Purpose of the policy

SFSS Accessibility Policies

Simon Fraser Student Society

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THIS MANUAL

The purpose of this policy is to establish accessibility standards in the areas of communication & information, physical space, customer service, events & meetings and employment & training.

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESS

This policy shall be reviewed annually or upon significant changes to the organisation.

Where no change is required, the President shall sign the policy indicating it has been reviewed. No changes shall be made to this policy without considering the impacts of those changes on people with disabilities. Students with disabilities shall be consulted before any changes are made to this policy.

Where need or opportunities for improvement arise, policy shall be created, changed, or repealed in the following way:

1. The office responsible for the policy outcome shall propose amendments to the Executive Committee.
2. The Executive Committee shall review the proposed changes with the department head.
3. The proposal shall then be submitted to the Accessibility Committee (AC) for comment, review, and approval. The Committee shall consult with students with disabilities, including clubs, constituency groups, and other student groups with a mandate to improve and/or advocate for improvements to accessibility for students with disabilities.
4. Where deemed acceptable by the AC, the proposal shall be submitted to Council for review and approval.
5. Any new, amended, or repealed policy shall be signed by the President.

POLICY STATEMENT

The SFSS Accessibility Policy (hereafter referred to as the "Policy") establishes a framework for compliance with the Simon Fraser Student Society (SFSS) commitment to accessibility.

The SFSS is committed to preventing, reducing and removing barriers to accessibility for all SFSS members, staff, guests and other visitors through our service and resource provision, including through representation and advocacy efforts. The SFSS shall strive for universal design wherever possible, providing or facilitating accommodations in a timely, respectful and confidential manner in other instances

APPLICATION & SCOPE

The Policy applies to SFSS staff, Council, Council Committees, in the areas of SFSS spaces, communications, services and events and meetings. SFSS Student Unions, constituency groups, and clubs are not subject to these policies, but are encouraged to follow them in the interest of inclusivity. Employment and training policies apply to SFSS staff and Council members. This policy is intended to reduce barriers to people with any disability or disabilities, and uphold the BC Human Rights Code as it pertains to people with disabilities.

PRINCIPLES

The fundamental principles underlying this policy include:

- Freedom from discrimination,

- Respect for diversity of ability,

- Respect for dignity and independence through ensuring accommodations meet the unique needs of the person requesting them, while also striving for universal design for all persons,

- Respect for a person's need for accommodation, regardless of whether their disability is apparent,

- Respect for privacy and confidentiality,

- Shared accountability, and

- Universally accessible post-secondary education

ACCESSIBILITY POLICIES

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AP-1: ACCESSIBILITY COMMITTEE

POLICY TYPE: ACCESSIBILITY POLICY		
POLICY TITLE: ACCESSIBILITY COMMITTEE		
POLICY REFERENCE NUMBER: AP-1		
Adopted: April 23, 2021 **Next Scheduled Revision: April 2024** **Previous Revisions: June 2022**		
Position	Signature	Date
President		
Board Organizer		

1.1 Please see the SFSS Council Policies – Standing Order 11 – Accessibility Committee for more details of the role this committee in ensuring an accessible SFSS

Composition
1. [Ex-Officio] President
2. [Chairperson] VP Equity and Sustainability Executive Officer as designated by Council; or, on recommendation of the Committee, another member of the Committee
3. Four Council of Councillors members
4. Minimum 2, up to 4 at-large members

Selection
1.2 The selection of students At-Large members and Councillors for this Committee shall be prioritized to students with lived experiences.

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AP-2: RECEIVING AND RESPONDING TO FEEDBACK

POLICY TYPE: ACCESSIBILITY POLICY *POLICY TITLE: RECEIVING AND RESPONDING TO FEEDBACK* *POLICY REFERENCE NUMBER: AP-2* **Adopted: April 23, 2021** **Next Scheduled Revision: April 2024** **Previous Revisions: June 2022**		
Position	Signature	Date
President		
Board Organizer		

Policy

2.1 The SFSS has procedures in place to receive and respond to feedback, which shall be posted on the **SFSS website**

Process

2.2 Feedback on the accessibility of SFSS communications, services, spaces, events and meetings are welcomed and shall be incorporated into the continuous improvement of the Policy. Feedback may be provided via telephone, email, in person, or other method and shall be accessible to people with disabilities through the provision of accessible formats and communication supports upon request.

2.3 Feedback, including requests, questions, comments, or concerns about this policy may be directed to the SFSS Accessibility Committee (AC) a**t afac@sfss.ca.**

2.4 When **conflicting access needs** arise, the SFSS shall make decisions on a case-by-case basis, and strive to accommodate all parties.

