

SAF Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

June 5th, 2025

[ONLINE]

Meeting Time: 13:30 - 15:00

Meeting Facilitator: Abraham Dawidziak Kiermaier

Meeting Minute Taker: India-Lynn Upshaw-Ruffner

Members in attendance:

Duha Elmardi (SAF)

Iqbal Hussain (SAF)

Mai Pradhan (SAF)

Paige Keleher (Sustainable Concordia)

Tiffany Soamihary (JMSB/CASA)

Erik Huang (Community)

Hailey Krackovitch-Pellatt (Student-at-Large)

Elizabeth Malitastinic (Fine Arts)

Georgette Pascual (Arts & Science)

Juliette Weil (Concordia Staff)

Members absent:

Rhonda Chung (GSA)

Leen Al-Hijjawi (CSU)

Yasmine Kaced (Student-at-Large)

1. Call to Order & Land Acknowledgement

2. Review and Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the [February 24th 2025] and [May 1st 2025] minutes:

- **Moved by: Paige**
- **Seconded by: Erik**
 - In favour: all
 - Against: none
 - Abstain: none
- *Motion passes*

3. Review and Adoption of Agenda

Motion to approve the [June 5th 2025] agenda:

- **Moved by: Erik**

- **Seconded by: Elizabeth**
 - In favour: all
 - Against: none
 - Abstain: none
- *Motion passes*

4. SAF General Updates

- a. **New budget is approved, and staff bonuses have already been sent.**
- b. **CNESST dues paid from 2020 to 2025, and 2024 salaries declared.**
 - i. Last payment was in June 2019, but warning letters have been sent to a wrong email. Seb the previous ED had a letter sent to his house. Situation has been cleared up, and all declarations and due fees have been sent
- c. **Townhall is set for June 25th, 6-8 pm on Zoom**
 - i. Statement from the board, should we do one? If so, we need board members to sign up and do this.
 - Could discuss all the changes the org has been through from the board perspective, to be shared publicly
 - But there are capacity issues for folks so it is not a requirement
 - Paige: not sure what to say or what to not say in the statement
 - Abraham: maybe create a list of thoughts and they can be edited by the SAF team for public consumption
 - Doesn't have to be too detailed, a general overview. Goal to make it clear that the SAF board has been active over the past few years and engaged in what's happening
 - Paige expressed interest in writing the statement, Elizabeth and Erik would also like to contribute.
 - ii. Dona Nham will be the facilitator, they are experienced with conflict mediations they will be great to have to manage potentially difficult convos.
- d. **Townhall updates - [Google doc](#)**
- e. **SLLFP - [Google doc](#)**
 - i. Full audit report available in the link provided
 - ii. Haven't met with OOS in a while, but SAF had a meeting recently to discuss post audit details and how we are closing this chapter
 - iii. SAF will pay the remaining projects waiting (3 projects, 2 partially paid and 1 not requested yet) and the program will close with that. Hopefully full payments will be made by the end of the summer
 - Projects will most likely not claim full amounts. Worse case scenario is that 35k is unclaimed. But it will most likely be less than 35k remaining. All amounts are accounted for in our budget

- iv. In the case that the projects don't request the full amount, OOS wants the balance for the SAP program
- v. SAF wants fincomm committee and board to look over the numbers one last time
 - The board is on board with the budget for SLLFP and the disbursement of the remaining funds

f. Special Projects Funding plan for the fall:

- i. Staff discussed a plan and are proposing the following:
 - Change applications to semesterly applications instead of monthly, with funding periods for the fall, winter and summer, and 3 board meetings dedicated to project decision-making.
 - How do we not put ourselves in situations of retroactive payments, very busy months compared to not busy months. All the money was allocated between June and November last year for example. The crunch time between SPC meetings and board meetings was always stressful for the project coordinator as they needed responses from project leaders immediately
 - Other board meetings in the year can be focused on strategic directions or other things happening
 - Open applications July 15th and close September 1st. If we don't get enough applications by Sept. 1st, we can extend for 10 more days.
 - Deliberation and decision-making by the end of September.

OR

- Continue the monthly model, but change the deadline of submission to the 10th of every month rather than the 15th, to allow staff and board time to review applications.
- ii. Funding limit changes:
 - Cap funding limit for the fall to \$5,000 per project and reassess the situation for the winter.
 - Cap funding to 10k generally.
 - Change the tiers on our website to the following:
 - Change \$1500 to \$3000 or less for short-term projects. Projects in this tier need SPC approval.
 - Change \$3000 to \$3001 to \$5000 for regular projects. Projects in this tier need board approval
 - \$5000 to \$10 000 must have 50% of funding from external sources. - Pause this for the fall. But no need for a public mention since it might change in the winter.
- iii. Discussion
 - Gigi: in favour of semester deadlines, it will give the staff and board more time to deliberate on projects and their alignment with SAF as opposed to the monthly system which can feel rushed
 - Juliette: More projects with lower amounts make more sense, it can help more students and community members to have access to funds. Semester basis makes

sense in terms of student schedules too. But also the influx of projects at one time could make it more demanding on the staff perhaps?

