

# ASWWU Government Official Referendum

## **Referendum Title: Sustainability, Equity & Justice Fund Fee Renewal 2025**

WWU Department or Program responsible for implementation: Sustainability Engagement Institute/SEJF Committee

WWU Department/Program Staff Contact: Zinta Lucas

WWU Student (or Group) Proposing Referendum: SEJF Committee

ASWWU Elected Sponsor: Kira Davis, AS VP of Sustainability

Date Referendum Proposal presented to ASWWU Governing Bodies:

- ASWWU Executive Board: 4/14/25 – Approved for Ballot
- ASWWU Senate: 4/14/25- Approved for Ballot

Approved Election Ballot for Referendum: ASWWU General Election Spring 2025

Administrative/ASWWU Advisor Notes: Proposal packet has been reviewed for complete contents and meets the requirements outlined in current ASWWU Election Code.

## **Approved Referendum Information:**

**Note: all information below is exactly as submitted by referendum sponsor and support program staff.**

### **1) Official Ballot Question:**

Shall Western Washington University renew the current Sustainability, Equity, and Justice Fund (SEJF) fee of \$9 per academic quarter for each student taking six or more credits on the Bellingham campus?

If approved for renewal as propose, the renewed fee would be effective Fall Quarter 2026 and would expire the end of Spring Quarter 2030.

### **2) Official Referendum Statement of Support (250 words or less):**

The maximum fee can be decreased or increased only with a vote from the student body.

**PURPOSE:** This fee is intended to fund projects and educational experiences that directly impact students at Western Washington University. These projects uphold Western’s pillars of sustainability, including environmental, social justice, economic vitality, and well-being. The fee also funds the operational and personnel budgets of the SEJF program. The SEJF fee as voted would be effective Fall Quarter 2026 and would expire the end of Spring Quarter 2030.

**BACKGROUND:** SEJF was initially started in 2005 by a student club and continues to be supported and led by students. The fee has been reapproved by the student body several

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times since, with the latest renewal in spring 2022. Western students, staff, and faculty can apply for a grant to support an innovative student-focused project that improves sustainability, equity, and justice on campus.

EXAMPLES OF PAST PROJECTS: Some recent examples of past proposals that were funded by SEJF include:

- Generations of Pride, which supported a series of events offered to WWU and the Bellingham community targeting social connectedness through intergenerational storytelling and meal sharing for the LGBTQ+ community.
- Western Worn Community Closet, which created a free clothing thrift store that anyone in the WWU community can utilize.
- LEAD Reforestation Demonstration Project, which supported planting a mini-forest, replacing invasive vegetation with native species.
- WWU Athletics JEDI programming, which supported long-term programming related to justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) within the WWU Athletics Department.

### 3) Official Supporting Documentation (additional details):

#### **Background history of the SEJF program:**

The fee was originally proposed in 2005 by a student club, the Students for Renewable Energy, who wanted to see Western commit to green infrastructure on campus. The original student fee was aimed solely at purchasing Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) to offset 100% of campus electricity usage with green energy. The fee has been reapproved by the student body several times since then, with the latest renewal in spring 2022. SEJF no longer purchases RECs, instead focusing on more direct campus impact through the grant program.

#### **Full list of SEJF grant projects from the last 3 years (2022-2025):**

This list is offered to show the wide variety of project ideas that pass through the SEJF grant program. A majority of these projects have been student led, and all of the projects have had a positive impact on the student community at WWU.

Professional Development for  
Urban Planning Students:  
Presenting & Networking at the WA  
American Planning Association  
Conference  
LEAD Reforestation  
Demonstration Project  
WOHESC 2023 Scholarships  
Growth, Resilience, and Belonging:  
Strengthening membership and

experience for Black and Brown  
Men at WWU  
Attending the APA National  
Conference 2023  
Indigenous Resilience: Sharing  
Our Stories for Mental Health  
Promotion  
QueerCon 2023  
Creating Community for  
Underrepresented Students in  
ESCI

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Earth Day Fair Free Produce Table  
WWU FASA Heritage Night  
Advancing the Morse Leadership  
Institute's Community  
Engagement Project Program  
Furniture Fest & Couchella  
Native Landscapes Phase I – York  
Farm  
Project ZeNETH – Construction  
Phase  
Campus Micromobility Counters  
Sustainable Office Certification  
Toolkits  
Native Landscapes Phase 2 – Art  
Annex  
Bellingham History Tour Bike Ride  
during Bike Fest  
Campus Cable Lock Swap Project  
Facilitate WWU Student  
Engagement in Regional Art &  
Ecology Education  
American Planning Association WA  
Chapter 2023 Conference  
Photovoice: Student Experiences  
of Well-Being through Visual  
Storytelling  
Sound Out Radio Relaunch  
WWU Athletics' Justice Equity  
Diversity and Inclusion  
Programming

WOHESC 2024 Scholarships  
Sustainable Lab Certification  
Project  
Western Worn Community Closet  
Urban Farm Project  
Sustainable Listening: The  
Sehome Hill Arboretum Sound  
Mapping Project  
Spring Natural Tie-Dye Event  
Wade King Native Plant Showcase  
Garden  
Green Thumb Initiative  
The Sprout Stop: Earth Week  
Produce  
Stephanie Land's Campus Visit  
La Bienvenida  
Generations of Pride  
WWU MakerMobile  
Reproductive Justice: Equal  
Access to LARC Care at the  
Student Health Center  
Disabled Peer Mentorship Program  
Accessing the Outback Phase I:  
Accessible Tools  
Multicultural Business Scholars  
Association Leaders of Color  
Initiative  
Co-Creating a Food Literate Future  
Composting 101

#### 4) **Official Fiscal Note** (required for any student-voted Fee referendum)

##### **Brief description of current fund balance, with three-year historical trend:**

FY2025 (July 2024 – June 2025):

- Beginning balance: \$217,324.90
- Revenue: \$359,648.49
- Expenses to date (at time of Referendum submission): \$368,004.11

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- \*Expected balance at end of fiscal year: \$30,000-50,000.00

FY2024 (July 2023 – June 2024):

- Beginning balance: \$244,118.07
- Revenue: \$356,897.99
- Expenses: \$379,446.94

FY2023 (July 2022 – June 2023):

- Beginning balance: \$544,557.02
- Revenue: \$359,671.39
- Expenses: \$678,660.34

**Basic estimate of expected annual revenue from fee (calculated with conservative enrollment projections):**

\$351,000 (13,000 students x \$9 x 3 quarters)

\*ASWWU membership number: 13,193 students in 2024-2025

**Basic estimate of annual expenditures (total expenditure projection, % supporting Admin Staff, % supporting SEJF grant projects):**

**FY2025:** (not available yet because the fiscal year has not concluded)

**FY2024:**

Annual operational expenditures: \$379,446.94

Admin staffing: 28%

Other non-staffing operational expenses: 14%

SEJF projects: 58%

**FY2023:**

Annual operational expenditures: \$678,660.34

Admin staffing: 14%

Other non-staffing operational expenses: 8%

SEJF projects: 78%