

# **SFPiRG ANNUAL REPORT**

**SEPTEMBER 2019–AUGUST 2020**



**Let's build a just and  
compassionate world,  
together!**

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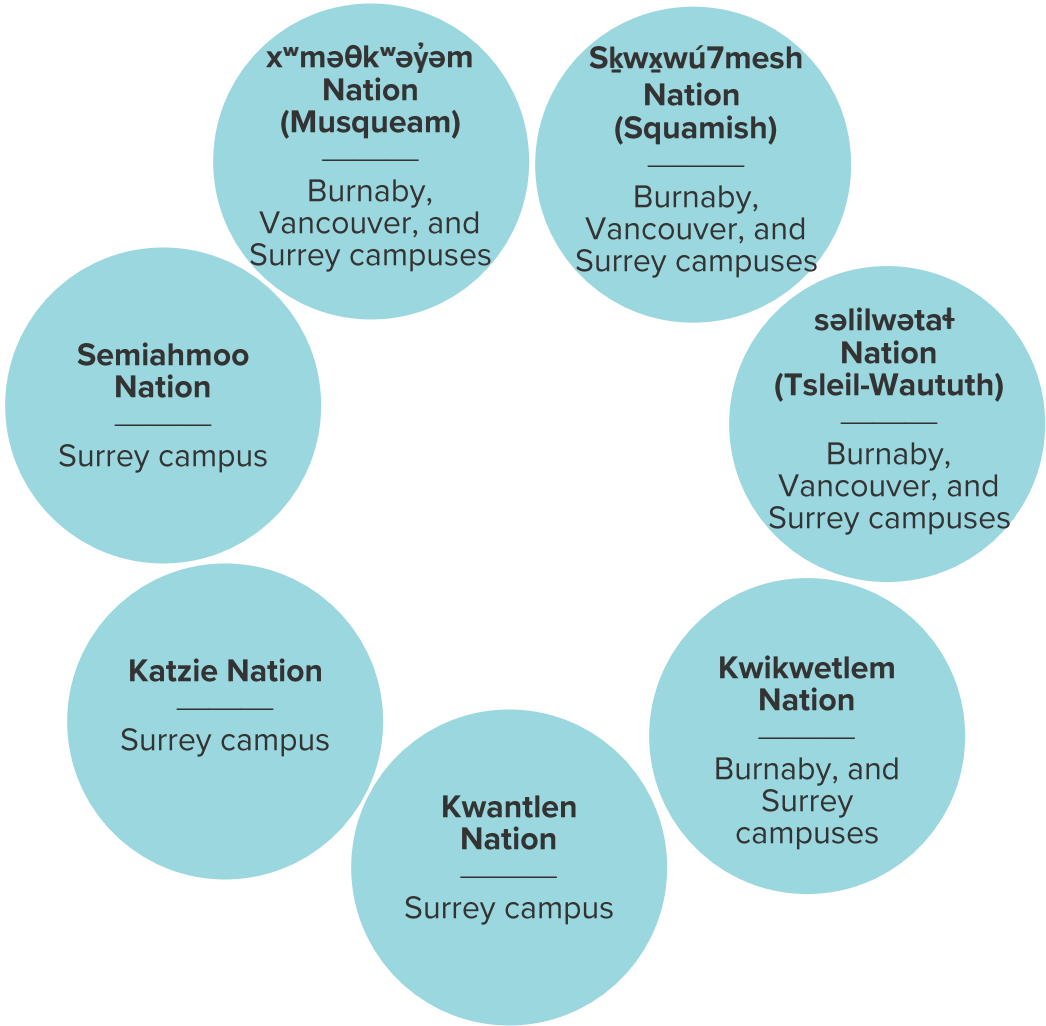
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# LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge that SFPIRG occupies the unceded Indigenous lands of Coast Salish peoples. Unceded means that this land was never surrendered, relinquished or handed over in any way.

Based on our current knowledge, this includes the territories of the following Nations:



We seek to support the varied strategies that Indigenous peoples are using to protect their land and their communities, and we commit to dedicating time and resources to working in solidarity. We acknowledge that we, as people living and working on these lands, are accountable to the laws and protocols of the people who have cared for this land since time immemorial. It is our intention to continue learning how to honour this responsibility.

