



Motion Regarding Approval of the Student Nutrition Accessibility Club Funding Application

Submitted for: 2024-02-01

Submitted to:	SSMU Legislative Council	Document no.:	LEG-PUB-MOT-2024-02-01-001
Moved by:	Amina Kudrati-Plummer <i>VP (Finance)</i>	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 <i>Arts and Science Councillor</i>		

Issue The Student Nutrition Accessibility Club requires an overriding of current funding regulations in order to receive the full amount of their funding request. The total amount requested is \$23557.50. \$5,000 has already been awarded by the Funding Committee.

Background and Rationale The Student Nutrition Accessibility Fund provides over 100 students facing food insecurity with 9-11 fresh pieces of produce every week. These distributions cost between \$1000-1500. In the past semester, they served over 1000+ students.

SNAC became a service at the end of the 22-23 school year, and planned to request their first fee levy in the Fall semester of the 23-24 school year, so that it could go into effect in the Winter semester. Due to a clerical error made by SSMU on the ballot, there was a delay in the funding until the Fall 2024 semester. As a result, no fee levy was raised in the Winter 2024 Semester. SNAC was relying on this money to run their service in the Winter semester.

Last year, SSMU funds had reached an all time high, and efforts were made to reduce the surpluses that had accumulated over COVID. These efforts



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were successful, and the surpluses of a majority of the funds were all disbursed.

At the beginning of Fall 2023, the Funding Committee enacted a series of new funding regulations in order to ensure that the now limited funds would not be used up too fast. The relevant regulation to this motion is the following:

- No more than 5% of any fund, or \$5,000 (whichever is higher) can go to one group or organization in a year

The Funding Committee would like to override this rule for the Student Nutrition Accessibility Club's application.

The Environment Fund has a surplus from unused funding during the past three years which was carried over into this current funding year. Therefore, providing this funding to SNAC would not be a burden on the Society or the capacity of the Environment Fund. It is the most under-utilized fund, and the fund with the largest surplus.

Alignment with Mission

SNAC aligns with SSMU's mission to provide outstanding services to its students. It also aligns with their value of sustainability, as SNAC provides a sustainable way for students to access produce for free.

Consultations Completed

The Funding Committee, VP Finance, and VP Student Life were consulted before bringing this motion. The Funding Committee voted to override the funding regulations in place for this year, and approve the application for the full amount.

The VP Student Life and VP Finance facilitated the creation of this motion, and agreed that the funding regulation should be overruled for SNAC in this instance. The Sustainability Commissioner was also consulted and agreed that the request abides by the regulations of the fund and approved the overruling.



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Risk Factors and Resource Implications

The amount being asked, \$18,557.50, is a significant amount of money, and many smaller initiatives could be funded using this sum.

However, based on previous years' funding disbursements and current projections, it is highly unlikely that the Environment Fund will be depleted. Additionally, there is a surplus of funds from previous years (as described above). Thus, this motion poses very little risk to future funding applications.

So far this year, we have only received 5 applications to the environment fund, totalling \$11,166.95 in disbursements. There is still over \$100k left in the Environment Fund for this year.

Sustainability Considerations

The project promotes a culture of sustainability on campus as they offer sustainable food choices (unpackaged fruits and vegetables) to encourage students to substitute away from highly processed, plastic-encased options. They also create a holistic culture of sustainability on campus by offering three on-campus cooking workshops to encourage limited waste and conscious consumption. All workshops share the overarching goal of teaching students how to cook with the in-season local produce they receive from the distribution initiative.

Approving this motion would enable SNAC to continue providing their sustainable produce options to students, thus creating a more sustainable life for students off campus, as well as overall encouraging more sustainable choices.

Impact of Decision and Next Steps

If approved, the funding application will be approved and the funding amount will be disbursed to the group.

The Funding Commissioner will process the application and inform SNAC.

Motion or Resolution for Approval

Be it resolved that the Legislative Council approves the remainder of the Environment Fund application #7053 submitted by Student Nutrition Accessibility Fund for \$18,557.50 (\$5,000 has already been paid.)



