

SAF Board of Directors Minutes

Friday, January 11th, 2019

Meeting Time: 17:00 - 19:00

Meeting Facilitator: Devon McKellar

Meeting Minute Taker: Jordan Beaulieu

Members in attendance:

Mark Underwood (SAF)
Oliva Champagne (SAF)
Ariel Dabora (SAF)
Rebecca Black (SAF)
Marlene (CSU Council)
Ashvin Ramasamay (CU Community)
Raphael Yeung (ECA)
Arrien Weeks (GSA)
Emma Campbell (ASFA)
Calvin Clarke (Student-at-Large)
Mariana Moreno Caro (FASA)
Niall Heath (Student-at-Large)

Members absent:

Vanessa Macri (SC)
Akira De Carlos (CSU Exec)
Mackenzie Murray (CASA)

1. Call to order and land acknowledgement

2. Review & approval of previous meeting minutes

Motion to approve the October minutes (tabled during Nov meeting):

- Moved by: Arrien
- Seconded by: Ashvin
- *Motion passed*

Motion to approve the November minutes:

- Moved by: Emma
- Seconded by: Calvin
- *Motion passed*

3. Review & adoption of agenda

Motion to adopt the agenda:

- Moved by: Emma
- Seconded by: Raph
- *Motion passed*

4. SAF general updates

Mark

- New additional to the team—welcome Rebecca!
- Doing new outreach campaign for the sustainability research awards this semester
- Awards for undergrad and grad students doing work in sustainability, as well as the Eric St Pierre project funding
- Asking for a contribution from the Fine Arts Faculty—their response still uncertain
- Would love help in the outreach effort for the research awards, if you know anyone doing work in sustainability right now they could be eligible for an award. Class announcements, talking with profs, tabling, all helpful
- Will have handouts for classes and graphics for emails, newsletters, etc
- Met for strategic directions planning in December, able to organize priorities and divvy them up amongst the team. Using an app called Monday to help manage. Individual planning sessions happening in January
- Batiment 7 has sent in needs assessment, they did a thorough job, most needs are for more funding. They also need help with marketing and outreach, things that seem like they could link to student learning
- Outreach to specific faculties for potential credit courses, will also provide scholarships or project funding through SAF
- Mark's excited for the year to come!

Olivia

- Key progress indicators: KPIs show how project funding contribute to SAF's longterm goals
- Offers comparative look at how things have changed since last year
- \$25 engagement per student last year, average project funding \$2,500
- Shows addressed sustainability issues and sustainability themes more broadly
- Social Justice and Education and Research most frequent themes
- Annual funding gap last year was 50% (between amounts requested and allocated in overall project funding budget)
- This year (Q1 and Q2 or June to November), giving out more money on average per project and therefore engaging more students (working with a smaller sample size for this data as the year is ongoing)
- Social justice is most common theme again this year, few projects in food systems or community
- Would be good to diversify the issues addressed by this year's projects as they're more narrow than last year so far
- Nothing allocated to health & well-being so far this year, hopefully more applications will come in
- Not giving out much to food systems as well
- Perhaps the SAF is less visible to these areas? Is it clear what sustainability means to students working in these areas?

- SAF also has a lot of reoccurring projects that means the same themes/issues receive consistent attention. Perhaps to the detriment of other themes/issues?
- These KPIs are new and looking at what the info tells us about SAF's engagement is next steps
- The funding gap for summer and fall semesters this year is high because a lot of funding is being requested; seems like requested amounts are generally increasing
- New metrics for Q1 and Q2 — average 379 attendance for events on campus, average 100 attendance for events off campus; on average off-campus events take more people to organize and less people attend
- Mission statement could be more central on the website to emphasize SAF's mandate to potential applicants
- Idea to put together an awareness and outreach campaign to educate students on what sustainability is and what SAF can offer students; could use data from these metrics and KPIs to see where this work could be directed (could be a goal of the marketing and outreach committee)
- Possibility of discussing a cap for funding requests?
- Clearly define the subfields SAF acknowledges as the field of sustainability becomes more board and diverse

