

SAF Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Friday, August 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)

Rebecca Black (SAF)

Duha Elmardi (SAF)

Courtney Witter (SAF)

Dileep Ravi Kodira (CASA/JSMB)

Faye Sun (CSU)

Rebecca Tittler (Faculty)

Maddi Berger (FASA)

Jaime Malone (Intern)

Katherine Parthimos (Intern)

Brett Cox (SC)

Jessica Di Bartolomeo (Student-at-large)

Roy Singer-Shay (Student-at-large)

Members absent:

Cassandra Lamontagne (Staff)

Kelley Boileau (ECA)

1. Call to Order & Land Acknowledgement

a. **Sign up for next meeting**

- Roy: Spent six weeks this Summer living with his cousin who lives in a Anishinaabe village and it was a very interesting experience. The people of this village are considered dissidents by the Canadian government because they don't live in a reservation. [Roy] helped build houses in the community and got to go to some band council meetings. It was an overall enjoyable experience!

- Brett: There was action taken in Hamilton to have a John A. MacDonald statue removed as a result of calls to take down the statue years in the making. City council finally met to vote on it and they decided to keep the statue up and people took action against that decision. The media coverage surrounding the issue was surprisingly in support of protesters. The symbols that we honour in our society such as statues, plaques and memorials matter and we need to critically consider them. Taking down a statue of someone who was partially responsible for residential schooling and other colonist aspects of Canadian history seems logical and straight-forward yet it's not. It was nice to see the statue taken down by protesters.
 - Jaime: Will they put the statue back up considering it was taken down through community action and not an executive decision to have it removed?
 - Brett: Not sure. [Brett] knows the protestors have destroyed the statue pretty badly. One article stated that the police are trying to pursue charges which is unfortunate. [Brett] will let the Board know of any updates in the next Board meeting.
- Abraham: How does this link to the current news? The incoming election has completely stripped Indigenous issues from the news cycle and it is unfortunate that they are being overshadowed.
- Seb: Wondering is there has been any talks about the Grey Nuns and the possibility of renaming things at Concordia associated with them?
 - Rebecca Tittler: Has been waiting to hear about that too as well as with Loyola; the Jesuits ran a residential school in Ontario. Wondering how the University will react and how they will bear that name. [Rebecca] is currently doing research and reading on the topic to bring it up in conversations at the University.
- Rebecca Black: Ryerson announced today that they will be changing their name. [Rebecca] wonders if there are any process we could look into that they took.
- Faye: The CSU have been getting lots of emails from students looking for something to be done about the Grey Nuns. There are crypts underneath the residence honouring the nuns who were involved with residential schools. A lot of students want to remove them or have some educational component implemented that explains what they did. The CSU was thinking of having some sort of walking tour to explain the history behind them.
 - Jaime: Lived in the Grey Nuns residence and was told that the reason why the crypts were still there is because a lot of them died of diseases like tuberculosis and they would have to have someone come in with protective equipment and remove them in a safe way which would make for a big undertaking.

- Duha: Had a class on indigenous perspectives involving community and economic development. It was an interesting class because [Duha] was able to write about her own indigenous roots: the Nubian people, which are one of the oldest indigenous civilizations in Africa in the south of Egypt and north of Sudan along the Nile valley. [Duha] was able to research into that history and found so many similarities between how the British colonized them (they lost their land, language and endured a mass exodus) and how that connected to various other indigenous communities across the world. The same policies and actions were involved, the differences lie in the geographical location.
 - Abraham: Part of acknowledging and decolonizing our own experience is finding how our own ancestry and inheritance reflects upon the current situation we live in.

2. Review and Approval of Minutes

a. July 27th, 2021 BoD Meeting Minutes

Motion to approval the July 27th, 2021 meeting minutes::

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

3. Review and Adoption of Agenda

Motion to adopt the August, 27th, 2021 agenda:

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

4. SAF General Updates

a. AGM date chosen - October 12th, 2021, 6pm

- The AGM will last at most two hours and Seb will reach out to all Board members about the possibility of returning as a Board member and staying on for an extra year.

- The maximum mandate for being a Board member is three years with 13 positions available.

b. Returning board members - decision must be made by September 13th, 2021

- Seb would like to know by September 13th at the latest who would and would not like to return as a Board member to know which seats will be open for new members.
- In developing the annual report, SAF will be looking for input from committee members.
 - This will consist of little blurbs and [Seb] will share the annual report with all of the Board for input.
 - Rebecca and Katherine have started working on the theme and design for the report and for the AGM.

