SAF 2024 AGM Minutes
November 21, 2024
[ONLINE]

Meeting Time: 18:00- 20:00
Meeting Chairperson: Erik Huang and Elizabeth Malitastinic
Meeting Minute Taker: India-Lynn Upshaw-Ruffner

Members in attendance:	**Members absent**:
	Ayan Yusuf Karshe (SAF)
Duha Elmardi (SAF)	
Iqbal Hussain (SAF)	
Mai Pradhan (SAF)	
Paige Keleher (Sustainable Concordia)	
Rhonda Chung (GSA)	
Leen Al-Hijjawi (CSU)	
	Emile Eeckhout (JMSB/CASA)
Erik Huang (Community)	
	Pramila Choudhary (Student-at-Large)
Mohammad (Haman) Jamali (Student-at-Large)	
Elizabeth Malitastinic (Fine Arts)	
Georgette Pascual (Arts & Science)	
	Mitchell McLarnon (Concordia Staff)
Christian Favreau (Office of Sustainability)	

1. Welcome, Call to Order & Land Acknowledgement

- A townhall will happen sometime in the winter 2025 semester for the many questions that folks have for SAF and funding moving forward

2. Voting Procedure

- Someone must present the motion, stating their name. “I [name], move that we …”
- Someone else must second the motion, state their name. “I [name], second the motion”
- The Chairperson will ask the membership if there are those that are against or abstain from the motion
- You can vote in favour, against, or abstain from voting on the motion
- The results of the voting process will be recorded in the meeting minutes

3. Approval of support members

- SAF Constitution- Article 4, Section 2
- 2.2. The supporting members include members of the Concordia community including Concordia's staff, Concordia faculty, the SAF ex-officio and alumni who have experience with the SAF and/or sustainability at Concordia University
    - i. Collection of names of supporting members
    - ii. Statement of affiliation with the SAF
    - iii. Election of supporting members

Motion to elect supporting members Brett Cox, Drew Oj, Hannah Hawk, Julie Critter, Kiermaier, Nelly Bacilly, Paul Fournier, Sandra Mouafo, Marcel Mesoda Partouch

- **Moved by: Georgette**
- **Seconded by: Haman**
    - In favour: all
    - Against: none
    - Abstain: none
- *Motion passes*

4. Meeting Roles (Chairperson, Scrutineer, Minute-Taker)

- **Motion:**

Motion to appoint Erik Huang and Elizabeth Malitastinic as Co-Chairpersons and India-Lynn Upshaw-Ruffner as Minute Taker

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

5. Review and Approval of the Agenda

- **Motion:**

Motion to adopt the SAF 2023 AGM agenda

- **Moved by: Brett**
- **Seconded by: Georgette**
    - In favour: all

- Against: none
- Abstain: none

- *Motion passes*

6. Review and Approval of 2023 AGM Minutes

- Review of 2023 minutes
- Motion:

Motion to approve the 2023 SAF AGM Minutes

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

7. Annual overview of the Sustainability Action Fund

- Mai Pradhan was hired as the communications Coordinator, and Ayan Yusuf as the executive director
- **Strategic Directions 2023-2024**
  - Improve support and resources for projects with long term impacts.
  - Increase the accessibility, education and engagement with social sustainability at Concordia.
  - Enhance the resilience of the SAF.
  - Strengthen support and accountability for student involvement in community initiatives.
- Not able to do an audit on strategic directions due to hectic year, SAF wishes to have a retreat to reflect further on the Strategic Directions with board members

HR/Governance Committee

a. Renewed the contracts of Iqubal Hussein (finance coordinator) and Duha Elmardi (Projects coordinator)
b. Duha will act as interim executive director since Ayan Yusuf is on medical leave

Special Projects Committee

a. During the fiscal year spanning June 2022 to May 2023, the committee met regularly once a month up until November 2022, as that was the last month where projects were accepted. After that, the committee met only when needed to review project revision requests or make recommendations relating to funding to the rest of the board

b. This year, the board voted to increase SPCs budget allocation limit to $3,000 instead of the previous $1,500

