

SAF Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, April 27th, 2021

[ONLINE]

Meeting Time: 14:00—16:00

Meeting Facilitator: Abraham Dawidziak Kiermaier

Meeting Minute Taker: Alexia McKindsey

Members in attendance:

Sebastián Di Poi (SAF)

Oliva Champagne (SAF)

Courtney Witter (SAF)

Rebecca Black (SAF)

Dileep Ravi Kodira (CASA/JSMB)

Katherine Parthimos (Community)

Amy Nguyen (CSU)

Rebecca Tittler (Faculty)

Kelley Boileau (ECA)

Brett Cox (SC)

Cassandra Lamontagne (Staff)

Jessica Di Bartolomeo (Student-at-large)

Roy Singer-Shay (Student-at-large)

Members absent:

Anaïs Gagnon (CSU Council)

Maddi Berger (FASA)

1. Call to Order & Land Acknowledgement

Motion to call to order the April 27th, 2021 meeting:

- Moved by: Rebecca Tittler
- Seconded by: Dileep Kodira
- *Motion passed*; all approved.

a. Sign up for next meeting

- Roy delivers the land acknowledgement.
- Roy: Has been thinking about the importance of this practice, why we do it and what more we can do to solidify acknowledging the land and the indigenous people it belongs to.
 - Feels that it's great that we've shifted our system of reading a land acknowledgement that's been prepared to this form of acknowledging the land in our meetings.
- Roy: Did some reading and came across someone pointing out the language involved in 'unceded territory' and how that term implies that there are ceded territories and that treaty land was given up when, in actuality, that land wasn't given up and was instead taken away from Indigenous populations. The conclusion came to was that we use the term 'unceded' and that we should instead say 'land that was stolen'.
 - Abraham: This is an important question and a good place to start a discussion.
- Roy: What more can we do going forward to implement new land acknowledgement practices? Looked into Concordia's Indigenous Directions Action Plan and didn't find much in there related to land—it is more inclined towards the creation and development of programs and studies. Is there any involvement on campus or within the university in landback, in opposing the development projects in Kanésatake or other victims such as the of land grab universities in northern New York?
- Abraham: It is interesting to look at the language we use and what systems are upheld within these contexts.
- Rebecca Tittler: Understands that the concern of private property and ownership is a largely settler concept.
 - Example: Can I own that tree or another entity? Or can I coexist with it and support it?
 - Our rights to existing space and land is one thing—land and other living organisms as property seems like more of a colonialist attitude.
- Abraham: How does this affect how projects are considered in SAF? What does sustainability have to do with all of this?

- Roy: Was thinking of this in terms of the mind.heart.mouth project we are going to review this month and that it occurs on land that Concordia resides on. Should we support projects that seek to use land owned by the University? What is the implication of this?
- Seb: Interesting connection—so many levels to talk about with managing that land and how that can guide us to speaking about what land is to us as humans. [Seb] considers those who interact with the land in a great way when thinking about this, and how perhaps people could be open to any interaction with the land if done in a horizontal power structure. The intergenerational aspect of knowledge sharing and pedagogy is dynamic in all kinds of land interaction.
- [Olivia shared a poem she came across.](#)
 - Abraham: Would like to wrap up the meeting with this.
- Abraham: There seems to be a desire to know how Indigenous people interact with land, as well as Concordia’s land and sustainability. Would anyone like to do research around this for next meeting?
 - Cassandra volunteers to deliver the land acknowledgement for next meeting.
- Cassandra: Considering Roy’s previous question—the Land as our Teacher project we funded last month is worth talking about in terms of how they challenge perspectives of land and sustainability.
 - Can speak to giving access to land at Concordia as a point of information and questions of Indigenous land ownership next meeting.

2. [Review and Approval of Minutes](#)

a. [March 2021 BoD Meeting Minutes](#)

Motion to approve the March 26th, 2021 meeting minutes:

- **Moved by:** Roy
- **Seconded by:** Brett
 - In favour: Dileep, Katherine, Amy, Rebecca Tittler, Kelley, Brett, Jessica, Roy
 - Against: None

- Abstain: Cassandra
- *Motion passed*; all approved.