5. Committee Updates

a. HR/Governance

i. Evaluations for BoD facilitator

- We want to lend further support to Abraham's position through giving and receiving feedback, which is something the SAF hasn't done in the past.
- Seb: This is a good step to take given we have been doing it for all other staff members.

ii. Minute-Taker hiring

- Alexia will be leaving her position after taking the minutes for today's Board meeting.
- We have received 11 candidates for the position. HR will be sifting through the applications and be doing phone calls and zoom meetings with applicants. This won't be a super rigorous process as it is a support staff position.
- There was a potential for the incoming minute taker to be hired in time for this month's Board meeting, but given that the meeting occurred today and not later on next week, the incoming minute taker will start in September instead.

c. SPC

- The SPC met on the 25th of this month and we did not have quorum so we made tentative recommendations.
- We only received one application this month (Films Across Canada).

- Menstrual Products replied to questions we previously had and we evaluated and approved two revision requests given they only had timeline changes and no budget changes.
 - i. Recommendations for project themes for the fall call out
 1. Something around envisioning what the new normal will look like
 2. Other thoughts/ideas?
- Duha: Is interested to see if folks have any recommendations of themes or topics that we can encourage students to apply for in future callouts.
 - Brett had mentioned an idea of envisioning what the new normal will look like.
 - Seb: The priority for today's meeting is to make decisions on project funding, but [Seb] would like to see the Board give input on any gaps that may be missing in the themes of the projects we receive.
 - Abraham: Is leaning towards revisiting this topic in the ancillary items of this meeting.

d. Fincomm

i. Meeting agenda

1. Fee levy review
- Fincomm met yesterday and went over the fee levies the SAF received over the Summer.
 - Summer fee-levies received:
 - Undergraduate: \$22,603.
 - Graduate: \$7,481.25.
 - Summer opt-outs received:
 - \$1,339.48
 - Opt-outs were \$600 less than projected and that amount includes the processing fees for opt-outs.
 - They used to charge a flat fee of \$75 and have now changed it to being proportional to how many opt-outs are processed for a total of \$121 this time.
 - We will continue to have opt-outs processed internally as it saves us money and the trouble of doing it ourselves despite the fee now being proportionate.

ii. Data in same document as this years budget

1. Found under 'summer update' tab

e. Marketing/Outreach

- Nothing to note, but updates will come with the AGM!

6. Project Funding Allocation (4)

a. General Project Funding Budget: \$83,600

- \$28,000 being requested this month.

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

- \$0 is being requested this month.

Project 1: Menstrual Products

- Requesting \$15,000.
- SPC recommends full funding.
- Presented by Duha.
- This project applied last month and the Board expressed some concerns and a need for clarification on certain points.
- The project has since provided additional information and addressed previous questions:
 - In terms of the contents of each package, each order includes one coupon where users can purchase a diva cup or 3-5 reusable pads. The project will also send out promotional materials to save money on future purchases.
 - Faye recommended that the project get in touch with the CSU's diva cup contact and they did. The reason the project was not offered the same \$17 per cup rate the CSU was offered is because the project is not buying the cups in bulk. Students will get the cups shipped individually to their houses directly, instead of the project purchasing the cups in bulk themselves and then shipping them out.
 - The workshops will occur in two phases (one in the Fall and one in the Winter semester). The event held in October will be online, recorded and uploaded to their website. The project will purchase the workshop materials and make them available to be picked up on campus, with the option to have the materials directly shipped to participant's houses in

the case of accessibility concerns. The project is in the process of finding a student facilitator for this workshop and they mentioned collaborations with CUCCR, Art Hives and Creative Arts Therapies. The workshop will prioritize hand stitching as most people don't have access to sewing machines, but the project will also provide machine sewing instructions too. The project doesn't have a plan for the Winter workshop yet, as they are looking to see if it can be held in person.

