

# University of Washington, Seattle

## Services & Activities Fee

### Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Request



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## Budget Request Highlights

*In this section, please list all line items for any changes in request amount greater than \$1000, along with a short description of each line item and the amount requested. For all other changes under \$1000, please list the total summed figures in a final "miscellaneous expenses" item at the bottom. Please ensure that all the SAF funded line items below and previous SAF allocation total add up to the requested amount. Our goal with this section is to provide an overview of the current financial state, along with any changes in SAF funding that are being requested this year.*

**Each unit's FY26 request may only represent a maximum increase of 6% or \$35,000 over the unit's allocation for FY25 (whichever is higher in context of the unit's FY25 allocation).**

**While we would love to fund everyone's full request, SAF is financially constrained by the Washington State Legislature. RCW 28B.15.069 limits the amount that the Services and Activities Fee (SAF) is allowed to increase each year. For FY26, the SAF amount can be increased by a maximum of 3.55%.**

Our unit's request in FY22 was **\$586,168** and our award was **\$572,168**.  
Our unit's request in FY23 was **\$585,835** and our award was **\$585,835**.  
Our unit's request in FY24 was **\$632,702** and our award was **\$604,635**.  
Our unit's request in FY25 was **\$653,005** and our award was **\$632,505**.  
Our request for FY26 is **\$670,455**, which represents a **6% (\$37,950)** from FY25.

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*In this section, please break each increase into its own sections (e.g. wage & benefits changes, increases in current employee hours/FTE, funding new positions, etc.). Example sections have been provided (you may delete the example sections).*

**Wage & Benefits Increases.....\$18,500**

The university is expected to encourage a **3% wage and benefit increase** across the university to align with state and federal labor regulations. As a unit, **we are striving to increase by 4%** to align with our values of paying people living wages.

**Student Staff Wages.....\$9,250**

Rising living costs in the Seattle/Puget Sound region, including housing, food, and child care, require us to offer **livable wages** to retain our staff. With additional funding, we will increase the **hourly base rate** to **\$22/hour** for undergraduates and **\$27/hour** for graduate students, with merit increases ranging from **\$24-30/hour** for returning student staff, based on experience and academic level.

**Professional Development.....\$10,200**

In the past two years, we've focused on **professional development** for Q Center employees, including student staff. This includes **cross-training, conference attendance, facilitation skills**, and **career preparation**. The budget covers costs for workshops, travel, and external experts, with conferences averaging **\$2000-3,000** per person and consultants charging **\$250-500 per hour**. This investment supports **career readiness** and skill development beyond traditional education.

### Full Budget Overview & Justification

*In this section, you will have the opportunity to explain your request in greater detail via the guiding question(s) below. You are encouraged to use graphs, charts, or other visual tools. Your goal for this section is to provide the SAF committee (and the public) with sufficient (and substantive) context and justification for the use of these funds.*

- 1. How are expenditures distributed across the programs and/or services your unit offers? Please provide a general overview of how much spending is allocated to each category of expense, such as staffing, materials, etc., as is applicable.**

The Q Center allocates its funding primarily to three core areas: **staffing, programmatic opportunities**, and **space maintenance**. The budget is designed to support our diverse range of services and ensure the sustainability of our resources, which serve students, staff, and faculty. We consistently supplement our operational funding with on-campus grants to enhance the accessibility and scope of our offerings.