Communications Committee

a. The committee did not meet regularly since there was a pause on regular activities, thus there was a general decrease of content on social media
b. During this pause the committee planned for restructuring upon reopening regular activities, including scheduling mandatory meetings three times a semester and a streamlined newsletter system

Finance Committee

a. Budgeting
    i. Reviewed and discussed the budget vs. actuals for FY 2023-2024
    ii. Confirmed the budget for FY 2024-2025
b. Policy
    i. Updated the current 2-signatory policy to a 3-signatory policy, this will eliminate all bottlenecks in fund disbursements
    ii. Contributed to the decision of increasing SPCs budget allocation limit from $1500 to $3000
c. Operations
    i. Confirmed the hiring of an intern to help with T4 generation and disbursements for FY 2023-2024
    ii. Exploring new avenues for increasing and diversifying funding sources for SAF

Sustainability Research Award

a. SRA recipients: Emad, PhD candidate from Gina Cody School of Engineering and Mohammed, PhD in Individualized Program in Fine Arts

8. Reimbursements Summary

General Summary

a. Average amount funded per project: $4,199.60
b. Projects funded under the special projects fund: 29 projects, $121,788.50
c. Projects funded under Living Labs (SLLFP): 4 projects, $64,974.65
d. Total amount allocated: $186,763.15

Funding Gap

a. Received less applications than last year
    i. Funding gap
    ii.

b. Total Number of applicants
    i.

Quantity of Applicants

a. Received a total of 43 applications, received 16 less applications than last year

Average Amount Allocated per project

a. This year the average amount funded per project increased by 16% from last year. The average went from $3,537.92 to $4,199.60

Percentage funded by Sustainability Theme

a. Education: 21%, Community: 26%, Social Justice: 24%, Health and Wellbeing: 11.3%, Waste: 9.7%, Food: 4%, Energy, Resources, and Tech: 4%
b. Majority of projects were community based

Reimbursement Updates

a. There were delays in SAFs fee-levy distribution from the university which caused delays in reimbursements for project recipients. SAF is doing their best to catch up
b. Summary:
    i. 2022-2023 Special project fund
        1. Paid = $110,666.31
        2. Pending = $11,698.72
    ii. 2022-2023 Living Labs
        1. Paid = $63,732.33
        2. Pending = $3,364.67
    iii. 2023-2024 Special project fund
        1. Paid = $63,314.37
        2. Pending = $58,504.13
    iv. 2023-2024 Living Labs
        1. Paid = $16,342
        2. Pending = $48,632.01
c. Note: pending amounts include projects that requested a reimbursement but are waiting but also projects whose funding has been allocated but they have not submitted a request for reimbursement.
d. The board has been thinking about creating a project reimbursement time limit so funds can be eventually reallocated and SAF can avoid projects coming and asking for reimbursements years down the line.

Partnerships

a. The Office of Sustainability (OOS) (2023-2024)
    i. The partnership between SAF and OOS was centered on co-funding the Living Labs program. Both organisations committed to contributing $40,000 annually, for a combined total of $80,000 per year. The OOS disbursed their portion in two installments of $20,000 each fiscal year
    ii. SAF was responsible for managing the disbursement of these funds and frequently set out to allocate and disburse project funds before receiving the corresponding agreed-upon and committed payments from the university. This arrangement was understood and agreed upon by OOS, which had representation on our board of directors.
    iii. Cashflow turbulence in Fall 2023/Winter 2024
        1. During the fall 2023 and winter 2024 semesters, exceptionally atypical delays in receiving our fee-levy payments from Concordia university led SAF to request an advance payment of $20,000 from the OOS to reimburse projects that had already been allocated funding. This early request prompted the OOS to review the specifics of the partnership contracts and the management of SLLFP funds
        2. SAF cooperated with these inquiries, and diverging accounts of the total remaining in the SLLPF fund became apparent. Despite a collaborative attempt to resolve the discrepancies

internally, with the help of the OOS' active seat on the SAFs board throughout the duration of the partnership, no consensus was reached. As a result, the OOS moved to withhold the remaining $20,000 pending the completion of a financial audit of SAF.

