

# Vote for Student Life

Vote YES on  
Feb 27th & 28th



## Frequently Asked Questions

### The Quick Details (TL;DR)

Student-led organizations make up the heart of campus life, creating spaces for connection, belonging, and growth through *student-led radio, news, campus events, community meals, climate action, advocacy, social justice, student politics, grant opportunities, club funding and more*. While we continue to provide **services by students, for students**, our impact shrinks each year due to rising costs. Vote YES this referendum to protect our groups from inflation and support a vibrant and connected campus community where all students can thrive.

#### What am I doing?

Voting YES to 1 referendum question to make a big impact on Student Life!

#### [VOTE NOW!](#)

#### What is in the question?

- (1) **Establishing increases** at \$1.50 per full-time student & \$0.75 per part-time student each semester for four independent student societies and \$12 per full-time student & \$6 per part-time student for SFSS, **totalling \$18/\$9 overall each semester** (They haven't been raised for inflation for 9-30 years!)
- (2) **Indexing these fees to inflation** annually, starting fall of 2026. Fees haven't matched inflation for our groups, putting essential student services and societies at risk. Adjusting and indexing ensures robust resources, protects vital programs, and future-proofs our campus community.

#### When am I voting? How do I submit my vote?

**February 27th-28th** in the SFSS General Election. Go to [this voting link](#) or click the link sent to your SFU email. You will need to log in using your SFU computing account to vote.

#### How else can I support?

- (1) Pledge to vote YES | [Make your pledge](#) | [Vote Right Now](#)
- (2) Tell your friends and peers to vote YES | [Here's a guide to help with that](#)
- (3) If you are a club or union representative, endorse our referendum question and spread the word to your community | Here's our [endorsement form](#) & [comms toolkit](#)

**Do you have a website?**

[Check out our LinkTree!](#)

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# What are you asking me to do?

Vote **YES** for the following referendum question in the upcoming election period (February 27th – 28th) to support a cost of living adjustment for our student-led organizations:

Whereas CJSF, Embark, the SFPIRG, the SFSS, and the Peak are independent student societies at SFU that are at the heart of student life and are a crucial vehicle for building a more vibrant campus culture. These societies encompass the campus radio, sustainability efforts, social justice advocacy, student events, and our campus newspaper;

Whereas fee revenues have been static for many years (in some cases since the 1990s), and inflation (i.e. rising costs) has limited their ability to serve students and enhance campus life;

Whereas the independent student societies were created “by students, for students,” empowering us to make this campus our own and allowing us to address our evolving needs, by creating opportunities for connection, belonging, wellness, and personal and professional growth;

**Do you support (1) the fee levies for CJSF, Embark, the SFPIRG, and the Peak being increased in the fall of 2025 by \$1.50 for full-time students and \$0.75 for part-time students; (2) given the range and scale of its mandate, the SFSS fee levy being increased in the fall of 2025 by \$12 for full-time students and \$6 for part-time students; and (3) all of these groups' fee levies being increased annually by the rate of inflation (as reported by the Government of British Columbia) beginning in the fall 2026?**

## ...What is a referendum?

Referenda (singular: referendum) are [resolutions about the SFSS's activities](#). They are decisions made by the student body during elections. They require a majority vote to pass.

## And what else happens at the elections?

At these elections, you will do two things:

- 1) Elect a new SFSS Executive Committee
- 2) Vote on Referendum Questions (what this FAQ is about)

The election will be carried out online via SFU mail. You'll receive an email that will allow you to vote, first voting for members of the new Executive Committee, then voting "yes" or "no" on [referendum questions](#), including the one we're talking about.

Make sure to vote "yes" for our question. Then, submit your votes and you're done!

