



Bureau du président du conseil de l'AEUM

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.

SSMU Office of the Speaker

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MOTION REGARDING THE REFERENDUM QUESTION OF THE INCREASE OF RADIO CKUT'S FEE, PENDING THE ADDITION OF THE 2022-2023 OPERATING BUDGET 2023-10-26

Submitted for: 2023-10-26

| | | | |
|----------------------|--|------------------------|--|
| Submitted to: | SSMU Legislative Council | Document no.: | LEG-PUB-MOT-2023-10-26-007 |
| Moved by: | Nadia Dakdouki Vice-President (Student Life) | Current Status: | <input type="checkbox"/> FOR APPROVAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> APPROVED <input type="checkbox"/> POSTPONED <input type="checkbox"/> COMMITTED <input type="checkbox"/> NOT APPROVED |
| Seconded by: | Natan Sakajiri Arts and Sciences Representative | | |

Issue Radio CKUT's fee, an opt-outable fee at \$4-5 per undergraduate student per term (see Appendix A for breakdown), has not increased since 2012. This motion will propose a fee increase of \$2 to be submitted as a Referendum question.

Background and Rationale Radio CKUT is a nonprofit campus-community radio station that was built by McGill students out of the club Radio McGill in 1987. The station broadcasts 24/7 music, news, and arts and culture programming on 90.3 FM as well as online at ckut.ca. It is run by staff and volunteers from the McGill and greater Montreal communities who work together to power a diverse grid of programming that spans many languages, genres, and perspectives.

McGill has no journalism program, and technical skills like audio recording and production have historically had barriers to access. CKUT is a training ground for McGill students to shape audio production and podcasting skills, with no prior experience necessary. Members have access to the station's fully equipped broadcast studio, podcasting room, and mobile audio kits, as well as hands-on training provided by a small core team of CKUT staff. The



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cost of maintaining these resources has steeply increased in recent years, but CKUT's fee levy has not been adjusted in over a decade. CKUT is an official SSMU ISG (Independent Student Group) and therefore collects a fee levy and is able to renew and increase it. A raise in CKUT's fee levy is necessary for the station to continue serving the McGill community. The increased money will go directly towards the projected deficit that CKUT is facing due to over a decade of inflation and rising costs.

Alignment with Mission

This motion aligns with SSMU's mission to improve the quality and accessibility of education and promote social, cultural, and personal opportunities for the SSMU Membership. It does so by ensuring the continued existence of CKUT, a campus media organization founded and powered by students using the airwaves to gain journalism skills, and contribute to cultural and social conversations on campus and across Montreal.

Consultations Completed

Consultation with the Policy and Advocacy Coordinator assisted us in the structure and drafting of the motion to ensure its appropriate format. Consultation with the Vice-President Student Life provided further edits on the motion, and consultation with the Vice-President Operations and Sustainability provided us with feedback on what to include for the budget documents. Consultation with the student membership of CKUT Radio informed us of the value the station provides via hands-on technical training and opportunities that are lacking elsewhere at McGill, underlying the importance of CKUT's financial sustainability.

Risk Factors and Resource Implications

Should this fee increase not pass, CKUT Radio will be hindered from operating its services at full capacity and will be facing a financial deficit that threatens its long-term existence. A possible perceived risk of the fee passing could be an increased financial strain on students, however, students would still only be paying \$2.00 extra, which is a fraction of the cost of audio production courses and equipment/studio rentals virtually anywhere else in the city.



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Sustainability Considerations

This motion considers the economic sustainability of Radio CKUT's operations, which influences social sustainability on campus. CKUT's mandate and history of keeping McGill students informed and involved with discussions happening on and off-campus is essential to a vibrant campus and community and a healthy student democracy.

Impact of Decision and Next Steps

If this motion is approved by the Legislative Council, the question proposing the fee increase will be submitted to the Referendum to be voted on by the student body.

Should the renewal of this fee pass, Members will be charged an additional \$2.00 per term. This will allow CKUT Radio to counter its deficit in order to robustly continue operations.

