

# Board Meeting Agenda

American Go Association

Meeting Date and Time: November 17, 2019, 7:00 pm EDT

## Video Conference Information

Google Meet: <https://meet.google.com/gvj-jzbw-oex>

## Past Board Meeting Minutes

Minutes are available on the AGA website, which you can also find by following this link:  
<https://www.usgo.org/board-minutes>

## Expected Attendees

Lisa Scott (Chair, Central Region Rep)  
Devin Frazee (Central Region Rep)  
Chris Kirschner (Western Region Rep)  
Chris Saenz (Western Region Rep)  
Gurujeet Khalsa (Eastern Region Rep)  
Dan Ritter (Eastern Region Rep)  
Paul Celmer (At-Large Rep)  
Andy Okun (President)  
Andrew Jackson (Executive VP)  
Samantha Fede (Secretary)

## Agenda

1. Call Meeting to Order
2. Approval of Minutes
3. President's Report
4. Goals and Long-Term Planning Discussion
5. Ongoing Business
  - a. Items from September 2019 Meeting
    - i. NJ Open Status
    - ii. Presentation on establishing conditions for AGA support of tournaments
      1. The proposal is available [below](#)

- iii. President's Proposal for alternative formats for Masters tournament
    - iv. Congress Financials: Creation of Scholarship Fund
      - 1. The proposal is available [below](#)
  - b. Search Updates
    - i. Update on Executive Search Committee (discussed in May 2019)
    - ii. Update on Treasurer Search (discussed in April 2019)
  - c. Ratings
    - i. Continue discussion from September meeting, time permitting
- 6. New Business
  - a. Proposal for Tour Operator Policy
- 7. Request for items for discussion during February 2020 Meeting
  - a. Preliminary discussion of any issues or questions the president should be aware of before compiling the report for the next meeting
    - i. Communications
    - ii. Congress
    - iii. Staff
    - iv. Teaching
  - b. Other items for February 2020 meeting
- 8. Discussion of date, time, and method of next meeting
- 9. Adjourn

# Proposal for the Creation of a Congress Scholarship Fund

The appendix has been removed from this version of the proposal

## Proposal Narrative

The US Go Congress has a complicated and variable financial structure, which has changed substantially since 2007. Since the introduction of clearly articulated stipends for professionals at the Lancaster congress in 2007, supporting our professionals has become a larger and larger portion of our congress costs, while simultaneously most other expenses have also become fixed. **In essence, this means that once the Congress's break-even point is met, the overwhelming percentage of additional revenue is surplus.** *For more information about the Financials of the US Go Congress, please see the appendix below.*

This has led to consistently large surpluses from Congresses, which are out of line with the membership's general feeling that the congress is too expensive. (For some examples of public discussion of the expense of the US Go Congress, see [USGO Congress Costs in 2020 on Life in 19x19](#), [First Time Going to US Go Congress on Reddit](#), and the [comments following David Bogie's August 7 post to Go \(Baduk, Weiqi\) Players on Facebook](#), responding to the referenced L19 discussion.) One way to address this issue is to put more of the funds contributed by those who can pay into subsidies for those who cannot.

This proposal argues for the creation of a Congress Scholarship fund, which would be maintained from the proceeds of the US Go Congress, with or without seed money from the AGA's coffers, or a portion of the Congress surplus that is allocated to the AGA each year. This fund may also be augmented by donations from the membership, as was discussed during the Future Congresses meeting at the 2019 US Go Congress. *For more information about Ideas to Facilitate US Go Congress Attendance by the Average Go Player, for whom price may be an overwhelming concern, see the appendix below.*

The goal would be to create categories of attendee – without recourse to means testing – who would qualify for a congress scholarship due to demographic circumstances such as age and student status. We should also consider (if and only if appropriate staffing can be secured to manage the fund) scholarships for those who have made significant contributions to the go community in the recent past (for example, the calendar year preceding the congress), through activities such as teaching, mentoring, tournament coordination, etc.