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AP-3: REQUESTS FOR ACCOMMODATION OR ACCESSIBLE FORMATS

POLICY TYPE: ACCESSIBILITY POLICY		
POLICY TITLE: REQUESTS FOR ACCOMMODATION OR ACCESSIBLE FORMATS		
POLICY REFERENCE NUMBER: AP-3		
Adopted: April 23, 2021 **Next Scheduled Revision: April 2024** **Previous Revisions: June 2022**		
Position	Signature	Date
President		
Board Organizer		

Policy

3.1 The Accessibility Committee is responsible for the administration of the Accessibility Fund

Process

3.2 Requests for accommodation can be made in one of two ways: through the **Accessibility Fund Grant Request Form**, if members would prefer to access the Accessibility Fund to book assistive technology or devices, or through the **Accommodation Request Form**, if they would prefer the SFSS to book assistive technology or devices through a preferred vendor or vendors of that service or services. Upon request, both of these forms shall be offered in an accessible format that suits the unique needs of the person requesting.

3.3 **Accessible formats** are available upon request. Accessible formats that cannot be produced by the SFSS, such as Braille documents or text transcripts of audio or visual information, may require additional time to process. These accessible formats may either be requested through **Accommodation Request Form**, or through following the feedback procedure.

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AP-4: COMMUNICATIONS & INFORMATION STANDARDS

POLICY TYPE: ACCESSIBILITY POLICY *POLICY TITLE: COMMUNICATIONS & INFORMATION STANDARDS* *POLICY REFERENCE NUMBER: AP-4* **Adopted: April 23, 2021** **Next Scheduled Revision: April 2024** **Previous Revisions: June 2022**		
Position	Signature	Date
President		
Board Organizer		

Policy

4.1 The SFSS is committed to meeting the communication needs of people with disabilities.

Process

4.2 Upon request, the SFSS shall provide or arrange for the provision of **communication supports** for people with disabilities in a timely manner if requests through the **Accommodation Request Form** are received within the posted deadline, if applicable

4.3 If members would like to book communication supports themselves, they must submit an **Accessibility Fund Grant Request Form** within the posted deadline. The suitability of an accessible format or communication support shall be determined by consulting with the person making the request.

4.4 If the SFSS determines that information or communications are unconvertible, it shall provide the person requesting the information or communication with an explanation as to why the information or communications are unconvertible. The SFSS shall educate staff that interact with students on how to communicate with people with different disabilities.

Website

4.5 The **SFSS website** , which is controlled both directly by the SFSS and through a contractual relationship, shall conform to the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 at Level AA.

Emergency Information

4.6 Any emergency procedures or plans made available to all SFSS members or available in SFSS-controlled spaces, shall be provided in an accessible format or through the use of communication supports, as soon as practicable, upon request.

Events & meetings

4.7 For all applicable SFSS events or meetings, the SFSS shall use social media and/or the **SFSS website** to communicate the following:

        (a)   Description of the Space

        (b)   Map of the Space

        (c)   Detailed Physical Access Guide

        (d)   Guest Guidelines

Please see **Appendix E** for more information. Accessible formats of these documents are available upon request.

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AP-5: PHYSICAL SPACE STANDARDS

POLICY TYPE: ACCESSIBILITY POLICY		
POLICY TITLE: PHYSICAL SPACE STANDARDS		
POLICY REFERENCE NUMBER: AP-5		
Adopted: April 23, 2021 **Next Scheduled Revision: April 2024** **Previous Revisions: June 2022**		
Position	Signature	Date
President		
Board Organizer		

Policy

5.1 The SFSS strives to make SFSS-controlled physical spaces accessible to everyone. Where barriers cannot be removed, a **Description of the Space** shall provide information on the barriers. A **Detailed Physical Access Guide** and **Map of the Space** will be provided on the **SFSS website** in order to assist people with disabilities in accessing and navigating the physical spaces.

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AP-6: CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS

POLICY TYPE: ACCESSIBILITY POLICY		
POLICY TITLE: CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS		
POLICY REFERENCE NUMBER: AP-6		
Adopted: April 23, 2021 **Next Scheduled Revision: April 2024** **Previous Revisions: June 2022**		
Position	Signature	Date
President		
Board Organizer		

Policy

6.1 The SFSS is committed to serving all of its members, including people with disabilities, in a way that respects their dignity, autonomy, and specific needs.