3. Review and Adoption of Agenda

Motion to adopt the April 27th, 2021 agenda:

- Moved by: Cassandra
- Seconded by: Dileep
 - In favour: Dileep, Katherine, Amy, Rebecca Tittler, Kelley, Brett, Cassandra, Jessica, Roy
 - Against: None
 - Abstain: None
- *Motion passed*; all approved.

4. SAF General Updates

a. SAF Sustainability Definition

- Seb: Concordia has their own definition of sustainability and while there is some overlap between us and Concordia's approach to sustainability, we as a staff have been looking more closely into defining what sustainability means to the SAF and how we can then use it as a tool when we consider our projects.
- This definition takes from Concordia's definition and provides a starting point and suggestion for what our definition can look like.
- Rebecca Black suggested that the last paragraph be put at the front of our definition.
 - Roy: Enjoys the last paragraph. The first paragraphs are what you would expect in a statement like this, but the last paragraph is great and feels like it ties everything together.
- Cassandra: Wondering about the word 'balance' and what it seeks to represent in this statement?
 - Seb: Good question—[Seb] feels that there are aspects in the way we engage with our environment, society and economy that work together but that could also be detrimental to the other. Could there be a more thorough way to get this point across?

- Cassandra: It's ironic because 'balance' is one of the terms that comes from Concordia's definition and [Cassandra] always thought it was a tricky word to use in this context. On one hand, it seems like 'balance' it could imply equality when there may not be, but it could also imply something flourishing. Could we use a more positive word in its place? 'Nourishing' or something along those lines.
- Dileep: Wondering if 'balance' means focusing on the social and environmental aspects as much as aspects dealing with profit or economy? Is it more about one or the other?
 - Rebecca Black: Doesn't have a direct answer to that, but feels we don't prioritize economy on an equal level. Maybe we could use a word like 'harmonize'? It may not imply giving equal weight to something as much as 'balance'.
 - Dileep: You need to have some amount of profit to sustain sustainable and environmental work and projects. To what point do we consider that?
- Rebecca Tittler points out misplaced commas in last statement:
 - 'To be sustainable in our decision and activities is to take a holistic, long-term perspective based on shared vision and responsibility that works to dismantle systems of oppression and balance the interconnected nature of our environment, society, and economy.'
- Q (Brett): Supports points brought forward so far, as well as agrees with Rebecca and Roy's points about the last paragraph. Is it possible to come back and comment on this definition in the future?
 - A (Seb): There is no specific end date set to this—felt it was important for us to address this as a staff and the next logical engagement was to then speak with the Board.
- Brett: Would like for this statement to be accompanied with a breakdown describing exactly what sustainability means for folks that may be new sustainability—it can be a lot to take in.
 - Thinking about how Concordia put together their land acknowledgement—they put together a resource breaking down every line of the land acknowledgement and why each sentence was chosen. Could we do something similar between our organization and other organizations also involved in sustainability? This could be a good learning opportunity for those wanting to get involved in sustainable practices!

- Kelley: In contrast with the UN definition—the older one is more general and applies to any society but this newer one talks about sustainability more concretely. For a lot of people it can be powerful to see a new addition like that. An added contrasting component could be a great extra thing to include.
- Seb: Good idea—especially when considering the context of who could be potentially engaging with this definition. This could help project leaders in strengthen their request for funding. What does this mean in a practical sense? How can we use this as an organization to evaluate projects?
- Rebecca Tittler: Suggests to add ‘supporting’ along with ‘promotes equitable economic systems’.
- Jessica: The systems of oppression point is important, as well as the variety of themes brought forward in this definitions. [Jessica] suggests to add which definitions of sustainability we are trying to align with and clarify our position on some of the debates currently happening.

b. Anaïs departure

- Anaïs hasn’t officially resigned but has said she will not be able to return to any more meetings for the rest of her mandate.
- Her departure doesn’t change quorum—we will still need 6 members for quorum.