The AGF provides substantial support for youth, particularly strong youth, but also youth who have participated in specific tournaments and scholarship competitions. For this reason, the current iteration of this proposal is oriented towards helping adults for whom attendance at the US Go Congress would require a substantial portion of their income. This fund is intended to be

a living thing, however, so its focus could and should change over time, as the needs of the membership change.

Below, I have compiled some of the potential ways that the Scholarship Fund could be funded:

- 50% of the Congress surplus over \$10,000 (if agreed to by the Congress Directors for a given year). *For the specific proposal with regards to funding from the Congress surplus, please see the optional Addendum to the Memorandum of Agreement in the appendix below.* The 2020 USGC Directors have expressed their approval of the proposal.
- Funds donated for the purpose by Congress attendees when they register for the US Go Congress. *For the origin of this proposal, see Ideas to Facilitate US Go Congress Attendance by the Average Go Player in the appendix below.*
- Additional funds from the AGA portion of the Congress surplus.
- Additional funds from the AGA reserves.

Below, I have suggested some potential uses to which these funds can be put, although I think that some of funds should be reserved for new proposals that may appear each year.

- Supporting US Go Congress attendance by young adults age 18-26.
  - This age group is often considered as separate from older adults in Europe, and there is substantial support for considering the specific financial needs of this population, who have all come of age since the Great Recession (and whose lifetime earning potential is therefore greatly hindered – for more on this, see for example this [article from Bankrate](#) – look at the data, not the conclusion that you should use financial products – and [this one from CNBC](#)).
- Supporting US Go Congress attendance by students of all ages (with documentation of current enrollment, current idea card, etc.).
- Supporting teachers (K-12 and Go teachers), particularly if they bring student groups. This may coincide with the soon-to-be-implemented Congress Tour Group Policy that was composed by Chris Kirschner, Andy Okun, and Lisa Scott in 2016, with revisions in 2019. *For the Congress Tour Group Policy, presently still a draft, see the appendix below.*
- Supporting US Go Congress attendance by retired folks, or folks over a certain age (perhaps 70).
- Subsidizing housing costs at expensive venues.
- Subsidizing group ground transportation from designated locations.

# Formal Proposal

## Proposal

The AGA should create a Scholarship Fund for the US Go Congress, which would allow the AGA to make the event more appealing to folks in certain groups for whom price may be a limiting factor on their attending the US Go Congress.

## Funding of Scholarship

The Scholarship Fund should be primarily funded by allocating a portion of the Congress surplus each year. Additional funds can be solicited from AGA members and Congress attendees, who may make a donation under specified conditions and with specified recognition, which may change from time to time.

The AGA may seed the fund with a specified amount of money, most productively a sum in the range of \$10,000 to \$20,000.

## Distribution of Scholarship Funds

The Scholarship Funds should be distributed through a public process that primarily designates specific groups as foci for the distributions of funds in a given year. The Scholarship Funds may also be used to recognize the contributions of individual organizers, who may as a result receive public approbation and recognition for their service to go in North America.

## Management of Scholarship Distribution

A committee originally comprised of folks holding positions *ex officio* should be created to manage the distribution of the funds in the first two years. This committee should consist of the AGA President, the Congress Coordinator, the Chairperson of the Board, and the Congress Director(s). Following this initial phase, and particularly if the AGA desires to recognize specific individuals, a permanent committee should be set up.

# Proposal: Conditions for the AGA to Financially Support Local Tournaments

Committee: Chris Kirschner, Devin Frazee, Dan Ritter

## Proposal

That the AGA provide a limited amount of financial support for the development and maintenance of tournaments

## Goals for proposal:

1. Define requirements for any AGA Chapter to request tournament funding support from the AGA.
2. Formalize process for reviewing those requests
3. Specify a budget
4. Specify the basis on how that budget will be distributed
5. Increase attendance at tournaments measure with an increase in games played