## I need a little bit more info on this referendum question...

Okay! Let's get into it. The proposed fee increase for four Independent Student Societies – Embark Sustainability, Simon Fraser Public Interest Research Group (SFPIRG), CJSF 90.1 FM (the Campus Community Radio), and The Peak (the Student Newspaper) is:

- **\$1.50** per full-time student
- **\$0.75** per part-time student  
*per semester*

**\$1.50 x 4 = \$6.00** (full-time)  
**\$0.75 x 4 = \$3.00** (part-time)

4 for the four independent student societies:  
CJSF, Embark, the Peak, and the SFPIRG.

For the Simon Fraser Student Society (SFSS) membership fee:

- **\$12** per full-time student
- **\$6** per part-time student  
*per semester*



<b>\$12.00</b>	<b>\$6.00</b>
<b>\$6.00</b>	<b>\$3.00</b>
<hr/>	
<b>\$18.00</b> (full-time)	<b>\$9.00</b> (part-time)

Together, this means an overall increase of \$18 per full-time student and \$9 per part-time student each semester. Starting in fall of 2026, these fees would be indexed (increase) annually by the rate of inflation as reported by the Government of British Columbia.

## Why adjust fees and index to inflation? Why aren't you just asking for a dollar amount?

Our fees—established 9 to 30 years ago—simply haven't kept up with the rising cost of living. Most of our groups last increased our fees in the 90s and 2000s **when most undergrads were born**. That's 21 seasons of Grey's Anatomy ago!!



**Every year fees have remained the same as costs increase**, eroding the ability of all of our groups to continue to serve students. Over decades, the effect on our budgets and resources has been enormous. According to the Bank of Canada [inflation calculator](#), inflation has increased by:

**26%** since Embark's last fee increase in 2016,  
**42%** since CJSF's last fee increase in 2008,  
**48%** since SFSS's last fee increase in 2006,  
**57%** since the Peak's last fee increase in 2003,  
**84%** since SFPIRG's last fee increase in 1995!!!

What was a **dollar** for SFPIRG in 1995 is now just **54 cents** today. By linking fees to inflation, we ensure that student groups can continue providing the same level of resources and support without needing to ask for larger increases later. It's a fair way to keep up with rising costs gradually. Indexing fees to inflation is crucial to:

- **Maintain** the quality and quantity of programming, services, and resources.
- **Expand** student events, programming and initiatives as demands grow.
- **Protect** vital programs and guarantee that student societies continue to thrive for generations.
- **Secure** long-term financial health for these organizations, covering rising costs.

By staying aligned with inflation, students can ensure a **stronger student life** with **consistent support** for the campus programs we all rely on. By supporting this referendum, you not only address the real costs these groups face today but also help **future-proof** our student community—safeguarding their ability to **serve** and **represent** students **effectively** for years to come.

## Why is the SFSS asking for a different dollar amount than the rest of the societies?

The [SFSS \(Simon Fraser Student Society\)](#) is the **largest student organization at SFU** with the broadest range of programs and responsibilities to support and enhance student life. They provide a wide range of services, events, and resources that require significant funding to operate. For example, **they manage major initiatives like advocacy campaigns, larger-scale student events, and essential services like maintaining the SUB (Student Union Building) and student health plan**. They also have a bigger team of staff members to support these programs and ensure they run smoothly. Their larger budget reflects the size and scope of the work they do for students.

In addition to the society's unique scale and scope of operations, rising costs due to inflation and increased demand for services also plays a significant role. In recent years, **the costs of maintaining and improving these services have risen significantly**. Inflation has driven up the prices of goods and services, including utilities, wages, and event supplies. At the same time, **student usage of SFSS services has increased**, further straining resources. For example, more students are utilizing the SUB for studying, events, and activities, and there is a higher demand for mental health, dental, and other support services provided through the student health plan.

The SFSS's request for increased funding reflects these financial pressures and their commitment to maintaining high-quality services for all students. The funding adjustment will ensure they can continue to meet the growing needs of the student body while addressing the rising costs of operating effectively.