Motion or Resolution for Approval

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

Whereas, CKUT is a 24/7 campus-community radio station based out of McGill University that broadcasts at 90.3 on the FM dial since 1987, and streams online for listeners across the globe,

Whereas, CKUT provides experiential learning opportunities to undergraduate students who are interested in gaining hands-on skills in podcasting, journalism, and audio production, and connects students to the local music scene,

Whereas, CKUT produces content by and for McGill students on news, music, arts and culture, and other topics both within and outside of the McGill context,

Whereas, CKUT listeners recognize its value to the McGill and Montreal communities by consistently voting it among the top radio stations in Best of Montreal polls,

Whereas, CKUT operates as an Independent Student Group of the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU),

Whereas, the costs associated with operating a campus-community radio station increase on an annual basis, especially with the extreme inflation of recent years,



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Whereas, had CKUT's original 1988 fee levy of \$4.00 a semester been tied to inflation, it would be \$8.83 today,

Whereas, CKUT's fee has not been increased in over a decade,

Whereas, CKUT's fee is entirely opt-outable, and is detailed in Appendix A,

Do you agree to increase Radio CKUT's opt-outable fee by \$2.00 to a total of \$6-7 (see Appendix A), starting in Winter 2024 and ending in 2027 (inclusive), with the understanding that a majority "no" vote would result in the inability to sustain current programming and service levels?

Be it further resolved, that the Legislative Council recommend the ratification and final review of the wording of this question to the SSMU Board of Directors, and to Elections SSMU, before it is presented on the Ballot.

Be it noted that the Deputy Provost (Student Life and Learning), also known as DPSLL, has ultimate and final approval on the wording of CKUT's referendum question.

APPENDIX A

CKUT Fee Schedule
in accordance with Article 1 of this Agreement

| As of winter 2022 | | | |
|--|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Description | Part-time (9 ≤ credits/semester) | Full-time (>=9 credits/semester) | End date as specified in latest referendum |
| | Fee/semester | | |
| Undergraduate students in professional programs (Dentistry, Medicine, Law) | \$2.50 | \$4.00 | fall 2027 |
| Undergraduate students in all other faculties. | \$3.00 | \$5.00 | fall 2027 |

Results of the
Vote

In favour ()
Opposed ()
Abstain ()

Appendix A: (from CKUT's MOA with McGill)



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Appendix B:

[CKUT's 2023-24 projected budget in full,](#)

+

[a simple breakdown of the predicted income from a \\$2 fee increase, and what it will go towards.](#)

A simplified snapshot of CKUT's biggest expenses, as recommended by VP Operations and Sustainability:

| | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------|---|
| Partnerships Coordinator | 36,812.41 | This full-time role solicits advertising on CKUT as well as community/business partnerships. |
| Music Coordinator | 36,812.41 | This full-time role coordinates all of the music programming on CKUT. |
| Funding & Outreach Coordinator | 36,812.41 | This full-time role manages grants and different sources of funding, including with McGill, does social media and outreach, and more. |
| Production Coordinator | 36,812.41 | This full-time role manages the creation of radio on CKUT – maintaining the studio, |



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| | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|---|
| | | training people on equipment, teching live broadcasts, renting out equipment, and more. |
| Spoken Word Coordinator | 36,812.41 | This full-time role coordinates all of the spoken word programming on CKUT, which includes news and arts and culture programming. |
| IT Coordinator | 31,543.20 | This part-time role manages CKUT's website, online signal, phone systems, and other technical/IT systems at CKUT. |
| Financial Coordinator | 22,080.24 | This part-time role manages CKUT's payroll, taxes, invoices, budget and audit, and more. |
| Permanent Staff | 237,685.49 | Total of above [^] |
| EI expense | 4,401.92 | |
| CNT expense | 176.08 | |
| CSST | 1,496.65 | |
| QPP expense | 17,314.23 | |
| QPIP Expense | 5,216.64 | |
| QHSF | 4,842.11 | |
| Health Fund | 7,000.00 | |
| Total Benefits | 40,447.64 | Mandatory benefits/taxes/costs, like Quebec Pension, for staff [^] |
| CBC - tower rental | 35,009.70 | |
| CTV - transmitter site | 16,809.60 | |
| Hydro - transmitter | 4,080.00 | |
| Outside Rental Expenses | 55,899.30 | Broadcast tower rental/expenses/etc. make our FM signal run for radio [^] |
| Bell Line Rental (Sub-Carrier) | | |
| SOCAN | 21,000.00 | CKUT has to pay SOCAN fees for playing Canadian music on air. SOCAN pays |



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| | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|---|
| | | Canadian musicians. CKUT has a mandate from the CRTC to play Canadian musicians on air. |
| General Maintenance | 1,500.00 | Building maintenance |
| Rent | 59,340.38 | Rent paid to McGill |
| Occupancy Cost | 60,840.38 | Total of the above^ |

APPROVED