

University of Waterloo Mathematics Endowment Fund

# Board of Directors

February 8, 2023

Location: Teams; Time: 6:30 PM EST

Chair	Daniel Matlin
Secretary	Daniel Matlin
Attendees	Audrey Lafortune, Christiane Lemieux, Matthews Ma, Kanan Sharma, Eric Yao
Expected Absences	Samantha Kaiser, Gracie Zhang (MathSoc VP Finance, non-voting)

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## 1 Preliminaries

### 1.1 Call to Order

The Chair calls the meeting to order at 6:34 PM EST.

### 1.2 Approval of the Agenda

The Chair assumes the agenda.

### 1.3 Appointment of Secretary — Chair Matlin, Director Ma

**Be it resolved that** Board appoints Daniel Matlin as the secretary.

**Motion passes unanimously.**

## 2 Approval of the Minutes — Chair Matlin, Director Ma

**Be it resolved that** Board approves the Fall 2022 EOT Minutes.

**Motion tabled because Fall 2022 EOT Minutes may not have been sent to Board.**

## 3 General Orders

### 3.1 Extend Linda Liu's term on the Board of Directors — Chair Matlin, Director Yao

**Whereas** Linda Liu held an Undergraduate Representative seat on the Board of Directors for the Winter 2022 through Fall 2022 terms;

**Whereas** Liu had a good record of attendance of meetings of the Board, and served on the Recruitment Committee for two of her three terms; and

**Whereas** Liu has expressed interest in her term on the Board being extended;

**Be it resolved that** Liu's term on the Board of Directors is extended through the Winter 2023 term (until April 30, 2023).

**Motion passes unanimously.**

### 3.2 Winter 2023 status of the fund — Chair Matlin (for information)

Amount of principal available for spending	\$71,500.00
Carryover from previous term	\$28,397.13
Expired funding granted in previous terms	\$19,958.41
<b>Total Funding Available</b>	<b>\$118,608.14</b>
Admin Allocation (3.75%)	\$4,447.81
PDF Allocation (6.25%)	\$8,660.41
Group Allocation (90%)	\$105,499.92

### 3.3 Goals for the term — Chair Matlin (for information)

- Last term, Board discussed the pending update and re-signing of our MOU with WUSA. We contacted WUSA about this last term, but never got a complete response. I (Daniel) will be following up with WUSA on this and hopefully we can reach an agreement this term. If so, I will let Board know when there's further progress.
- Update documents for the reimbursement process to account for the move to paperless.
- Discuss the possibility of getting space on the third floor of MC from MathSoc. (Previous hope was that we could use the room now occupied by Math Studies Club, so that's a setback.)

**Discussion:**

**Matthews:** I sent a proposed MOU to WUSA after EOT last term. Hopefully that can be approved and signed by the end of this term.

### 3.4 Important dates for the term — Chair Matlin (for information)

Item	Date
Funding Council applications open	<i>(already opened)</i>
Start accepting group proposals	Saturday, February 11, 2023
Open Board of Directors applications	Thursday, February 16, 2023
Funding Council application deadline	Sunday, March 5, 2023
Board of Directors application deadline	Saturday, March 11, 2023
Group proposal submission deadline	Saturday, March 11, 2023
Funding Council meetings	week of March 19, 2023
Board of Directors EOT meeting	week of April 2, 2023

### 3.5 Recruitment Committee selection — Chair Matlin, Director Lemieux

Be it resolved that Board appoints the following directors as members of the Recruitment Committee for the Winter 2023 positions:

- Daniel Matlin (chair)
- Matthews Ma
- Eric Yao
- Kanan Sharma

**Motion passes unanimously.**

### 3.6 On external perspectives of MEF — Chair Matlin (for discussion)

I (Daniel) have noticed that many students view MEF perhaps as a source of “free money”. In one notable case, during this term’s MathSoc Council budget meeting, a Data Science Club representative said that a funding proposal’s estimate presented to Funding Council was increased from the actual expected cost in anticipation of being granted less than full funding. Are there any thoughts on ways to reduce this view within those who come to MEF for funding?

**Discussion:**

**Daniel:** Tell FC proposers ahead of time that if we notice any abuse of the system it may affect their getting their reimbursement + receiving funding in the future.

**Audrey:** How did DSC cut budget without reducing how much funding they can use?

**Daniel:** They cut funding to every category but the one we funded (food).

**Kanan:** Reach out to MathSoc, ask for an itemized list of how MEF funds were used at the end of every term/year. Or, we don’t pay MathSoc up-front and instead reimburse after payment is made by group. WUSA, something to a similar effect through MOU.

**Daniel:** Can check and see if last term’s draft MOU with WUSA covers this.

**Matthews:** Could we ask this term groups that receive money up-front (i.e. WUSA/MathSoc) to send us how they used funding?