Ariel & Finance Committee

- Updated all financial recording from the summer and fall semesters
- Budget to actual from start of fiscal year to now puts SAF \$6k over-budget, coming mostly from the undergrads fees
- (All finance records are available view in the finance folder in Slack)
- Have issued about \$10k less project funding by this point of the year than budgeted (timing variance)
- Under-budget for marketing so far so there's funds to be put toward something there
- In summer SAF spends more than it collects but makes up for that in the Fall when about 50% of the yearly fee levy is collected
- Looks like SAF will end the year with about \$5k more than budgeted
- Finance committee will look into all variances above \$100 in the budget to see where the difference comes from

Sustainability Investment Memo

- Since the fund started a surplus has accrued from yearly roll-over, about \$100k total of accumulated surplus now
- Finance committee looking to utilize that money more efficiently. It's in a Desjardins saving account at the moment to gather interest (about \$1,000 per year)
- The new idea is to take 35% of accumulated surplus to invest in a responsible way to earn 8-10 times more interest (3-5% return) with the goal of investing longterm (5-10 year horizon)
- What will the money be used for as it grows? For a huge project down the road?
- Haven't yet done a full dive into potential uses. The idea would be to make a reoccurring investment to make sure the money is continually reinvested responsibly.

- Any suggestions / feedback are useful at this stage
- Looked at 5 different investment options, looking at the time frame of the investment being 5-10 years, looking for stable investments (low to medium risk), looking at how liquid the capital could be (liquidity is how easily the invested money can be reclaimed), liquidity of investment is directly related to the risk
- Comfortable with investing half of the money in Canadian bonds (less liquid, more stable), a bond or mutual fund can be an investment in many different companies, so SAF will research the top ten companies to make sure they are compatible with SAF's values
- Looking at Desjardins' responsible investing portfolio; meeting with them to find out more about this due diligence
- Looking to invest the majority through Desjardins and another smaller part with CoPower, hoping to meet with them before the end of the month
- Timeline is to have a formalized go-forward plan by February's board meeting
- Looking for feedback today (voting to occur in the future)
- Not comfortable with government bonds—looking at CoPower bonds
- GICs invests in / empowers financial institutions which is why the lean is toward the responsible portfolio by Desjardins
- Since this is a long-term decision please ask lots of questions and do some research to make sure these are actions you're comfortable with. Not everyone is a finance major but fortunately some are and they can answer your Qs!
- SAF's been around for ten years, could we look at approximately how long people stay with the institution, and base the decision on this timeline? So decisions aren't being many for many people too far down the road
- Idea to create an endowment fund with the money invested—taking surplus and put it toward a specific purpose. Universities tend to create scholarships with this type of approach, could work for SAF too. Money could also be put toward a community project. But the whole purpose is to let the surplus grow so that it can be used later
- To sum up: in 10 years the money could be used to fund scholarships for the next ten years

Document Digitization

- Going paperless for 2019! Minimizing all uses of paper, and digitizing records from previous years
- Documents are scanned and then automatically placed into the Google Drive, which will hopefully be the standard practice forever
- Also looking into a way to not have to print contacts etc, and sign everything that needs signing digitally

5. Project funding allocations (8)

~\$46,000 remaining in allocations budget

Project 1: PV Optimization (revision)

- Requesting \$500
- PhD student received \$15,000 from Eric St Pierre award for this project, in addition to another scholarship, looking into best places to put solar panels on Concordia, asking for additional funds (\$500) to top up her budget
- Doing this technical work for a very low price (about \$20/hour compared to standard rates of about \$50/hour)
- SPC allocated full funding of \$500 to PV Optimization

Project 2: Poverty Panel

- Requesting \$500
- SPC liked application, felt it touched on an important topic
- Subtracted water and AV costs from the project's request since these can be acquired for free on campus
- SPC allocated partial funding of \$300 to Poverty Panel

Project 3: From the Source

- Requesting \$1,000
- Course in geography, they take field trips to nearby Indigenous communities to learn and bring in elders and leaders to lecture
- Great success rate previously
- The person who applied is technically not a student but it was decided to allow the application as many students will be impacted by the project
- SPC allocated full funding of \$1,000 to From the Source

Project 4: Take Heed

- Requesting \$2,580
- Art project to make a suit to be used as a tool to encourage/enable people to connect emotionally (meant as an aid to soothe anxiety in communicating/connecting with and understanding others)
- Based in computer science / computation arts
- Putting on a demonstration after the project is made, including guest speakers to talk about the ideas the project raises
- Doing exhibitions at 2 or 3 galleries where participants can try on the suit and they can collect that research
- Took recommended changes into account; provided SAF with a clear picture of where their materials would be sourced from, for the most part they are legit electronic manufacturers / distributors based in North America
- What is its most useful potential in the long-term? Could it be used by departments or students here? What is the "use"fulness of art?
- How could data continue to be collected and applied long-term?

