



Guidelines for Awarding Grants from the Mental Health Fund of the Student Union at Graz University of Technology

As the student representative body at Graz University of Technology, we are deeply committed to supporting our fellow students in every way possible during their studies. This includes helping students who would like to seek therapy but cannot afford it. For this reason, we have established this Mental Health Fund, through which we aim to provide financial and emotional support to students in particular need who are struggling with their mental health.

We ask applicants to understand that the funds in the Mental Health Fund are limited and represent a voluntary contribution from the HTU Graz. The decision-making body consists of administrative staff and the representative of the Department of Social Policy within the Student Union at Graz University of Technology.

Decision dated: March 18, 2026

§ 1 General Requirements

- (1) A prerequisite for receiving funding from the HTU Graz Mental Health Fund is that the applicant
 - a. is enrolled in a degree program at Graz University of Technology,
 - b. is in need of social assistance as defined in the guidelines under § 2,
 - c. is not receiving free psychotherapy or clinical psychological treatment from any other provider, and
 - d. submits an invoice for the five sessions attended after the grant has been awarded. This applies to therapy sessions attended up to one year prior to or up to six months after the grant was approved.
- (2) The applicant must prove that they are enrolled at Graz University of Technology by submitting a certificate of enrollment for the semester in which the funding was applied for.
- (3) The applicant must ensure that the application is fully completed and that all information provided in the application is clearly and verifiably supported by the relevant documentation.
- (4) There is no legal entitlement to financial support from HTU Graz.





§ 2 Financial Need

- (1) Social need is deemed to exist if one of the following benefits is received and can be appropriately documented:
 - a. Student grant (Studienbeihilfe)
 - b. Housing allowance (state or municipality)
 - c. Prescription fee exemption
 - d. Support from the social fund of the Federal Student Union (ÖH) or Graz University of Technology (TU Graz) in the past year.
- (2) If none of these benefits can be verified, it is also possible to demonstrate financial need based on income, in accordance with §3 of these guidelines.

§ 3 Proof of financial need based on income

- (1) Social need based on income, as defined by these guidelines, exists if the student's monthly income (over the last 6 months prior to the application) falls below the at-risk-of-poverty threshold specified in paragraph 2 and the monthly income exceeds necessary monthly expenses by less than 10%.
- (2) The at-risk-of-poverty threshold is set at 80% of the amount determined by Statistics Austria for the previous year. This takes into account that most students do not reach the official at-risk-of-poverty threshold with their income. The official threshold is calculated for individuals in private households. However, many students live in shared apartments or student dormitories, where living costs are at least 20% lower than for people living alone.
- (3) To prove financial need based on income, the student must clearly state in the application their total income for the past 6 months as well as the sum of all monthly expenses. These must be documented by a bank statement in which income is clearly separated from expenses.
- (4) For total income, the source and proof must be submitted (e.g., money from parents via a written statement signed by the parents, wages via pay stubs, student aid via the notification from the scholarship office, etc.)
- (5) For all expenses exceeding 20% of monthly income, the invoice or legal basis must be submitted along with a brief explanation; this applies in particular to rent.
- (6) For students who are required to pay tuition fees, these must be reported as such (as an expense and, in the case of a refund, as income), as must all other study-related expenses exceeding 20% of monthly income, and they must be disregarded when assessing social need based on income.
- (7) Social need is deemed to exist for an applicant living in a shared household with their





parents or partner if the joint income falls below the at-risk-of-poverty thresholds specified in paragraph 2, multiplied by the following factor:

- a. shared household with a partner, without children: factor 1.5
 1. with 1 child: factor 1.8
 2. with 2 or more children: factor 2.1
- b. Shared household with one parent: 1.5
 1. With both parents: 1.8
 2. With one parent and siblings: 1.8
 3. With both parents and siblings: 2.1

(8) In the case of paragraph 8, proof of income and expenses as specified in paragraphs 2 through 5 must be provided for the entire household.

§ 4 Applications

- (1) Applications for funding from the HTU Graz Mental Health Fund may be submitted by students of Graz University of Technology to the Department of Social Policy at HTU Graz. Applications may only be submitted online via the HTU website. Incomplete applications will not be processed.
- (2) Applications for funding from the Mental Health Fund may be submitted from October 1 to January 30 and from March 1 to June 15 and are processed on an ongoing basis by the Award Committee. The latest version of the designated form must be used for the application. The form is available at the HTU Graz office and can be downloaded from the HTU Graz website (<https://www.htugraz.at>).
- (3) The following must be attached to the fully completed application:
 - a. Proof of enrollment for the current semester,
 - b. invoices or supporting documentation with a brief justification for expenses exceeding EUR 200.00 (for the applicant and for all persons living in the same household),
 - c. Registration forms for the applicant and, if applicable, all persons living in the same household, specifying the nature of the relationship with these persons. Supporting documents must be attached (for married couples: marriage certificate; for other couples, a jointly signed affidavit regarding the relationship; for parents and children: birth certificate)
 - d. For third-country nationals: a copy of the valid residence permit
 - e. A signed affidavit in which the applicant certifies the accuracy of all information provided in the application and the attached documents. (A false statement may result in criminal prosecution.)
 - f. Hand-signed consent to the processing of personal data (within the meaning of Articles 5–9 of the GDPR)
 - g. Proof of financial need, either through a notice of eligibility for the relevant benefit or, in the case of proof of financial need based on income:





- Proof of income for the applicant (including social benefits and support from family and friends) and, if applicable, proof of income for the partner or parents/children/siblings if living in the same household (including social benefits and support from family and friends),
- Continuous bank statements for the last six months (for the applicant and for all persons living in the same household)

§ 5 Procedure

- (1) Applications are processed by the Award Committee.
- (2) Members of the allocation committee are the Mental Health and Accessibility Officer, and staff members of the Social Services Department.
- (3) Members of the Awards Committee have access to the applicant's documents. HTU Graz does not disclose any student data to third parties.
- (4) The decision on an application is made by the Grant Committee in accordance with the "Guidelines for the Awarding of Grants from the Mental Health Fund of the Student Body at Graz University of Technology," as amended.
- (5) The Allocation Committee makes its decisions at its meetings, which take place at least three times per semester. The Allocation Committee's decision on applications is made by a simple majority of the valid votes cast. The committee has a quorum when three members of the Allocation Committee, including the Mental Health and Accessibility Officer, are present. In the event of the absence of the Mental Health and Accessibility Officer, the Allocation Committee has a quorum if the Officer has authorized another person (from among the administrative staff) in writing to act as their representative.
- (6) The Awards Committee determines its own ad hoc process for reviewing applications at each meeting.
- (7) The decision on an application is communicated to the applicant in the form of a written notice, which must be signed by the Social Policy Officer.
- (8) In the event of a positive decision, the grant in the corresponding amount (see § 6) will be transferred by the Department of Economic Affairs via bank transfer to the applicant's account (as listed in the application). The transfer can only be made to the applicant's account. The applicant is responsible for ensuring that the account details provided are correct.
- (9) The decision of the award committee is final.
 - a. If the award committee has grossly violated these guidelines in its decision-making, the applicant in question may file a complaint.
 - i. This appeal must refer to the specific provision of the guidelines that was violated and provide a detailed explanation of why exactly this provision was violated.
 - ii. Such an appeal may be filed in writing (via email or the online form) with the HTU Department of Social Policy within ten days of the decision being delivered.





- b. In the event of an appeal, the Awards Committee shall decide.
 - i. If the appeal is deemed valid, the Awards Committee must issue a new decision. The new decision must take the appeal into account.
 - ii. Unfounded appeals must be rejected as such.
 - iii. The decision on the appeal must be communicated to the appellant in writing, accompanied by a brief statement from the Awards Committee.
- (10) Any funding obtained on the basis of false or incomplete information or in any other unlawful manner must be repaid. Knowledge of any facts that arise after the funding has been awarded and that would result in the suspension or repayment of the funding must be reported to the Social Affairs Office of HTU Graz within two weeks. HTU Graz reserves the right to take legal action in the event of non-compliance.
- (11) Incomplete applications as defined in Sections 1 and 2 must be rejected immediately. In such cases, the subsequent submission of missing documents or information is not permitted.
- (12) Through the awarding of grants based on these guidelines, individual therapy sessions are funded at up to EUR 100 per session for a total of 5 sessions.
- (13) Funding is generally distributed on a “first come, first served” basis. However, if at the end of the fiscal year there are more applications than funds remaining to be allocated, applicants with greater financial need will be given priority.
- (14) Each student may apply for the grant only once per semester.
- (15) Students who received funding in the previous semester may not submit an application until January 1 or June 1, respectively, to ensure that funding is distributed to as many different students as possible.
- (16) If funding is approved for individual therapy, the student must select a psychotherapist from the list on the Social Services Department’s website within 4 weeks and schedule an initial consultation with them. **Otherwise, the funding approval will be reassigned.** After an introductory session, it is possible to change therapists. In that case, the 4-week period begins anew. If the initial consultation is offered free of charge by the psychotherapist, it will not be counted toward the subsidized therapy sessions.
- (17) For individual therapy, any remaining balance must be paid by the student. Payment through the social insurance provider does not preclude the grant awarded under these guidelines. The student must submit the paid invoice and provide bank account information so that the grant can be disbursed. A collective submission of all invoices is also possible.
- (18) In the case of individual therapy, the subsidized therapy sessions must be completed no later than 6 months after the grant is approved. Otherwise, the entitlement expires.
- (19) If your application is approved, the grant will be disbursed only after you submit the invoice(s) or fee statement(s). These invoices or fee statements do not all have to be submitted at the same time; it is possible to receive the grant in multiple disbursement installments. The payment dates are November 15, January 15, and





February 31 for the winter semester, and April 15, May 15, and June 30 for the summer semester.

§ 6 Amount of Funding

- (1) The total amount of funding for one year is determined by the Student Council at the beginning of the year.
- (2) If this amount is exhausted, the Grant Committee may request an increase in the total amount from the University Council. If this request is not made or the University Council rejects the Grant Committee's request, all subsequent applications must be rejected on these grounds.
- (3) If the total amount is not exhausted by the end of the year, the University Council shall decide on the allocation of the remaining funds.
- (4) Funding amounts to up to EUR 100.00 per session for five therapy sessions, for a total of EUR 500.00, provided that the funded amount per session does not exceed the actual cost of the session.

§ 7 Entry into Force and Publication

- (1) These guidelines shall enter into force on March 18, 2026.
- (2) These guidelines, together with brief information about funding from the Mental Health Fund and the corresponding form, shall be published on the HTU Graz website and thereby made known to all students at the University.

