



MEMO

From the office of the...

ASSOCIATE VICE-PRESIDENT FINANCE

TO: Student Representative Assembly
FROM: Alexandra Johnston
SUBJECT: Finance Committee Engineers Without Borders Review
DATE: November 7, 2018

Dear Members of the Student Representative Assembly,

The Finance Committee was satisfied with the state of Engineers Without Borders (EWB). We asked them questions and we were impressed with the detail in their responses. Below are the Committee's questions and EWB responses. The Committee does not recommend that they go to referendum.

In the JF budget line, what is the stipend used for?

- In the JF budget line, the stipend is used to provide day-to-day costs for the Junior Fellow (food, transportation etc.) in whichever country in Africa they are working in during the summer.

Two years ago, you had \$4,000 carried over for your operating budget. For the 2018-2019 year, you only have \$100, how do you plan to operate with \$4,000 less this year? Further, what changed resulted in such a dramatic shift?

- I believe there was a slight misunderstanding in the information. The budget we sent to you is for the current 2018-2019 academic year. We had approximately \$4127 in carryover from last year (2017-2018). However, being a non-profit organization, this carryover by our standards is unusually high. On average, the carryover over the last few years was around \$1000, which is reasonable.
- This year, given our current plans and projects' scope, which involves significantly more community engagement and partnerships (with Empowerment Squared, the Sustainability Office etc.) the end of academic year balance as it stands is \$100. However, we are already in the process of looking into getting further funding (from MSU, MES etc.) to get that up to \$1000. This has always been a good amount for carryover, such that the next year's team can get started right from the summer of 2019, before receiving their yearly funding in Fall 2019/Winter 2020.
- On a related note, we plan on bringing up the MSU Budget Request Form (separate from the ancillary fee) in our meeting on November 11. We mentioned that we use the ancillary fee exclusively for the JF program and all our other operations are executed with separate funding (from Faculty of Engineering, MES, external sponsors etc.), however we did not receive any MSU funding separate from the ancillary fees.

As a non-MSU service who received funding, you are required to have financials easily accessible for students. When do you plan to update your website with the current budget info? Further, the current data seems to be mis-labeled, do you have a plan to update this?

- As for making the financials easily accessible to students, our website has been going through a revamp through EWB National Office since early summer, and unfortunately they have not been able to complete it. We plan on publishing our financials from last year (2017-2018), along with an executive report on the website as soon as National Office gives us the green light to go ahead and start using it (within 2-3 weeks). As for the financials of 2018-2019, it will be posted on the website on April 16, 2019 (which is the day after our last JF installment). In the interim, if you think it is appropriate, we can post the 2017-2018 financials and 2018-2019 plans on our Facebook page to be accessed by students. Also, which data are you referring to as mislabeled? Please let us know about this.

Is there any specific reason why you have received less funding this year from the faculty?

- This year because of our large turnover, we decided with the Faculty of Engineering that we will start with \$1500 less (we got \$5000 previously), however they will fund us further as needed, which is one way we can ensure a carryover amount of \$1000 for the 2019-2020 team.

How many general students are involved with EWB? Is it just the 1 JF?

- The JF program is only one of our 5 projects this year, as you have seen on the budget Excel sheet we sent to you. The other projects are: Leadership Development, Food Systems, Global Engineering Conference, Policy & Advocacy. In addition to these projects, we have a general space to engage students who cannot commit to a project, but still want to learn about the projects (and their impact areas) and participate in activities EWB does (which are all discussed in a general meeting every Thursday at 6:15 pm @ Hamilton Hall H305). Putting together members from all these projects and general members, we have an **active** membership of approximately **65 students** this semester ("active members" is defined by us as members who put in 1 hour or more of their week into EWB related meetings and/or activities). We are expecting this number to reach 100 by end of the academic year, as we have about 300 new students (interdisciplinary) sign up for our e-mail list this year.

How many students are reimbursed with the \$3,700 in reimbursements on your budget line?

- It depends on how many students register for National Conference. This year the conference is in Montreal during the weekend of Jan 18-20, and registration + hotel cost will be \$550 per person. Given historic data and interest, at least 10 students will register (since it is a big upfront cost). We will **subsidize equally** (not completely reimburse) the cost of them attending the conference with the budget we have. We expect students to pay the registration cost through EWB National Office up front and we subsidize them when they complete the following steps:
 - 1. Attend a pre-conference meeting where we discuss what we expect to get from the conference, bring to it and bring back from it.
 - 2. Actually attend the conference.
 - 3. Bring learnings from the conference back to McMaster. This is done through providing a reflection during one of our general meetings, as well as writing a joint piece for the Engineering magazine for sure, as well as the Silhouette if they allow it.

Sincerely,

Alex Johnston

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