Today, most of BC remains uncaded sovereign Indigenous lands, over which neither the Canadian or BC governments have the legal or moral authority to govern.

If we have it wrong, or you know more information about whose land we're on, please contact us at [education@sfpirg.ca](mailto:education@sfpirg.ca).

# WHAT IS SFPIRG?

**The Simon Fraser Public Interest Research Group (SFPIRG) is your student-led and student-funded resource centre on campus for social and environmental justice. Join us to build a more just and compassionate world together!**

## OUR MISSION

Our mission is to engage students and community in social and environmental justice. Throughout everything that we do, we aim to build community and work together for justice and liberation. The main parts of our work are:

Education

Community  
research

Action &  
organizing

Building  
community

## OUR HISTORY

PIRGs were established across North American campuses in the 1970's and 80's as a way for students to advocate for social change. SFPIRG was set-up by students on SFU's Burnaby campus in 1981. Since then, SFPIRG has engaged in all kinds of exciting work and has positively impacted the lives of SFU students and the wider community.

## OUR GOVERNANCE

We are a registered non-profit organization with our own constitution and bylaws. We are governed by a student-led board of directors, who guide the direction, vision and growth of SFPIRG, and we have a team of three unionized staff who carry out the work of the organization. We use consensus decision-making as the basis for our work. SFPIRG is independent from the University, the Simon Fraser Student Society, and the Graduate Student Society.

We work closely with other student organizations on campus, including CJSF 90.1 FM, Disability and Neurodiversity Alliance, Embark, the First Nations Student Association, Out on Campus, The Peak, Students of Caribbean & African Ancestry, the Teaching Support Staff Union, and the Women's Centre.

## OUR VALUES

SFPIRG brings together a diverse range of people and our work is centred on a shared set of values. SFPIRG's organizational values serve as a guide for the work of SFPIRG. We invite everyone to come and talk with us about these values and to work with us in translating them into action!

### **Inclusive and accessible space:**

We strive to recognize and respond to diverse access needs, we are committed to principles of Disability Justice and ensuring that our space and practices are as accessible as possible.

### **Accountability, integrity, wholeness and healing:**

We strive to be accountable to our membership, hold space where people can be their whole selves, find support, and act to bring their *values* & their *day-to-day lives* into greater alignment. We believe that all of this requires continual learning, growth, curiosity, compassion and self-reflexivity.

### **Self-representation, self-determination, & empowering student and community leadership:**

We value individuals and communities working and speaking from their own experience, we respect different life experiences, social locations, community histories and diversity of approaches.

### **Sustainability:**

We strive to live in harmony with our environment and minimize our ecological footprint.

### **Intersectional anti-oppression:**

We acknowledge that systems of oppression exist, are interconnected and multifaceted, and must be challenged in multiple ways.

### **Indigenous sovereignties & decolonization:**

We seek to support the varied strategies that Indigenous peoples are using to protect their land and their communities, and we strive to work in solidarity. We acknowledge that we are accountable to the laws and protocols of the people who have cared for this land since time immemorial.

### **Body sovereignty and diversity:**

We resist violence against all marginalized beings and bodies, and we support the right of all people to a social reality that allows for non-coercive, community-supported reproduction.

### **Respectful communication:**

We commit to engaging in open and respectful dialogue with anyone who is willing to do the same.

# OUR TEAM

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### May 2019 — April 2020

Aiswariya Alagu-Sunder  
Adriano D'Alessandro  
Balqees Jama  
Constantin Lozitsky  
Simran Randhawa

### May 2020— April 2021

Aiswariya Alagu-Sunder  
Annie Bhuiyan  
Saima Chowdhury  
Adriano D'Alessandro  
Fahim Faysal  
Constantin Lozitsky  
Susan Naseem  
Pariya Zabihi

## PERMANENT STAFF TEAM

Susan Chiv	Director of Administration
Kalamity Hildebrandt	Director of Research & Education
Craig Pavelich	Director of Communications

