Budget Brief – Social Issues Commission (2026-2027)

Budget Summary:

Expected Revenues:

- Total projected revenue: $190,960
- Funding sources:
    - Grants
        - VPCEI
        - Inclusive Community Fund
        - Principal's Student Initiatives Fund
        - Black Student Initiative Fund
        - Budgeted: $26,500
    - Assembly Allocation
        - 91,900
    - Student Activity Fees
        - 71,760
- Change from last year's actual revenue: $29868
    - Previous year actual revenue: $161,092

Expected Personnel Expenses:

- Salaries: $65,485
- Wages (General Staff, Supervisors): $30,398
- Other (if applicable): $1500
- Change from previous year actuals: $7742
    - Previous year personnel cost: $89,642

Expected Operating Expenses:

- Total projected operating expenses: $191,961
- Key allocations:
    - Personnel: $97,384
    - Indigenous Initiatives Lead: $8700
    - Black Initiatives Lead: $3500
        - Black Legacy Mentorship Program: $10,000
    - Queer Initiatives Lead: $6700
    - Collective Reflections: $2050
    - Racial, Ethnic, Cultural Lead: $5500
    - Accessibility: $478
    - Grants: $39,000
    - Awards: $24,000

- Advertising: $150

Variances and Notable Issues

Previous Budget vs Actuals (2025–2026 - 2026-2027)

The Social Issues Commission budgeted $154,995 in total revenue and generated $162,092 in actual revenue, exceeding projections by approximately $7,100. This positive variance was primarily driven by higher-than-anticipated external funding and partnership revenues, while core AMS funding remained consistent with budget expectations.

Personnel expenditures totaled $89,642, compared to a budget of $86,128, representing an increase of approximately $3,500. This variance reflects the annual wages according to the compensation grid; the previous year's budget did not account for this.

Reported operating expenditures totaled $46,915 against a budget of $62,567, resulting in a reported underspend of approximately $15,700. However, this variance should be interpreted with caution, as several commission initiatives, including BLMP and other event-related expenses, were not fully captured or were allocated differently than originally budgeted. As a result, the reported underspend does not necessarily reflect reduced programming activity or unused funds. Rather, it appears to be partly driven by expenditure reporting and allocation inconsistencies across initiatives, grants, and event budgets. Approximately, $20,000 through various initiatives (MEP, BLMP, IIL event, Queer Prom, grants) are still being distributed and allocated to the correct budget lines.

Overall, total reported expenditures were $140,104, compared to a budget of $154,995, resulting in a reported year-end surplus of $21,988. While this reflects a surplus on paper, the figure was influenced by strong revenue performance, personnel variance, and the way certain expenses were recorded as mentioned above. Therefore, the surplus should not be interpreted as excess operational capacity or as evidence that Commission programming required substantially less funding. Instead, it reflects a combination of higher revenues and reporting/allocation differences, particularly across grants and event-based initiatives.

Current Budget vs Previous Actuals (2026–2027 vs 2025–2026 Actuals)

The 2026–27 budget reflects a return to full operational capacity following several reporting and allocation inconsistencies identified in the previous fiscal year. While the Commission reported a surplus of $21,988 in 2025–26, this figure does not fully capture the true cost of Commission programming, as several initiative expenses, including BLMP programming, MEP expenses, event expenditures, and portions of grant-supported activities, were not fully reflected within reported operating costs.

Revenue projections have increased from $162,092 to $193,060. This increase is primarily attributable to the restoration of the Commission's student activity fee allocation , expanded external funding opportunities (approximately $26,000), and anticipated partnership contributions that support

Commission programming and student-facing initiatives. Further of note, the assembly allocation has been decreased from $100,000 to $91,900.

Personnel expenditures have increased from $89,642 to $97,384. This adjustment reflects the approved compensation grid and provides a more accurate representation of expected staffing costs required to support Commission operations. Personnel costs were underbudgeted in the previous fiscal year relative to actual expenditures, making this increase necessary to ensure appropriate staffing capacity and operational sustainability.

Operating expenditures have increased from $46,915 to $67,649. This increase does not represent unchecked program growth, but rather a more accurate reflection of the Commission's existing activities and commitments. The budget now incorporates full funding allocations for recurring initiatives, event delivery, BLMP, MEP, grant-supported programming, and operational needs that were previously underreported or allocated inconsistently. Additional investments include the expansion of Commission awards through two new award categories, increased support for student-facing programming, and enhanced funding for resources and educational initiatives.

Grant funding has also been adjusted to support the Commission's commitment to fully distributing available grant resources. This aligns budgeted expenditures more closely with actual program delivery and ensures student groups have continued access to equity-focused funding opportunities. Where external or university-matched funding is available, the Commission will continue leveraging those sources to offset internal costs while maintaining strong support for student initiatives.

The Commission is budgeting to end the year at $0, with all available funds intentionally allocated toward student-facing programming, grants, awards, education, resources, and community initiatives. This reflects the Commission's role as a service- and advocacy-based body: the goal is not to generate a surplus, but to responsibly deploy available resources in ways that directly support students and strengthen equity-focused programming across campus.

Employee Costs

Staffing Numbers (Current Year vs Previous Year)

Position Type	Role	Change from Previous Year
Salaried	Social Issues Commissioner – External Social Issues Commissioner - Internal	None
Waged	Black Initiatives Lead Accessibility Initiatives Lead Queer Initiatives Lead Indigenous Initiatives Lead Collective Reflections EIC	None
Honoraria	Advocacy Lead Marketing Deputy	Additional honoraria role

	REC Lead	
Volunteer	12 SIC Volunteers 5 CoRE Volunteers SIC interns x 2	None

Staffing Cost Comparison (Current Year vs Previous Year)

Category	Current Year Budget	Previous Year Actual	Change
Salaried Staff	65,485	63,113	Minimum wage changes Net change of 2372
Waged Staff	30,398	25,259	Net change of 5139
Honorarium / Transition	1500	1271	Additional honorarium role + wages transition Net change of 500
Total	***97,384***	***89,643***	**$8011**

Cost Management:

Financial resources are managed through a combination of annual budget planning, ongoing monitoring, and strategic external funding efforts. Core expenditures are allocated to priority initiatives identified at the beginning of the year, with key events such as Queer Prom, Equity Caucus, Equity Town Halls, and Equity Gala receiving dedicated budget allocations to support consistent delivery and student engagement.

Several initiatives, including the Black Legacy Mentorship Program (BLMP), portion of the new awards programs, and certain educational and community-based initiatives, are dependent on grant funding and external sponsorship support as well as cross-commission collaboration. As a result, programming is scaled and planned based on confirmed funding availability to ensure financial sustainability and responsible resource use.

Personnel costs are budgeted using the full AMS compensation grid and expected staffing complement. Actual expenditures may vary throughout the year depending on hiring timelines, vacancies, staff transitions, and operational needs. Regular budget reviews allow for adjustments to reflect changing circumstances while maintaining overall fiscal responsibility.

The Commission also prioritizes leveraging external funding opportunities and collaborative partnerships to maximize impact while minimizing direct costs. Ongoing relationships with community and institutional partners, including the Vice-Principal (Culture, Equity, and Inclusion) portfolio, the Principal's Office, the City of Kingston, and other community organizations, help support programming through financial contributions, in-kind resources, shared event costs, and collaborative initiatives.

To ensure efficient and effective use of resources, spending decisions are guided by alignment with Commission priorities, anticipated student impact, available funding, and opportunities for cost-sharing. Regular monitoring of expenditures throughout the year helps ensure funds remain on track and can be reallocated where necessary to address emerging needs or support high-impact initiatives.