6. Committee Updates

a. HR

- i. [HR Meeting Minutes](#)
- ii. [ED Term Limit Extension *Vote*](#)
 1. [Rationale](#)
- iii. [BoD two-year mandate discussion](#)

- *Seb leaves meeting while discussion and vote is being conducted.*

- Katherine presents the Executive Director Term Limit Extension Proposal in regards to Seb's term limit as Executive Director with the SAF.
- Right now the ED position has a two-year term limit with the potential extension to a third year for a three-year maximum term.
- The HR committee has been working on this proposal and wanted to bring it to the Board. By the end of this discussion we can choose to table the decision or motion to have it approved it at the next AGM.
- Katherine overviews the rationale:
 - This term limit was initially set in place as a more frequent turnover would allow for new people to take up the position, gain experience and learn from the role. However, HR has been in discussion about this and is in support of an extension for this staff position because there's no term limit for any other staff positions—it doesn't make sense that this position would have a limit when none of the other positions do.
 - We do appreciate this position as a learning opportunity, so that's why we haven't decided to terminate the limit altogether but we figured that the current term limit is too quick of a turnover—there is a great learning curve at the start of the position and once the ED has become familiarized with the position, they would have to start looking for a replacement. A five-year term would be a more steady approach to this and ensure the development and growth of the organization.
- Rebecca Black: This extension would be good for the overall wellbeing of the organization as well—having a new person take up this position every two years is difficult for any organization trying to grow. The person would have to leave just as they've learnt the job and have to immediately look for another job once they've gotten used to the position after the first year.
- Olivia: The term is not actually three years. The governance handbook states that it's a two-year term and if the ED wants to continue the position for a third year they have to write a proposal describing why and what they would like to specifically work on. This would then have to be approved by HR and brought to the Board for a vote.

- Katherine: This proposal is suggesting a five-year term with the possibility of extending to a sixth and final year under extenuating circumstances only.
- Olivia: Six years feels like a long term.
 - Roy: Agrees but at the same time recognizes the importance of a ED that has been with the organization for a while—gives them the ability to make sure strategic directions continue to be followed. Would proposing a four-year term with the possibility extending to a fifth year be better?
 - Rebecca Tittler: Enjoys the four-year with a potential five year idea. A six-year term feels like a big jump from that.
- Q (Rebecca Tittler): Will there be any financial implications with this term extension? If there aren't, [Rebecca] would be in favour of a four-year term with a one-year extension.
 - A (Olivia): Yes. Depending on the performance evaluations, each position gets a a 2 - 6% increase in salary.
 - Rebecca Tittler: What would that look like in numbers? It would be good to see a budget to know what we're voting on.
 - Olivia: Not sure if we have the capacity to do a five-year projected budget—in [Olivia's] experience 6% isn't too much.
- Kelley: Our main target as an organization is not to give learning experience through our positions—agrees four years with a potential additional year is ideal.
- Rebecca Black: A two-year term is too little time to properly benefit the organization.
- Roy: If we are putting term limits on this one position, maybe we should consider term limits on the other positions as well? If the argument for these term limits is to provide learning opportunities, it would make sense to have term limits on all the other positions so they offer just as equal learning opportunities. Maybe when one position's term is up, we can offer the potential to transition to another position within the SAF so that they could learn within another capacity?
 - Katherine: This is interesting and a discussion the HR committee should have.

- Katherine: Does the majority of us feel that a four-year term with the possibility of a fifth additional year seem more realistic? Would the fifth additional year only occur in extenuating circumstances or be more lenient like how the two-year term is described now?
- Courtney: Looked up annual salary for this position and calculated the 2 - 6% projection increase.
 - 2% increase: ~\$800
 - 6% increase: ~\$2,500
 - This wouldn't be a huge increase and [Courtney] could make a more official budget on this.
 - Q (Rebecca Tittler): Would this be up to \$2,500 a year? Would we be able to see a budget that states what this position looks like over the years financially and in comparison to what it looks like with the current two-year term?
 - A (Courtney): That is valid—[Courtney] will crunch those numbers and have a more official and accurate representation of what this could look like.
- Kelley: Feels that the fifth year extension shouldn't be in extenuating circumstances only, but it shouldn't get in the way of someone taking up the position if we find someone who is qualified and who can come into the position early.
- Roy: Would also like to look at the finances more closely and wouldn't feel comfortable making a decision without looking at that.