3. SAF is still awaiting the results of the financial audit

iv. Sustainability Living Labs Program

1. In light of the confusion surrounding the financing of the Living labs program and the ongoing cashflow issues exacerbated by the university's fee-levy disbursement schedule, SAF and OOS jointly decided to close applications for the winter 2024 semester, with no set date for reopening. These financial turbulences were further compounded by Concordia's troubling statements about budget deficits and projected cuts due to rising student tuition fees and declining enrollment.
2. During this period, we also learned that OOS would not be renewing the Living Labs Coordinator contract, leading to the dissolution of the position. This decision raised concerns about Concordia;s future involvement in the program. As we continue ongoing discussions with the OOS, the status and future of the Living Labs program as well as our partnership, remains uncertain

10. Financial Review and presentation and approval of the 2024-2025 Operating Budget

Finance Cycle of Controls at the SAF

a. Finance loop: at the top is the finance coordinator, we use an independent auditor form to issue assurance over our annual financial transactions to ensure they are accurate and reported properly.
b. Then our finance committee is formed by board members and the finance coordinator. We meet at minimum every quarter (highlights earlier in meeting), look at budgets to actuals, review the budget.
c. Users to financial statements (all online) students BOD, university, banks etc.
    i. Controls over disbursements- dual signing authority. We have electronic support for this (reimbursements to projects, payroll expenses, any money to things like insurance), we keep digital records.
    ii. The finance committee provides oversight ensuring controls operate well, and ensure communication to the wider board.
d. Budget is broken down by semester. Year end-statements and QBO online has an audit trail and reinforced online security

2023-2024 Budget-to-Actuals and proposed budget for 2024-2025

a. Budget:

ANNUAL BUDGET for the FISCAL YEAR 2024 - 2025							
	Total Budgeted 2023-2024	Total Actual 2023-2024	Variance %	Budgeted Summer 2024	Budgeted Fall 2024	Budgeted Winter 2025	Total Budgeted 2024-2025 (Optimistic)
Fee Levies							
Undergrad Fee-Levy Rev	450,000.00	377,009.13	-16.22%	65,976.60	87,968.80	109,961.00	263,906.39
Graduate Fee Levy Rev	26,250.00	25,850.00	-1.52%	5,170.00	6,893.33	8,616.67	20,680.00
Refunds-Allowances	(28,575.00)	(24,171.55)	-15.41%	(4,268.80)	(5,691.73)	(7,114.66)	(17,075.18)
Total Fee Levy Income	**447,675.00**	**378,687.58**	**-15.41%**	**66,877.80**	**89,170.40**	**111,463.00**	**267,511.21**
Miscellaneous Income Sources							
Dept. A&S - Research Projects Funding	5,000.00	0.00	-100.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Dept. Fine Arts - Research Projects Funding	2,500.00	0.00	-100.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Dept. ECS - Research Projects Funding	2,500.00	0.00	-100.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
University Contributions - Living Labs	40,000.00	20,000.00	-50.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Rollover Project Funds SLLFP	5,000.00	8,863.00	77.26%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Rollover Project Funds SPF	5,000.00	3,554.05	-28.92%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
CCSL Income	1,500.00	0.00	-100.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Eric St.Pierre	5,000.00	0.00	-100.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Interest Income	60.00	0.00	-100.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Miscellaneous Income	**66,560.00**	**32,417.05**	**-51.30%**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**
Total Income	**514,235.00**	**411,104.63**	**-20.06%**	**66,877.80**	**89,170.40**	**111,463.00**	**267,511.21**
Project Funding							
Special Projects Funding	(104,300.61)	(121,788.50)	16.77%	(25,888.63)	(34,518.17)	(43,147.71)	(103,554.50)
Living Labs Funding	(76,300.61)	(64,974.65)	-14.84%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Project Funding	(180,601.22)	(186,763.15)	3.41%	(25,888.63)	(34,518.17)	(43,147.71)	(103,554.50)
Other Projects							
Workshop Series	(3,000.00)	0.00	-100.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Other Internal Projects/Events	(1,500.00)	0.00	-100.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
AGM	(600.00)	(118.29)	-80.29%	(37.50)	(50.00)	(62.50)	(150.00)
Community Contributions	(1,000.00)	0.00	-100.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
SRA Funding	(20,000.00)	(9,649.50)	-51.75%	(3,000.00)	(4,000.00)	(5,000.00)	(12,000.00)
Total Other Projects	**(26,100.00)**	**(9,767.79)**	**-62.58%**	**(3,037.50)**	**(4,050.00)**	**(5,062.50)**	**(12,150.00)**
Total Funding Costs	**(206,701.22)**	**(196,530.94)**	**-4.92%**	**(28,926.13)**	**(38,568.17)**	**(48,210.21)**	**(115,704.50)**
Other Expenses							
The Refugee Centre Opt-outs	10,000.00	9,775.03	-2.25%	(3,421.26)	(4,561.68)	(5,702.10)	(13,685.04)
745 Minute Taking	(1,093.87)	(1,197.79)	9.50%	(306.28)	(408.38)	(510.47)	(1,225.13)
Board Facilitator	(1,996.77)	(1,227.92)	-38.50%	(559.10)	(745.46)	(931.83)	(2,236.38)
Bank charges	(300.00)	(96.90)	-67.70%	(84.00)	(112.00)	(140.00)	(336.00)
Food for Events, Meetings, Fairs	(1,004.38)	(614.58)	-38.81%	(250.00)	(333.33)	(416.67)	(1,000.00)
Insurance	(1,675.84)	(1,675.84)	0.00%	(469.24)	(625.65)	(782.06)	(1,876.94)
Employee health insurance	(2,000.00)	(2,000.00)	0.00%	(560.00)	(746.67)	(933.33)	(2,240.00)
Legal and professional fees	(3,621.71)	(3,967.54)	9.55%	(1,110.91)	(1,481.21)	(1,851.52)	(4,443.64)
Marketing / IT (Adobe, MS, Web, Cr.Card)	(1,430.74)	(1,340.84)	-6.28%	(375.44)	(500.58)	(625.73)	(1,501.74)
Office Expenses, Phone, QBO	(721.48)	(1,993.00)	176.24%	(555.94)	(741.25)	(926.57)	(2,223.76)
Payroll Service Charges	(501.73)	(392.52)	-21.77%	(109.91)	(146.54)	(183.18)	(439.62)
Supplies	(11.06)	0.00	-100.00%	(25.00)	(33.33)	(41.67)	(100.00)
Professional Development	(3,750.00)	(1,454.81)	-61.21%	(937.50)	(1,250.00)	(1,562.50)	(3,750.00)
Health & Well Being	(3,750.00)	(3,197.21)	-14.74%	(937.50)	(1,250.00)	(1,562.50)	(3,750.00)
Total Other Expenses	**(11,857.58)**	**(9,383.92)**	**-20.86%**	**(9,702.07)**	**(12,936.09)**	**(16,170.11)**	**(38,808.27)**
Total Costs Before Payroll Expenses	**(218,558.80)**	**(205,914.86)**	**-5.79%**	**(38,628.19)**	**(51,504.26)**	**(64,380.32)**	**(154,512.77)**

