# YEAR PLAN

*SIF Directors*
*Aryan Sood and Manya Malik*
McMaster Science Society
2023-2024

(submitted *September 1,2023*)

**MCMASTER**
**SCIENCE**
**SOCIETY**

2023-2024 Year Plan

Letter from the Position

Dear MacSci,

The Science Initiative Fund (SIF), previously known as the Academic Science Fund, was established in 2011 with the goal of supporting student life and academic projects within the Faculty of Science. Projects funded by SIF include the Ontario Science Games, an annual weekend long competition between science students, and newer projects such as Sciential, one of McMaster's Undergraduate Science Journal, with the goal to publish and share a variety of research pieces written by students and faculty members at McMaster.

Since its name change in 2016 from the Academic Science Fund to the Science Initiative Fund, this MSS service has continued to empower students and faculty who have had innovative ways of bettering the McMaster community. The previous SIF directors have established a strong foundation to the SIF program by updating the SIF database, rehauling the rubric for application assessment, and collaborating with a dedicated group of individuals for the Board of Directors. We hope to build upon these pillars of support as well as add initiatives of our own to further strengthen the SIF program.

The previous SIF Co-Directors had the goal of increasing promotion to underrepresented groups on campus, bringing similar ideas together, and increasing accessibility and promotion of SIF. As the incoming SIF Co-Directors, we want to build upon the previous goals and further and a couple more objectives: increase promotional awareness for the SIF/SOG resource and encourage more applicants to apply, improve the SIF website page and database to increase transparency behind the SIF budget and allocations and streamlining the application process by updating the rubric.

Please feel free to contact us with any questions or comments you may have, we look forward to talking to you about SIF.

Manya Malik and Aryan Sood

sif@macsci.ca

Science Initiative Fund Co-Directors

OBJECTIVES:

| Objective 1: Increase SIF awareness through various methods of promotion to allow for more SIF applications | |
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| Description/ Current State | • While awareness of SIF has increased over the last year as an opportunity to receive financial help for various projects, it still a MSS service that is not widely known, especially by the average McMaster Science student. It is more common and known on a group/club level. |
| Goal | • Create a comprehensive showcase from past student grants and funds to increase awareness, promote available opportunities, and provide guidance on the application process. By doing so, we aim to empower current students with the knowledge and resources needed to access the SFO opportunities<br><br>What you hope to improve (your vision for the improvement!)<br>- How you will improve it<br>- Overview of how you plan to achieve your goal (can include steps you will take, events you will organize, etc.)<br>- How your goal will support the MSS/students of the Faculty of Science<br>(be sure to focus on actions and their underlying goals, and eventually how they work to achieve your objective!)<br>What are your strengths and weaknesses that relate to the goal you're trying to reach?<br>- How your strengths will help you reach your goal<br>- How your weaknesses may get in the way of your goal, and how you plan to overcome this |
| Long Term Implications | - Making sure that our promotions, and social media posts reach the intended audience, and promote people to apply and encourage the use of the SIF<br>- Finding prospective students/professors in project-based courses who are interested in expanding on their project using the SIF fund. |
| Partners | The following is the main contact for the funding and financial processing:<br>• Mary Cass (Main Contact) |

