



Notice of Motion Regarding Creation of the SSMU Equity Fund Referendum Question

Whereas, 5,036 international undergraduate students are registered in Fall 2012, representing 22.5 percent of the SSMU undergraduate membership¹;

Whereas, given the fact that McGill University is home to students from over 150 countries, issues of equity and inclusiveness on campus are critical and have to be acknowledged and addressed;

Whereas, in the Final Report of the McGill University Student Demographic Survey published in 2011 by the Deputy Provost (Student Life and Learning), "37% [of respondents] identified with another ethnic or visible minority group²" and "at least 20% of survey respondents reported some discrimination by fellow students (lower by staff) based on language, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation and ... 3.6% of students reported feeling high levels of discrimination by fellow students³", highlighting the fact that discrimination is still highly prevalent and more efforts need to be made to sensitize the McGill community on a wide range of equity and diversity issues;

Whereas, the SSMU has a long-standing history of leadership on issues of Equity;

Whereas, Leadership, the third pillar of SSMU's commitment to its membership, as outlined in the SSMU Constitution states that:

VII. The Students' Society commits to demonstrating leadership in matters of human rights, social justice and environmental protection. The Society shall be mindful of the direct and indirect effects that corporations, businesses and organizations have on their social, political, economic, and environmental surroundings.

VIII. The Students' Society commits itself to groups, programs and activities that are devoted to the well-being of a group disadvantaged because of irrelevant personal characteristics that include but are not limited to race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, gender identification, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation or social class;

Whereas, the Equity Fund will empower campus members to engage in initiatives that foster leadership, encourage civic engagement, and make observable and/or measurable differences in the representation or experiences of individuals who are members of historically and currently disadvantaged groups;

Whereas, the Equity Fund will support projects, research and policies that aim to end discrimination and promote accessibility and inclusiveness in the McGill community, examples of which include, but are not limited to: forums, speakers, film/video series, workshops and seminars, community outreach programs, applied student research, faculty/student collaboration for curriculum improvement and multimedia performances that aim to highlight issues of equity and diversity;

¹ McGill University – Fall 2012: Total Full-Time and Part-Time Visa Enrolments by Countries
http://www.mcgill.ca/es/sites/mcgill.ca.es/files/fall_2012_szfrgrs8.pdf

² McGill University – p. 12 of the Final Report of the McGill University Student Demographic Survey

³ McGill University – p. 28 of the Final Report of the McGill University Student Demographic Survey



Whereas, the Equity Fund will be the only student-regulated equity fund on campus, and therefore prioritizes students;

Whereas, the Equity Fund will be supported by an opt-outable student levy;

Whereas, the Equity Fund will be administered by the SSMU Funding Committee; and

Whereas, all SSMU members who does not opt out of the fee will be eligible to apply for Equity Fund funding;

Resolved, that the SSMU Legislative Council approve the following question for the Winter 2013 referendum period:

“Do you agree that the SSMU create the Equity Fund, which will be directly funded by an opt-outable student fee of \$0.50 per semester, paid for by all SSMU members and accessible to all members who do not opt out of the fee, to start in Fall 2013, and to be charged for a duration of 3 years until Winter 2016 (inclusive) when it will be brought back to the membership for renewal, and that the fee be adjusted to inflation, as indexed by the Bank of Canada CPI (Consumer Price Index), with the understanding that a majority “no” vote would result in the absence of the creation of such a fee?”