

How to Write a Public Purpose

FIN 119: Public Purposed Served (<https://www.asu.edu/aad/manuals/fin/fin119.html>)

Description of a Public Purpose: A public purpose is the **reason** taxpayers allow you to **spend** their **money**. It is not an explanation of what was purchased, and it is not a description of an event Think of it as a **2-3 sentence argument** for what you used this money for and how it benefited your department, club and the ASU community.

Words to use when writing a public purpose:

- Retention
- Education
- Security
- Civic engagement
- Community outreach
- Professional development
- Event planning
- Community building
- Participation Incentives
- Tokens of Appreciation
- Event Supplies

Ideal Phrases to Use:

- Encourage participation
- Promote civic engagement
- Community outreach
- Facilitate communication
- Show appreciation
- Support academic excellence
- Foster a bond between members
- Persistence to graduation
- Encourage participation

Include:

- What you purchased
- What the purchased item was used for (meeting, event, advertisement, etc.)
- How this will benefit your department or club
- How this item will benefit other students and the ASU community

Do NOT include:

- Only a list of goods purchased
- Only a description of the event
- Only a list of participant names
- The words
“gift”
“donation”
“prize”
“decoration”

Example 1

Payment for: conference travel

Unacceptable Public Purpose: To have a good time while learning about leadership

Acceptable Public Purpose: In order to promote professional development, one staff member and ten students attended the National Association of Leadership conference. Over the course of one weekend, the attendees learned the valuable leadership strategies that will help them run our organization more effectively. In addition, they attended interactive workshops that taught them how to plan campus-wide events that will promote leadership to all students on campus.

Example 2

Payment for: honorary plaque for a speaker

Unacceptable Public Purpose: This plaque is going to be gift for a speaker at our club meeting.

Acceptable Public purpose: Lady Gaga attended our weekly general meeting to inform our members about her recent efforts to go green and ways that our organization can improve our currents endeavors to increase sustainability. In order to show appreciation, our president presented Lady Gaga with an honorably plaque.

Example 3

Payment for: food for general meeting

Unacceptable Public Purpose: Since our meeting is at a dinner time and the members get hungry, we ordered pizza for our general meeting.

Acceptable Public Purpose: In order to promote attendance and attract new members, our organization ordered two pizzas. After eating, our members were significantly more enthused as we planned our spring event, Make a Difference, to promote civic engagement and fun.

Example 4

Payment for: Posters and flyers to advertise event

Unacceptable Public Purpose: These posters and flyers will raise awareness for our event.

Acceptable Public Purpose: These posters and flyers were posted around campus in order to raise awareness for our event, Spring Welcome Mixer, and promote student involvement on the ASU Tempe community. With ice-breakers and various fun activities, the event promoted comradery and fostered relationships between out of state students.

Example 5

Payment for: Copies

Unacceptable Public Purpose: These agendas were passed out at the meeting so members knew what was going on and could read the action items addressed during the meeting.

Acceptable Public Purpose: These agendas were distributed to all of the Board members in order to facilitate communication and organization derigs our general meeting. At this meeting, our organization planned our upcoming community outreach activity, Devils our Way, which will promote acceptance of diversity on campus.