

Annual Fund FAQs

Why an Annual Fund?

CIS is amongst the highest ranked International Schools in Asia.

Outstanding programmes, exceptional faculty and staff and the many extraordinary projects that make CIS the special place that it is, cannot be covered by tuition alone.

The goal of the Annual Fund has always been, in essence, to increase resources and to ensure that our students are receiving the state of the art education that they deserve, accelerating the pace of innovation at CIS in a way that would not be possible through incremental increases to tuition fees and the operating budget.

What are the benefits of the Annual Fund?

In addition to the initiatives it funds, the Annual Fund has created an ongoing process of information-sharing about the school's immediate priorities and future directions, a great channel for parents, staff, alumni and friends of CIS to contribute and make a difference in their student's life.

Who decides what the initiatives are?

Every year the school Leadership Team drafts a list of priorities, with input from the staff and Annual Fund co-chairs, and ultimately they share the final slate with the Board of Governors. This then becomes the basis for each year's Annual Fund effort.

The Community plays an important part too. At each Steering Committee meeting during the Annual Fund season, Annual Fund Year Heads pass on the input from their Advocate teams to the Co-Chairs and Advancement Office team.

How can parents find out more?

Every year a Giving Report is shared with all families, with a Spending Report summarising key initiatives. All reports to date may be found via the CIS Website or the MyCIS portal. Families are welcome to contact the Advancement Office and raise questions anytime throughout the year.

What's the right amount to give?

There is no right amount to give. Our goal is 100% participation and every family is encouraged to contribute annually. The collective impact of donations of any size and family involvement in the life of the school add the extra edge to the education of CIS students.

How are disbursements handled? Is there an audit?

Annual Fund disbursements are handled as for other areas of the school, with sign-off and approval processes resting with the respective Head of Primary/Secondary or Director of Finance, under the supervision of the Head of School. Annual Fund monies are kept separate from the operating budget and are reported on separately via this Report.

As with other areas of the school, the Board plays a strategic and oversight role, rather than an operational and management role. The Board reviews the list of Annual Fund initiatives prepared by the Leadership Team every year and periodically reviews the place of the Annual Fund in the overall development of the school. Additionally, KPMG conducts an annual audit of the Annual Fund that focuses on the mechanics of the Annual Fund and verifies that funds have been properly received, disbursed and recorded.

How do community members apply for funds, make suggestions, or give feedback?

The only portions of the Annual Fund open for application are the Professional Development funds for teachers and the Student Dream Fund for students. An application form must be completed and approved by the relevant Head of Primary/Secondary. Community members are encouraged to suggest initiatives or give other feedback to the Advocate, Advancement Office or school Leadership Teams. See the CIS Website or the MyCIS portal for relevant links.

Tell me more about specific initiatives

Typically a flagship initiative is selected — eg, Well-being in 2019 and 2020, Primary Playground Renovation in 2018 and Sports Field Returfing in 2017.

Among the basket of initiatives supported each year, a number were established in the early years of the Annual Fund and subsequently renewed because the Leadership Team has deemed them effective — for example, the Student Dream Fund, which encourages student initiative; Faculty Fellowships, which not only strengthens our recruitment strategy, but also refreshes and retains our very best teaching staff; or hiring Teaching Fellows/Interns, who play a role in Secondary similar to Teaching Assistants in Primary. (NB: the Annual Fund does not support permanent staff positions, which as a rule will always be funded out of the operating budget.)

Short-term, “jump-start” initiatives have included: the launch of the one-on-one laptop programme; pre-opening research and development costs for Hangzhou CIS; the introduction of Positive Education; and the piloting of Connected Learning. The Annual Fund has also supported small-scale renovations such as upgrades to the old Cafeteria, Primary bathroom renovations, returfing of the Sports Field, a new filtration system for the Swimming Pool, and improvements to the Primary playgrounds.



How do I know which initiatives benefit my child?

Everything the Annual Fund does is for the good of our students and to ensure that they benefit from all the possibilities the Annual Fund can provide.

Some initiatives may have a more focused impact, but overall the Annual Fund impacts the broad culture of the school, like the Visible Well-being programme and the Sustainability fund.

What happens if the school doesn't reach its fundraising target, or an initiative costs less than projected?

If the school does not reach its fundraising target, expenditures will be reduced accordingly, with every endeavour made to prioritise the flagship initiative. There are instances where initiatives may cost more or less than budgeted; should there be a surplus, as required by audit procedures, funds will be rolled over and spent within the same sub-funding area.

In the event that initiatives cannot be carried out, which was the case in 2020 with many Faculty Fellowships and Fellows-in-Residence, the expectation is that, as above, the funds would be rolled over with the same or similar initiatives re-scheduled at a future date.