

# Evolving the Capacity Development Fund

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Draft proposal 4

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## Introduction

During the 2012 International Conference the question was raised if the “Capacity Development Fund” (CDF) is bound to the “Chapters” in a way which excludes “SIG”.

The present document examines the underlying intention of the CDF and the convenient interpretation of “Chapter” in the light of the existing rules. It then proposes to

1. convert the “Capacity Development Fund” into a “Strengthening the Field Fund” addressed not only to Chapters but also to SIGs;
2. define the “Strengthening the Field” committee;
3. adapt the fund’s guidelines

The following section reviews the different documents and rules, with the important parts underlined (by the author).

## Background

### The original motion

The original motion (<http://systemdynamics.org/PolicyCouncil/2011/winter/papers/P1026.pdf>) :

“Formal Motion 103, Promoting Chapter Activities, \$20,000 in 2011 budget. (Revised 3-12-11)

In order to support the development of capacity in of System Dynamics in locations that are outside of the default conference locations the sum of \$20,000 will be reallocated in the 2011 Society budget from "Strategic Investment (one time)" to a new line item "Strengthening the Field (one time)."

Chapters in good standing are encouraged to develop and submit proposals to the VP Chapters.

“Development of capacity” as used here means new initiatives for workshops and/or training delivered by established system dynamics experts external to the proposing group. An ad hoc “Strengthening the Field Committee (SFC)” consisting of VP Meetings (ex officio chair), VP Finance and President will be responsible for substantive review and final approval of proposals and awarding grants with this money. The budgeted line item, if not fully expended in 2011, will carry over to 2012 and thereafter expire. Possible long-term budget and specific selection criteria will be considered after evaluating outcomes of this first-time experience. The same committee is therefore also charged with presenting a proposal for a long term strategy for such capacity and awareness development at the 2012 Winter meeting of the Policy Council for consideration as a firm proposal as part of the 2013 and later budgets. Note : To provide continuity for the SFC, the President (David Lane) will retain membership into 2012.”

## The “guidelines” from November 2011

The document “ISDS-ChapterDevelopmentFundGuidelines-111107” (<http://www.systemdynamics.org/ISDS-ChapterDevelopmentFundGuidelines-111107.pdf>) states that

“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 is the development of chapter’s capacity in system dynamics and not the development of demand for system dynamics or other purposes. In addition, the focus of the capacity development is to be on relatively advanced aspects of accepted system dynamics practice, not system dynamics fundamentals or topics outside the existing system dynamics domain.”

## BYLAW VII. CHAPTERS

With the approval of the Council, individual members may establish chapters for the furtherance of the objectives of the Society as stated in Article II. Specifically, the bylaws say “With the approval of the Policy Council, members may establish chapters and special interest groups for the furtherance of the objectives of the Society as stated in Bylaw II. Such chapters and special interest groups shall conduct their affairs in accordance with the Bylaws and [Policies](#) of the Society. The Policy Council may dissolve a chapter or special interest group for due cause in accordance with the procedures specified in the [Policies](#) of the Society.”

## POLICY 8. CHAPTERS

Section 1. Purpose.

Chapters of the Society are intended to further the dissemination and encourage the advancement of system dynamics. Chapters can do this by undertaking activities that are specific to the interests or convenience of a subset of all practitioners and researchers in system dynamics. A subset of all practitioners might be delineated on the basis of location (regional or national), language, culture, application area, research interest or software use.

## Analysis

The intention of the CDF is to strengthen the SD capacities of groups outside the regions of the default conference sites. There is no precise definition concerning the extension of

This excludes

- promotional activities and introductory training;
- activities to be carried out in the local medium of the default sites (Boston and Delft as well as sites inside a rough 2,000 km radius around them).

The Bylaw VII defines chapters as groups pursuing the furtherance of the objectives of the SDS, and Policy 8 includes application area and research interest as the founding themes for chapters. In this sense, “SIGs” may be regarded as one type of “Chapter”. This interpretation is further supported by the fact that there are no Bylaws or Policies concerning “SIGs”.

Some SIGS have an important share of their members in locations outside the “default conference site” regions (as indicated by the VP Chapters report for the Policy Council Summer Meeting

2012). These groups may have a well-founded interest in proposing a CDF activity, which would be compatible with the CDF's objectives.

Therefore I conclude that for the matters of the "capacity development", the term "Chapters" should be interpreted in accordance with the larger sense implied by the Bylaw and the Policy – thereby admitting "SIGs" to propose CDF activities.

## **Proposal**

In order to formalize this interpretation, I suggest to

1. convert the "Capacity Development Fund" into a "Strengthening the Field Fund" addressed not only to Chapters but also to SIGs and redefine the "Strengthening the Field" committee;
2. adapt the fund's guidelines

## **Converting the "Capacity Development Fund" into a "Strengthening the Field Fund" and redefining the Committee**

The objective of the "Strengthening the Field Fund" (StFF) is identical to the "Capacity Development Fund": to support the development of capacity of System Dynamics in locations or ways that are outside of the default conference locations.

The StFF is directed at Chapters and SIGs located outside the areas of the default conference sites of Boston and Delft, delimiting these areas at a radius of roughly 2000 km radius.

A proposal for an activity supported by the StFF has to describe how the SD capacity in the area of the activity will be increased or reinforced in persuasive manner. Such activities may be (but are not restricted to) those mentioned in the guidelines (below)

The SFF will be under the responsibility of a "Strengthening the Field Committee (StFC)", which consists of the VP Meetings (ex officio chair), VP Chapters, VP Member services (SIGs), and VP Finance.. The SFC will review and select proposals, award grants, review the reports coming back from granted activities and develop the StFF and its guidelines according to the experience accumulated. It is also charged with presenting a proposal for a long term strategy for such capacity and development at the 2013 summer policy council meeting.

## **The modified "guidelines"**

The following is a revision of the document "ISDS-ChapterDevelopmentFundGuidelines-111107" (<http://www.systemdynamics.org/ISDS-ChapterDevelopmentFundGuidelines-111107.pdf>) which enlarges the scope such as to include SIGs and gives orientation as for which kind of activities we wish to foster.

# **International System Dynamics Society**

## **Strengthening the Field Fund**

### **Application Guidelines**

Draft Revision 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 SD 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 SD 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 Strengthening 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 SD conference, the parts of the SD 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. Breakeven analysis
  - i. Number of participants necessary for the event to breakeven 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.

The Fund may, with the approval of the Policy Council, be funded in the annual Society budget, such as from investment income as was done for 2013. However, the Society should form a committee to develop a capital fund that can "endow" this fund so that it is not dependent on the annual Society operations income.