## WORKSTUDY STUDENTS & TEMPORARY STAFF

Istiaque Akib	Community Outreach & Engagement Assistant (Spring 2020)
Jhanvi Indatissa	Racial & Migrant Justice Organizer (Fall 2019 & Spring 2020)
Shirley Ji	Resource Centre Assistant (Fall 2019 & Spring 2020)
Fegor Obuwoma	Racial & Migrant Justice Organizer (Fall 2019 & Spring 2020)
Brinda Odedra	Letters for the Inside Student Coordinator (Fall 2019 & Spring 2020); Electoral Officer (Spring 2020)
Matthew Provost	Resource Centre Assistant (Fall 2019)
Leanna Paul	Racial & Migrant Justice Organizer (Spring 2020)
Moroti Soji-George	Community Outreach & Engagement Assistant (Spring 2020)
Mateo Zepeda	Campaigns Manager (Ongoing until March 2020)



# OUR WORK

## YEAR IN NUMBERS: PROGRAM STATISTICS

15+

Events, workshops  
and talks

117

RSVPs & attendees  
through events,  
workshops & talks

59

Volunteers

24

Groups supported

### Letters for the Inside (LFTI):

LFTI is a nationally-recognized project where student researchers respond to research requests from prisoners, run through SFPIRG since 2007. LFTI aims to improve prisoners' access to information by providing prisoners with research assistance from students on issues that are important to them, and to develop relationships with them to reduce the stigma associated with the criminal justice system. These statistics are for Fall 2019 only, stats unavailable for Spring 2020, and suspended since Summer 2020

44

Letters received

47

Letters  
responded to

32

New volunteers  
trained

37

Active  
volunteers

### Bike Tool Co-op:

The SFPIRG Bike Tool Co-op is a shared tool and work-space program run by students. This year, there were **26** bike sign-ins before we closed in March 2020 due to COVID-19.

## COMMUNITY GROUPS WE SUPPORTED

- BC Initiative for Inclusive Post Secondary Education – STEPS Forward
- Behavioural Neuroscience Student Society
- CJSF Radio
- Dan's Legacy
- Embark Sustainability
- First Nations Student Association
- Kinesiology Games SFU
- Out On Campus
- Phi Delta Epsilon
- Queer ASL
- Radical Individuals for Solidarity and Equity (formerly Left Alternative)
- SFU Autistics United
- SFU Disability & Neurodiversity Alliance
- SFU Students for Justice in Palestine
- SFU Student Walkout for Wet'suwet'en
- SFSS Board of Directors
- SFSS Women's Centre
- Students of Caribbean and African Ancestry
- Students supporting bus drivers
- Teaching Support Staff Union
- Tuition Freeze Now
- TumblerShare
- Vancouver Aces and Aros
- World Media in English



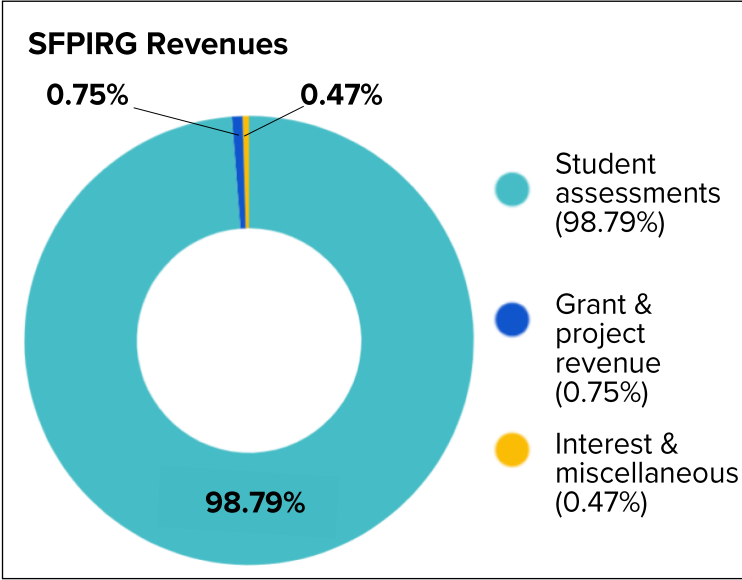
# FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Below is a summary of SFPIRG’s revenue and expenses during the September 2019 - August 2020 fiscal year. The full audited financial statements, including the auditor’s report, are available digitally at [www.sfpirg.ca/governance-documents](http://www.sfpirg.ca/governance-documents). Paper copies are available to SFPIRG members upon request. Contact us at [info@sfpirg.ca](mailto:info@sfpirg.ca)

