

SAF Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Monday, June 28th, 2021

[ONLINE]

Meeting Time: 13:30—15:30

Meeting Facilitator: Abraham Dawidziak Kiermaier

Meeting Minute Taker: Alexia McKindsey

Members in attendance:

Sebastián Di Poi (SAF)

Oliva Champagne (SAF)

Rebecca Black (SAF)

Dileep Ravi Kodira (CASA/JSMB)

Faye Sun (CSU)

Cassandra Lamontagne (Staff)

Jaime Malone (Intern)

Katherine Parthimos (Intern)

Members absent:

Jessica Di Bartolomeo (Student-at-large)

Brett Cox (SC)

Courtney Witter (SAF)

Kelley Boileau (ECA)

Rebecca Tittler (Faculty)

Maddi Berger (FASA)

Roy Singer-Shay (Student-at-large)

1. Call to Order & Land Acknowledgement

Quorum has not been met—motions for this meeting will occur online following this meeting.

- Short introductions and welcome to Faye, SAF's new Board member!
- Cassandra: Given the difficult times and events taking place over the past few weeks in Canada, [Cassandra] felt it would be appropriate to mention the developments surrounding the residential schooling system in today's acknowledgement. [Cassandra] won't go into detail about the topic, but just wanted to preface the acknowledgement with this warning.
- Cassandra delivers the land acknowledgement with attention brought to the ongoing developments surrounding the residential schooling system.
- Cassandra collected action points, resources and recommendations of what we can do to support and assist Indigenous communities at this time:
 - Read the [94 Calls to action](#) from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report.
 - Contact [your local MP](#) and [ask them to implement the TRC 94 calls to action](#).

- Contact your local MP and ask them to implement the [Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Metis children, youth and families](#).
- Read Concordia's [Indigenous Directions Action Plan](#) and reflect on how you can support or enact it through your work at Concordia.
- Amplify indigenous voices, including through social media.
 - Follow #indigenous, #indigenousrights, and other channels.
 - When re-sharing posts about residential schools, always share the National Indian Residential School Crisis Line 1-866-925-4419.
- Donate (if you can)
 - [Support survivors of the schools or to your local Indigenous community](#).
 - [List of Kahnawake community organizations](#).
- Canada Day
 - Call for the cancellation of Canada Day celebrations in favour of a day of grieving and reflection.
 - Wear orange on Canada Day.
 - Join events taking place on Canada Day, while respecting [green zone safety measures](#).
 - [Every Child Matters convoy from Kanehsatake to Montreal](#).
 - [Montreal gathering and march](#).
 - [Hip-hop for Iskwew event \(with proceeds going to the Iskwew Project, from the Native Women's Shelter of Montreal\)](#).
- Here are some things to help support survivors of the movement and engage in reconciliation.
- Abraham: What does the SAF have to do with residential schools?
 - Olivia: Shared '[Taking Children, Taking Land](#)', '[Truth and Reconciliation offers 94 'calls to action'](#)' and '[Location of Mass Graves of Residential School Children Revealed: Independent Tribunal Established](#)'
 - The second link points out that they have been trying to get people to looking into this since issue since 2008. There are gravesites that have been identified in Montreal on McGill's campus.
- Abraham: This is not an easy thing to talk about and position ourselves in relation to. [Abraham] feels as though there is a growing sense of awareness in our communities but questions revolving around 'Why should I care?' Or 'How does this impact us?' still comes up. These are not questions we can answer as a small group together, but they are questions to consider. How do we have these heartbreaking conversations?