- Team is made up of women and non-gender conforming students, which is uncommon in STEM projects, and the research is being put toward health and wellbeing
- SPC recommended full funding
- With funding, push the agenda of sustainable sourcing and encourage the project to think about long-term applications for their art object and research

Motion to allocate full funding of \$2,580 to Take Heed, including board's suggestions:

- Moved by: Arrien
- Seconded by: Emma
- *Motion passed*

Project 5: JDSP

- Requesting \$3,000
- Big weekend conference to be hosted at Concordia this year
- A new initiative is started every year in conjunction with the conference
- Concordians involved want to show other schools that the conference can be hosted more sustainably as their initiative
- Funding would be for a meal provided by the Hive for 275 attendees (~\$12/person), this includes water, presumably bottled water
- SPC recommends denying funding
- Conference itself is focused on pole sci and AI, its possible attendees won't notice the sustainability initiative
- It happens tomorrow so SAF won't get any recognition
- Project didn't seem concerned about not getting funding; SAF's contribution isn't necessary for them to go forward
- They could be more clear about how the conference's content is connect to sustainability; how is the conference and the discipline actually dealing with sustainability issues

Motion to deny funding to JDSP:

- Moved by: Emma
- Seconded by: Niall
- *Motion passed*

Project 6: Queer Gatherings

- Requesting \$4,850
- An opportunity for high school students in the Montreal area to have a safe space for prom
- They have workshops to accompany, on subjects ranging from safe space partying to consent to make-up tutorials to dress making for all bodies, and more
- Not really related to Concordia; SPC recommends to deny funding because the impact at Concordia is too low

- SAF offered them the opportunity to host it at Concordia but they said it might be too intimidating for high school students
- Wanted SAF to fund a big honorarium for archiving
- Application is more in-depth but not significantly different than last time (still not enough Concordia involvement)
- Midnight Kitchen from McGill is doing their food
- Sounds like a great project but not a good fit with SAF
- Possible to fund a small amount / just one aspect of the project?
- Comparing the negative impact of frosh to the positive impact of something like this
- Could the surplus money be used to fund things that are external from Concordia?
- Batiment 7 project is that test to see how we can work with projects off campus (tho the impact in that case that is still primarily on Concordia students)
- Could allocate funding for aspects we think Concordia students will be working on (archiving), can't guarantee Concordia students will be working on it as project wouldn't agree to this stipulation
- Could a version of this initiative replace the chaotic nightmare commonly known as frosh?

Motion to reluctantly denying funding to Queer Gatherings:

- Moved by: Ashvin
- Seconded by: Marlene
- *Motion passed*

Project 7: RB4SJ - Black History Month

- Requesting \$5,000
- Rap Battles back at it again for Black History Month, and the 50th anniversary of the occupation of the 7th floor
- Good track record in general and with SAF, project has a large impact, longterm financial securing potentially coming in soon from Head & Hands, possibly SSHRC for related research, they're also looking to become a non-profit
- Organizers are all Concordians and their main outreach is based at Concordia
- Used to do it at Reggies before they outgrew that venue, now hosted off-campus
- SAF funds cover pretty much the same things every time, artist honorariums, venues, etc
- SPC recommends full funding

Motion to allocate full funding of \$5,000 to Rap Battle for Black History Month:

- Moved by: Marlene
- Seconded by: Calvin
- *Motion passed*

Project 8: Environmental Racism Book Launch

- Requesting \$5,950

- Asking SAF to fund honorariums for opening ceremony, speakers, interpreters, and translators
- Case study of environmental racism in Nova Scotia, panel will focus on relating the case in Nova Scotia to experiences in Montreal
- Still haven't found a venue and the event is coming up in February
- SPC recommends \$3,000
- Concordians will be main target of outreach
- Funded by many other Concordia-based organizations
- If SAF funds the aspects we think are essential then the Concordia community can step in to fill in the blanks (CUTV)

Motion to allocate partial funding of \$3,000 to ER Book Launch

- Moved by: Ashvin
- Seconded by: Raph
- *Motion passed*

Funded \$10,580 worth of great project today—\$35,420 remaining in allocations budget

6. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 19h00