International System Dynamics Society
Strengthening the Field Fund
Application Guidelines
January 10, 2013

I. Background

The development of the chapters of the International System Dynamics Society is critical to the Society's health and growth. Therefore the Society's Policy Council approved a motion at the 2010 meeting providing a limited amount of funds to support chapters in development activities. The goal of this effort was the development of chapter's "capacity" in System Dynamics and not the development of demand for system dynamics or other purposes. In order to develop and reinforce "capacity", the focus of the capacity development was to be on relatively advanced aspects of accepted System Dynamics practice, rather than System Dynamics fundamentals or topics outside the existing System Dynamics domain.

Based on the discussion at the 2012 Policy Council summer meeting the care of the fund was placed under the control and direction of the "Strengthening the Field committee" (StFC). That committee consists of the VP Meetings (ex officio chair), VP Chapters, VP Member services (SIGs), and VP Finance. Its present task is to determine how the funds shall be used to strengthen SIGS as well as Chapters, possibly including other purposes such as providing scholarships to the System Dynamics conference. The recommended guidelines are described next.

The Strengthening the Field Fund (StFF) will be used to strengthen the Society's chapters and SIGs in System Dynamics. Examples of activities that may be funded include, but are limited to:

- The development of a Chapter or SIG's capacity in System Dynamics through training on relatively advanced aspects of accepted System Dynamics practice,
- Sponsorship and awards for competitions among Chapters and SIGs based on a System Dynamics challenge
- Activities that strengthen the relationship of specific Chapters or SIGs or the Society in general with other related organizations, such as through joint or adjacent meetings, scholarships to the System Dynamics conference, etc.,
- Development of materials enabling advanced students to keep on improving their capabilities (DVDs, self-studying guides etc.).

The fund goal does not include, and the fund will not be used for the development of demand for System Dynamics marketing of System Dynamics, or other related purposes. The fund will not be used to:

- □ develop demand for System dynamics
- □ market System Dynamics
- □ support internal activities of individual chapters or SIGs
- □ support activities organized by Chapter/SIG members for their own Chapter/SIG

Applications will be made by one or more specific Chapters or SIGs. A recommended format is provided below.

II. Decision Procedure

1. Applications for funds are made through a formal request that provides the information outlined in section III of this document (using the application form).
2. All proposals must be submitted to both the VP Chapters and the VP Members. The VP Chapters ensures that the proposal meets the minimum information requirements and that it fits with the intended purpose of the funds. The VP Chapters should assist the local proposers or group in the development of proposals.
3. The StFC will be responsible for reviewing and approving all applications for the Strenghtening the Field Fund (StFF).
4. The purpose of the funds is to strengthen the Chapter or SIG by enabling them to perform activities that would not otherwise occur, usually because of financial risk (e.g. of low participation). When activities generate funds that exceed costs, these funds are intended to function as seed money for the local chapters, with the surplus being reused to allow the Chapter or SIG to initiate further capacity development activities in the future with less or no financial support being needed from the StFF. In the event of large surpluses a portion of the surplus could be refunded to the Fund. As such, applications will be evaluated not only in terms of the impact towards the stated goals of the StFF, but also in the financial merits of the proposal.
5. Applications of fund should be submitted at least four months prior to the requirements of the funds. The committee should not take more than a month to reach a decision.

III. Application Format

In order to facilitate the decision process, the application of funds should, if it applies to the specific activity, at a minimum, contain the following information:

1. Chapter or SIG identification
   a. The Chapter or SIG proposing the activity.
   b. The individuals responsible for the funds.
2. Description of the proposed activity
   a. Dates
   b. Place
   c. Planned activity with a description of the content, participants and what they will do. Examples include, in the case of a scholarship to the System Dynamics conference, the parts of the System Dynamics conference that are of particular interest and benefit to the participants, or, in the case of a workshop the identification of invited leaders/facilitators/etc. (if any) and their credentials.
   d. Intended participants / audience for the event.

3. Anticipated impact of the activity on the participants / audience and how they will benefit.
4. Explanation of how the proposed activity will fulfil the goals of strengthening the field.
5. Budget
   a. Breakdown of estimated costs. For example:
      i. Conference registration fees and travel costs
      ii. Rental space/equipment
      iii. Travel and per diem for instructors
      iv. Instructor compensation
      v. Workshop or other materials
      vi. Translation costs
      vii. Reviewing and editing costs
      viii. Other

b. Breakdown of estimated revenues (if any)
    i. Expected revenue from participants (number * fee)
    ii. Expected local sponsorship (in kind and funds)
    iii. Expected revenues from sales
    iv. Support from the Society's Strengthen the Field Fund
c. Break-even analysis
    i. Number of participants necessary for the event to break-even financially
    ii. Anticipated chapter surplus from the activity if the planned number of persons participate
    iii. Any proposed sharing of surplus of revenues over expenses with the Strengthen the Field Fund

IV. Reporting

Within 30 days of the completion of the activity the organizers must prepare and submit to the Society (VP Chapters) a full report of the supported activities and events. The report should include the number of participants, indicators of success/failure, financial outcomes, and planned follow-up activities.

V. Other Guidelines

The proposed activities shall not generate work for the System Dynamics Society Home Office beyond writing the check and receiving a copy of the final report.