

The A4SE Petition – Environmental Action Resolutions at a Glance!

These Resolutions aim to compel the SUO to take more actionable initiative for environmental and social causes.

Note: This document is just a subjective explanation and interpretation of the original petition and has no legal value. Any legal interpretation of the Resolutions shall only be based on the original petition, dated August 25th, 2024, that can be found here:

https://ubc.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_38lKA4ysfxz1VvU

Resolution 2 Summary: Last year, SUO Executives piloted the Smart Meals program, allowing students to buy \$5 lunches from the UNC every Tuesday and Thursday. This year, the new Executives want to change the Smart Meals program so that \$5 meals are only offered on the last week of each month. On other weeks, The Well will provide a free breakfast for students once a week. Free breakfast is great, but a lot of students don't get to campus very early, and the proposed breakfast foods aren't always compatible with people who are vegan, gluten free, or halal. The original Smart Meals program worked well and was popular and could have easily been continued and expanded. Instead, the SUO is changing the program entirely. This Resolution will require the SUO to return to the original Smart Meals program.

Resolution 2 Full Text (Ordinary):

Whereas, the original pilot Smart Meals program was a successful and popular campaign, and

Whereas, the Smart Meals 2.0 program fails to follow the standards set by its predecessor, and

Whereas, the Smart Meals program must be continued irrespective of the composition of each Board of Directors, then

Be it resolved, the SUO shall ensure the continuation of the Smart Meals program by:

1. dedicating a separate budget line of a minimum \$60,000, and
2. forming a Committee, consisting of 1 Executive Director, 3 Non-Executive Directors, and 3 Students-at-Large, with the purpose of executing the Smart Meals program through gathering feedback from previous iterations, negotiating with the vendors, forming a student engagement strategy, and collaborating with the University and other external partners for research, sponsorship, and execution,

3. preparing relevant amendments to the Bylaws and Regulations to establish the above Committee as a Standing Committee, and
4. adhering to the three pillars of affordability, sustainability, and student wellness.

Resolution 8 Summary: Student fees enable the SUO to lease the UNC space to businesses. Yet, students have no say in which businesses operate in the UNC. These businesses are meant to serve students, so students should have a say. This Resolution would require all new and renewed UNC lease contracts to be voted on by students at a General Meeting.

Resolution 8 Full Text (Special):

Whereas, the choice of UNC businesses deeply affects students, and

Whereas, the student fees enable the SUO to lease the UNC space, and

Whereas, the SUO does not currently consider direct student input in which businesses get to lease UNC spaces, then

Be it resolved, That Bylaw XIII be amended to include a new Bylaw, which shall be renumbered as necessary, and shall read as such:

“The signing of new contracts, or renewing existing contracts pertaining to the leasing of Student’s Union spaces (the UNC or any new buildings) to external businesses shall be approved through an ordinary Resolution at a General Meeting.”

Resolution 9 Summary: The SUO currently has a Regulation which recommends they align their finances with Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) investing criteria. But Regulations are easy to change, unlike Bylaws which are more permanent. Just this summer, the SUO’s RBC finance advisor suggested they re-invest in fossil fuels, despite the fact that the SUO divested years ago. This Resolution would move the ESG Resolution from the SUO Regulations to SUO Bylaws, ensuring that the SUO will actually keep its promise of being a responsible ESG investor over the long term.

Resolution 9 Full Text (Special):

Whereas, the SUO’s commitment to environmental, social, and governance considerations in its finances are codified in the Regulations, and

Whereas, Regulations can be changed easily through a Special Resolution of the Board of Directors, and

Whereas, these considerations must be adhered to irrespective of the composition of each Board of Directors, then

Be it resolved, That Bylaw XIII be amended to include a new Bylaw, which shall be renumbered as necessary, and shall read as such:

“All financial dealing of the Students’ Union shall be conducted with consideration of matters related to environmental, social and governance (ESG) risks and opportunities. Specifically, the Students’ Union will:

- a. integrate the consideration of ESG factors into the investment process as a required criterion in the selection and ongoing monitoring of active investment managers;
- b. regularly review and track the engagement of active investment managers with their investee companies and their proxy voting records on ESG related issues;
- c. obtain and evaluate annual disclosure from all active investment managers on how ESG factors are incorporated into their investment decision making processes;
- d. collaborate with other institutional investors and industry associations on ESG matters where appropriate; and
- e. disclose and publish a detailed listing of its investments annually, and report on ESG matters in the Finance Committee’s annual report.”

Resolution 10 Summary: Universities across Canada are invested in various environmentally and socially destructive corporations. Student unions have the ability to positively influence the investments of universities. This Resolution would require the SUO to use its power and propose a strategy to the British Columbia Federation of Students for influencing universities to adopt better investment criteria.

Resolution 10 Full Text (Ordinary):

Whereas the SUO and many Student Societies in British Columbia are dedicated to responsible financial planning based on environmental, social and governance criteria, and

Whereas many universities in British Columbia fail to follow their Student Societies in this endeavour, and

Whereas the SUO has the power and opportunity to exert positive influence on the University of British Columbia and other universities in BC, then

Be it resolved, the SUO shall propose a Resolution to the British Columbia Federation of Students (BCFS) to adopt a strategy in lobbying the universities in BC to adopt environmental,

social and governance criteria in their investment strategies and divest from environmentally and socially destructive companies.