|  | <ul><li>cassm@mcmaster.ca</li></ul><ul><li>Accounting Assistant (Office of Dean) - BSB 102</li><li>Aditya Misra (VP Finance)<ul><li>vpfinance@macsci.ca</li></ul></li></ul>We need the following Program Society Presidents:<ul><li>McMaster Actuarial Society (actuary@mcmaster.ca)</li><li>Biochemistry & Biomedical Sciences Society (macbiochem@gmail.com)</li><li>Biology Society (mcmasterbiology@gmail.com)</li><li>Biology & Pharmacology Society (macbiopharm@mcmaster.ca)</li><li>BioPsych Society (biopsych@mcmaster.ca )</li><li>McMaster Undergraduate Society for the Chemical Sciences (macmuscs@gmail.com)</li><li>Geography & Earth Sciences Society (gessociety@mcmaster.ca)</li><li>iSci Society (iscisociety@gmail.com)</li><li>Kinesiology Society (mackinvpexternal@gmail.com)</li><li>Life Sciences Society (lifescienceinfo@gmail.com)</li><li>Math & Stats Society (mathandstatssociety@gmail.com)</li><li>MedRadSci Society (mrsss@mcmaster.ca)</li><li>McMaster Undergraduate Physics Society (mups@mcmaster.ca)</li><li>PNB Society (pnbsociety@gmail.com)</li></ul> |
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| Objective 2: Improve the SIF website page and SIF database for MSS execs and general public use to increase transparency behind the SIF budget and allocations. | |
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| Description/ Current State | <ul><li>The SIF website and SIF database should be a resource for the incoming SIF directors to give them an idea of previously funded projects. The website and database should also be a resource to the general McMaster Science population as a way to see previous funded projects, how to improve their own ideas, and build on previous ideas. Currently, the website is</li></ul> |

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| | quite basic in terms of the information it provides and the SIF database is not up to date as the latest funded projects are from the 2017/2018 year |
| Goal | The SIF website page and SIF database should include:<br>● An introduction on what SIF is<br>● A link to our profiles and year plan<br>● A FAQ link<br>    ○ Discuss what SIF CAN and CANNOT be used for.<br>        ■ The latter is particularly important because there are applications that are rejected immediately due to not falling in the proper guidelines.<br>● A link to a Google drive that contains the application documents, rubric, materials from past workshops and other resources<br>● The link to our facebook page<br>● A link to SIF database<br>● An application slideshow, so that it is easy for applicants to access and use when creating applications<br><br>The SIF database must be consistently updated at the conclusion of each academic term. This involves reaching out to previous grant recipients to gather updates on their ongoing projects, as well as information on new projects that have received funding in the current year.<br><br>To effectively showcase the projects approved for the current year, we anticipate receiving promotional materials such as images, website links, and more, illustrating the progress of these initiatives. Additionally, we require recipients to provide their contact details to be included in the database. This way, individuals interested in the project can easily connect to offer suggestions, improvements, or opportunities for collaboration.<br><br>Following approval of a project, we want to make sure there is a breakdown of the costs covered by the SIF fund on the SIF database so |

| | the public knows how this money is being used and they themselves know how to plan similar events. Also having a breakdown of how the project was accepted and how it would be beneficial to McMaster students would be good (ex. a post of their rubric score).<br><br>● We will try to collect all the information on past projects early on in the term, either in the summer or at the beginning of the year, to have that information ready and hopefully have the "past Projects" in the SIF database portion hopefully done early on.<br>● Talk with the Webmasters before preparing the material to be uploaded, in order to ensure that we provide the information in an ideal format<br>● We will update the information from the previous semester at the beginning of the following semester<br>   ○ For example: upload the updates funded projects from Fall 2020 semester at the beginning of the Winter 2021 semester<br>● In order to avoid the overwhelming the Webmasters, send necessary information and instructions as early as possible (before the winter break in 1st semester, and by first week of April before exams in 2nd semester) |
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| Long Term Implications | ● Allow for clearer insight into how funds are distributed, fostering a greater understanding of financial decisions.<br>● This increased transparency can build trust and confidence within the Science Faculty/MSS community by demonstrating a commitment to open and accountable financial management. |
| Partners | The following is the main contact for the funding and financial processing:<br>● Mary Cass (Main Contact)<br>   ○ cassm@mcmaster.ca<br>● Accounting Assistant (Office of Dean) - BSB 102<br>● Aditya Misra (VP Finance)<br>   ○ vpfinance@macsci.ca |