- The project started in August as a pilot launch and they received 47 requests.
- The project's budget has remained the same, but has been broken into two phases (Fall and Winter). They are requesting funding for the diva cups, reusable pads, materials for the workshops, the shipping costs from Canada Post and for Instagram advertising.
- Dileep: Thinks this is a great project. We previously expressed confusion over the number of packages they listed, but given the packages will have several reusable pads, the calculations add up and [Dileep] feels that all concerns have been clarified.
- Roy: Didn't read the original application but did read the updates, looked at the project's budget and feels as though they have addressed everything. [Roy] is impressed with the project, enjoys it and is in big support of it. Sewing workshops are a fantastic idea and it is great that they are going to give people the skills to make their own reusable pads.
- Rebecca Tittler: Thought it was initially odd that the workshops costs seemed invented, but Duha made a good point that the project will need to provide exact receipts for the reimbursement of their expenses, so [Rebecca] has no more concerns with the project and thinks it's an overall great project.

Motion to allocate full funding of \$15,000 to Menstrual Cups.

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

Project 2: Films Across Canada

- Requesting \$13,000.

- SPC recommends.
- Presented by Brett.
- This is the third time we have received this project and [Brett] will go through a breakdown of the feedback we received:
 - Q [Brett]: In terms of their travel costs, is there a precedent for the SAF funding travel costs for flights?
 - A [Seb]: They shared the travel cost of a couple flights with us. As stated on our website, the SAF cannot allocate funding towards flight costs.
 - Brett: We would be unable to pay for a flight associated with one of their workshop facilitators as well as additional travel costs to Toronto for another portion of their trip. We need to be funding things that are relevant to Concordia.
 - The breakdown they provided for the workshops they will be hosting is quite general: \$4,500 towards workshops and \$6,500 towards honoraria. The project laid out the collaborators that would be involved in the workshops and what classes would be taught.
 - Brett: It is unclear how they arrived to those amounts. Personally speaking, [Brett] has hired facilitators with very specific cultural knowledge, such as an Anishinaabe elder and found the process for hiring them was very straight forward and general. Assuming this is the same situation, [Brett] understands why they are presenting things like this. [Brett] feels comfortable funding his portion of their funding request but understands if others are not.
 - Jaime: Agrees with Brett. Going back to the airfares, [Jaime] read through the Indigenous Directions website and one of their targets was to pay for indigenous elders to travel to the school for educational events and components. It's understandable that it is within the SAF's mandate not to fund air travel, but this may be something we want to look at in the future and see if there's a possibility to align ourselves with Indigenous Directions.
 - [Name missing]: I don't see a conflict with this, we should pay for local indigenous elders to come to Concordia.
 - There was an elder that was flown from Kahnawá:ke to Mexico by the Mexican government to participate in an event. Indigenous Action Plan may point to local elders not being properly compensated.
 - Seb: They are only flying one collaborator from Saskatoon, not the others.

- There will be 10 honorariums of \$300 given out to each person in their panel discussion. This seems like it will be a very big event and [Brett] is unsure of the logistics of it but is in support of it. Additional honorariums will be given out to the management work of the Concordia student team running the project, where they are requesting wages at a rate of \$20 per hour. We will only be able to fund wages of \$19 per hour based on the policy we have to match SAF's wages.
- The SPC felt comfortable funding the \$4,500 towards the workshops and the team's wages at a rate of \$19 per hour, but didn't feel comfortable giving a recommendation to approve the project's travel cost to Toronto. We can further talk about the facilitator's airfare.
- They did provide an extensive list of the things they plan to host at Concordia and have received funding from Canada Council.
- Abraham: It sounds like this project is in alignment with SAF's values and that there is a general agreement to fund most of their request with the exception of their flights. What parts of this project do folks feel comfortable funding?
- Roy: Has some reservations about this project. The project proposal seems overall good, but [Roy] has concerns about the organization of the project given this is the third time we are receiving this project and we have continuously seen that they are not good at incorporating our feedback and that it clearly states on our website that we don't fund flights. A project should properly research exactly what the organization does and doesn't fund when applying for funding and shouldn't be requesting funding for things the organization explicitly states it doesn't fund. That being said, what the project has presented sounds good and [Roy] accepts that. [Roy] agrees with providing funding for the honoraria and workshops. The flight for the workshop collaborator could be an accessibility issue. Maybe there is no other way for this person to travel comfortably except for flying, but that is still uncertain. [Roy] is generally in support of this project.
- Faye: Is wondering if there is a way we could clarify with the project why they requested funding for the flight. If it is an accessibility issue, maybe we can help support that?
- Rebecca Black: Do we want to go back to them again and ask for more information? This is the third or fourth time we've gone back and forth with them and they change components of their project every time. Revisiting this project in yet another meeting may be too taxing on everyone's time.
- Faye: Is it possible to give partial funding for certain parts of the project?

