

The Services are presently examining the options for setting up a Solidarity Fund, with the aim of covering, for parents experiencing financial difficulties, the expected increase in the cost of transport if zero-emission busses are introduced, and perhaps also part of the cost of canteen meals and after-school activities.

A single independent solidarity fund is in principle better than two separate funds for APEEE and Services, but implies setting up a new ASBL. It is more realistic for each to manage a fund within its own budget.

Attached is a summary of the social funds set up by the APEEEs of Ixelles and Laeken, and a proposal for internal rules setting up **a fund for the APEEE of EEB1**. This proposal is based on that of Laeken.

The APEEE proposal excludes funding:-

- for services, which would be covered by APEEE Services' solidarity fund
- of the school fees (minerval), as the school is legally required to reduce these fees in cases of financial hardship
- school trips such as those for P3, P4 and P5 and secondary, so long as the school includes a solidarity fund in their budgets
- costs not directly linked to the school (bereavement...) or to a student (APEEE staff...)
- projects, as these are covered by separate arrangement.

Likely calls on APEEE should not be significant, given these exclusions, and that Rentcompany offers lap-tops on easy payment terms. However, a solidarity fund is needed in order to give the necessary budgetary cover to a response to any eventuality which jeopardises a student's academic progress in EEB1.

A draft application form is also attached.

### Likely beneficiaries

Parents who have applied for a reduced minerval or school trip fee are typically single parents, or single earners, on low salaries, and with more than one child in the European School. They may be on parental leave, working part-time in an institution, or be past employees (end of contract) who have the right to maintain their child in the European School.

Some 5% of parents applied for a reduced cost of ski trips. Certain criteria can be applied, such as a maximum monthly family income and number of children, but each case needs to be assessed individually.

### **Proposal**

It is proposed that:

- this CA presents the attached draft internal rules for adoption by the next AGM, and includes 3000 € in its 2021/22 budget to set up the Solidarity Fund.
- At its first meeting, the next CA appoints a Chair of the Fund, and the Treasurer and between one and five other members of that CA to the Solidarity Fund Committee
- This Committee be entitled to call upon the APEEE secretariat to initiate the payments it authorises from the solidarity fund.

## Annex 1 : comparison between the funds of APEEEs of Ixelles and Laeken

The APEEEs of both Laeken and Ixelles have set up solidarity funds, in January 2018 and May 2019 respectively. They diverge in a number of respects:

	Laeken	Ixelles
Funding	Within the annual budget From end-of-year reserves and/or other activities	Annual budget May include personal contributions
Approval of budget	AGM	AGM
Eligible costs	School fees Obligatory equipment (e.g. byod) Obligatory school trips Periscolaire Transport Canteen Other costs	Obligatory school trips P3,P4,P5,S3,S6 Books and IT materials Periscolaire Transport Canteen Subsistence of orphans with no pension Medical fees Costs of a student's funeral Any other expense in the framework of APEEE activities
Beneficiaries	Include other members of school community In cases of clear and objective financial difficulty	APEEE members and their families, and include APEEE staff In cases of serious hardship, death of family member, serious health or other personal circumstances
Max % finance	100% of first three, 80% of the rest, no retrospective financing	80%, exceptionally more
Limits	One assistance per child per year	One assistance per child per year
Applications	To dedicated mailbox with supporting documents	To APEEE HR and operations manager to APEEE e-mail, but only if the school cannot provide assistance; Supporting docs may be requested (tax certificates ....)
Trustees	Social Fund Committee of 3-7 members of the APEEE CA, (re)appointed annually by CA. CA designates Chair and Treasurer. Presently 3 members	<1000€ by APEEE chair, vice-chair for admin and treasurer >1000 by EXCO (bureau?)
Decisions	By majority of trustees, EEB Director may be consulted	Majority
Reporting	Anonymised minutes and accounts to CA	Anonymised decisions to CA
Other info	35 000 € initially made available, some 9000€ spent. Annual deficits so no addition to social funds	Unused reserves up to 2000€ per year can be used for student projects; 20 000€ initially available, then annually from APEEE members' subscriptions, exceptionally from annual profit or other activities. Financial statements not publicly available

## **Annex 2: APEEE Solidarity Fund draft internal rules**

### **Article 1.**

The Solidarity Fund (SF) of the APEEE may provide financial assistance to its members who experience exceptional difficulties in meeting the costs associated with their childrens' education in EEB1.

### **Article 2.**

1. A Solidarity Fund Committee (hereafter called "the SFC") is established. It will comprise a number of members between three (3) and seven (7).
2. All members must be on the Board of the APEEE, with the cessation of Board functions implying the immediate end of the SFC mandate.
3. The APEEE Board shall appoint one member of the SFC as the Chairperson and one as Treasurer. SFC members are appointed for of a year, an appointment made by the APEEE Board on its first meeting after having been elected by the APEEE General Assembly. Members of the SFC may be re-appointed.
4. All members will sign a confidentiality disclosure and data protection agreement (as will any members of staff of the APEEE who handle data concerning any applications and transfer of funds),and are prohibited from disclosing any personal data to non-SFC members.
5. Members of the SFC will declare any potential conflict of interest before or during the handling of a financial assistance request.
6. The SFC will report to the Board and provide minutes and accounts (with the exception of personal data or other identifying information on recipients of support).
7. The SFC will meet on the invitation of the Chairman, provided that applications have been made. Proxies are allowed. Written procedures may be launched to decide on an application.
8. The SFC will not issue guarantees or loans. Voluntary reimbursements may however take place.