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Results of the Vote	In favour	(18)
	Opposed	(0)
	Abstain	(1)

APPROVED



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Appendix A : Budget

SSMU SNAC Service Budget - WINTER 2024				
General Category	Specific Expense	Revenues	Expenses	Notes
Bank Balances		\$ 50.00		
Fee Levy	Winter 2024 Fee Levy	VOID		Due to a clerical error on SSMU's behalf, SNAC will be unable to receive fee funding in the Winter 2024 semester.
Workshops & Market Trips	January zero-waste workshop		\$ 200.00	
	February "Cooking Sustainably" Workshop		\$ 200.00	
	March "Reusing Old Produce" Workshop		\$ 200.00	
Volunteer appreciation			\$ 750.00	\$50 each, for around 15 volunteers.
Advertising/marketing	Advertising - posters		\$ 22.50	
Equipment/venue fees	Distribution supplies		\$ 60.00	
Miscellaneous	Volunteer Appreciation		\$ 300.00	
Grocery distribution	Grocery orders		\$ 21,875.00	We plan to purchase an average of \$1562.50 of produce per
		Projected		
	Total Revenues	\$ 50.00		
	Total Expenses	\$ 23,607.50		
	Surplus/deficit	\$ (23,557.50)		

Appendix B : Application

Student Group Name

Student Nutrition Accessibility Club

Type of Group

SSMU Service

Group's Mandate



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To increase access to nutrition on campus.

We have been a club for 10+ years and became a SSMU service in Winter 2023.

We were supposed to receive funding for our operations in Winter 2024, but due to a SSMU clerical error, we now have no income and still are expected to operate as a service.

Funds Available

Environment Fund

Requested Amount

\$ 23,557.50

Retroactive or Proactive?

Proactive: event/project has not occurred yet

Name of Event (if applicable)

Good Food Box Operations, Workshops, Conferences

Date of Event (if applicable)

01/15/2024

Description



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SNAC provides over 100 students facing food insecurity with 9-11 fresh pieces of produce every week. These distributions cost us between \$1000-1500 (please see sample past invoices). In the past semester, we served over 1000+ students. We also ran three workshops to educate the community on how to utilize their produce and other fun things -- such as meal prepping and growing your own lettuce. All of our activities are FREE (since we are a service we cannot charge) and open to ALL members of the McGill community.

Your money is going to ensure that we can run these operations again. Unfortunately due to the SSMU error, we have no funds. Without this money, we will not be able to operate at all next semester.

Our mission strongly aligns with that of the Environment Fund. Students require access to affordable groceries that are both sustainable and healthy, and food insecurity is a massive problem on McGill campus. Food systems are intricately linked to the environments in which they form. Everything from agricultural methods, transportation, packaging, and food waste impact the environment. Truly sustainable nutrition requires not only access to environmentally-friendly food, but access to healthy food ("The Nutrition Source"). While many students are aware of the environmental and health impacts of their food choices, sustainably-sourced and nutritious food is often unaffordable on a student budget.

By coupling our Good Food Box distribution with our sustainable nutrition workshop series, we are able to not only tackle food insecurity among students by providing healthy, sustainably-sourced food, but also ensure students have the knowledge to efficiently use that food in a low-waste way, thereby reducing the carbon footprint of their food consumption.

Additionally, by supporting a local business, Terra Bella, through the Good Food Box, we contribute to the local economy and foster community connections. The project's focus on providing nutritious food encourages healthy eating habits and reduces reliance on processed and packaged foods, thereby minimizing waste and promoting personal and environmental well-being.

This is an issue identified by our previous research and by the fact that there is strong demand for our program. We consistently "sell out" and intended to increase capacity for the Winter semester (unfortunately that seems unlikely with the issue of the money).

The literature reveals that at least 40% of food available for consumption in Canada is wasted (Abdullah 2013). Agriculture accounts for about 20% of carbon emissions worldwide (Prastiyo 2020). Both CBC and Global News have published reports of high on-campus food costs at McGill (Jonas



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2023; Carpenter 2023). This disproportionately affects healthy and sustainable food, forcing students to select cheaper and often unhealthier options. These alternatives are often less sustainable, with plastic packaging contributing to high waste. This past semester, in McGill dining halls, a 170 gram box of raspberries cost \$15, a vegetarian caesar salad cost \$17.69, and a small fruit cup cost \$6.37.