## REVENUES

Revenues = \$228,441

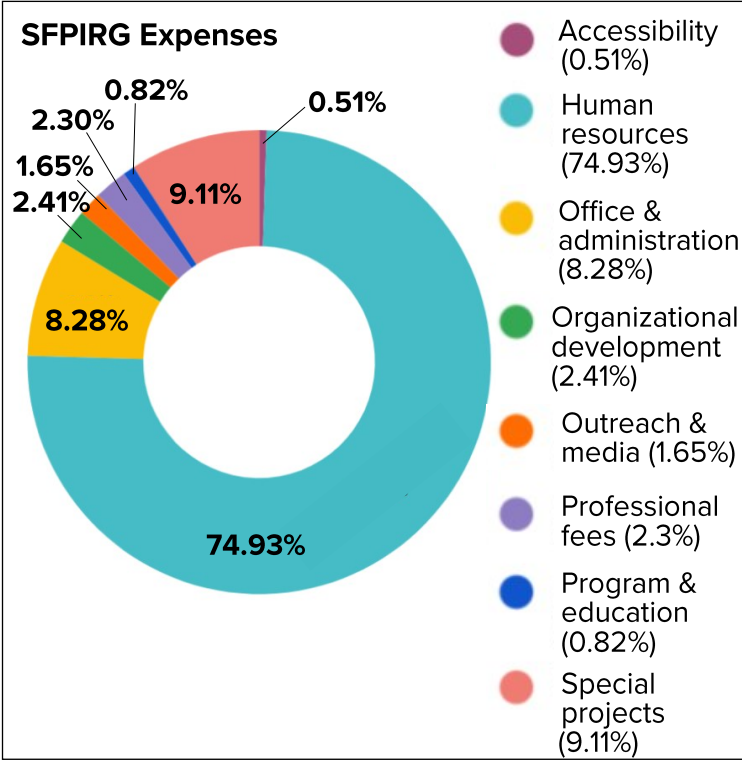
Student assessments	\$225,670	98.79%
Grant and project revenue	\$1,707	0.75%
Interest and miscellaneous	\$1,064	0.47%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$228,441</b>	<b>100.00%</b>



## EXPENSES

Expenses = \$241,176

Accessibility	\$1,232	0.51%
Human resources	\$180,704	74.93%
Office and administration	\$19,960	8.28%
Organizational development	\$5,804	2.41%
Outreach and media	\$3,978	1.65%
Professional fees	\$5,538	2.30%
Program and education	\$1,983	0.82%
Special projects	\$21,977	9.11%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$241,176</b>	<b>100.00%</b>



# YEAR IN REVIEW

## OUR EVENTS

**Dis/Orientation Week**

Dis/Orientation week is an alternative orientation week of panels, workshops and other events that aim to connect community members to insight, analyses and research on social and environmental justice. This year’s events were:

- Tips ‘N Tricks for Surviving University
- Received Knowledge is Dangerous
- Putting Students Back in the Student Union Building
- Introduction to Social Justice
- Introduction to Prison Justice
- Introduction to Migrant and Racial Justice

- Racial & Migrant Justice workshop (fundraiser for Pull Together)
- Challenging Carceral Feminism
- Filling the Gap: Social Innovation Challenge on Food Security

**Workshops**

**Discussion Groups**

- Calling all Queers! Discussion group and sticker-making event
- Lunchtime discussion series on:
  - Academic freedom & freedom of expression
  - Taxation & student fees
  - Climate grief

**Note about COVID-19 closures:**  
We did not run public programming during the Summer of 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. SFPIRG focussed on health and safety policies, and on preparing for our programming in the Fall of 2020. We regretfully have temporarily suspended our Letters for the Inside program. The Letters for the Inside program will resume after the pandemic.

Stay tuned for our grand reopening in the Student Union Building!

# YEAR IN REVIEW

## OUR VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

### Community Outreach Street

**Team:** this team supported SFPIRG's community outreach and engagement strategy, initiatives, and activities to promote core programs, services, and campaigns to the SFU community. Volunteers assisted in poster, delivering classroom talks and tabling at events.

