

# Reserve Fund Policy

## Policy Information

Oversight Body: Budget and Finance Committee

Date Passed by Council: December 7, 2023

Date of Next Review: July 2022

Title of Related Policies, Bylaws, Legislation: Financial Policy; Bylaw 5.3; Bylaw 7; Equity Policy

## Purpose

This policy lays out the principles that guide the Union's reserve fund usage in order to align the organization's financial management with its overarching objectives. The Reserve Fund Policy will be implemented in conjunction with the other governance and financial policies of the Union, and is intended to support the goals and strategies contained in these related policies and in strategic and operational plans.

## Scope

This policy shall apply to all Union Reserve Funds. It shall guide both the review and use of current funds and of any new reserve funds created through DSU referenda or other programs.

## Policy Statement

### Principles

- 1.1. The Union, as a representative body and a membership-based organization, has a responsibility to act in the best interests of its members with regard to reserve fund use. All decisions around the use of reserve funds must be made in a responsible and democratic manner and in compliance with all existing policies, bylaws, and legislation.

### 2. Specific Purpose Reserve Funds

- 2.1. The Union shall maintain Specific Purpose Reserve Funds, composed of fees collected through relevant levies. Where established in policy or official agreements, individual Specific Purpose Reserve Funds may also include donations, contributions from the University, and monies otherwise allocated to the Reserve Funds.
- 2.2. Funds collected through levies are managed by the Vice President, Finance and Operations, and the relevant department head(s). Levy funds that go unused during the fiscal year in which they were collected shall become Reserve Funds.
- 2.3. All Reserve Funds shall be maintained and allocated in accordance with their original intents, or with their referendum questions, where applicable (Appendix A). The purpose and scope of each Reserve Fund is as follows:
  - 2.3.1. DSU Renovations Fund: This reserve was established to accumulate funds for the renovation of the Student Union Building. This reserve is funded through student fees collected through the DSU Renovations Fee, which is collected at a rate of \$25 per full-time student and \$20 per part-time student, per semester.
  - 2.3.2. DSU Facility Improvement Fund: This reserve was established to support overall improvements to the Student Union Building, equipment, computers, and furniture. This reserve is funded through student fees collected through the DSU Facility Improvement Fee, which is collected at a rate of \$4.25 per full-time student and \$1.00 per part-time student, per semester.
  - 2.3.3. DSU International Health Plan Reserve Fund: This reserve was established to create an Emergency Bursary program for which all Dalhousie full-time international students may apply. This reserve is funded through the DSU International Health Plan Fund Fee, which is collected at a rate of \$1.50 per month from each student enrolled in the International Student Health Plan.
  - 2.3.4. DSU Survivor Support Reserve Fund: This reserve was established to fund a DSU-operated support center dedicated to service delivery, education, and advocacy addressing sexualized violence. This reserve is funded through the DSU Survivor Support Fee, which is collected at a rate of \$5.00 per full-time student and \$3.00 per part-time student, per semester.
  - 2.3.5. DSU Equity and Accessibility Office Reserve Fund: This reserve was established to address issues of equity, accessibility, and inclusion on campus. This reserve is funded through student fees collected through the Equity and Accessibility Fee, which is collected at a rate of \$2.00 per full-time student and \$1.00 per part-time student, per semester.
  - 2.3.6. DSU Sustainability Office Reserve Fund: This reserve was established to create a sustainability office at the DSU. This reserve is funded through student fees collected

through the DSU Sustainability Office Fee, which is collected at a rate of \$2.00 per full-time student and \$0 per part-time student, per semester.

2.3.7. DSU Student Accessibility Reserve Fund: This reserve was established to create an accessibility fund, which was used to create an Accessibility Bursary program, issue Accommodation Grants, and fund capital purchases which enhance the accessibility of the SUB. This reserve is funded through student fees collected through the DSU Student Accessibility Fee, which is collected at a rate of \$1.75 per full-time student and \$1.00 per part-time student, per semester.

