater turnout than last year. Additionally, this year, ISA continued participation in the Small World Coffee Hour to promote learning about Indian culture with a strong attendance and fun activities, like teaching Bhangra dancing.

Several events are static to our programming and stem from our affiliate status with groups like the Minnesota International Student Association and the Asian Student Union. These include the MISA Cook Off (previously, MISA Culture Day) and ASU Light Up the Night and ASU High Tea. Attendance at these events is dependent on the type/extent of publicizing pursued. Attendance this year was on par with previous years and showed great turnouts for the small scale nature of the events. However, the attendance was slightly lower this year for the MISA Cook-Off and ASU High Tea. Our final small scale event we will attempt this year will be the Chit Chaat Chai event, planned for the end of January as a Welcome Back event for our members. It will allow our members to come enjoy fun activities like karaoke and henna with snacks.

The greatest success we experienced this year was with our Fall Show: Rangeela. The attendance greatly increased from the 2012-2013 count and positive feedback from members further added to the success experienced. This year, more than 950 individuals were present to enjoy the wide variety of cultural performances and various types of Indian cuisines. Additionally, this year we were able to provide food for volunteers and participants and decrease
the cost of the catered meal for attendees to only $2(student)/$7(non-student). For future shows we aspire to make this event completely free (Guideline 3).

Our final events of the year are the Spring Charity Formal and the End of Year Picnic, which is a great way to send off our senior members. The Spring Charity Formal-the first of its kind hosted by ISA last year- is a formal dance event that sheds light on various charities active on campus with a short presentation by select charities (SILK Road, Nourish, Be the Match, Autism Speaks), followed by a dance. The purpose of the event was to increase awareness of these groups and expose our members to opportunities to get involved. Fairly successful for a first attempt, ISA will be holding a similar charity/dance based event again this year. We hope to increase attendance and engagement. Finally, our last event will be the End of Year Picnic, which is a great way to send off our new and senior members.

Section 4: Reserve Accounts

- The Indian Student Association does have one reserve funds account. This past year, with Warrior Dash fundraising (a local marathon which collects funds for medical research) (Guideline 7) and SSF support, ISA was able to create the Reserve Account (as a savings account) at US Bank with $800. This account is currently and in future to be maintained with $800 at all times and is to be used only in situations where ISA is financially limited (i.e. requiring more temporary funding to cover expenses, etc.) or no longer a SSF Fees receiving student organization. Prior to converting to an SSF student organization, annual financial carryover was to be $800. In the event that no SSF funding is obtained, the reserve funds will serve as the carryover; and as based on SSF budgeting, no SSF funds will remain in the checking account (Guideline 9).

Section 5: Fees Request

- We are requesting $8565.00. This is a second year SSF request and an increase from last year. The increase in funding stems from a new limitations on fundraising opportunities. Our main sources of fundraising came from partnering with KAPLAN and volunteering with Warrior Dash. In past years, partnering with KAPLAN has allowed us to fundraise as much as $3700, but with a change in internal management, fundraising opportunity is now severely limited (requiring 300 original KAPLAN-student referrals by the partnering group for one complementary course that can be sold, as opposed to obtaining a complementary course upon partnership). Another limitation experiences this year was from a decrease in the number of days Warrior Dash volunteering was possible. The SSF request increase reflects these changes as well as the increase in membership that has resulted in an increased need for funding (Guideline 7).

- With an increase in membership and the potential to conduct events, in greater frequency and on a higher scale, ISA will require financial stability from the student service fees in order to reach out to a wider audience. In order to promote our mission of spreading
awareness of Indian culture in the University of Minnesota, ISA will utilize the student service fees to increase promotional and informational fliers, to conduct culture-comparison events with other student groups, and to increase a forum of informal open discussion for a larger student audience to interact and learn about the Indian culture. Although our group has been around for a very long time, we hope to employ the student service fees to augment and increase our University-wide influence to surpass our historical University presence (Guideline 8, 9).

**Section 6: External Funding**

- ISA has a diversified income source. Funding is obtained via various methods: fundraising (with KAPLAN, Saint Jude’s Warrior Dash, India Association of Minnesota), grant applications to affiliate student organizations (such as MSA, GAPSA, ASU, MISA), SUA grants, and Student Service Fees. Each source contributes significantly to the final budget and a lack of either source has a limiting impact on our programming.
- The percentage of funding that comes from each source is shown below for the 2013-14 and 2014-15 years: (2013-14 income breakdown is based on actual current funding and projected funding for the remainder of our events. 2014-15 income breakdown is projected from the 2013-14, incorporating funding source changes we experienced and expect for next year.)

![2013-14 Income Sources](image_url)
As demonstrated in the charts above, SSF support has become integral to ISA funding. In our 2013-14 academic year, 40% of our budget will come from SSF funding and in 2014-15, approximately, 49% will come from SSF funding. SSF funding provides the stability and financial flexibility that allows ISA to program successful events without limitations of grant-giving organizations; with SSF income, ISA is able to create events that reflect its mission without the overbearing necessity of conforming events to grant guidelines. Furthermore, the stable funding allows the ability to program/plan for events throughout the year, not only when there is funding available. As experienced with SSF funding received this year, we are now able to have more, better planned and executed events, in terms of event promotion and program content. The income from SSF also has improved our ability to attract a greater and more diverse membership.

**Description of Impact of a 10 Percent Reduction in Fee Request**

- A 10 percent decrease in funds would contribute to fewer events and would shrink the scale of existing events. Events would still be conducted, but with fewer promotional fliers, fewer decorations, and in a smaller-sized and less expensive venue. The food budget would still remain close to the same, since it is important to a lot of our programming. Ultimately, with a reduction of funding, ISA would only be able to reach out to a fraction of its potential members because of the limit in its promotional caliber. ISA's mission would be met, but definitely not to the fullest (Guideline 8).