| Objective 3: Update and improve the application marking rubric. | |
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| Description/Current State | The rubric was previously updated in order to place a greater emphasis on the feasibility of the projects.<br><br>We would like to develop the rubric further to establish clear-cut guidelines and levels to ensure a more objective grading scheme. |
| Goal | Make levels within each criterion and establish a grade range within each criterion.<br>● This will help:<br> ○ Provide concrete descriptions of what the project requires in order to be graded fairly and at a certain grade range<br> ○ Allow for a more objective and clear marking process for the people marking (SIF Co-directors and BODs) |
| Barriers to Success | ● Potential for ambiguity between the marking levels. |
| How? | ● Go through the current rubric and change any parts that are confusing or nonspecific<br>● Ambiguity can be resolved by providing an appropriate amount of detail within each level descriptor, and not simply changing adjectives between levels (such as poor vs good vs excellent). |
| Long Term Implications | An updated rubric with levels for each criterion and an associated grade range will allow for greater objectivity and consistency in the marking of projects. It will also allow an easier and faster allocation of marks by all members. The new rubric can be used for not only this academic year, but for years to follow. |

| Partners | |
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| | ● Previous BODs<br>● SIF Directors |

EVENTS & PROJECTS

EVENTS & PROJECTS

| Name of Event/Project: SIF/SOG Showcase | |
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| DATE | Mid - Late October and in Mid February |
| PURPOSE | ● Having workshops will allow projects that started after the first round of applications to be given an opportunity to attend the workshop in second semester.<br>● By providing workshop materials online after conducting the event, students who were not able to come would be able to access information and the students who did come would be able to refer to the material whenever needed.<br>● By increasing the number of workshops and the accessibility of information, awareness of the applications would increase. |
| PROCEDURE | 1. Create a presentation with an outline of the process in applying for SIF and accurately fulfilling the criteria for a given project.<br>2. Reach out to previous individuals who have been funded by the SIF to see if they would be willing to speak/showcase at the event<br>3. We will reach out to the main contacts of the previously or newly approved projects for any promotional material such as pictures of the event, their website, their awards/accomplishments, etc.<br>4. Similar to above, depending on the number and quality of content received, we will decide if it will become an in-person event or a larger online event.<br>    a. If an in-person event, then a venue will be booked where we would ask either us or the project owners to |

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|  | come present how their project/idea/event is or has gone. <br> 5. Have a session that explains why each part of the rubric was established and how applicants can maximize their chances of being funded. <br> 6. A part of the workshop will include looking at examples of successful long-term and short-term projects that focused on academic and student-life initiatives. <br> 7. Contact VP Communications 1 month in advance to promote the workshop. An accessible room for the workshop will be booked through EHOSS and the MSS |
| DIFFICULTIES | ● Receiving enough responses from previously approved projects with good quality promotional material <br> ● Will likely be time-consuming alongside school work, need to prepare well in advance |
| PARTNERS | MSS Execs: <br> ● VP Internal - Visali Manimaran <br>    ○ vpinternal@macsci.ca <br> ● VP External - Giuliano Serafino <br>    ○ vpexternal@macsci.ca <br> ● VP Communications - Daisy Pham <br>    ○ vpcomm@macsci.ca <br> ● VP Finance - Aditya Misra <br>    ○ vpfinance@macsci.ca <br> ● VP Student Affairs - Ava Colangelo <br>    ○ vpstudentsaffairs@macsci.ca <br> ● VP Academic - Wynter Sutchy <br>    ○ vpacademic@macsci.ca <br> ● Social Media Directors - Twinkle Prajapati & Runisan Natheeswaran <br>    ○ socialmedia@macsci.ca <br> ● Webmaster - Dima Traboulsi & Rohan Jadhav <br>    ○ webmaster@macsci.ca |
| PROJECTED OUTREACH | We hope that the outreach of this project reaches the McMaster community. If they see that there are all these amazing projects/ideas funded by SIF, it would increase the SIF program's |

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| | reputation and increase the number of applicants for the next application cycle. |
| BUDGET | $30 for snacks<br>$20 for posters, posts, etc.<br><br>Total: $50 |

| Name of Event/Project: SIF Recipient Showcase | |
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| DATE | End of the Semester |
| PURPOSE | To promote the SIF program, its achievements, and how other people and clubs can relieve their burden of funding with their projects. Highlight various projects/ideas that have received funding by SIF and have been implemented in the McMaster community. Ultimately raise awareness about SIF through social media to help support future projects. |
| PROCEDURE | 1. During each semester, compile information regarding proposed projects and save them into a file so there is less background research required at the end of the semester.<br>2. Work alongside the Webmaster to create a section on the MSS website showcasing all the SIF funding recipients for the semester.<br>3. Contact Graphic Designers during November time so the showcase can occur somewhere around December.<br>4. With the help of Social Media Directors, promote the showcase on SIF and MSS social media. |
| DIFFICULTIES | ● Will require significant collaboration between us and the Webmaster, which can be time-consuming and potentially difficult<br>● The material must be engaging and well promoting, which can be difficult to create |