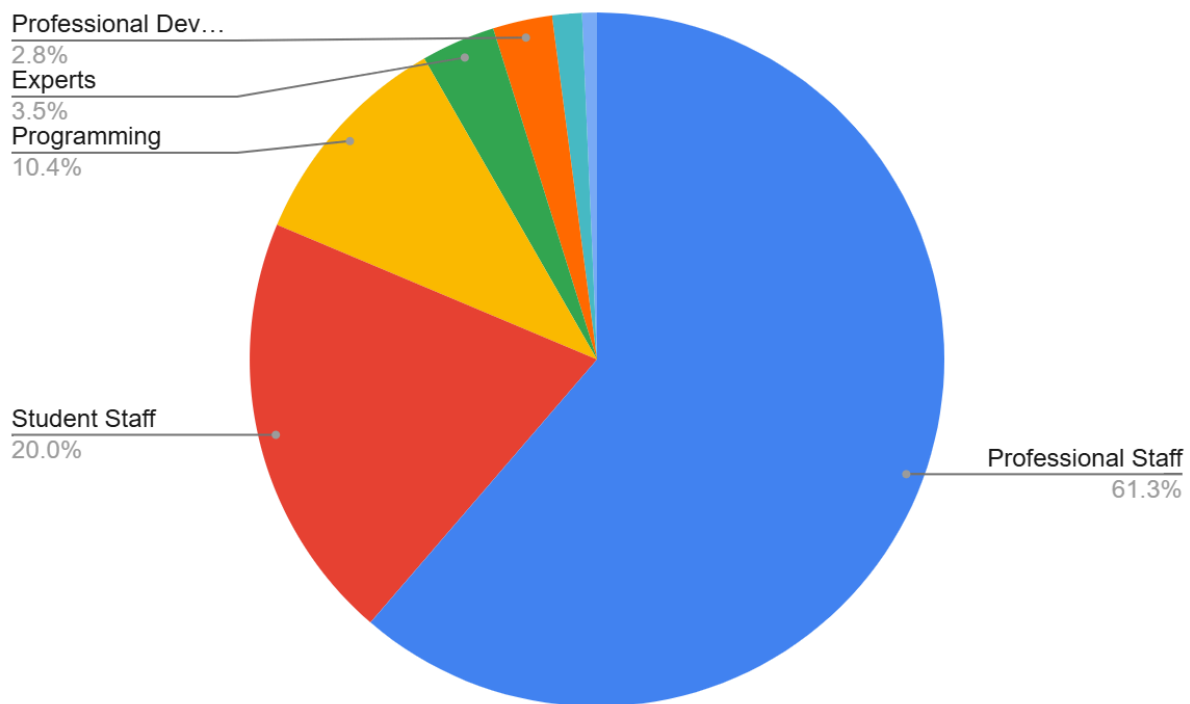


Chart 1: Q Center budget overview

### Staffing:

- **Professional Staff:** The largest portion of our budget, approximately **\$443,734** in **FY25**, goes toward the salaries and benefits of **4 full-time professional staff**. These staff handle administration, programming, fiscal management, and student engagement.
- **Student Staff and interns:** We spend approximately **\$145,000 annually** on student staff wages and benefits, covering 6 student staff and 3 interns. For **FY25**, we offset **\$6,600** through work-study funds and **\$17,305** through **CIDF funding** for internships. Additionally, the **VP of SL** provided **\$15,000** for a student staff role in FY25, which will not be available next year. Student staff are essential to the Q Center's operations, and we prioritize paying at least **\$22 per hour** to ensure livable wages. These internships also provide **real-world experience** and foster **leadership development**.

### Programmatic and Material Costs:

- **Programming Expenses:** A significant portion of the budget, approximately **\$75,000** for **FY26**, is allocated to materials and resources for student programs. This includes costs for room reservations,

catering, program materials, and events like **Lavender Graduation**. The **Marsha P. Johnson Memorial Library**, the only LGBTQ+ library at UW, is also part of this request as it reopened in **Fall 2024**. We will seek additional funds for the library through **SAF's capital request packet**.

- **Independent Contractors, Speakers, and Outside Experts:** We allocate approximately \$25,000 to bring in expert speakers and independent contractors to facilitate workshops, lectures, and other specialized programming that requires external expertise. This allows us to provide relevant and responsive programming to meet emergent needs within the community.
- **Professional Development:** Around \$20,000 is spent on professional development for both our professional and student staff. This includes attending conferences, workshops, and other opportunities to build skills and improve our services. This investment in our talented team is rooted in our ethos for creating pathways of empowerment for LGBTQ+ individuals.

#### **Space Maintenance and Operations:**

- Funds are allocated to maintain the Q Center's physical space, including office supplies, furniture, and library upkeep. We plan to allocate **\$10,000** to enhance the library and improve the space as demand grows, following **\$8,900** in spending last year. This will help account for **inflation** and adapt to student needs now that we are fully on campus.