## Can I opt-out of these fees? What if I don't want those benefits or can't afford it?

The fee adjustment is designed to increase annually by the rate of inflation which ensures that the services and programs we provide can continue to be maintained and improved without drastic cuts. The increase will match the cost of living, so **it won't be a large jump year-to-year**, but rather a consistent, manageable adjustment here forward (**typically just cents at a time!**)

If you're ever in a position where the fees are burdensome or if you'd prefer to opt-out, that's totally ok! Even if you don't use these services directly, voting YES ensures that they remain available for those who do need them. **You can support our referendum and then opt-out of most services individually based on your interests and needs.** Here's our opt-out information across groups:

**Embark Opt-Out Info:** "All members may request a full fee refund within the first 15 business days of each semester. Refunds may be provided later in the semester at the discretion of Directors."

**The Peak Opt-Out Info:** "Any Student may, within the first 14 days of classes, present a copy of their course registration and request a refund of the Subscription Fee paid for that Semester. The refund shall be paid within 14 days of the request."

**SFPIRG Opt-Out Info:** "A member shall cease to be a member of the Society... in the case of an ordinary member, on written resignation and receipt of a refund of the member's membership fee paid in that semester, in which case membership shall resume in the next semester the student enrols in a class at Simon Fraser University."

**CJSF Opt-Out Info:** A member may opt out of membership in CJSF Radio by requesting to withdraw their membership by coming by the station in person during the first calendar month of each semester – SUB Room 1420. Fees will be refunded provided proof of enrollment is presented.

### **SFSS Opt-Outs**

SFSS has opt-out options specific to certain levies. Explore the levies list at the link above!

# So who are you, anyway? (about our societies)



## CJSF 90.1 FM Radio | Diverse – Independent – Yours.

CJSF is the independent, volunteer-run campus/community radio station located in the SUB on SFU's Burnaby campus. We are a Do-It-Yourself outlet for the diverse voices and sounds of our community, both on-campus and around Metro Vancouver. As a CJSF volunteer, you can work on-air hosting radio shows, work behind the scenes in production, produce videos, cover local issues and arts, and reach out to the wider community. CJSF has been providing training and volunteer opportunities in media production to SFU students and members of the general public since 1966!

Grow and develop life skills, experience and opportunities that encourage your personal and professional growth. CJSF is:

*Diverse* – we provide a platform to bring unique and individual voices, perspectives, opinions to the broader conversation through broadcasting where there are no barriers to participation.

*Independent* – we are not beholden to specific ideologies or points of view and this allows for us to stretch minds and hearts, provide counter-information to the mainstream narrative, and tell a different story than the one of the dominant culture so that your community is more accurately represented.

*Yours* – we are grassroots, not-for-profit, and volunteer-run, and everyone who contributes to the station by way of funding and or participation is a stakeholder in our operations.



## Embark | Empowering students for lasting sustainable change.

Embark Sustainability Society's mission is to create a hub that empowers and resources SFU students and allies in their sustainability journeys. We serve transformative communities by centring anti-oppression, decolonization, and equity in impactful programming, events, and initiatives. Through this work, we spark dialogue and drive action to dismantle oppressive frameworks within institutions and our interconnected climate and food systems. Embark currently offers students monthly community kitchens and climate workshops, semesterly gardening cohorts, and has run food rescue weekly food distribution since 2016. Embark engaged 2090 students in 2024, providing 1700 meals through our food justice programs. Each year 60 volunteers join us through our programs and student collectives, in addition to paid student positions and governance opportunities.



## SFPIRG | Engaging students in social and environmental justice.

The Simon Fraser Public Interest Research Group (SFPIRG) is a student-funded and student-directed resource centre dedicated to social and environmental justice. SFPIRG was set-up by students on SFU's Burnaby campus in 1981. Our mission is to engage students in social and environmental justice, and we support the community through research, education, community building, action, and organising. Students can join the SFPIRG board of directors, start an action group to

get funding and staff support for a social justice issue you are working on, join a volunteer collective, relax in the student lounge, and attend programming and events that offer training and learning opportunities in all areas of social justice!