## Process for Application

1. Application Submitted following Framework
  - a. [Framework](#) for form
  - b. [Requirements](#)
  - c. [Criteria for funding](#)
2. Coordinator Review
  - a. Coordinator to be chosen by AGA president.
    - i. Usually it is the person who developed the program.
    - ii. Devin Frazee is the likely person with Chris Kirchner/Andy Okun as the secondary option should there be a conflict of interest
  - b. Funding is decided by the coordinator
  - c. Budget of \$5,000 per year
    - i. \$2,000 currently earmarked for the New Jersey Open
3. Response
  - a. If approved
    - i. applicant is notified
    - ii. treasurer sends check prior to the event
  - b. If not approved:

- i. Coordinator gives feedback on why to either cure the issue
  - ii. or notify applicant that the AGA isn't able to fund them
- 4. Measuring success of program
  - a. Check how well we improved the areas of criteria for funding
  - b. Check % increase of membership in the area
  - c. Further Research enabled by this
    - i. Do prizes offered increase strong player participation?
    - ii. Does having strong players in a tournament attract weaker players?
  - d. Other

## Application Framework

### Areas of Inquiry

Name of organizer

And contact info

Name of TD

And contact info

Name of Chapter (Collected to ensure that they are a current AGA Chapter, also to know what area the tournament is in)

And contact info of chapter

History of tournament (We do not want to fund startups)

How long has it been done regularly

What is the attendance in the past

Anticipated budget (in specified format)

(We see this as an important indicator of organizational capability.)

Expected revenues

Expected expenses

Expected cost of prizes

Tournament structure

Rounds

Sections

Open, dan, sdk, ssk, 13x13, 9x9

Prizes

Time limits

State championship?

## Requirements

1. Active AGA Chapter
2. Previous tournament (maybe small stipend for first tournament)  
(Also taking into account change of chapter name/ leadership)
3. Tournament has to have entry fee (encourage community commitment and "buy-in")
4. Tournament has to be AGA rated

## Criteria for calculating the amount of support to be provided

1. Number of participants in prior years
2. Size of local population of AGA members in prior n years
3. Qualifier for other events (eg. state championship)
4. Chapter outreach efforts (measured by chapter rewards system)
5. Additional criteria optional



## Board Meeting Schedule for 2019-2020

<u>Date</u>	<u>Meeting</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Topics</u>	<u>Written Reports</u>	<u>This Year Supplemental Issues</u>
Sept. 8, 2019	Fall Meeting	Phone	Tournaments, Games, Rules, Ranks and Ratings	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Annual Tournament Calendar</li> <li>2. Report on Games and Tournaments Played</li> <li>3. Report on Pro Play</li> <li>4. Minutes of Prior Meeting</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pair Go Rules</li> <li>2. Pro System Restart</li> <li>3. Proposal on Major Tournaments and Rewards</li> <li>4. Proposal regarding New Jersey Open</li> </ol>
Nov. 17, 2019	Strategy "Retreat"	Phone	Long view of the organization	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strategy Memo</li> <li>2. Minutes of Prior Meeting</li> </ol>	
Feb. 23, 2020	Winter Meeting	Phone	Admin, Communications, Congress, Staff, Education	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Roster of Positions and Staff</li> <li>2. Reappointments List</li> <li>3. Minutes of Prior Meeting</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teacher Program</li> </ol>
May 17, 2020	Spring Meeting	Phone	Budget, Investments, International Affairs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Preliminary financials</li> <li>2. Investment report</li> <li>3. Budget</li> <li>4. Report of the VP of IR</li> <li>5. Minutes of Prior Meeting</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Proposed reworking of membership categories, as noticed in 2019 Chapter Assembly Meeting</li> </ol>
Aug. 7, 2020	Congress Meeting	YMCA of the Rockies, Estes Park, CO	Financial Position, Membership	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Annual Financial Report</li> <li>2. Annual Report of the organization</li> <li>3. Report on Membership</li> <li>4. Minutes of Prior Meeting</li> </ol>	

Aug. 8, 2020	Chapter Assembly Meeting	YMCA of the Rockies, Estes Park, CO	Congress, Chapter Relations, General Discussion	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Annual Financial Report</li><li>2. Annual Report of the organization</li><li>3. Chapter Membership and Rewards</li><li>4. Prior Year's Chapter Assembly Minutes</li></ol>	
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