- Faye: Is there something the SAF can do in response to this? Perhaps provide more services to Indigenous students? Not just focusing on how we feel about the issue but instead what we can do about it?
 - Olivia: We do have an internal project budget line that can be used for something like this.
- Faye: The BIPOC committee of the CSU wants to hire an Indigenous director position—one concern we have in doing that is how we can go about providing a safe space at the CSU for the person who would be doing that job. Would the SAF be willing to contribute to helping pay for the salary and to help establish some kind of support system for them? Financing the position is one concern of ours. The CSU has a history of being hostile to BIPOC in general and it is therefore really important for us to have that kind of representation, especially within institutions like the CSU and the SAF. [Faye] would personally like to see more initiative and aid from the administrative level at Concordia, given Concordia is a colonialist institution.
 - Cassandra: Have you reached out to the Otsenhákta Student Centre? They engage in creating safe spaces for Indigenous students at Concordia would have resources for that.
 - Faye: Yes, the CSU we will contact them!
 - Seb: The SAF can offer capacity and support to the committee and hiring process. Agrees with Olivia for the budget line—it is an open and timely budget line in terms of the perimeters it can be used for. This would be a good time to support a position like this.
- Abraham: It is good that we are identifying resources that can be put towards reparations, instead of just engaging in acknowledgments.
- Seb: This could spark conversations around the composition of our Board. We all have different experiences within the university, but we could also institutionalize more positions within the SAF that would be more reflective of people’s understanding and experiences, as well as ties to Indigenous knowledge. As a white settler, [Seb] feels lacking in the deep historical understanding of the systemic issues that have been passed down through generations. Perhaps someone within Indigenous Directions can offer aid in having these conversations.
- Rebecca Black: Seems like Faye is saying that they wouldn’t want to have someone come into the CSU position until the CSU can make sure that position would be a good experience for that person. Inviting someone into that space right now could come across as tokenization.

- Faye: That is the main concern. The position was created last year as a reaction to the social developments happening at the time. There wasn't any logistics planned to make the position welcoming and safe. [Faye] wonders if the SAF or Concordia in general would have resources to aid in that or to work together to welcome BIPOC students, make them feel good about contributing and not be put on the spot or tokenized.

- *Roy enters meeting at 2:05 pm*

- Faye: The Indigenous director position would be separate from the council and other staff members. It would be an independent position.
 - Olivia: Is leaving the SAF and can't speak to ongoing collaborations, but this position does feel like it could be a living lab application as it would be an ongoing position that would need a support system built around it. Our internal project line is only about ~\$1,000 - \$2,000 and would typically be used for a more reparation style donation.
- Abraham: What are the actionable things we can do?
 - Rebecca Black: We can share a bit more on SAF's Instagram in the short-term.
 - Seb: We received a donation for the living labs funding program from the CSU. [Seb] is wondering if there can be a conversation around what the CSU position's financial needs are and perhaps potentially creating a cycle of donating that money back to support this position. This could manifest in the form of a living lab project, but seeing as it was an unexpected donation, maybe we could think about donating some of that money back to the CSU to support this position. If Faye would like, [Seb] can trickle that conversation back down to people at the SAF and our key stakeholders.
 - Faye: Thank you. [Faye] will forward this information to their team members and set up a meeting.
- Jaime: Feels it is important for SAF to recognize the issues stemming from residential schools. Action is better than words and funding this position within Concordia in order to create a place for Indigenous students to look to is really good.
- Dileep: Is glad that we are having a conversation surrounding the hiring of this position within the CSU. Is it possible to build a similar awareness through SAF in terms of supporting BIPOC and Indigenous students as well? Are we able to have some kind of promotional message on our Instagram that would invite these people to apply?