### **SFSS | Working together to improve the student experience.**

The Simon Fraser Student Society (SFSS) is a student-led organization that represents and advocates for the interests of the 25,000+ undergraduate students at SFU. We are your not-for-profit support network and voice at SFU and provide services and support to make your student life better. The mission of the SFSS is to advocate for students, build student power, and provide resources and services that represent, connect and benefit our membership.



### **The Peak | SFU's independent newspaper, by students for students.**

*The Peak* has provided a platform for students to publish their work and voice their perspectives since 1965. As an independent society, we platform issues that affect SFU students and community, including investigating concerns and holding the university accountable. We understand how news media can contribute to harming marginalized groups and are dedicated to uplifting underrepresented communities. Our weekly issues are available for free in print and online, we hire around 24 paid student jobs, pay students for their contributions and student governance opportunities.

## **Wait, aren't you all funded through SFU?? → Our independence from the university and how our funding works**

**SFU's independent student societies are funded by students, for students.** The SFSS, Embark, SFPIRG, The Peak and CJSF Radio are all funded by relatively small fee levies voted on and approved by SFU students. The independence and accountability this provides means that we work in the service of students, student life and student goals first. **None of the operational funding these organizations need to survive comes from SFU.** **These are YOUR organizations – we're here for you and accountable to you.**

## **Sure, so what are you *doing* with the money?**

### **CJSF will be...**

- Providing training and support to help you share your voice with the world and speak truth to power through your own radio program with access to professional broadcast tools, equipment and studios
- Producing video content; e.g., Studio 6 Live sessions
- Hosting events to help you meet friends, make connections, and build community
- Upgrading studio spaces and equipment so students have access to the latest professional media and broadcast tools.
- Offering personal development to augment your university education and prepare you with real-world experience for life after university
- Providing access to a comprehensive music library with thousands of vinyl LPs, CDs, 7" vinyl and digital content, which is constantly growing
- Develop a new user friendly website offering more services and easier access to content

### **Embark will be...**

- Promising & creating stable (\$100-\$500) student bursaries and (\$100) grocery reimbursement programs per student per semester, open to domestic and international students
- Creating more paid student positions (we currently have two!) at living wages

- Expanding resources for student groups taking climate action on and off campus, through direct collaboration, climate action grants, and more
- Improving and expanding food distribution efforts
- Improving and expanding food growing and gardening infrastructure
- Supporting our existing programs:
  - [Food Rescue](#)
  - [Community Kitchens](#)
  - [Climate Workshops](#)
  - [Learning Garden Cohorts](#)
  - [Student Collectives](#)

### **The Peak will be...**

- Increasing wages for student positions (student positions deserved a fair pay rate, and with increasing cost of living, the need for a wage increase should increase with time)
- Hiring an Indigenous consultant twice a year for our Indigenous-focused issues (Orange Shirt Day in the fall and Indigenous History Month in the summer)
- Maintaining the website to make it more student user friendly, easier to find/read articles
- Running more workshops for students, events for contributors & readership building
- Conducting newspaper stand maintenance across all campuses

### **SFPIRG will be...**

- Restoring our programming budget so that we can host more and larger community events, more well-resourced workshops/educational programs, and more collaborations that create bridges between student groups and local organizations
- Purchasing resources for the center and maintaining a consistent stock of supplies (e.g. stationary & art supplies, food & snacks, new books, etc.)
- Creating more student employment opportunities

### **The SFSS will be...**

- Ensuring the SUB remains a vibrant hub for student activities, including study spaces, meeting rooms, and event-hosting
- Administering the student health and dental plans to ensure access to essential healthcare services
- Funding campaigns and projects that address key student issues, such as affordable education, mental health, and sustainability
- Hosting events like socials, cultural celebrations, and networking opportunities to foster a sense of community
- Providing grants and resources to support diverse student-led clubs, societies, and organizations
- Ensuring the SFSS has sufficient staff to manage its growing operations and meet the demands of students effectively
- Investing in upgrades to facilities and programs to ensure they are inclusive and accessible to all students