Payroll Expenses							
Executive Director	(62,782.72)	(56,038.50)	-10.74%	(12,887.88)	(17,183.83)	(21,479.79)	(51,551.50)
Project Cordinator	(42,684.10)	(38,110.80)	-10.71%	(9,813.53)	(13,084.71)	(16,355.89)	(39,254.12)
Communications Coordinator	(41,723.14)	(39,445.20)	-5.46%	(10,134.89)	(13,513.19)	(16,891.49)	(40,539.56)
Finance and Funding Coordinator	(44,225.13)	(39,486.72)	-10.71%	(10,167.83)	(13,557.11)	(16,946.38)	(40,671.32)
Benefits for Employees	(22,969.81)	(21,222.64)	-7.61%	(5,835.66)	(7,780.88)	(9,726.10)	(23,342.64)
Total Payroll Expense	(214,384.90)	(194,303.86)	-9.37%	(48,839.79)	(65,119.72)	(81,399.65)	(195,359.15)
Total Expenses	(432,943.70)	(400,218.72)	-7.56%	(87,467.98)	(116,623.97)	(145,779.97)	(349,871.92)
Surplus / Deficit Brought Forward				2,721.48	3,628.64	4,535.80	10,885.91
Net Surplus / (Deficit)	81,291.30	10,885.91	-86.61%	(17,868.70)	(23,824.93)	(29,781.17)	(71,474.80)

b. Important notes:

i. Undergraduate fee levy was 16% less
ii. CU stakeholders mentioned a 10% drop, however trend analysis indicates a worse situation
iii. Since McGill has already experienced almost 30% decline in tuition earnings, we will assume the same for Concordia
iv. The expense has been adjusted to the expected inflation and cost of living rate of around 6% as per the Prudent Concept
v. We will have to identity and expand our funding sources over the next fiscal year

Motion to approve the SAF 2024-2025 Operating Budget

- **Moved by: Brett**
- **Seconded by: Leen**
  - In favour: majority
  - Against: none
  - Abstain: 1
- *Motion passes*

Motion to approve the Finance Auditor Ron & Stephanie Amstutz, Amstutz Inc.

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

11. Finance Audit Report

a. Much of SAFs revenues stayed the same, there were not any particular standout moments from the audit

documents. SAF invites further discussion of the audit report at the upcoming townhall.

12. Board of Directors

SAF Board Composition

a. 1 CSU Council Member
b. 1 CSU Exec
c. 1 GSA Graduate Student
d. 2 Students-at-Large
e. 1 Concordia Faculty
f. 1 Concordia Staff
g. 1 Faculty of fine arts
h. 1 Faculty of Arts and Science
i. 1 Concordia Community Member
j. 1 CASA/JMSB
k. 1 Sustainable Concordia
l. 1 ENGCS

Ratification of board term extension and removal of OOS seat

a. Motions to extend the term limit in extenuating circumstances were passed this year at board meetings to maintain institutional knowledge during a transitional period. We would like to ratify these motions at this AGM.
b. The motion to remove the OOS seat was also made at a board meeting this year and needs to be ratified

Motion to ratify the board term extension, to extend the board term limit due to exemplary circumstances if board members decide to stay

- **Moved by: Paul**
- **Seconded by: Haman**
    - In favour: all
    - Against: none
    - Abstain: none
- *Motion passes*

Motion to ratify all returning board members and accept the returning board members for an extended term limit.

- **Moved by: Nellie**
- **Seconded by: Paul**
    - In favour: all
    - Against: none
    - Abstain: none

- *Motion passes*

Motion to ratify the removal of the Office of Sustainability (OOS) seat from SAFs board of directors

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

Motion to ratify the appointment of Leen Al Hijjawi in the CSU Executive Seat

- **Moved by: Paul**
- **Seconded by: Brett**
    - In favour: all
    - Against: none
    - Abstain: none
- *Motion passes*

Presentation and Election for Open Seats

a. 9 seats are filled
b. JMSB/CASA Seat is open, candidates will be considered for student-at-large seat as well
    i. Tiffany Soamihary – APPROVED
    ii. Harpreet Kaur Lal
c. Concordia Staff seat is open
    i. Juliette Weil – APPROVED
d. 2 student-at-large seats are open
    i. Harpreet Kaur Lal
    ii. Yasmine Kaced - APPROVED
    iii. Hailey Krackovitch-Pellatt - APPROVED

Voting via online polls

13. Raffle and Closure