Motion to table this discussion to the next Board meeting:

- Moved by: Roy
- Seconded by: Rebecca Tittler
 - In favour: Dileep, Katherine, Amy, Rebecca Tittler, Kelley, Brett, Cassandra, Jessica, Roy
 - Against: None
 - Abstain: None
- *Motion passed*; all approved.

b. SPC

- i. Discussion around project request amount limit guidelines

- SPC had a discussion around project request limits given we've been getting larger funding requests over the years.
- We previously had guidelines around this on our website that we took down.
- We since found more appropriate language to frame these limits and to help guide people—this is something the SPC is working on and if there is a decision needed we will bring it to the Board.

c. Fincomm

i. [Fincomm Meeting Minutes](#)

ii. [CSJ Update](#)

- The Canada Summer Jobs came through and we received \$8,000—this will help hire interns and new part-time positions.

iii. [2021/22 Budgeting Process](#)

- Started process of looking at next year's budget—mainly making assumptions and determining who we would like to reach out to.
- Looked at our timeline and the draft budget will be brought to the committee first and then to the Board by May 15 before the May Board meeting.

d. Marketing/Outreach

i. [Design Intern!](#)

- The Canada Summer Jobs applications came through and we will be looking for a design intern—share within your network!

ii. Latest takeover by LFV

- Le Frigo Vert did a small takeover of the Instagram—it received less engagement than De Souche had but it was still fun!

7. Project Funding Allocation (4)

a. **General Project Funding Budget : \$34,709.54**

- \$6,400 being requested this month.

b. **Living Labs Project Funding Budget: \$19,683**

- \$23,708 is being requested this month.
- We have one more month before the fiscal year turnover—our funding budget will reset in June.

Project 1: JMSBG

- Requesting \$1,400.
- SPC denied funding.
- Presented by Rebecca Tittler.
- *Dileep has a conflict of interest as he is part of JMSBG—Dileep will abstain from participating in discussion and voting.*
- The SPC thought the project was well written and well proposed.
- The project's initial case challenge workshop plan was cancelled due to the pandemic.

- The issues the SPC found with the project's funding request was in the items they requested SAF to fund—\$400 in gifts to faculty judges for the competition and \$1,000 in prize money to the winning team (split between 4-5 students).
- The decision of the SPC was to deny funding for this project because the faculty member judges are salaried and part of their salary is service given to the community—they should be doing things like this for free as it is included in their salary.
 - In relation to the \$1,000 in prize money—there is a precedent for SAF not funding student awards.
- There was attempts at communication with the applicant about these issues and we received no response.
- The SPC would reconsider funding if the applicants were to reapply with different items.
- Rebecca Tittler: This kind of case competition is a great opportunity for business students all around and it allows for partnership, networking opportunities and for students to engage with outward communities.

Project 2: Film Across Canada

- Requesting \$5,000.
- SPC recommends to re-evaluate with more information.
- Presented by Brett.
- This project consists of a family traveling from British-Columbia to Quebec to attend Concordia in the Fall where they will be making films across their journey touching on discussion of ethical travel, permaculture, economic developments in relation to tourism and Indigenous communities and more.
- If regulations permit, they hope to have an in-person discussion event and potentially a workshop at Concordia in the Fall.
- The SPC had concerns around this project's connections with Concordia—if they aren't able to have an in-person event, how strong is the connection? Beyond that, their budget didn't line up—they are requested \$5,000, but their budget states only \$4,000 is being requested from SAF.

- The SPC asked them to reapply with a contingency plan in case they do not have the event and proof of place, as well as to clarify the different assets they are looking to buy.
- Clarifications Olivia received:
 - The project provided a budget breakdown—they are requesting \$5,000.
 - The project provided details of the pieces of equipment they would like to get, but did not provide an estimate of their cost.
 - They aren't able to rent the equipment because of the time limit put involved in rentals.
 - They proposed a new idea stating that they can act as a mobile film crew that can film various other projects on campus and lend out their equipment if they are unable to host an in-person event.
 - The events will be replaced with a livestream on the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema webpage.
 - There are three people involved in the team—some are students.
 - Rebecca Tittler: One of the applicants is a student of mine—[Rebecca] can abstain from voting, but has no implication in this project.
 - No one on the Board expresses concerns with Rebecca participating in voting or discussion.
- Rebecca Tittler: Enjoys this project but finds some concerns with the project, most of which has to do with the project's connection to Concordia. The way they've addressed our concerns makes it seem like they are proposing a whole new project. [Rebecca] would like to see more than their email responses to see exactly how they would like to develop this project.
 - Olivia: Agrees. There are also other groups on campus that already does what they are proposing—loaning out equipment free of charge (CUTV, for example).
- Roy: Seems like the budget they sent to Olivia is somewhat different than what we saw. In the SPC meeting discussion surrounding the tripod and drone—it states they will be keeping those assets and requests that SAF pay for the full cost of those items. In this new budget it looks like they want us to pay for a portion of those items. Those aren't assets that SAF would get to keep afterwards and it also seems like they are proposing a different project based on Olivia's clarifications.