- Seb: Partial funding is always on the table. Projects can only do their best to align with SAF's guidelines and the feedback from Duha and the SPC. We can fund the components of the project we feel most comfortable funding. A partial funding decision has often been easier in the past especially knowing the project has other funding available to them.
- Rebecca Black: There is also the possibility of the project submitting a project revision request once funded if they feel there are things we missed and want to visit. It's not common, but it's a possibility.
- Abraham: Does anyone have any ideas of potential motions to put forward?
- Seb: We should also take into account Rebecca Tittler's comment about a backup plan for the events the project plans to hold in person given the president of Concordia just announced that non-research and non-teaching-related in-person events would be cancelled, as well as asking for justification as to why their airfare should be funded.
 - Roy: That does change things given they were looking to do workshops that [Roy] is assuming are in person (one workshop involves dance). Should we be funding in-person events knowing that?
 - Seb: We can include stipulations in our motion that the project adapt to an online format. Online events won't change the honoraria amounts. Workshops involving dance might not be easy to hold online but it wouldn't be unprecedented.
- Roy: Provided that the project is able to hold their events online, [Roy] is okay with funding those components. The project would have to have them online and engage in lots of outreach for them.
- Rebecca Tittler: If we allocate funding to in-person events when they are not possible this year, we will have misallocated.
- Faye: Can the funding be conditional? For example, we will allocate a certain amount on the condition that the events occur in person.
 - Seb: Worries that is that if they are forced to run the workshops online, they may not be able to host the workshops altogether.
 - Faye: Maybe we could allocate a different amount for online events if it doesn't happen in person?
- Roy: As much as [Roy] doesn't want to, maybe we should give them this new information about in-person events being cancelled and ask them to reapply. [Roy] doesn't want to see this project come up again in a meeting but this is important information to know and it would

change a big part of their project. Another concern that comes up is that if the events are online, the facilitators for the event can be anywhere and they wouldn't need to request funding for travel costs anymore.

- Faye: The best option would be to have the project reapply when considering all this information.
- Rebecca Black: It would be so sad to ask them to go through this application again and not guarantee them funding. We really need to think about this decision and consider partial funding given all the work that has already been put in on all our parts. If the events are online, we can offer funding for honorarium. That amount won't change if the events are in person or online. It seems like we all love this project and [Rebecca] understands all the concerns expressed, but we are continuously putting off making a decision on it over and over again. This is the first case where the SAF has had to revisit a project so many times over and we don't want to make this a precedent.
 - Seb: Agrees strongly. Application fatigue is a big thing and we saw that with the 'Land as our Teacher' project. There were lots of things to work through within the Living Labs program and in contextualizing the goals of that project. We have a lot of options available to us in terms of funding this project that would avoid them having to reapply and us having to revisit the project for a fourth time. [Seb] encourages everyone to explore as many of those options as possible. The overarching sentiment towards this project is positive despite their budget lines.
- Brett: Agrees with Rebecca Black's point and would feel comfortable approving funding for the workshop and honoraria costs with the exception that they offer and organize an online option for events
- Faye: Wonders if there is an issue with conditions in motions? [Faye] feels comfortable with conditional funding.
- Brett: Considering the travel costs, we could offer that they apply for a revision request if they want to justify those costs. [Brett] personally doesn't feel comfortable funding those costs given it is stated on our website that we don't fund airfare. It may be good to give them the option to justify it, but [Brett] otherwise wouldn't provide funding for that.
- Q [Duha]: Does funding for the workshops include the panel as well?
 - A [Brett]: Assumes that is included as part of the honoraria funding and would also entail figuring out an online option for it.

- Roy: It would include the panel because they are overall asking for \$6,500 for the workshops where \$300 is allocated per panelist.
- We should also include a condition that the honorarium amounts be changed from \$20 an hour to \$19 an hour. This would lower the amount by \$175.

Motion to approve partial funding of \$11,000 to Films Across Canada for their workshops on the condition that they be made available online and towards the honoraria expenses on the condition that the hourly rate for the workshop facilitators be \$19 per hour.