Process
Accommodations

6.2 Accommodations may be requested by or on behalf of people with disabilities members of the SFSS through the **Accessibility Fund Grant** or the **Accommodation Request Form**.

6.3 The use of assistive devices, assistive technology, support persons and service animals shall be accommodated when a person with a disability is obtaining an SFSS service. It is the responsibility of the person using the assistive device, technology, support person or service animal to ensure the support is operated and/or controlled in a safe manner at all times

6.4 Exceptions may occur in situations in which the support may pose a risk to health and safety of the person with a disability, or others in the space. For example, where an assistive device could put the user at risk due to its poor condition, another option will be discussed with the user.

Fees

6.5 People with disabilities shall not be charged more to access SFSS services than any
     other SFSS member.

Notice of Temporary Service Disruptions

6.6 The SFSS shall provide notice of disruptions to the following services:
    (a) Food Bank Program
    (b) U-Pass BC
    (c) Health and Dental*
    (d) Grants
    (e) Free Legal Clinic
    (f) Surrey Campus Services and Resources
    (g) Out on Campus
    (h) Women's Centre

6.7 Contingent on Studentcare Health and Dental reporting service issues to the SFSS

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AP-7: Event & Meeting Standards

POLICY TYPE: ACCESSIBILITY POLICY		
POLICY TITLE: EVENT & MEETING STANDARDS		
POLICY REFERENCE NUMBER: AP-7		
Adopted: April 23, 2021 **Next Scheduled Revision: April 2024** **Previous Revisions: June 2022**		
Position	Signature	Date
President		
Board Organizer		

Policy

7.1 SFSS is committed to making events and meetings accessible to all members, including people with disabilities, so all members can participate in and engage with the SFSS. The SFU Inclusive Events Checklist shall be used to ensure events are inclusive and accessible to all members.

Scope

7.2 This standard applies to the following meetings and events:
- (a) Council meetings and events
- (b) All Council Committee meeting and events,
- (c) Members' Meetings,
- (d) SFSS general election debates, and
- (e) Other SFSS-hosted events.

7.3 Groups, which includes clubs, student unions, and constituency groups, are encouraged to follow this standard. Upon request, event and meeting accessibility support shall be offered.

Communication supports

7.4 Communication supports are available upon request through the **Accessibility Fund Grant Request Form** or the **Accommodation Request Form**. Please see **Appendix A** for more details on what communication supports may be available.

Accessible formats

7.5 The SFSS shall provide meeting agendas for Council and Annual General Meeting (AGM) meetings in the **SFSS standard accessible format**. Accessible formats for other documents, and additional styles of accessible formats, including Braille documents, are available upon request.

Support persons

7.6 When an admission fee applies, a support person shall be permitted to attend at no charge when they are assisting a person with a disability.

Service animals

7.7 A water dish for service animals shall be available, upon request. The closest outdoor area for the animal to relieve itself shall be indicated on the relevant map.

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AP-8: EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING STANDARDS

POLICY TYPE: ACCESSIBILITY POLICY		
POLICY TITLE: EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING STANDARDS		
POLICY REFERENCE NUMBER: AP-8		
		Adopted: April 23, 2021 **Next Scheduled Revision: April 2024** **Previous Revisions: June 2022**
Position	Signature	Date
President		
Board Organizer		

Policy

8.1 The SFSS has procedures for employment and training standards, including customer service training, for SFSS staff.

Procedure

8.2 SFSS staff training shall include training on understanding people with disabilities, universal design, accommodations, how to communicate with people with disabilities, inclusive language, this Policy, and the Accessibility Fund. Incoming staff members shall be informed of the SFSS commitment to recruiting and welcoming people with disabilities to the staff team, and the SFSS commitment to serving people with disabilities.

8.3 The SFSS Council orientation shall include training on understanding disabilities, accommodations, how to communicate with people with disabilities, inclusive language, and this Policy. Incoming Council members shall be informed of the SFSS commitment to recruiting and welcoming people with disabilities to the Council, and the SFSS commitment to serving people with disabilities.

8.4 Club or student union executive training shall include training on understanding people with disabilities, universal design, accommodations, how to communicate with people with disabilities, inclusive language, this Policy, and the Accessibility Fund.

APPENDIX

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DEFINITIONS

Accommodation: The process by which suitable arrangements are made for people with disabilities, determined on the basis of information provided by the individual[1]. The onus is on the person with the disability to disclose their needs.