## Okay, how does voting YES benefit me and other students?

Our student organizations are drivers of a vibrant student life, providing irreplaceable opportunities for students to engage, grow, shape their communities (on and off-campus), build friendships, and have fun. Voting YES ensures that we are able to continue that work long into the future. **This vote isn't just about maintaining what we have now—it's about protecting and improving the services that make your student experience better.**

## International students & students in residence should vote YES because...

Living away from home can be challenging, and having access to community events, mental health support, and spaces for students to connect is crucial for making that transition smoother, especially for those living away from home for the first time. Our organizations also understand the unique opportunities and challenges of studying in a new country and help international students build meaningful university experiences, through:

- **Events and workshops** that create opportunities for community building and connection with other students
- **Inclusive drop-in spaces** that create and maintain a campus atmosphere where everyone feels supported and included
- **Research support** for international students who may be navigating unfamiliar academic expectations

- **Mental health supports** for dealing with student stressors away from your support systems
- **Volunteer and work opportunities** that open doors to future work
- **Community meals**, cooking workshops, and food growing opportunities for students making their own food for the first time

## Marginalized students should vote YES because...

The services funded by these fees are specifically designed to support diverse needs and create a more inclusive, equitable campus environment. Voting **YES** allows programs and resources addressing the unique challenges faced by marginalized students—such as those related to race, gender, sexuality, disability, and socio-economic background—to continue and grow, including social justice **workshops and resources, mental health support, safe spaces, and political and social organizing**, helping students from all backgrounds have a space to feel safe and focus on what matters to them.

## Student club members should vote YES because...

By voting **YES**, club members are helping maintain spaces and resources that support their organizations, from meeting rooms to funding for events. The fees also support programs that encourage collaboration across different clubs, foster new ideas, and provide networking opportunities. For students involved in clubs, this means continued access to the support they need to grow their initiatives and have a lasting impact on campus.

## How can I find out where the money goes? What if I don't agree with the way funds are being spent?

Great question! All our groups will be allocating funds differently ([here's a quick overview](#)). There are several ways you can keep track of our spending:

- 1) **Annual General Meetings** (AGMs) are a great opportunity for students to learn about how funds are allocated. During AGMs, we present budgets and provide details on where the student fees are spent. This is an open forum where you can see exactly how the money is being used for services, programs, and other initiatives.
- 2) **Board of Directors meetings** are where decisions about the budget and programs are made. These meetings are open to all students, and you can

have a direct say in how funds are managed by participating, asking questions, or even running for a position to help influence decisions.

- 3) **Getting involved with student governance** is something to explore if you feel strongly about a particular issue. Consider running for a position on our Boards or other committees, where you can have a direct say in how funds are used. The more involved you are, the more influence you can have on ensuring funds are spent in a way that aligns with your values and priorities.

## Okay, I'm ready to vote but...how?

The election will be carried out **online from Thursday, February 27th to Friday, February 28th**. Go to this [voting link](#) or click the link sent to your SFU email. You will need to log in using your SFU computing account to vote. You'll receive an email that will allow you to vote, first voting for members of the new Executive Committee, then voting "yes" or "no" on a variety of referendum questions, including ours!

Once you've voted for the Executive Committee members, make sure to also vote on the referendum questions.

Make sure to **vote YES**. Then, submit your vote and you're done!

## How else can I support the campaign?

1. [Pledge to vote!](#)
2. Share the [pledge link](#) and FAQ with 5+ friends, peers, and classmates (any SFU undergrads). You can use the [scripts here!](#)
3. If you are a club or union rep, endorse our referendum question and spread the word to your community, here's our [endorsement form](#) & [comms toolkit](#)
4. Share [campaign content](#) to your social media story
5. Volunteer to support the campaign (Click 'YES' on the pledge form that you want to volunteer!)

# Contact Us

Complete our [contact us form](#) to reach out!