#### **Supplemental/Miscellaneous expenses:**

- Smaller but essential expenses include gender care and menstrual hygiene supplies (around \$5,000, depending on demand), along with costs for maintaining our computer lab, a vital resource for students. While our partnership with the Campus Sustainability Fund (CSF) has reduced our need for miscellaneous funds, there are areas outside the scope of sustainability funding that we aim to address. Specifically, there is a growing demand for transfemme-affirming items, which we currently cannot fully meet. Dedicated funding for this need would allow us to better serve the full spectrum of student interest, ensuring we can adapt and respond to emerging needs in the year ahead.

In summary, the Q Center's expenditures are distributed as follows:

- Staffing: 81% of the budget (including professional and student staff)

- Programming, Professional Development, and Contractors: 17% of the budget
- Space Maintenance and Operations: >1% of the budget
- Miscellaneous expenses: <1% (see chart 1 for visual breakdown)

This allocation allows us to invest in the development and excellence of our team, particularly our QT and QTBIPOC-led staff, who play a vital role in maintaining the University of Washington's recognition as one of the top LGBTQ+-serving institutions. According to the BestColleges index, the university has "the largest overall student population — and a strong support system for the LGBTQ+ community." This investment ensures we continue providing high-quality services in a space that is welcoming and adaptable to the evolving needs of our community.

**2. Please give a summary elaborating on how SAF Funding has been used to support students** *(Please refer to dollar amounts in this discussion when possible).*

- a. In what ways has SAF funding been essential to supporting your unit's on-going services and role in the university? Please provide at least one specific example of a program/service.

**SAF funding has been essential in supporting the Q Center's ongoing services, particularly in meeting the number one need reported by students at UW: connection and community.** Our annual surveys of queer and trans students consistently highlight this as a top priority, and SAF-funded programs like Gayme Nights, Gender Discussion Group, A-Spec discussion group, ColorMode, and QMPP directly address this need. SAF funding enables us to provide staffing for these programs, which are led by our dedicated student staff. This staffing is critical to delivering consistent, high-quality support for LGBTQ+ students.

**SAF funding also covers the labor costs** of leading our **LGBTQ+ competency training program** for units across the university. This training enhances the safety and well-being of LGBTQ+ students by improving campus and classroom culture and climate.

SAF also funds **Lavender Graduation**, an event that celebrates LGBTQ+ graduates, covering essential costs like venue fees, catering, and staff labor. This event has been a tradition for 20 years and costs \$15,000–\$20,000 annually. **SAF support is vital to making these key programs and events possible, directly contributing to the Q Center's role in fostering a strong sense of community at UW.**

- b. How have your unit's services and programming changed over time, and how have you adapted the use of SAF funding?

As the student population grows and their needs change, the Q Center's services and programming have evolved. Initially focused on counseling and small social events, we now allocate SAF funds toward **program materials, outside experts, and workshops**. We've also seen increased demand for resources like **free menstrual hygiene products, gender care supplies, and mental health support**, prompting a broader use of SAF to meet these material needs.

- c. Are there programs/services that SAF has funded in the past that your unit no longer provides?

Yes, some services previously funded by SAF have been phased out or modified due to **shifting student needs** or **resource constraints**. One example is the **annual LGBTQ+ talent show**, which was discontinued after declining **student attendance** and changing interests. Additionally, while the Q Center no longer hosts its own **LGBTQ film series**, we now **partner with organizations** like Three Dollar Bill Cinema to meet this interest, such as during the Seattle Queer Film Festival (SQFF) in October 2024, where we distributed discounted tickets to UW students, faculty, and staff.

However, these changes reflect a shift towards **programming with greater impact**, such as **mental health programming, gender care support, and LGBTQ+ education** for faculty and staff.

- d. Are you currently using your unit's allocation for new programs or services that were not originally requested as an item in your SAF budget request?

Yes, we have adapted our SAF funding to include **new services** in response to evolving student needs. For example, we have increasingly focused on **mental health resources** and **gender care services**, which were not initially included in our SAF budget request. The demand for **mental health support** within the LGBTQ+ community and **inclusive gender care items** has led us to allocate SAF funding to these areas. Specifically, we are using SAF to provide **mental health workshops** and offer **gender-neutral hygiene products**, both of which have become priorities for creating a more inclusive space at the Q Center.

**3. What is the nature of your reserves/fund balances? For what purposes do you hold reserves? How were they accrued?** (Reserves/Fund balances are termed and considered differently in every unit. If you are unsure of what these terms mean or would like clarification on anything, please reach out and ask.)