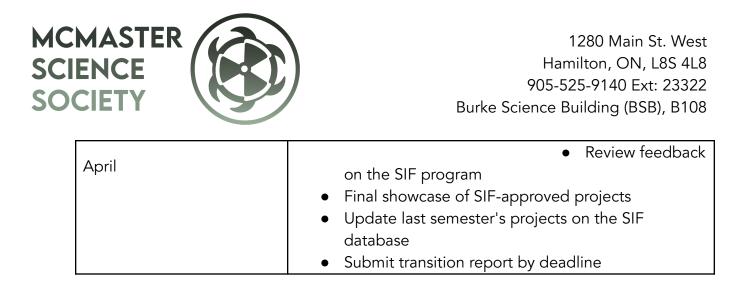|  |  |
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|  | ● Due to students being focused on exams, there may be less engagement with our showcase due to the fact that our showcase will be at the end of the semester |
| PARTNERS | These MSS Execs:<br>● VP Internal - Visali Manimaran<br>  ○ vpinternal@macsci.ca<br>● VP External - Giuliano Serafino<br>  ○ vpexternal@macsci.ca<br>● VP Communications - Daisy Pham<br>  ○ vpcomm@macsci.ca<br>● VP Finance - Aditya Misra<br>  ○ vpfinance@macsci.ca<br>● VP Student Affairs - Ava Colangelo<br>  ○ vpstudentsaffairs@macsci.ca<br>● VP Academic - Wynter Sutchy<br>  ○ vpacademic@macsci.ca<br>● Social Media Directors - Twinkle Prajapati & Runisan Natheeswaran<br>  ○ socialmedia@macsci.ca<br>● Webmaster - Dima Traboulsi & Rohan Jadhav<br>  ○ webmaster@macsci.ca |
| PROJECTED OUTREACH | The projected outreach of the project would hopefully be towards those in the McMaster community to see all the projects that were funded during the year by SIF and would hopefully help increase the reputation and number of applicants in the following cycle. |
| BUDGET | No cost (online showcase) |

**Separate table for each event/project

TIMELINE

| Month | Objective/Project/Event/Goals |
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| June | • N/A |
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| July | • Update the SIF database by connecting with previous SIF recipients |
| August | • Create thorough SIF year plan for 2023-24 |
| September | • Early in the month: Contact professors to post on avenue and class talks<br>• Later in the month: connect with sub-societies to organize a meeting time with either the presidents and/or exec team to promote and explain SIF funding, as well as hear about their events.<br>• Open applications for SIF & SOG<br>   ○ Communications request should be completed in August |
| October | • SIF & SOG Deadline reminders<br>• Later in the month: First semester's SIF application workshop<br>• Continue promotions for applications to SIF<br>• Provide feedback to applicants and final deadlines |
| November | Final SIF & SOG Deadline reminders |
| December | • Schedule first allocation meeting as well as reflect on what worked and improvements that need to be made using the progress reports. |
| January | • Contact professors to post on avenue and class talks<br>• Update last semesters projects on the SIF database<br>• Showcase accepted projects from last term on social media<br>• Open applications for SIF & SOG |
| February | • Second semester's SIF application workshop<br>• Continue promotions for applications to SIF |
| March | • Provide feedback to applicants and final deadlines<br>• SIF & SOG Deadline reminders<br>• Conduct the second allocation meeting and write the transition report |

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| April | ● Review feedback on the SIF program<br>● Final showcase of SIF-approved projects<br>● Update last semester's projects on the SIF database<br>● Submit transition report by deadline |
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**This timeline should go to the end of your term, i.e. April 30th.