- Duha: yes it definitely changes the timeline for SAF staff, but projects usually submit a draft and meet with the project coordinator first. But we can try it and go through it, to see if the change is too much or not
- Erik: agrees with Juliette, but is hesitant to move to a semester based model, especially if projects are course-based. But it makes sense to change the deadline to the 15th, or even accepting applications every two months instead could work. This could account for projects who only get started later in the semester, and reducing the workload internally
- Duha: ideally by september people should have received their thoughts from the previous semester. There is also something to be said about last minute applications for events happening the same month. It would create a challenge for those projects
 - Erik: semesterly applications for Board approval projects, and monthly applications for SPC approval? Projects from capstone only have their projects set by end of september
 - Duha: SCPA, capstone and film students each have particular times that they can apply to SAF funding. It may create a barrier for these applicants. Also cinema politica, gender advocacy centre defund all have a particular time they apply as well.
 - SAF should link up with the film dept and capstone organisers, if we can find a plan with them to manage deadlines it could be great for managing workload. Could improve outreach of SAF to other concordia groups
- Erik: funding limit changes make sense
- Duha: the funding cap could help mitigate funding spacing between projects and balance out the budget and amounts of projects. There will be a maximum cap for each semester
- Elizabeth: process for internal funding from Concordia? How can we get more support from them?
 - Duha: SAF doesn't think that this would be a possibility. Given austerity measures with the university we shouldn't expect any money coming in outside of fee levies. But we want to branch out to find external funding especially for the SRAs
- Paige: likes funding caps, understands motivation behind semesterly application change. Maybe a compromise can be made where there is an SPC meeting in-between the two funding periods where we determine if projects that came in can be discussed in an adhoc meeting
- Elizabeth: can SAF do fundraising?
 - The process is difficult since we don't have charity status. The money would have to go through concordia

Motion to cap the fall funding of 2025 to 5k and reassess in the winter, and cap general funding to 10k per project, and to change the tiers of the website to reflect the changes

- **Moved by: Paige**
- **Seconded by: Elizabeth**

- In favour: all
- Against: none
- Abstain: none
- *Motion passes*
- SAF staff meeting pros and cons list

Semesterly		Monthly	
Pros	Cons	Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More organized in terms of budget expectations - Requires less board member coordination and demand (only meeting once a semester) - Gives projects a <u>good idea</u> of whether or not their project is funded. - 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Could lose project applications that are last minute, smaller, etc - Requires longer deliberation meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gives last minute projects a chance to get funding - Reaches a broader scope of projects - 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Requires more board member engagement - Could end up having delays from when projects apply versus when they're actually approved - More difficult to manage the <u>budget</u>, some months we have a lot of applications, others we do not have that many -

- Erik, Elizabeth and Gigi agree that a good compromise could be a funding period every two months
- Paige: how does this effect the staff?
 - Duha: could help in giving more time to communicate with projects
 - Iqbal: could help with budget planning and also meeting quorum for the project decision meetings
 - Paige: monthly meetings can also help engagement wise for the board
- Duha: a decision making meeting in september including old board members would be ideal
- Starting application period in July 15th to September 15th. Any application received post that date will be reviewed for next application period

Motion to accept project funding applications every two months (twice a semester)

- **Moved by: Erik**
- **Seconded by: Elizabeth**
 - In favour: all
 - Against: none
 - Abstain: none

- *Motion passes*

g. Sustainability Research Award (SRAs)

- i. Staff are proposing to resume SRAs in the fall.
 - We will reach out to faculties and student associations for additional funding, but if we don't receive any, we can allocate \$12,000.
 - Fall SRA
 - October (1st Week-Mid) Callout
 - November (One month) Deadline
 - Winter SRA
 - February (1st Week-Mid) Callout
 - March (One month) Deadline
 - A review committee can be formed to include staff and board members along with any faculty or student association reps.
- ii. Board is on-board to continue SRA funding

5. Committee Updates


a. HR/Governance

- i. Iqbal's contract renewal is approved!

b. SPC

- i. No updates

c. Finncomm

- i. NEW BUDGET - Iqbal  SAF Annual Budget FY 2025-2026.pdf
 - Approved!

d. Marketing/Outreach

- i. No updates

6. Project Funding [funding on pause until Fall 2025]

7. Community Announcements and Ancillary Items

a. Upcoming board meetings

- i. Schedule all upcoming board meetings ahead (Third wednesday/thursday of the month...etc) , if semesterly is accepted, we can schedule the decision-making meetings in advance.
- ii. Could make sense to have a meeting the third week of the month every month?

- b. NO BOARD MEETING FOR JUNE - due to Townhall June 25th, aim for one in July or August**

8. Adjournment