The Q Center holds a modest reserve of just over \$100,000 to ensure that we have the financial flexibility to weather unexpected costs and support long-term initiatives. Our reserves are primarily used for:

- Emergency Program Costs: If we experience an unexpected or unanticipated event (such as the sudden need to replace damaged equipment), we rely on reserves to cover these expenses.
- Sustainability of Long-Term Projects: For ongoing initiatives that need financial stability, such as Lavender Graduation, reserves provide us with a buffer to manage costs during lean periods.
- Future Strategic Initiatives: As we plan for the future and anticipate growth, the reserve funds will help us pilot and scale our services and add new programs that may not be fully covered by regular SAF funding. Such was the case with our Policy Literacy Program in FY24.

The reserve has been accrued over time through **careful budget management**, including underspending in some areas, reorganization of professional staff roles, and savings from canceled programs or unspent funding in previous years. We make a conscious effort to maintain this balance to ensure that the Q Center is able to operate efficiently and respond to the evolving needs of the student body.



## Budget Breakdown

In this section, please include a breakdown of your requested revenues/expenses for FY26 and your unit's budget for FY25.

The template, instructions, and an example can be found here: [SAF FY26 Budget Breakdown.xlsx](#)

### Q Center FY26 Budget Request Breakdown

<b>BUDGET BREAKDOWN</b>			
	<i>FY26 Request</i>	<i>FY25 Expected</i>	<i>FY25 Actuals Notes</i>
<b>REVENUES</b>			
SAF Funding	\$ 670,455.00	\$ 632,504.00	SAF FY25 Award
State/University Funding	-	\$ 15,000.00	VP of Student Life support for graduate student position*
Self-Generated Revenue	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00	LGBTQ Training program + fundraising efforts
Grants/Subsidies	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 25,000.00	Campus Sustainability Fund (CSF) and Campus Internship Development Fund (CIDF)
Interest Revenue	-	-	
Other Revenue	\$ 18,500.00	\$ 18,500.00	Reserves, gifts, and fundraising efforts
Total Revenue	\$ 709,955.00	\$ 697,004.00	
Change in Revenues	\$ 12,951.00	1.86%	
	<i>FY26 Request</i>	<i>FY25 Expected</i>	<i>FY25 Actuals Notes</i>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Salaries & Wages:			
Classified	-	-	
Professional	\$ 357,442.00	\$ 340,550.00	As expected, but 2 professional staff have not actually received the merit raises budgeted for in FY25. We are hoping that those raises will go into effect retroactively.
Graduate Appointments	-	-	
Temporary	\$ 129,250.00	\$ 120,000.00	Presently, we have fewer WS eligible students than we anticipated which means the costs are not offset by federal subsidy.
Other Salaries & Wages	-	-	
Total Salaries & Wages	\$ 486,692.00	\$ 460,550.00	
Retirement & Benefits:			
Classified	-	-	
Professional	\$ 108,309.00	\$ 103,186.00	As expected
Graduate Appointments	-	-	
Temporary	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 27,000.00	Higher benefits load for student employees when not offset by work study.
Other Retirement & Benefits	-	-	
Total Retirement & Benefits	\$ 138,309.00	\$ 130,186.00	
Operations:			
Personal Service Contracts	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 12,000.00	At halfway through FY25, we have spent approx. \$13,000 on services combined. We expect to spend more with continued professional development, Lavendar Graduation, and EOY programming.
Other Contract Services	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 15,000.00	
Grants & Subsidies	-	-	
Travel	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 3,500.00	By prioritizing local and/or virtual professional development, we have underspent on travel this year.
Supplies	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	Notable increase in food for programs and staff training. Also saw increases in general space maintenance supply expenses.
Other Operations	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	Utilities and other misc. operating expenses or administrative fees.
Total Operations	\$ 88,000.00	\$ 65,500.00	*We hired an additional graduate student position and graduate student intern with supportive funding from the VP of Student Life and CIDF. The \$15,000 allocation from the VP of Student Life is not gaurenteed and will no longer be available for FY26.
Total Expenses	\$ 713,001.00	\$ 656,236.00	
Change in Expenses	\$ 56,765.00	8.65%	
Revenue - Expenses	\$ (3,046.00)	\$ 40,768.00	