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

Project 3: LOAT

- Requesting a revision request.
- SPC approved.
- Presented by Duha.
- There is no decision to be made on this project, the SPC has already approved their revision request given the project was not requesting changes involving their budget.
- The project requested a change in their timeline:
 - Their initial idea was to organize a camping trip with 20 participants plus personnel held over 4 - 5 days. Given the changing Covid-19 restrictions, they will now have two cohorts of 8 people each to be held on different dates.
 - They are starting one camping cohort this weekend for a total of 15 people on site (participants and personnel).
- The project will also be integrating an archive component and online video recording into their project.

Project 4: RB4SJ

- Requesting a revision request.
- SPC approved.
- Presented by Duha.
- This project also requested a timeline change:
 - They initially wanted to host the inauguration of their mural on August 18th however they did not get permission from the city because the artist had one week to do and submit the sketch to the city. The project didn't have enough time to do this and needed to hire another artist because the wall is very big.
 - They expect the permit to come in by September 13th and will push the inauguration to happen on October 10th.
- The project also added two additional workshop to their program:
 - Nonviolent community action and knowing your rights.
 - They will be focusing on policy work a little more.

Funded \$26,000 worth of general projects this month—\$57,600 remaining in the allocations budget.

Funded \$0 worth of Living Labs projects this month—[amount missing] remaining in the allocations budget.

7. Community Announcements & Ancillary Items

a. Topics/themes for call out:

- i. Biodiversity conservation
 - Duha: Envisioning what the new normal looks like and not wanting to go back to the old normal. How can we put that sentiment in a sentence to be put in a call out? Biodiversity and conversation can be considered as a part of that. Rebuilding and starting a new normal?
- ii. Reconciliation
- iii. Homelessness and social housing policies

- Roy: One thing we've seen throughout this pandemic is unhoused people living in tents getting forcibly evicted by police. There was a big protest in Halifax last week about this. A theme involving housing could be a good consideration considering it is a topic that has been in the spotlight this year and has become especially prevalent in recent politics.

iv. Accessibility to mental health services

- Seb: Would be nice to see projects that focus on accessibility to mental health services. These are issues that have been prevalent before and during the pandemic. Some projects in the past have tried to address social isolation and [Seb] feels that providing access to spaces and services that allow for reconnection between folks is important when considering that new normal.
- Abraham: Winter is coming and the degree of freedom that people will have will be limited. People will be confined again and it will get frustrating. What kind of projects can SAF accept that will work around the pandemic? Would be interested to see projects related to social housing, connections to how people relate to the land, having a right to equality of life and a connection back to mental health.

v. Accessibility during pandemic, providing online options

- Faye: There is ultimately so many administrative barriers within Concordia's campus. There are structural issues and barriers within the University to go through in order to get anything done. This speaks to a lot of experiences that don't just involve Indigenous students. Getting access to grounds is difficult for everyone all around looking to make differences. What are the ways in which we can make these processes simpler and more accessible to those wanting to make changes? This is a huge barrier as students don't know who to contact to access certain places on campus or to do certain things.

vi. Landback and giving access to green unused spaces to Indigenous groups/offices at Concordia (Indigenous directions...etc)

- Faye: Montreal and Concordia is on unceded land and [Faye] has been thinking about how there is so much unused space on Concordia (such as the green spaces and lawns). Indigenous students don't have access to using those spaces and that seems hypocritical considering Concordia's land acknowledgement states we are committed to decolonization. Decolonization is a physical activity and not just a mental activity. Talking about it isn't enough. [Faye] would

like to see more of the green spaces at Concordia allocated to the Otsenhákta Student Centre or to Indigenous Directions where they can decide what to do with those spaces.

- Abraham: What are actions that can be taken to facilitate and support future projects in getting land back? What does that look like institutionally and how can we supporting students participating in this movement?
 - Brett: Indigenous Direction's action plan encourages community member's support, contributions and aid. Under each point of their action plan they list comprehensive examples for how they want to tackle plans leading to LandBack.
- Abraham: Would like to take a moment to express gratitude to everyone for making time today and every month to come together to have these conversations. It is awesome to be able to get in touch and participate this way together.

8. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the August 27th, 2021 meeting.

- **Moved by:** Brett
- **Seconded by:** Roy
- *Meeting adjourned at 3:39 pm.*