



Swimming Saves Lives Foundation

Strategic Plan

A. Overview

In 1998, USMS formed its charitable giving arm that is now branded as the Swimming Saves Lives Foundation. SSL exists within the USMS structure. SSL has a Board of Trustees that reports to the USMS Board of Directors. SSL is the repository of charitable contributions to USMS as allowed under its 501(c)(3) nonprofit status. SSL is funded through contributions from its members and supporters. SSL has incorporated the former USMS Endowment Fund into its program.

B. Purpose statement

The purpose of the USMS Swimming Saves Lives Foundation is to **solicit charitable contributions** and **provide grants** that encourage adults to swim and to provide grants for medical and research initiatives and a broad range of other programs that reinforce the benefit of swimming. The contributions may be for immediate distribution or may be placed in a permanent endowment in support of an ongoing project at the direction of the donor.

C. Recent achievements and ongoing programs

To date the SSL Foundation (and its predecessor, the USMS endowment) has invested over \$165,000 in a variety of initiatives that include:

Provided support to adult learn-to-swim programs primarily conducted by volunteer USMS clubs;

Educated physicians on the direct and positive benefits of swimming programs for their patients in need of rehabilitation and treatment for a variety of conditions;

Funded a study on the positive effects of swimming on Parkinson's disease;

Provided funding to purchase an Endless Pool for the Counsilman Center for the Study of the Science of Swimming at Indiana University, for use in conducting controlled studies of the effect of temperature;

D. Resource opportunities

- 100% giving from BOD, staff and Foundation Trustee members;
- Increased member contributions during registration;
- Directly solicit contributions and planned giving from members with means;
- Encourage LMSCs, zones and clubs to incorporate information about SSL on their websites and in their written materials and event programs and to provide matching grants for their members interested in donating to SSL;
- Seek donors who wish to make a restricted contribution through an endowment;

- Develop a SSL 1-Mile Challenge: a participation event that may be licensed to a LMSC, club or chapter with the intent that members will swim 1 mile in a pool or open water and make and/or solicit contributions to SSL;
- Grants from other organizations (i.e., community foundations, sponsor partners, etc.);
- Pilot fee-for-service opportunities, such as licensing and patents that result from an SSL grant;
- Continue to seek out programmatic opportunities that are consistent with the goals and objectives of SSL and which engage the USMS membership.

E. Structure

- The SSL Foundation is a committee of the USMS Board of Directors which is governed for its designated purposes by a Board of Trustees (BOT) appointed by the USMS President with the advice and consent of the USMS BOD;
- Foundation Trustee members shall serve for a term of four years with no limit on the number of terms. They shall serve at the pleasure of the President and may be removed and replaced without cause at any time;
- The SSL Foundation BOT shall consist of a chair, vice chair and no fewer than six additional trustee members, to provide leadership in (a) contributing and soliciting major contributions to SSL; (b) facilitating contact with high level individual, corporation, and foundation contacts; (c) uncovering and shepherding grant requests; and (d) making grant recommendations to the BOD; and (e) continuing to seek out programmatic opportunities that further the objectives of SSL. Preference for appointment to the SSL BOT shall be given to those who have contributed or solicited \$25,000 to SSL;
- The SSL BOT shall meet face to face at least once annually and conduct other business via conference calls and electronic communication at such times and places as it may determine;
- The USMS BOD shall approve grant requests recommended by the SSL Foundation unless a 75% majority of the BOD vote to disallow the recommendation;
- The SSL Foundation, acting by and through its BOT, will involve the USMS BOD members in relationship-building activities and uncovering grant opportunities and such other activities that will promote the goals and objectives of SSL;
- The USMS executive director will be responsible for managing SSL day-to-day operations. USMS staff will be responsible for assisting the SSL BOT in the following day-to-day activities: (a) resource generation; (b)

donor recognition; (c) soliciting grants; (d) reviewing grants; (e) recommending grants to the SSL BOT; (f) managing the grant process; (g) providing financial reports, accountability and audit control; (h) and promoting grant successes;

- An advisory group of regional SSL volunteers will be relied upon to encourage grant submissions, champion and liaison LMSC support, propose programmatic opportunities and assist with contributions.

F. Grant-Making

- SSL will not consider grant requests that are directed at individuals or groups that are not eligible for membership in USMS;
- All grant requests shall include implementation capability, program implementation costs, and the ability to demonstrate that more adults will experience the benefits of swimming because of the grant approval;
- Grant requests that have a matching contribution will be entitled to priority consideration;
- The grant application cycle shall open in the spring and close in the summer; however, the SSL BOT may consider “out of cycle” funding requests when, in its discretion, such an action is reasonable and necessary.
- The SSL BOT shall review all grants and make recommendations for grant awards to the USMS Board of Directors at the annual meeting or at such other times as may be warranted by an “out of cycle” project.

G. SSL Supported Grant Programs

- Grant preference is for programs that can demonstrate more adults will be provided the opportunity to benefit from swimming as a direct result of the SSL grant support;
- The SSL BOT shall give special priority consideration to Adult Learn to Swim programs that are sponsored and staffed by USMS clubs or other USMS affiliated groups. The maximum grant award for such a program will be up to \$5,000 annually subject to the annually budgeted amount available to fund such programs;
- Grants will be considered for medical and research initiatives and other programmatic opportunities that reinforce the benefit of swimming;
- Grant recipients will be required to submit a grant report in a form approved by the SSL BOT and which shall be intended to demonstrate the impact of the program;
- Grant recipients may apply for a grant renewal.

Initial approval by the Board of Directors prior to 2011.