**Information on Other Revenues:**

*If you have other sources of revenue, please give an overview of those anticipated revenues (including new sources) and how you expect them to change in the coming years. If relevant, include a breakdown of services & positions funded by SAF vs other revenues.*

In addition to SAF funding, the Q Center has secured **recurring funding streams** from external sources that help sustain key programs. Notably, the **Campus Sustainability Fund (CSF)** has supported the following programs:

- **Menstruation Station Program:** \$5,000/year for 3 years, totaling \$15,000. This funding covers the purchase and distribution of menstrual products across campus.
- **EnGender Program:** \$6,000/year for 3 years, totaling \$18,000. This funding supports gender inclusivity initiatives, including supplies and workshops.

These CSF funds have been crucial in supplementing SAF funding, allowing us to focus SAF dollars on **core services** and **staffing**. The CSF commitment covers program costs for Menstruation Station and EnGender, enabling SAF to support other essential services like support groups, community-building initiatives, and LGBTQ+ competency training.

Looking ahead, we anticipate **continued CSF support** for these programs, but are also exploring **additional funding opportunities**, such as sustainability, health, and inclusivity grants. We are positioning the Q Center to take advantage of these new revenue streams.

Additionally, the **Campus Internship Development Fund (CIDF)** has supported our internship placements for the past 3 years, with awards ranging from \$5,000-\$17,000 annually. However, this funding is not guaranteed and must be applied for each year.

We also generate revenue through **paid training programs**, offering workshops on LGBTQ+ safety and wellness. We charge **\$1,000-\$2,500 per session**, with higher fees for additional coaching. These trainings help transform campus culture by engaging staff in creating safer spaces for LGBTQ+ students, staff, and faculty. These funds are then used to pay for food and things not covered by SAF funds so that we can increase the attractiveness of our SAF funded programs - the revenue goes directly back into the community.

## Additional Questions

1.

- a. How would you adjust your operations if you did not receive your full request? Please elaborate on the potential impact on staffing and services.

If we did not receive our full request, **staff compensation** would be a primary concern. **Limited funding** would challenge our ability to maintain **competitive salaries**, potentially affecting **staff morale**, **talent retention**, and the overall **quality of services**. This could jeopardize the student experience at a top LGBTQ+ institution and impact **LGBTQ+ student retention** as a result. Despite this, we remain committed to finding innovative solutions to support our team.

We regularly conduct **efficacy analyses** through **formal** surveys (annual pre- and post-surveys, program participant feedback) and **informal** feedback pathways (observational data, direct communication with patrons). These analyses allow us to **optimize programs** and **resize or eliminate** those with low attendance or satisfaction. In the event that our full request was not met, **core programs** would be prioritized, and we will **increase collaboration** with university and city partners to share programming costs.

Staffing levels may be impacted, leading to **increased workloads** for existing team members. We would manage these changes carefully to maintain a **positive work environment**. To maximize engagement, we would create **volunteer opportunities** for students, reducing program costs while aligning with our values. Though this may involve **unpaid labor**, we aim to sustain as many successful programs as possible. **Transparent communication** will be key to managing **community expectations** and ensuring support during any adjustments.

- b. What if you received an amount less than your FY25 allocation?

Receiving an amount less than our FY25 allocation would require a **strategic reallocation of resources**. We would prioritize **services with the most direct impact** on students' immediate needs, such as **gender-inclusive programming**, while reducing or postponing **non-urgent programming** like ColorMode, Gayme Night, Grad Student Night, and Queer Mentorship and Peer Program. Staffing adjustments could include eliminating some **future student staff positions**.

In such a scenario, we would face challenges in maintaining our current level of programming, leading us to cut **non-essential or experimental initiatives** and explore **external funding sources** to fill the gap. Our focus would be on maintaining student trust and being transparent about changes.

In the worst-case scenario, if funding falls slightly below our FY25 allocation, we would likely **withhold additional raises** beyond the state's merit adjustment and not hire **additional Graduate Program Coordinators**. A significant reduction would require **reducing staff hours**, including potential cuts to student roles or pro staff to **0.8 FTE**.

