

MOTION REGARDING PLATE CLUB FEE INCREASE 2026-10-08

Submitted for: 2026-10-08

Submitted to:	SSMU Legislative Council	Document no.:	LEG-PUB-MOT-2026-10-08-004 (to be assigned by Steering)
Moved by:	Acadia Knickerbocker <i>VP Clubs & Services</i>	Current Status:	☐ FOR APPROVAL ☒ APPROVED ☐ POSTPONED ☐ COMMITTED ☐ NOT APPROVED
Seconded by:	Charley Letham <i>Arts Representative</i>		

Issue

The Plate Club is a SSMU Service that provides free dishware to groups across campus in order to promote sustainable practices and prevent useless waste through disposable dishes. The Plate Club operations have expanded such that the current student fee amount can no longer support its operations, therefore requesting an increase to its opt-outable fee.

Background and Rationale

The Plate Club is a sustainability initiative that provides free rentals of reusable dishware to various groups in the McGill Community, particularly to SSMU clubs and services, with the goal of reducing waste generated by the usage of disposable products. Currently, the Plate Club operates through an opt-outable fee of \$0.14, charged to all undergraduate downtown campus students. The fee was established in Winter 2019 and was approved for renewal by referendum as of Winter 2023.

The fee generates around \$5,670 of revenue for the Plate Club. In the 2025-2026 academic year, \$5,000 was budgeted for the General

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Coordinator's salary. The service has very few other expenses including purchasing additional inventory and small volunteer appreciation events.

During 2025-2026, the General Coordinator exhausted their contract hours prior to the end of the contract term. Increased usage and operational growth requires additional labour hours. In the 2026-2027 year, the General Coordinator will likely exhaust their contract hours before the Winter 2027 semester.

Operations have expanded significantly over time. The General Coordinator now manages a team of 8 executives and nearly 40 volunteers, as compared to a team of only 3 volunteers and no executives in the 2024-2025 year.

According to available records, 2025-2026 was the highest year of Plate Club usage since Plate Club was founded in 2007, with over 29,000 dishes borrowed, 119 completed orders, and 83 groups, consisting of student, faculty and community initiatives, having benefitted from the service.

Alignment with Mission

This aligns with the SSMU's mission to provide sustainable services to its membership and its intention to increase sustainability efforts across student events.

Consultations Completed

- GAC
- HR
- President
- VP Finance
- Plate Club General Coordinator
- Chief Returning Officer at Elections SSMU

Risk Factors and Resource Implications

Should this motion or the contained referendum question not pass, the Plate Club will have insufficient funds to continue its current operations, forcing the service to scale back by 50% or more. Importantly, this operational deficiency will persist in future years.

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**Impact of
Decision
and Next Steps**

If approved by the Legislative Council, the Referendum question as described below will be put forth to the membership during the Fall 2026 Referendum.

If approved by the membership, the increased fee will begin in Winter 2027.

**Motion or
Resolution for
Approval**

Be it resolved, that the following question be added to the Fall 2026 Referendum ballot:

“Do you agree to the increase of the opt-outable SSMU Plate Club Fee from \$0.14 per student per semester to \$0.35 per student per semester beginning in Winter 2027 until Winter 2028 (inclusive), at which point it will be brought back to the Membership for renewal, with the understanding that a majority ‘no’ vote will result in scaling back operations of the Plate Club”

Be it further resolved, that the SSMU Legislative Council adopts the actionable aspects of this question and that any grammatical or legal changes necessary do not need the re-approval of the Legislative Council.

**Results of the
Vote**

- ☐ In favour ()
- ☐ Opposed ()
- ☐ Abstain ()

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Appendix A : Plate Club Budget 2025 - 2026

[Plate Club Budget 2025-2026](#)

The Plate Club had a total student fee revenue of \$5,810.25 in 2025-2026 at 0.14c per student.

Appendix B : Plate Club Increase Budget

Total Costs:

Staff Salary & Benefits (approximate) <i>15 hours per week during the school year when SSMU is operating and 5 hours per week for maintenance over the summer</i>	\$11,864.06
Maintenance of other costs per 2025 - 2026 Budget	\$2020.00
Total Approximate Cost:	\$13,884.06

Assuming the same opt-out rate of 2025-2026, a fee of 0.35c per student would result in a budget of \$14,525.

We have slightly overestimated the cost per student to ensure that even in a year with a larger opt-out rate, the Plate Clubs' fixed costs (primarily staffing) would be covered.