



# MEMO

*From the office of the...*

## AVP Finance

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TO: Student Representative Assembly  
FROM: Maheera Choudhury, AVP Finance  
SUBJECT: Bylaw 9; Non-MSU Groups – EWB McMaster  
DATE: November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024

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Dear SRA,

Please find the following recommendations.

Specifically, we have the following concerns:

- 1) In a recent discussion with EWB, the Finance Committee learned that around ten universities participate in EWB Canada's fellowship program, with approximately eight students selected by the parent organization for fellowship placements. While EWB McMaster contributes \$12,500 to this program, it's important to note that if no McMaster student is selected for the fellowship, the funds are still used to support students chosen from other universities.
- 2) We would also like to bring to your attention that EWB experienced issues with accessing their bank accounts, including receiving fraud alerts when attempting to log in. Consequently, they faced delays in submitting their budgets and were unable to provide accurate figures for their 2022-2023 actuals. This situation has raised some concerns for us as the Finance Committee.
  - a. Establishing secure banking practices is essential to prevent loss of access to critical accounts. We recommend a centralized, secure password management system to store banking information and other sensitive credentials. Regular updates to the access protocol can further ensure that passwords are safeguarded and accessible only to authorized personnel.
- 3) The prior year's team did not take appropriate steps to transition leadership/operations to the current team. While current leadership is doing a great job picking up the pieces, there needs to be measures in place (i.e., guiding constitution or bylaws for the McMaster chapter) to prevent this from reoccurring in the future.

- a. A suggested system was quotas on hiring from each year for the executive team, to avoid a team too heavily comprised of upper year students who may be harder to locate after their terms.
  - b. An additional suggestion was a year rep system where there would be one designated spokesperson from each year on the team, which would also always ensure representation from each year.
  - c. To facilitate seamless transitions between incoming and outgoing executives, it is recommended that a detailed transition report SOP be developed and maintained. This report should compile essential operational information, processes, and contacts in one centralized document. By having a single resource, new team members will have immediate access to key information, minimizing disruption and supporting smooth handovers.
- 4) To strengthen collaboration and clarify expectations, it's essential to establish a formal understanding of the relationship with the parent organization. Clearly defining the parent organization's role, particularly regarding, will enhance alignment on goals and responsibilities. This understanding should be documented to avoid ambiguity and provide a reference for both current and future team members.
- 5) A well-defined understanding of the organization's constitution is crucial for compliance and operational integrity. We recommend conducting a review session with key members to discuss constitutional elements, focusing on core guidelines, roles, and procedural expectations. This effort will promote adherence to the organization's foundational principles and ensure actions align with its stated mission and values.
- 6) Given the surplus if the fellowship does not take place, we recommend that the EWB create a structured two-year plan to allocate these funds strategically. This plan should outline clear objectives, identifying areas for potential investment that align with long-term goals. A well-defined approach to managing the surplus over time will ensure that funds are utilized effectively to strengthen the EWB's impact and support its sustainable growth

Due to the recommendations, particularly the first two, the Finance Committee believes that section 3. 1. 3 of the bylaws was not accurately followed. The Finance Committee has done its preliminary questioning and the answers to our questions are attached.

Thank you,  
Maheera Choudhury  
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