**c. What student services/programs are integral to your mission that you would not cut even if you received an amount less than your FY25 allocation?**

There are several integral programs and services that we would not cut, even with a reduction in funding:

- Open Space/Drop-in Hours: While we may reduce hours due to funding cuts or maintenance needs, we would still maintain **drop-in hours** and space for students.
- Coaching services: Essential for supporting students, particularly those from marginalized communities, offering **mental health connection** and **advocacy** around **gender identity, sexual orientation, and racial equity**.
- Educational programming: Programs like **LGBTQ+ Core Competency training** and workshops are critical to fostering an **inclusive campus environment** and supporting all students.
- Menstruation Station and EnGender: These **CSF-funded** programs provide **menstrual hygiene** and **gender-affirming care items** and will continue with allocated resources and labor hours.

These services directly support our mission of **student well-being, inclusion, and community-building**, and would remain protected from funding reductions.

**2. If financial resources were not a restriction, what is one program/service your unit would add/expand on to enhance students' experience at the University?**

If financial resources were not a restriction, we would **stabilize and build on our library resources as well as our staff training and development model**. We relaunched our library in November of 2024 using our reserve funding and this

project has already surpassed its engagement goals for the Fall Quarter. If resources were not a restriction, we would consider investing in building up a digital component to our library as well as an expanded collection. And while we pride ourselves in offering a strong onboarding and ongoing training services for our student staff, we would continue to grow and enhance this work to ready our student staff to both better serve our LGBTQ+ community, but also for work beyond the Q.

**3. How does your unit ensure that student fees do not subsidize non-student, academic, research, and other costs that are the primary responsibility of the University and its colleges?**

We take great care to ensure that student fees are exclusively allocated to student-facing services and programming. We follow strict budgeting protocols to separate funds used for student services from those that would be used for non-student or academic research-related activities. For example, all costs related to staffing and programming are dedicated to student support, such as workshops, advocacy, and group counseling. On a monthly basis, we track our spending practices to ensure compliance with the guidelines for the use of SAF funds, and we maintain transparency with both students and the administration regarding how these funds are allocated. If there are any concerns regarding the use of funds, we promptly address them and make adjustments to ensure that student fees are not subsidizing academic or non-student initiatives.

**4. How are you utilizing the SAF logo? In what ways do you spread awareness of your affiliation with SAF?**

We utilize the SAF logo in several key ways to ensure students are aware of the critical support we receive through the fee:

- Printed materials: We include the SAF logo on all printed materials such as flyers, posters, and brochures promoting programs, events, and resources funded by SAF.
- Digital presence: The SAF logo is prominently displayed on our website, social media channels, and in email newsletters. This helps spread awareness of the SAF's role in supporting our initiatives.
- Event signage: For in-person events, we ensure that the SAF logo is displayed on banners, programs, and presentations to acknowledge the funding support.

We also actively engage with students and staff during events to emphasize the importance of SAF funding and encourage students to be mindful of the impact that their fees have on sustaining these critical programs.

5. If you are projecting a net deficit for FY26, please provide additional context for this net deficit (e.g. reallocation of carryover funds from previous fiscal years, extraordinary expenses necessary to meet operational needs, etc.). *(Optional – Answer “N/A” if not relevant to your unit)*

We are currently projecting a net deficit of \$3,046. However, this figure does not include potential revenue streams that will help offset this deficit. Such streams include work study funding, potential CIDF awards, continual funding from CSF for our sustainability service programs, revenue from training, and donations.

6. When projecting out 1-3 fiscal years, what challenges, if any, do you foresee for your unit? How could SAF be helpful in navigating these challenges? *(Optional – Answer “N/A” if not relevant to your unit)*

One of the key challenges we anticipate in the next 1-3 fiscal years is **increased demand for services**, particularly related to **mental health access** and **gender inclusion programming**. As Washington continues to be a sanctuary state for LGBTQ+ services, and with the University of Washington serving as a major avenue for residency, **we expect** our counseling workshops, advocacy support, and educational workshop **requests to increase**. This may require us to hire more staff or offer extended hours to meet the demand.

To address this challenge, SAF funding would be essential in **scaling our staffing** and maintaining the quality of our services. SAF could also support **the expansion of library services** and/or the hiring of **additional trained student staff** to manage increased workloads. **Continued access to external revenue sources** (such as the **Campus Sustainability Fund**) will help diversify funding streams, reducing reliance on SAF for non-essential programming.