### Letters for the Inside Research

**Team:** this team supported our nationally-recognized, volunteer-led project run through SFPIRG since 2007. It aims to improve prisoners' access to information by providing prisoners with research assistance from students on issues that are important to them.

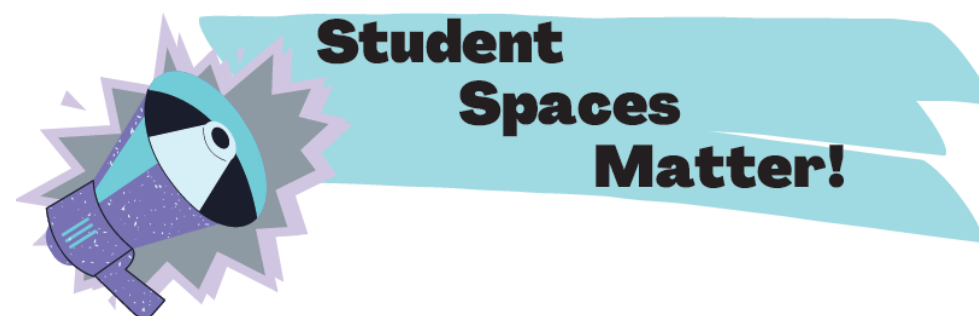
### Dis/Orientation Week Planning

**Team:** this team supported Dis/Orientation Week, an alternative orientation week of panels, workshops, and resources that connected SFU community members to critical analyses, insight and research on social and environmental justice.

### Racial & Migrant Justice Peer

**Educators Team:** this team helped to educate the SFU campus community about anti-racism and migrant justice by providing educational workshops and programming. Volunteers assisted in delivering and facilitating educational workshops and programming.

**Library, Lounge & Bike Tool Co-op Oversight Committee:** this team supported the expansion of services for marginalized communities at the SFPIRG Resource Centre Library, Lounge, and Bike Tool Co-op.



## OUR CAMPAIGNS

### Fee Increase Campaign:

In Spring 2020, SFPIRG ran a referendum campaign to increase SFPIRG's member fee and to annually adjust the fee for inflation.

The last referendum establishing SFPIRG's member fee was in Spring 1994, setting the semesterly member fee at \$3 per full-time student and \$1.50 per part-time student. Unfortunately, member fees have not kept up with over 20 years of inflation: something that cost \$3 in 1994 would now cost \$4.35. This has significantly impacted SFPIRG's ability to continue providing the same level of programming, resources, and opportunities to students, and restricting our ability to expand and enhance the work of our organization.

**We won a fee increase for graduate students!** This will help us maintain our programming and keep building our community. The breakdown of student fees is now:

#### Graduate Students

Full time: **\$5.50** per semester  
Part time: **\$2.75** per semester

#### Undergraduate Students

Full time: **\$3.00** per semester  
Part time: **\$1.50** per semester

Moving forward, we'll be exploring how and whether to approach another undergraduate student fee referendum.

### Space Campaign:

SFPIRG was previously housed in the Rotunda space (also known as the Transportation Centre), along with CJSF, The First Nations Student Association, Out on Campus, Students of Caribbean & African Ancestry, and the Women's Centre. **But, for around 7 years, we were at risk of being displaced and evicted from SFU.**

If evicted, SFPIRG and other Rotunda groups that are vital to student wellbeing would have been inaccessible to students, and might have ceased to exist altogether. Despite initially being promised space in the new Student Union Building (SUB), we had to fight institutional violence, and perpetual uncertainty about long-term and short-term space.