- Olivia: In their email it did state that they hope to purchase these items secondhand and they've purchase one piece of equipment already—the Sony Alpha lens is on the new budget.
- Olivia: If people really like this project, we could just approve partial funding for their honorariums not fund the equipment?
- Dileep: Thinks the concept of the project is great and checked their links on YouTube—great quality work and their solidarity with Indigenous people is a great thing.
- Q (Dileep): In terms of their honorarium breakdown—is it \$500 split for each of the four participants?
 - A (Olivia): Yes.
 - Dileep: Having a rationale for that \$500 breakdown could help as well.
- Roy: Likes the project but has concern about their connection to and engagement with Concordia students. We don't know to what extent we will have in-person events on campus in the Fall.
- Cassandra: The SPC wanted the project to indicate some sort of backup plan should they not be able to hold an in-person event. [Cassandra] thinks the project is interesting but is wary about its cross-country implication making it not as relevant to the Concordia community but if it is properly released and promoted to our community it is valid.
- Olivia: Maybe the reason people feel more ambivalent about this project is that the amount they are requesting is quite different from film projects we typically receive—most projects of this kind request funding for \$2,000 and under and this project is requesting a significantly higher amount.
 - Q (Cassandra): Is this due to their equipment costs? Are they aware that the equipment would have to be given to the SAF or be donated?
 - A (Olivia: Yes, it is due to equipment costs and no, [Olivia] doesn't think they are aware of that.
- Abraham: Sounds like a lot of clarification needs to be made before coming to a decision on this project.

- Rebecca Tittler: Doesn't like their contingency plan to bring equipment rentals to campus especially in light Olivia pointing out that there are other projects doing this kind of work already.
- Q [Rebecca Tittler]: Olivia, did you reach out to them with ideas on how to engage with the community if we are still online in the Fall?
 - A (Olivia): After the feedback period is complete, [Olivia] is not supposed to change a project's application unless the Board requests it.
- Rebecca Tittler: Still feels stuck and unsure about whether or not this project would be fostering a culture of sustainability on campus.

Motion to have Film Across Canada reapply with a more thorough contingency plan, more information on how they will engage with Concordia students, a breakdown of their honoraria, as well as letting them know about CUTV and other campus equipment rental organizations doing similar work to their proposed contingency plan

- **Moved by:** Brett
- **Seconded by:** Dileep
 - In favour: Dileep, Katherine, Amy, Rebecca Tittler, Kelley, Brett, Cassandra, Jessica
 - Against: None
 - Abstain: Roy
- **Motion passed;** all approved.

Project 3: mind.heart.mouth

- Requesting \$17,000.
- SPC recommends partial funding.
- Presented by Cassandra.
- This project applied in February and we delayed our decision in funding this project until we could get more information about the space availability and whether or not the project has permission to do it on campus.