- Rebecca: We are planning a summer callout and that was one of the points that was requested by the SPC to include in it. We have funded some really incredible Indigenous educational and celebratory projects before who usually are yearly applicants.
- Olivia: We have been long time supporters of First Voices and Anti-Colonial Week. It's not so much that the info isn't there, it's that people are not looking for it.
- Roy: In regards to our conversation about this position for the CSU, would we want to have a position like this within the SAF as well? Perhaps this position could support someone who is able to advocate for deeper reconciliation? Although there is also the issue of tokenization.
 - Rebecca Black: The idea of potentially having a Board position like this was brought up amongst staff. We should be wary about tokenization. We have had Indigenous folk on the Board before who haven't explicitly stated so, but there was visible discomfort that arose in conversations and there is a possibility that this could happen again. It's not that we don't want to have a position like this, but we shouldn't seek out that representation if we're not ready to give the safety and support that it would need.
 - Roy: Understands. We do have projects put forward by Indigenous people and most of us discussing those projects are settlers. We lack perspective as a Board but we also don't want to turn to the one person who would take up that position for their opinion.
- Katherine: It is good that we are having a dialogue around this acknowledgement and are actually acting on it. Would like to see more discussion happen around this topic, more posting about it on SAF's social medias. Creating a dialogue around action points is really great and [Katherine] would like to continue to shift SAF's land acknowledgements in the coming meetings towards something more active.
- Abraham: Good to have more discussions surrounding working on creating a safe space and support structure for a position like this before onboarding someone.

a. Sign up for next meeting

2. Review and Approval of Minutes

Quorum has not been met—motion to approve the May 26th, 2021 meeting minutes will occur online.

3. Review and Adoption of Agenda

Quorum has not been met—motion to adopt the June 28th, 2021 agenda will occur online.

4. SAF General Updates

a. **Welcome to our new board member - Faye Sun - CSU Sustainability Coordinator**

- Welcome to Faye—Sustainability Coordinator at the CSU studying environmental science and in their last year of studies.
- Faye will be sitting on the HR committee.

b. **Welcome two new interns!**

i. Graphic Design - Katherine Parthimos

- Re-welcome to Katherine who will be shifting from being a Board member to the new Graphic Design intern position.
- Katherine will be supporting Rebecca, the marketing team and SAF's communications.
- Katherine will be designing graphics around campaigns, supporting projects and more!

ii. Project Admin - Jaime Malone

- Jaime will be the new Project Administration intern.
- Jaime will be supporting the Project Coordinator and Seb in developing mid-term and final reports for the Living Labs program and the next steps for Bâtiment 7 for the upcoming year.
- Jaime may also contribute support to the Project Coordinator transition as well.

c. SAF Sustainability Definition revisited

- We are seeking to develop a sustainability definition as an organization to use as a reference for our project applicants.
- Seb: How can we best and positively express the work we are trying to do within the SAF as well as address the issues society is also battling with? How do people feel about this definition so far?
- Katherine: Finds the definition is a bit difficult to follow (run-on sentences, terms mentioned are vague and could be more descriptive). There's a lot trying to be addressed in the first passage, but the second passage comes across well.

- Rebecca Black: Agrees and enjoyed the second and following paragraphs. What can we do with the first paragraph vs. the second paragraph? Do we need both of them? Are they complimentary?
- Faye: Is the first paragraph meant to be an introductory paragraph? Perhaps we can elaborate on:
 - Defining ‘Holistic, long term perspective’
 - What is ‘our shared vision’ and what do we mean by it?
 - What do we mean by ‘systems of oppression’ and ‘balance of our environment, society and economy’?—Not many people understand the balance between the environment, society and the economy.
- Seb: Good points about needing specificity. This process of creating a definition can tease out how SAF gets its vision across and the work our supported projects are doing. External stakeholders could find a long definition fatiguing—the suggestion of having an explanatory document could be a good thing to have alongside the definition. Depending on our capabilities, we could have a mouse-hover feature over specific words that would expand to their definitions in each passage. The first paragraph of the definition is meant to demonstrate more of a broad vision of what the SAF sees sustainability as.
- Seb: Enjoys the concepts surrounding ‘holistic, long term perspective’ and ‘dismantling systems of oppression’. It is important to recognize that this is what we at SAF and as a society are battling against.
 - Jaime: Agrees, but touching back on what Katherine said, we could take out ‘based on a shared mission and responsibility’ to make the definition easier to read.
 - Faye: We could put a period at the end of ‘holistic, long-term perspective’ and break that concept down a little more.
- Seb: Will edit these comments into the document as a suggestion—not erasing anything.
 - Could use phrasing such as: ‘we as an organization’ or ‘we in support of projects that do the following’.
 - Faye: Enjoys the active voice role.
- Seb: Understands that ‘shared vision and responsibility’ is vague. This is something shared internally as an organization between the staff, Board and projects. It also implies a shared vision in the system we’re a part of (Concordia), but we have to be wary that we can’t speak for everyone at Concordia.