### Student organizing works: student activists fought for space and we won!

Together with the other Rotunda groups, we launched a campaign to advocate for student needs, pressure SFU and the SFSS to respect student needs by giving us space, and garner community support to prevent our eviction. Student activists and our communities spent countless hours resisting displacement, and our space campaign included:

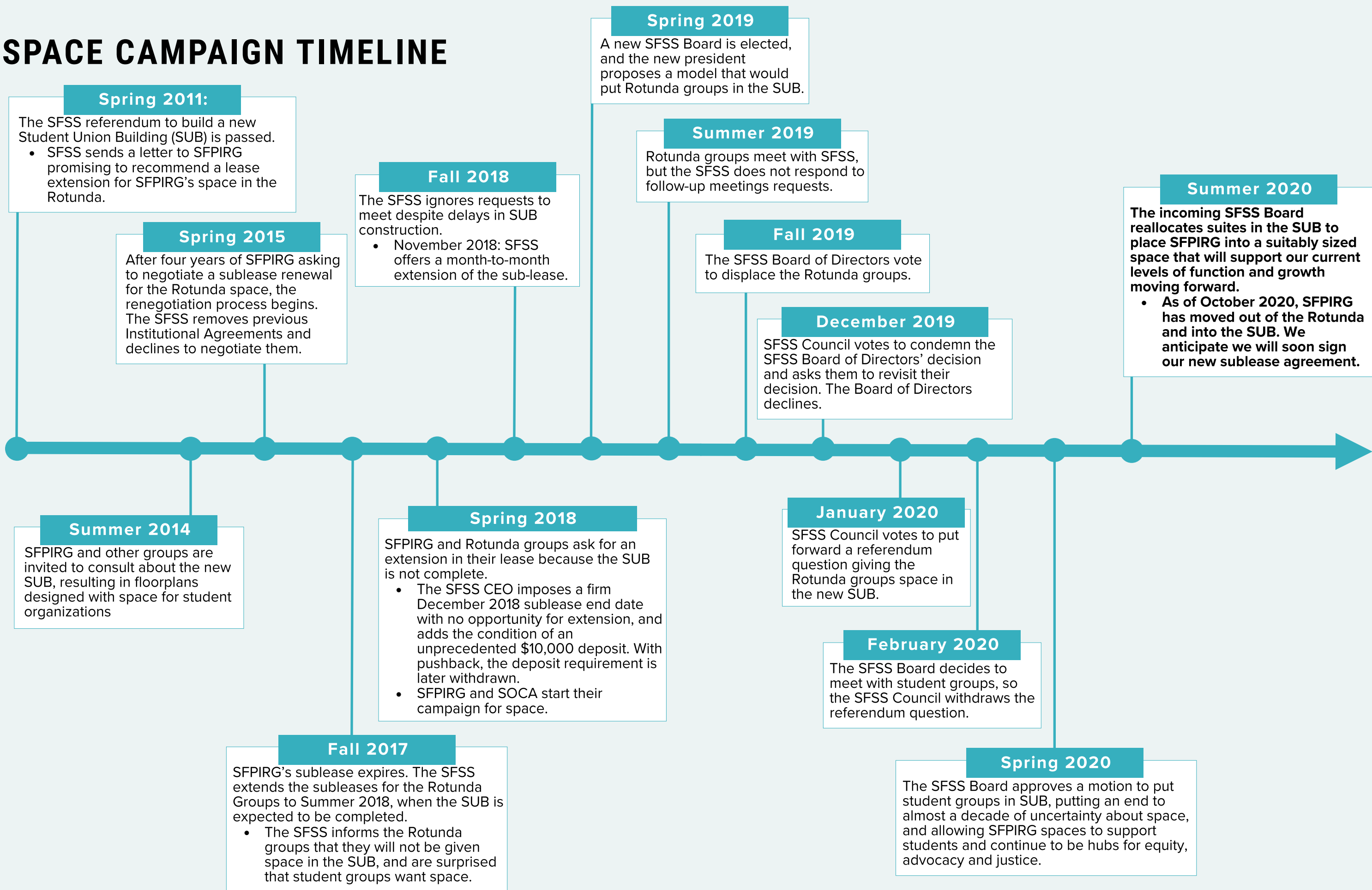
**25+**

Public letters of support

**1250+**

Petition signatures

# SPACE CAMPAIGN TIMELINE



# **SIMON FRASER PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP (SFPIRG)**



**PHONE:** (778) 782-4360

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**WEBSITE:** [www.sfpirg.ca](http://www.sfpirg.ca)

**FACEBOOK:** [facebook.com/sfpirg](https://facebook.com/sfpirg)

**TWITTER:** @sfpirg

**INSTAGRAM:** @sfpirg