**Daniel/Kanan:** Yes, funding won’t be used by this term but we can ask them to start tracking that info.

### 3.7 Funding Council seat allocation definition issues — Chair Matlin (for discussion)

The Constitution of MEF says the following in Section 7 (Funding Council) 2 (a) and (b):

2. The following persons shall constitute voting members of the Funding Council:
  - a. Two (2) student representatives from each undergraduate program of the Faculty of Mathematics, all of whom will serve for the duration of their current academic term;
  - b. Three (3) student representatives elected from each year of an undergraduate mathematics program, who will serve for the duration of their current school term;

Looking at the list of programs on the following page: <https://uwaterloo.ca/future-students/programs/by-faculty#math>, there are some things left unclear about what constitutes a program. Consider for example “Information Technology Management”: it’s not known to be a “program”, because in fact, it’s a “plan” under Mathematics and Business. On the opposite end, that list omits Software Engineering, a well-known program which is jointly run by the Math and Engineering Faculties.

The structure is made more clear on the following page:

<https://ugradcalendar.uwaterloo.ca/page/MATH-List-of-Academic-Programs-or-Plans>. The term “program” seems to be poorly defined, but there does seem to be logical groupings of “plans” under broader fields to which they all relate. There are dozens of plans—too many to give each two seats on Funding Council. But the categories under which they are grouped seem like a possibly better set to base Funding Council seats on.

This would, however, formalize a disparity in proportional representation, if each category got two seats: at the extremes, the Mathematics/Teaching plan (with some tens of members) would have an entire category of representatives for itself, while Computer Science would have just as many seats for as many representatives. If this would be problematic, a possible solution to look at is something similar to how MathSoc allocates MathSoc Council seats (an algorithm called the method of equal proportions).

#### **Discussion:**

**Christiane:** Possible good sources of info on grouping/terminology: Math Undergrad Office, Associate Dean Undergrad’s Office.

**Kanan:** Some programs are more homogenous in their needs (CS homogenous, M/B less so). Might have a negative effect on how well-represented students are in FC.

**Kanan:** May not be necessarily good to change constant seats per constituency to something like equal proportions.

**Kanan:** Note that this constitutional change would take a while to pass through the approval/ratification process.

### 3.8 Frequent PDF requestors — Chair Matlin (for discussion)

There are a number of repeat requestors of PDF funding. I (Daniel) want to discuss the possibility of splitting PDF funding into a segment for only new requestors (or only students who have made under some amount of requests), as well as a segment that remains available to everyone.

**Discussion:**

**Audrey:** Requires better marketing of PDF to students to ensure the new segment is actually used. Previously, we discussed the possibility of granting PDF on a calendar-year basis rather than a termly basis. Would also require updating info on the website.

**Kanan:** Look into what was discussed about this at F22 EOT and see if an appropriate standing resolution for this can be passed this term. Also, maybe start PDF in the second month of the term, to give non-repeat requestors more time to become aware of PDF ahead of it opening.

## 4 New Business

### 4.1 Disclosure of factors considered in funding — Director Lafortune (for discussion)

**Discussion:**

**Audrey:** In the past, we've been concerned with exhaustion of funding. If we want to continue this, we may want to put a disclosure on the website that MEF may not fund non-Math faculty groups (like engineering design teams) if they don't go to another fund as well (like WEEF for engineering design teams). Engineering design teams do put in effort to make these proposals and they may resent MEF for not giving money without any warning.

**Daniel:** The problem isn't that they're not faculty groups, but that MEF has a constitutional purpose to improve the math undergrad experience, and if they only have a small proportion of math students, it may go against our duties to fund them instead of others.

**Kanan:** It's not just the small amount of math students but also the amount of money they request. That money could be equivalently used for other groups with more math students. Engineering design teams started increasing the amount they ask for a few years ago when MEF had an increase in amount of funding to grant per term, but they didn't reduce how much they ask for as funding available has decreased. Good point Audrey about how it's perceived on the proposers' side.

**Audrey:** When there's leftover funding it also seems like MEF is prioritizing building up of funds over engineering design teams (rather than prioritizing math students). We can make a point of telling teams that if they only have a low percent of math students then they should be asking for less. Then teams won't be wasting their time if they get an expectedly low amount of funding, or if they choose not to make a proposal with this in mind.

**Kanan:** Building up funding for the future isn't negative; if we use all funding every term for all proposals that concern any amount of math students, then that reduces funding that can be used for the future. It's about the opportunity cost.

**Daniel:** I agree with Kanan.

**Matthews:** A lot of the time we look at the proportion of math students, but even a low proportion can still be 20 or 30 math students. It may be important to look at absolute numbers as well as proportion. We also can partially fund in proportion to their math student proportion.

**Daniel:** Yes, we've done that before.

## 5 Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:16 PM EST.