- Faye: Suggests 'based on a diversity of values'.
- Seb: Suggests 'we and the projects we support work to...?'
- Seb: How do we feel about the last part?
 - Rebecca Black: Feels like that paragraph is trying to say what our mission already states. We already have a mission statement that is less wordy and poetic compared to this. Will this go under our mission statement? If so, maybe we need to make it so that these things speak to each other more and use the same kind of written language.
 - Seb: We want streamlined language around what we're saying. This definition can be considered as a kind of vision.
- Seb: We will spend more time on this conversation next meeting and [Seb] will try to clean the definition up based on the comments made in this meeting about a week before the next meeting to give the Board enough time to put their thoughts together around this.

d. Olivia leaving the SAF

- Hiring process is currently underway.

5. **Committee Updates**

a. HR/Governance

i. Callout for Board members to join HR/Governance

- Katherine is no longer a Board member and used to sit on the HR/Governance committee. We need a minimum of two Board members to make quorum for this committee and we currently only have one member.
- Would like to see if anyone would like to step into the committee temporarily. If anyone has capacity available, we could use support on this committee!

b. SPC

i. Project by expenses review

- Given the fiscal year turnover, the SPC reviewed the projects by expenses, looked at which projects are still active and reallocated budgets accordingly.

- The amounts for project funding have been topped up.

ii. Living Lab application postponed

1. [See document here](#)

- We will hopefully see this project next month.

c. **Marketing/Outreach**

i. Project callout

- Project callout will be out in a couple of days—share on your IG stories!

6. Project Funding Allocation (2)

a. **General Project Funding Budget: \$95,000**

- \$17,666 being requested this month.

b. **Living Labs Project Funding Budget: [amount missing]**

- \$0 is being requested this month.

Project 1: Films Across Canada

- Requesting \$17,166
- SPC recommends to deny funding.
- Presented by Cassandra.
- This project was submitted a few months ago and 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 Indigenous communities and more.
- The project would also like to shine a light on child care in young families, as well as creating educational films with First Nation communities.

- This project was originally rejected for not having a contingency plan for their in-person event planned—the Board requested that they come up with a plan for that.
 - Previous concern brought up also included that the project would reach a very limited number of students, their budget was unclear and there was a miscommunication surrounding the equipment bought using SAF funding would need to be returned to the SAF.
- The project’s total budget is now ~\$49,000 and their funding request has greatly increased—they requested \$5,000 in their prior application.
 - The project has shifted their budget away from equipment and is now asking funding for a director, actors, and collaborators.
 - Their planned workshops will take place digitally or in-person depending on the measures in place.
 - None of the funds requested from SAF would fund those workshops.
 - Workshops do not appear to be well-planned and they haven’t outlined a plan on how they will reach students.
- Olivia: The SPC was confused by the direction they took with this reapplication. The whole project is very hypothetical and they completely changed the direction of the project (they wanted us to initially fund the film). The changes in their reapplication did not address the feedback given surrounding our funding rejection in the first place. Are we funding this project’s film? Their vacation? Or the Concordia students who will engage with this project?
 - Olivia: Would be happy fund this project if they were engaging more with students, which is not what their application looks like right now.
- Seb: Really enjoys this project in terms of their goals. This project is not tailoring their objectives to SAF’s mission on engagement at Concordia. Not sure if there was any other updates from the project leaders after the SPC meeting?
 - Olivia: The SPC did not request to ask for any additional information.
- Dileep: Agrees with the SPC. It wasn’t clear in their application where the funding would go and how the film will be released post-filming.
- Olivia: It feels hypocritical that we are considering deny funding for this project given the discussion we had around reconciliation in terms of Indigenous communities in our meeting’s land acknowledgement. The project applications are, however, white settlers.

