



## Bureau du président du conseil de l'AÉUM

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.

### SSMU Office of the Speaker

Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories.

[speaker@ssmu.ca](mailto:speaker@ssmu.ca) | [ssmu.ca](http://ssmu.ca) | (514) 398-6800 | 3600 rue McTavish, Suite 1200, Montréal, QC, H3A 0G3

# MOTION REGARDING THE REFERENDUM QUESTION FOR A SSMU BASE FEE INCREASE FOR UNIONIZED SALARIES AND GENERAL OPERATIONS 2023-10-26

Submitted for: 2023-10-26

**Submitted to:** SSMU Legislative Council

**Document no.:** LEG-PUB-MOT-2023-10-26-009

**Moved by:** Alexandre Ashkir  
*SSMU President*

**Current Status:**

- FOR APPROVAL
- APPROVED
- POSTPONED
- COMMITTED
- NOT APPROVED

**Seconded by:** Naomi Pastrana-Mankovitz  
*Caucus Representative*

### Issue

The SSMU Base Fee has not seen an increase in 5 years. Given the scale of its operations, the Society must increase its base fee in order to continue to provide for its members, the students, and its staff. This motion proposes a base fee increase that will allow SSMU to address its current financial needs and expand further in its support of the student body and the livelihoods of the SSMUnion staff during a time of unprecedented inflation and rise of cost of living.

### Background and Rationale

As per the Constitution, SSMU seeks “to provide excellence and quality of service at all times, and shall continue to enhance the quality and scope of these services.” The base fee is used for a variety of elements of SSMU conduct including building operations, staffing, and various crucial services. By increasing the base fee, students will have more opportunities to take advantage of SSMU assets and be provided assets of greater quality.

Research into Canadian student union base fees has demonstrated that SSMU’s base fee is below average. However, when comparing this amount to the breadth of the population under SSMU’s jurisdiction, it is significantly



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less and poses a limit to SSMU's function compared to other university student unions of comparable size.

The SSMUnion, the union of SSMU employees, has also asked that salary brackets be increased to be better adjusted to market prices and better reflective of inflation, as many of these salaries have not been updated in years.

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### Alignment with Mission

The SSMU's highest priority is to maintain a high quality of service for its members, one that requires adequately paid labor and enough funds. The SSMU is committed to paying workers, particularly its student workers, a fair wage for their work and holds strong pro-worker positions.

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### Consultations Completed

The Policy and Advocacy Coordinator, along with the Governance Coordinator conducted research into base fee comparisons between other Canadian student unions, and continued to consult on the formatting of the motion as needed.

Consultations have been completed with SSMU Executives, including the SSMU VP Operations (acting VP Finance in the absence thereof), as well as the SSMU General Manager.

Further, this motion comes in collaboration with executives from the SSMU Union, as this base fee increase would directly affect SSMU staff salaries.

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### Risk Factors and Resource Implications

Increased base fees may pose an economic risk to the student body as they will be responsible for paying to the Society. However, the additional gains will allow SSMU to expand the quality and quantity of its services and this will likely close the gap as students take advantage of these services. Further, it must be noted that, if this base fee increase does not pass, the SSMU will be pushed into further financial peril.

To resolve its financial difficulties without an increased contribution from Members, the Society will likely have to drastically reduce its operational scale. This reduction could directly affect specific operations, services, and programs that the SSMU offers to its members such as Gert's Bar, support for clubs & services, political representation, advocacy, and support, as well as all events and activities that foster student life on and off campus.



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### Sustainability Considerations

This motion is in line with the SSMU's responsibility in long-term planning of finances to ensure year to year financial stability as mandated within the Sustainability Policy. As the base fee increase serves to better compensate unionized staff, it also supports aspects of the Society's social sustainability efforts. However, the SSMU recognizes the additional financial burden on the student body.

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### Impact of Decision and Next Steps

Should this motion be approved, the referendum question in this motion will be forwarded to Elections SSMU for review and approval.

Per the IRs of Elections, the SSMU Executives, in collaboration with the SSMUnion Executives, will assume the responsibility of campaigning for a "Yes" vote on this referendum question.

Should the base fee increase be approved by referendum, SSMU will be able to maintain and expand its operations, better providing services to its membership, while continuing to provide its employees fair compensation for their work. The funds from this increase will be entirely dedicated to the salaries of unionized employees, allowing these to match market value and providing a salary floor. This would liberate a significant part of the overall operational budget to address current financial needs at SSMU and allow the growth of new initiatives and programs.

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### Motion or Resolution for Approval

Be it resolved that the Legislative Council approve the Policy in Appendix A.

Be it resolved that the Legislative Council approve the following question for the Fall 2023 referendum period:

*Do you agree to the increase of the non-opt-outable SSMU Base Fee by approximately 71% as indicated in Appendix A to cover the salaries of the unionized staff of the SSMU, and facilitate the operations of the SSMU as a whole with the understanding that a majority "No" vote would likely result in a drastic reduction of SSMU's operations and services?*

Be it resolved that the Legislative Council approve, and recommend to the Board of Directors for approval, the report in Appendix A.



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Be it resolved, that the final wording of the referendum question be reviewed and approved by Elections SSMU before it appears on the Referendum Ballot.

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<b>Results of the Vote</b>	In favour	( )
	Opposed	( )
	Abstain	( )

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## Appendix A : Relevant Appendix

Outcomes of Proposed Fee Increase		
Full Time Students	Faculty Group A*	Faculty Group B**
Current	\$68.48	\$50.31
Increase for Unionized Salaries	\$48.73	\$35.09
<b>Proposed Winter 2023 Base Fee</b>	\$117.21	\$85.40
Part Time Students	Faculty Group A*	Faculty Group B**
Current	\$33.24	\$24.14
Increase for Unionized Salaries	\$24.37	\$17.54
<b>Proposed Winter 2023 Base Fee (part-time)</b>	\$57.61	\$41.68

\*Faculty Group A: Arts, Architecture (B.Sc. Arch), Education, Engineering, Music, Management, Nursing, Physical & Occupational Therapy, Science, and Arts & Science.

\*\*Faculty Group B: Law, Dentistry, Medicine.