### **Article 3.**

1. The SF budget shall be submitted to the General Assembly within the APEEE's annual budget.
2. The funds available for the SF budget shall include those voted in the APEEE budget and income generated through other activities.

### **Article 4.**

1. The SFC shall decide on applications for financial assistance for specific activities outlined in article 8 up to a maximum of 80%. The SFC takes into consideration the family situation, available income, the importance of the expenditure from a school perspective and any other relevant special circumstances. Only one assistance request per individual beneficiary may normally be granted per school year. In a family of siblings, each child counts as an individual beneficiary.
2. The SFC shall not award funding exceeding the total amount available in its budget. It shall establish objective criteria for the acceptance of applications, and for percentage of the admissible costs to be covered, taking account of the funds available.

### **Article 5. Majority decisions**

Decisions within the SFC are taken by an absolute majority of its members, who may only vote in favour or against an application. In case of a split vote, where votes in favour and against granting an application are equal, the decision is referred to the APEEE Board for decision, after due anonymization of personal data.

## **Article 6. Application procedure**

1. Applications must be submitted to a dedicated electronic mailbox, using the form provided by the SFC. All applicants must provide the reasons for applying, including supporting documents, in order to receive financial assistance from the Social Fund.

2. Confidentiality regarding the applicant will be guaranteed by the SCF and the APEEE in relation to any parties outside the SFC and the APEEE staff in charge of payments. Applicants will be deemed to have waived their right to confidentiality with respect to SFC members and the afore-mentioned APEEE staff.

3. The SFC will take the final decision, taking into account all the information available to it. It may request further information and supporting documents.

4. Applications should normally be submitted at the beginning of the school year, and in any event in good time before funds are required.

6. Retroactive financing is not allowed (except in **duly justified circumstances**).

7. Applications shall be stored electronically and shall be accessible only by SFC members.

## **Article 7. Financial Assistance**

1. Financial assistance may be provided in cases of clear and objective financial difficulty, having regard to the applicant's family income and number of dependent children.

2. The SFC must be satisfied that there are no other possible and reasonable sources of financial assistance available.

3. APEEE board members may not submit an application unless they resign from their position.

## **Article 8. Eligible costs**

1. The assistance may cover the following costs up to the maximal amount mentioned in article 4.1:

1. Obligatory equipment (e.g. BYOD, text-books)
- 2.. School trips without a budget for solidarity funding
3. Extracurricular educational activities: (e.g.: Eurosport, MUN, MEC, Olympiade, etc).
4. Other costs of schooling in EEB

2. The assistance shall not cover the cost of school transport, canteen, cafeteria or after-school activities. Requests for such assistance must be addressed to APEEE Service ASBL.

## **Article 9 False declarations**

Wilfully false declarations or omissions will lead to a rejection of the application. If the false declaration or omission is discovered after disbursement of the financial assistance, the money may be claimed back from the beneficiary. Authors of such wilful false declarations or omissions will be barred from applying for financial assistance from the SFC for a period of five years.

## **E. Reporting.**

### **Article 10.**

1. Summary minutes of SFC meetings are sent to the APEEE Board for information. The summary minutes shall not include any personal data which could lead to identify those requesting financial support.

2. The progress on fund activities shall be reported to the APEEE Board on a quarterly basis.

**F. Revision.**

Article 11.

The internal rules of the Social Fund may be revised at any time upon decision by the APEEE Board.

They shall be published on the APEEE website.

# ANNEX 3 DRAFT APPLICATION FORM

## REQUEST OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO THE APEEE SOLIDARITY FUND

**NAME of student/class/ section**

**NAME of applicant parent (if beneficiary is a student under 18 years of age)**

Family situation: married/registered partnership/single parent/other (please specify)

Professional situation:

EU official (grade):

EU contractual agent (function group):

EU temporary agent (grade):

Other EU agent (please specify):

NATO/Eurocontrol agent:

Member of an EU Member State Permanent Representation:

Other professional activity (please specify):

Unemployed:

Other (please specify):

Second parent:

Professional situation

Monthly net **household** income, including family allowance and alimony (in EUR):

Monthly rent or mortgage payment (in EUR):

Health situation (to the extent that it affects work income or, substantially, household expenditure - in this case, please provide details):

Applying for one of the following costs (put a cross before the chosen option):

- School fees**
- Obligatory equipment (e.g. Bring Your Own Device)**
- Obligatory school trips**

**Extracurricular educational activities (e.g. Eurosport, Olympiade, etc)**

**(please specify):**

**Other costs (please specify):**

Reason for application:

Total cost of the activity for which assistance is requested:

Amount requested:

**Please provide supporting documents and additional information in support of your application, such as pay slips of the parents or other household members if applicable, supporting documents for rent (rental lease and extract from bank transfers for the last 3 months), mortgage loan and household composition document (“attestation de composition de ménage”).**

Supporting documents: please indicate which supporting documents you are attaching to this request.

The undersigned certifies that all information contained in this request is correct and corresponds to the truth.

The undersigned accepts that the personal information provided herein will be used for the purposes of assessing the demand, subject to applicable confidentiality and data protection rules.

The undersigned accepts that financial assistance granted on the basis of false declarations will be claimed back.

*Signature of the parent(s) (if the beneficiary is a pupil below 18 years of age):*

*Signature of the applicant (if over 18 years of age):*

*Date:*