- Rebecca: We have funded projects to have other people make their films in the past and we often prefer to fund films that will do a screening of the film at Concordia.
 - Cassandra: Can't remember if this project included an event devoted to the screening? Student engagement was the only thing missing in this project as far as the SPC was concerned.
 - Seb: Mango Lemon Soda was given funding for actors and musicians who were students.
- Abraham: Key points mentioned so far around this project:
 - The main concern with this project has to do with a lack of student engagement.
 - It is important to consider reparations and participation in the documentation of Indigenous realities, as well as to consider that the people putting on this project are settlers.
 - If the project evolves to a stage where they can more actively engage students, SAF would be more open to funding it, but that is not part of the conversation at this moment.
- Olivia: It is in the Board's power to give partial funding, perhaps we could give funding towards offering stipends to the people they are interviewing in these Indigenous communities.
- Cassandra: There is a line in their budget to give honorariums to their collaborators to speak during virtual or in-person events about their experiences. The only problem is that we don't know what those events are. The SPC mentioned that a portion of this project is taking place at Oka—we might want to support that portion.
 - Dileep: Can we ask them to modify their application for the portion that it is unclear?
 - Cassandra: It is unclear how they will be paying their collaborators as they are already collaborating with them now. Do they have a backup fund in place?
 - Abraham: Perhaps a request for clarification needs to be initiated?
 - Seb: The project mentioned that they could pay for necessities with their savings and credit cards. They are committed to paying artists fairly and are prioritizing paying the collaborators that they'd meet with.
- *Olivia leaves meeting at 2:58 pm.*
- Abraham: Sounds like more info is required before a decision can be made on this project. Are we comfortable postponing this project to next month and requesting more information from them?

- Seb: Will relay all this information to Olivia in order to continue communication with the project. Not sure if it is worth it for us to ask them to rewrite an entire application in order for them to meet the points that we would be more willing to fund. When we asked the project for more information last time, they drastically changed their application and asked for three times the amount with little explanation.
- Rebecca Black: Goes to show they were maybe a bit underprepared the first time they applied and perhaps now as well. Their application was hard to read and understand.
- Seb: It is also important to look at their timeline. They should be in Nelson, B.C at the moment and on their way to Alberta. By August's meeting they will be back in Quebec. It wouldn't be unprecedented to reimburse funds, but [Seb] is unsure if it would work in their favour given their timeline.
- Dileep: The project also does not have a contingency plan in place. Hopefully the university will open up, but if it doesn't, what will they do in place? Regarding funding the project, we will have to be more specific about what they're asking funds for.
- Seb: We don't have quorum to vote on this—as soon as Alexia is able to send over the minutes, [Seb] can collect them and send it over to the Board to vote on denying funding or requesting more information.

Quorum has not been met—motion for funding allocation to Films Across Canada will occur online..

Project 2: CARE (Project revision request)

- Requesting a capital asset purchase of ~\$500.
- SPC approved funding for up to \$500.
- Presented by Seb.
- CARE wanted to purchase an external hard drive from a reliable storage company with their remaining funds that will be used for future video interviews.
- This was a budget line not taken into account in their original budget.
- The project would rather have it in a physical Drive at a one-time cost than pay for a recurring cost with a cloud service.

- They gave us a quote for a 2 TB hard drive at \$483—their request is to change the item that the \$500 remaining in their budget would have originally gone towards and allocate it towards this external hard drive instead.
- This is a point of information for the Board, nothing to vote on.

7. Community Announcements & Ancillary Items

a. **Share Project Coordinator posting widely!**

- [Website](#)
- [Facebook](#)

- Olivia is leaving, please share as widely as possible!

8. Adjournment

- *Meeting ended at 3:13 pm.*