



Bureau du président du conseil de l'AÉUM

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.

SSMU Office of the Speaker

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MOTION REGARDING QPIRG-MCGILL FEE INCREASE REFERENDUM QUESTION 2024-10-03

Submitted for: 2024-10-03

Submitted to:	SSMU Legislative Council	Document no.:	LEG-PUB-MOT-2024-10-03-004
Moved by:	Hugo-Victor Solomon <i>VP External</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:	Seraphina Crema Black <i>Music Representative</i>		

Issue

QPIRG-McGill is seeking an increase in the opt-outable QPIRG fee by \$1.75 per student per semester from \$5.00 to \$6.75. This fee increase will address the deficit of QPIRG-McGill and continue its services to students.

Background and Rationale

The Quebec Public Interest Research Group - McGill (QPIRG-McGill) is a student-initiated, student-run organization and Independent Student Group with the mandate to engage McGill students in the Montreal community with a commitment to social and environmental issues.

QPIRG's fee levy has not increased since 2015 despite inflation rising by 25%.¹ This financial imbalance has forced a reduction in programming and services capacity, including diminished student research funding, applied skills workshops, and community engagement initiatives. For example, we have had to suspend discretionary funding requests for campus groups from February 2023 onwards, and we could not offer our summer research stipends this year.

This fee increase would allow for the further development and expansion of employment and applied research opportunities for McGill students that connect them to the broader Montreal community. This includes programmes like the Community-University Research Exchange (CURE), the

¹ <https://www.bankofcanada.ca/rates/related/inflation-calculator/>



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Free Textbook Loan Program, Rad Frosh, the Alternative Research Library, and various popular education initiatives. The fee increase is necessary for maintaining fair pay for student work-study positions, continuing funding for working groups, and investing in accessible programming.

Already, thousands of SSMU members participate in and benefit from QPIRG-McGill's services, which includes over 30 events per year in collaboration with the SSMU External Portfolio and the role of Popular Events and Education Coordinator per an MoA, and maintaining a collection of over 8000 books, zines, and periodicals in the alternative library.

Alignment with Mission

The core of QPIRG-McGill's mandate is to support social and environmental justice initiatives on campus. QPIRG-McGill provides accessible alternative education workshops, funding, and resources for students interested in environmental and social justice and community research. This aligns with SSMU's commitment to providing services to strengthen the educational, cultural, environmental, political, and social conditions of our Members, in addition to SSMU's positions on Education, Environment and Environmental Sustainability, Ethics, Equity and Social Sustainability, Research, Gender Equality, Indigenous Equity, and Student Life.

Consultations Completed

This motion was developed in consultation with the VP External (Hugo-Victor Solomon), the Popular Education Commissioner (Emily Hardie), the Policy and Mobilization Researcher (Emma Bainbridge), the Community Engagement Researcher (Tess Cameron), and the Policy and Advocacy Coordinator (Simone Brown). All of those consulted provided QPIRG with information on the process of running a referendum question. The Policy and Mobilization Researcher offered guidance and feedback on how to write and format this motion. QPIRG's Finance and Administration Coordinator additionally ran an external financial audit. The Policy and Advocacy Coordinator was consulted to ensure proper formatting and structure in the motion writing process.

The Vice President Finance, Pauline Jolicoeur approved both the amount of the increase and the overall motion on 2024-09-19.



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Risk Factors and Resource Implications

If this motion is not passed, QPIRG-McGill's ability to support valuable social and environmental justice efforts on campus will be severely limited. Materially, a majority no vote would force QPIRG to reduce funding for working groups (including Solidarity Across Borders, Black Healing Centre, and the Trans Patient Union), to eliminate student research stipends, and scale back popular education events like Rad Frosh, School Schmool, Spring Into Action, and Culture Shock. Additionally, we would no longer be able to offer discretionary funding to small-scale community projects. Therefore, this loss of valuable campus programming would negatively impact SSMU's membership.

Should the motion pass, undergraduate students would pay an additional \$1.75 per semester to the QPIRG opt-outable fee. We understand that student fees going up amidst tuition hikes and increased cost of living will create an additional financial strain for students. However, we would like to emphasize that this is an opt-outable fee, and that a small fee increase would allow us to continue offering the same quality of free programming and services.

Sustainability Considerations

QPIRG-McGill's work, made possible by this fee, serves to promote an inclusive and equitable community that addresses systemic power imbalances within society and fosters a culture of anti-oppression, in accordance with section 3.2. of [the Sustainability Policy](#). QPIRG-McGill also provides funding and resources to groups advocating for social and environmental sustainability in Montreal such as Climate Justice Montreal.

Impact of Decision and Next Steps

If this motion is approved by the Legislative Council, the question included in Appendix A would be included in the Fall 2024 Referendum Period by Elections SSMU and sent to the Membership for approval.

If the question is approved by the membership, the fee increase will go into effect as of the Winter 2025 semester. This will allow QPIRG to maintain and augment the standard of their current programming and services for students.

Motion or Resolution for Approval

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Council approves the following question for the Fall 2024 Referendum period:



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Do you agree to the increase of the opt-outable QPIRG-McGill fee from \$5.00 per semester to \$6.75 per semester for full time students and from \$2.50 per semester to \$3.37 per semester for part time students? The fee will apply starting in Winter 2025 and ending in Winter 2030, at which point it will be brought back to the Membership for renewal. A majority 'no' vote would result in the continuation of the fee at its current rate.

Results of the Vote

In favour	(UNANIMOUS)
Opposed	()
Abstain	()

APPROVED



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Appendix A : Referendum Question

Do you agree to the increase of the opt-outable QPIRG-McGill fee from \$5.00 per semester to \$6.75 per semester for full time students and from \$2.50 per semester to \$3.37 per semester for part time students? The fee will apply starting in Winter 2025 and ending in Winter 2030, at which point it will be brought back to the Membership for renewal. A majority 'no' vote would result in the continuation of the fee at its current rate.

Appendix B: Budget Information

Projected QPIRG Budget

QPIRG Revenue	Estimated Amount	Notes
Student fee levy (88.0% of funding)	\$365 410	
Employment grants (8.4%)	\$35 055	Work study, Young Canada Works, Canada Summer Jobs, etc.
Other revenue (3.6%)	\$14 860	Discretionary funding, event income

QPIRG Expenses	Estimated Amount	Notes
Payroll (56.5% of funding)	\$234 779	3 full-time positions, 4 part-time positions, 3 full-time positions in the summer
Programming costs (19.9%)	\$82 640	
Administrative costs (13.6%)	\$57 713	
Opt-out costs (11.0%)	\$40 193	

Fee Yearly	13.50
Fee Semesterly	6.75



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Actual budget for QPIRG this past year:

QPIRG Revenue (2023/24)	Estimated Amount	Notes
Student fee levy (91.0% of funding)	\$293 185	
Employment grants (7.5%)	\$24 268	Work study, Young Canada Works, Canada Summer Jobs, etc.
Other revenue (1.5%)	\$4 899	Discretionary funding, event income

QPIRG Expenses (2023/24)	Estimated Amount	Notes
Payroll (63.1%)	\$203 910	3 full-time positions, 2 part-time positions, 3 full-time positions in the summer
Administrative costs (15.1%)	\$48 800	
Programming costs (11.1%)	\$35 902	
Opt-out costs (10.7%)	\$34 553	