In conclusion:

- a) We would like Environment Fund money to fund our Good Food Box distribution weekly to reach 100+ students and run three nutrition workshops to increase knowledge of healthy eating and sustainable practices on campus.
- b) Our project promotes a culture of sustainability on campus, we offer sustainable food choices (unpackaged fruits and vegetables) to encourage students to substitute away from highly processed, plastic-encased options. We also create a holistic culture of sustainability on campus by offering three on-campus cooking workshops to encourage limited waste and conscious consumption. All workshops share the overarching goal of teaching students how to cook with the in-season local produce they receive from our distribution initiative. In the Fall, we ran:
 - * A September workshop that featured a tour of the Education Garden, a salad-making workshop using local veggies, and a lettuce planting workshop. Twenty participants learned about urban agricultural opportunities and strategies for using local, in-season produce to reduce their carbon footprint.
 - * Our October workshop offered a wonton-making workshop at ECOLE. Fifteen students learned about a seasonal vegetarian recipe and understood the communal and cultural value of food, encouraging more conscious food consumption.
 - * Our November workshop was a soup-in-a-jar workshop in which students prepared a dry-mix bean soup that could be cooked later. Workshop leaders and participants had a chance to exchange meal-prepping and storage tips to reduce waste.
- c) As for the environmental impact:
 - All of our produce is received loose in recyclable boxes. If we have any extras, they are given to waitlist participants. We have never had extra produce after a distribution.
 - We do not provide our own bags -- students are asked to bring their own tote bags. This has never



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been a problem!

- We never have plastic at our events. The GFB is proudly plastic free and Gold certified from the SPF.

- Our workshops received Gold certification as well. We utilized the plate club for our materials and tools. For soup-in-a-jar - students were asked to bring their own jars to encourage recycling.

d) With full funding, we were expected to utilize economies of scale to reach 2000+ students this semester (1900 from our weekly produce distribution, 100 from our workshops). The campus overall benefits as students have access to healthy options, and many have commented on the positive benefits of our program. Additionally, this initiative combats food insecurity as produce is expensive! Some comments and statistics we have received from our surveys this past semester:

- 87% believe that our program has helped reduce anxiety when thinking about meals for the week.

- 98% believe that the Good Food Box has increased their consumption of healthy produce.

"The Good Food Box has helped me by reducing meal planning stress and anxiety around exams and midterms"

"I have an eating disorder and this has helped me enormously"

"Helped supplement my diet with vegetables! Rice and beans are cheap but not very exciting."

"Since fresh vegetables are expensive, GFB has helped me a lot to manage my monthly budget."

"An amazing initiative to help students! This club should be expanded and shoutout for all the good work!!"

"I wanted to take a moment to express my sincere gratitude for the wonderful work you all are doing. Your colorful and friendly team creates such a welcoming atmosphere, and your warmth and generosity truly make a difference. I've been a vegetarian for 11 years, but I must admit that my vegetable selection hasn't always been as diverse as I would like. Since I realized about SNAC, I've not only been introduced to a broader range of organic and sustainable products that I may not normally buy because of their higher prices, but I've also found myself adopting a healthier eating habit. It's not just about the quantity of vegetables in the basket (though it's always a delightful surprise to see what's inside each week and how many), but it's the culture of sustainability and organic living that



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you promote. I've even started buying additional veggies to mix and match with what I receive, resulting in more greens on my plate every day."

Thank you for your consideration.

Event Accessibility Information

Good Food Box distributions occur in the SSMU flex space (room 106) which requires a minor ramp to enter the building but requires no elevator past that. Gender neutral bathrooms are present in the University Centre.

Students are able to register online for the event the Friday before distribution, and to increase accessibility, we take students off the waitlist in a lottery fashion.

Event Budget Spreadsheet

[SNAC-2023-24-Service-Budget-GREENFUND.xlsx](#)

Annual Budget Spreadsheet

[SNAC-2023-24-Service-Budget-GREENFUND.xlsx](#)

Were you able to upload the spreadsheets?

Yes

Quotes/Receipts

[Invoice-3318-combined.pdf](#)



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Were you able to upload your quotes/receipts PDF?

Yes

Student Group/Club

Student Nutrition Accessibility Club



Account Number

N/A



Transit Number

N/A



Institution Number

N/A



Applicant Email

snac.mcgill@ssmu.ca



Mailing Address

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Additional Information

Please note that as a SSMU service we do not have an individual banking account

We understand that this is a lot of money.

Unfortunately, our hands are tied. We did everything right in trying to get this fee approved. SSMU made an error and now we are being told that we have to source all of this money BY OURSELVES with little to no assistance. WE have to do the applications. WE have to do the collaborations. It goes on.

Our team would still like to provide our service, but genuinely without this money we are out of luck. The SPF will not fund us next semester as we already received their funding for the Fall to test our operations. SSMU doesn't have any money to advance to us, even though we are expected to receive our fee money.

I am requesting leniency here. I understand that this limits the rest of the clubs for the semester. Unfortunately, without this money, our service (which reaches 1000+ students a semester and was slated to reach 2000 next semester) WILL NOT OPERATE in Winter 2024. Period. We have no other sources of funding.

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