Accessible formats: May include, but are not limited to, large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, Braille and other formats usable by people with disabilities[2]. The **SFSS standard accessible format** is:

(a) White background with black text

(b) Sans Serif (Calibri or Arial) font

(c) Font size 24

Assistive technology or assistive device: An umbrella term that includes assistive, adaptive, and rehabilitative devices or software for people with disabilities[3]. It includes the process used in selecting, locating, and using these devices and software. Assistive devices may include **communication supports**.

Barrier: Anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of their disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice[4].

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[1] University of Toronto Accessibility Services, 2019, https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/accessibility-services/

[2] Ontario Regulation 191/11: Integrated Accessibility Standards,2016, https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/110191

[3] Development Disabilities Association, "Assistive Technology", https://www.develop.bc.ca/about-us/assistive-%20technology/

[4] Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/05a11

Communication supports: Include but are not limited to sign language (such as American Sign Language interpretation), plain language and other communication supports that facilitate effective communication, such as closed captioning services (e.g. Communication Access Realtime Translation, or CART), audio and video casting (e.g. webinars, webcasting, livestreaming) and amplification (e.g. microphones, FM systems).

Conflicting access needs: When the accessibility needs of more than one person do not work together. For example, a person with low vision who requires bright lighting versus a person who has a light sensitivity that requires dim lighting.

Disability: Is defined as long-term or episodic physical, mental, intellectual, sensory or communication needs, visible or invisible, which in interaction with barriers may hinder a person's full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

Mobility aid: A device used to facilitate the transport, in a seated posture, of a person with a disability[5].

Mobility assistive device: A cane, walker or similar aid[6].

Service animal: May be a service dog, as defined in the *Guide Dog and Service Dog Act*, SBC 2015, or a therapy or emotional support animal that can be readily identified as one that is being used by the person for reasons relating to the person's disability, as a result of visual indicators such as a vest or harness worn by the animal[7].

SFSS member: A Simon Fraser University student who is currently registered in an undergraduate course or program and has paid all relevant fees, fines and penalties levied, as per SFSS By-Law 2.

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[5] Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/05a11

[6] AODA, 2005

[7] O. Reg. 191/11,2016

Support person: Means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies the person with a disability in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods, services or facilities[8].

Universal design: A design that works for everyone. It includes the expansion of current design parameters to be inclusive of a broader range of user, regardless of their age or size or those who have any particular physical, sensory, mental health, or intellectual ability or disability[9]. Universal design puts the onus on the group offering the service, rather than the person with the disability.

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[8] O. Reg. 191/11,2016

[9] BOMA Canada:2021 Accessible Guide, How to Create Inclusive Buildings for Everyone,2021, http://bomacanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/BOMA_AccessibilityGuide_2021_Rev2-EN_201028.pdf

ACCESSIBLE EVENTS CHECKLIST

The [SFU Inclusive Events Checklist](#) will be used by SFSS staff to ensure accessibility at all events. It is recommended that all SFSS groups, including clubs, student unions, and consistency groups, use this list when planning and hosting events.

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ACCOMMODATION REQUEST FORM

This form will be used to request accessibility accommodations, which will be arranged or provided by the SFSS. The form will be available as a fillable PDF and Microsoft Word document on the Accessibility tab of the website and on the SFSS website. It will also be available in HTML format on the SFSS website, so that members requesting accommodation can follow the feedback process to submit a request with sufficient detail in a way that is accessible to them.

ACCESSIBILITY FUND GRANT REQUEST FORM

SFSS members with disabilities and any SFSS member event organizer can use the Accessibility Fund, available by applying for a grant using the [Accessibility Fund Grant Request Form](#) to increase accessibility and remove barriers to participation in Society activities for students with disabilities. Funds can be used to pay for communication supports, accessible formats, or other assistive devices, among other things. This form will be made available in fillable PDF, Microsoft Word document, and HTML formats on the SFSS website.

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SFSS Event & Meeting Accessibility

Description of the Space

The Description of the Space will provide an overview of the physical meeting space, e.g. where to find things, seating, format of the meeting or event, and any accessibility barriers in the space.

Map

The Map will feature a map of the Student Union Building (SUB).

Detailed Physical Access Guide

The Detailed Physical Access Guide will provide information on the following, with regards to SFSS spaces:

(a) Vehicular Access (including passenger zone and public transit)

(b) Exterior Approach and Entrance

(c) Interior Circulation

(d) Interior Services and Environment

(e) Sanitary Facilities

(f) Signage, Wayfinding, and Communications

(g) Emergency Systems

This guide should be used in tandem with the Map.

Guest Guidelines

Guest guidelines will provide policies for guests to follow in order to participate in SFSS meetings and events. These guidelines ensure inclusivity for all members of the SFSS.