- This project consists of a community food garden at Loyola campus—themes of agriculture, reducing food waste, community building, creating an environment where community members can learn about food, making urban agriculture accessible to the community and fighting food insecurity by teaching participants how to grow their own food.
- This project began as a master’s student project under SAF’s Eric St. Pierre award.
- Volunteers for this project will come from the Concordia community as well as community senior members.
- The project had a successful first year, COVID-19 happened in their second year and for their third year, they plan to continue with garden, expand the garden’s physical space at Loyola, onboard paid volunteers and potentially host workshops.
- Based on an updated budget in the Board folder, their total budget is ~\$29,000 to operate from May to November.
 - \$9,000 will be allocated to honoraria.
 - The one coordinator honorarium is at a rate of \$17.50/h, whereas the student jobs are at a rate of \$16/h.
- The project received permission to have senior and student volunteers, as well as secured the facilities to expand the garden and move forward.
- Cassandra: We are no longer forced to give this project partial funding if we don’t want to—the actual project request is for \$17,000.
 - The SPC recommended partial funding only because we thought we only had enough funding for a partial funding allocation, not because we found problems with the project.
 - The only concern we found was that there was a previous Board recommendation that the project seek external funding sources as the project gives back heavily to the external community—SAF would be giving this project 60% of their funding. All of their other funding sources are from Concordia.
- Roy: Enjoys this project and understandings concern about them asking SAF for the majority of their funding. If we did approve full funding for this project, we would only have \$2,000 in Living Lab project funding left. With that being said, if we receive another Living Lab project

application next month, it may not be a big deal to push that project back to the next month when our fiscal year renews.

- Rebecca Tittler: Understands Roy’s point. We could ask this project to look for external funding elsewhere, but [Rebecca] feels less concerned about external funding than previously felt.
 - [Rebecca] is thinking about the project and what it offers to Concordia—it is very visible on Loyola campus. This project could offer a good educational venture and have the potential to incorporate into curriculum and diversity on campus.
 - There will be a big effort to get people back on campus and to build up in-person presences—a project like this at this time might help boost the community feeling at Loyola.
- *Rebecca Tittler may have involvement in the volunteer jobs selection—will abstain in voting.*
 - Cassandra: This project will be working with various professors.
- Cassandra: Feels the honorarium amount requested is reasonable. The project leader is doing her PhD and the student volunteers could be doing their Undergraduate degree. [Cassandra] thinks it is reasonable to allocate full funding for this project especially considering we are getting close to the end of the fiscal year.
- Amy: Enjoys this project—feels like it tackles both food and curriculum in their plan.
- *Katherine leaves meeting: 3:52*

Motion to allocate full funding of \$17,000 to mind.heart.mouth.

- **Moved by:** Roy
- **Seconded by:** Amy
 - In favour: Dileep, Amy, Kelley, Brett, Cassandra, Jessica, Roy
 - Against: None
 - Abstain: Rebecca
- **Motion passed;** all approved.

Project 4: RB4SJ

- Requesting a budgetary revision within the same amount allocated.
- SPC approved funding.
- Presented by Jessica.
- The revision request for this project was received in January.
- This project is no longer doing a workshop and instead will organizing a mural in support of Black Lives and Sheffield Matthews and Nicholas Gibbs who was shot by police officers in NDG.
- The project will be filming a video to showcase the mural process.
- \$5,000 has already been allocated to this project and the SPC reiterated that we enjoyed the overall project and work being done.
- The SPC approved the project's revision and asked that they make the film available to the Concordia community
 - Olivia: Asked that they integrate the mural into the Concordia Shuffle and the project confirmed that they thought this was a good idea.
- Q (Rebecca Tittler): Where is the mural? We will need the location to make it a part of the Shuffle.
 - A (Olivia): The project didn't respond with the address yet—will need to confirm.

Funded \$0 worth of general projects this month— \$34,709.54 remaining in the allocations budget.

Funded \$17,000 worth of Living Labs projects this month—\$2,683 remaining in the allocations budget.

8. Community Announcements & Ancillary Items

- i. [How to be an Excellent Board Member](#)

- Workshop coming up!
- Noticed that there are very different practices across Boards and Concordia organizations often struggle to get more Board members—if we offer more training on this subject, we may be able to inspire more people to join Boards.
- If you know anyone who would be interested—give this a share!

ii. [2021/21 Sustainability Research Awards Ceremony](#) - April 27th, 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM

- Hosting this today in one hour—all the committee members are invited to attend.
- We will be sharing all the recipients over social media and on our website.

iii. [Olivia's poem](#)

- A poem in relation to our land acknowledgement conversation earlier.

iv. [Invitation to Brave Space poem](#)

8. [Adjournment](#)

Motion to adjourn the April 27th, 2021 meeting.

- **Moved by:** Dileep
- **Seconded by:** Roy
- *Meeting adjourned at 4:03 pm.*