### 3. Use of Reserves

- 3.1. The following general steps will be taken in identifying appropriate uses for Reserve Funds:
  - 3.1.1. The Vice President, Finance and Operations shall, in consultation with the Director of Operations and/or the Director of Research and Outreach, assess the need for access to reserve funds and confirm that the proposed use is consistent with the purpose of the reserves as described in this Policy;
  - 3.1.2. Where appropriate, consultation with stakeholders will be undertaken in compliance with Union policy;
  - 3.1.3. The Vice President, Finance and Operations shall research and analyze the reason for use, the availability of other sources of funding to mitigate the use of Reserve Funds, and evaluation of the time period that the funds will be needed and replenished;
  - 3.1.4. No motion regarding the use of Reserve Funds shall be brought to council for debate or decision prior to the preparation of a proposal as per this policy.
- 3.2. Based on the research and consultation undertaken under 3.1, the Vice President, Finance and Operations shall develop a proposal for the use of the reserve funds in question. The proposal shall include a proposed budget for the project to be undertaken using reserve funds, an explanation of how the project falls within the scope of the Reserve Fund in question, and information about any research and consultation undertaken to arrive at the proposal. Where feasible and appropriate, additional documentation such as pricing quotes or reports may be attached.
- 3.3. The Vice President, Finance and Operations shall submit the to the appropriate body depending on the value of the proposal. Said body shall have the power to amend, approve,

and reject the proposal and to authorize transfer from the appropriate Reserve Fund. Regardless of the body making the decision, all decisions about reserve fund proposals shall be reported to the Budget and Finance Committee and to Council.

3.3.1. Proposals valued up to \$1,000 shall be submitted to the Executive Committee.

3.3.2. Proposals valued between \$1,000 and \$10,000 shall be submitted to the Budget and Finance Committee.

3.3.3. Proposals valued over \$10,000 shall be submitted to Council.

3.4. The Vice President, Finance and Operations, shall be responsible for monitoring the Reserve Funds and ensuring they are used only as described in the proposal.

3.5. The Vice President, Finance and Operations, shall keep a record of all proposals and actual uses of reserve funds. Where requested by the Budget and Finance Committee or Council, the Vice President, Finance and Operations will report on plans to replenish the Reserve Fund from which monies were drawn

#### 4. Accounting for Reserve Funds

4.1. The Reserve Funds will be recorded in the audited financial records as Council-Designated [TITLE OF FUND] Fund(s). Reserves will be maintained in the general cash and investment accounts of the Union, unless otherwise determined at the discretion of the VP Finance and Operations, Director of Operations and the Financial Controller.

#### 5. Policy Review

5.1. This policy shall be reviewed by the Budget and Finance Committee once every two (2) years. The policy may be reviewed or amended more frequently based on the direction of the Executive Committee, Council, or the Budget and Finance Committee.

## Appendix A

### DSU Equity and Accessibility Office Levy Question (2014):

Do you support the implementation of a new per-semester fee of \$1.00 for full-time students and \$0.50 for part-time students? This question pertains only to Halifax campuses

Be it further resolved the funds be used in order to address issues of equity, accessibility, and inclusion on campus. This could include issues relating to physical and non-physical disabilities, language and discrimination based on sex, gender, race, ability and anything else by? [sic]

(Passed)

### DSU Survivor Support Levy Question (2017):

Do you support instituting a fee of \$2.50 per semester for full-time students and \$1.50 per semester for part-time students to fund a robust DSU-operated support centre dedicated to service delivery, education and advocacy addressing sexual assault, violence, and harassment? This question applies only to the Halifax campus and applies to the fall, winter and summer semesters.

(Passed)

### DSU Sustainability Office Levy Question (2007)

Do you support the implementation of a levy of \$2 per full time student per year to fund the creation of a sustainability office and a sustainability coordinator?

(Passed)

### DSU Accessibility Fund Levy Question (2002):

Do you support a levy of \$1.75 per full-time student and \$1.00 per part-time student every year to be used to establish a student accessibility fund?

(Passed)