



ESS Terms of Reference: **Relations Committee**

Approved by the Board of Directors on July 2, 2026

Reviewed on June 23, 2026

Recommended to be reviewed by May 2027

Mandate:

1. The Relations Committee is a standing Committee of the Embark Sustainability Society (ESS) Board of Directors.
2. The Committee engages the campus and regional community to advance the ESS's mission and vision.
3. The Committee ensures the ESS works in the best interests of its members.
4. The Committee shall report to the Board at least once per month.

Membership:

1. The Committee shall be composed of:
 - a. At least three (3) members of the Board of Directors;
 - b. Up to five (5) general members of the Society;
 - c. The Director of Development as a non-voting member;
 - d. The Director of Engagement as a non-voting member
2. A member of the Board of Directors shall chair the Committee.
3. The Committee may invite additional non-voting guests at its discretion.
4. Quorum shall be three (3) voting members of the committee.

Authority and Reporting:

1. The Chair may serve as an official representative of the ESS to its members.
2. The Committee shall report to the Board at least once per month.

Meeting Frequency & Timeline:

1. The Committee shall meet at least once per month during the fall, spring, and summer sessions.
2. The Relations Officer has the authority to increase or decrease the frequency of meetings as needed.

Chair:

1. The Committee will be chaired by the Relations Officer.
2. The Chair will be responsible for calling meetings, developing the agenda for meetings with input from the Committee, and reviewing the draft minutes from the

previous meeting and reporting the Committee's activities to the Board of Directors at least once per month.

3. The Chair is responsible for onboarding new Committee members to ensure they are aware of the Committee purpose and mandate.
4. The agenda will be sent out at least 2 days (or 48 hours) prior to the holding of a Relations Committee meeting
5. A planned meeting conducted by the committee Chair can be altered into an electronic motion that initiates on the same day of planned meeting if the agenda is sent at least 48 hours prior to the original meeting.

Activities:

The Committee shall undertake the following activities in collaboration with the Board, Staff and Volunteers as needed:

Roles and Responsibilities	Example
1. Public Information, Marketing & Education	
- Develop and distribute communications materials (press releases, social media content, flyers) in collaboration with the Board and Staff to inform and mobilize students. - Organize educational events (teach-ins, workshops, street outreach) in collaboration with the Director of Engagement if needed to deepen understanding of campaign issues. - Work with the Communications Manager to maintain clear public messaging to the student body (website, newsletters, campaigns). - Promote major events (Annual General Meeting, fee-levy campaigns, rallies) in collaboration with other committees to increase visibility and turnout.	Publish 1 press release per major campaign/event. Distribute 100+ flyers or educational materials per term.
2. Collective Action & Mobilization	

• Organize and support direct actions (rallies, protests, lobbying efforts) to build public pressure and visibility. • Support Mutual aid programs (food rescue, community kitchens) to strengthen care-based organizing. • Recruit and coordinate short-term volunteers for actions to expand participation.	Execute 1–2 direct actions or rallies per academic year. Maintain 1 active mutual aid program.
3. Alliance & Solidarity Building	
• Build and maintain partnerships with NGOs, coalitions, and grassroots groups. • Represent the organization in solidarity campaigns (climate justice, food equity). • Coordinate joint events with external allies (universities, Indigenous collectives, offices and departments etc). • Engage with campus clubs, student unions, constituency groups, and student societies (non-administrative).	Maintain 8–10 formal partnerships per year. Attend or co-host 2–4 solidarity events annually.
4. Internal Organizing & Political Development	
• Educate and train members to inspire long-term involvement in organizing. • Facilitate political education (study circles, workshops). • Conduct member check-ins, evaluations, and appreciation efforts. • Document lessons learned during and after campaigns/actions for internal and public memory.	Onboard 8–12 new volunteers per semester. Hold 2–3 internal evaluations per year.

- Analyze student body conditions to adapt campaigns to member capacity. - Support the recruitment, training, and transition of new Board members	
5. Governance Liaison & Advocacy	
- Liaise with SFU administrators and policy-makers to advance student priorities. - Advocate for equity-centered policies in institutional spaces. - Assist in AGM/logistical planning (in partnership with Embark Internal Team). - Report back to members on SFU and SFSS governance changes and initiatives as related to Embark's activities.	Attend semesterly meetings with SFU decision-makers.

Glossary of Terms:

- Campaign** = This is an action that directly confronts the existing condition or state of affairs done in a specific period of time with a long-term goal of growing and expanding
- Political Education** = The transmission of knowledge, values, attitudes and skills needed to participate in the methods and activities through which groups and individuals organize, govern, and make decisions within a society.
- Lobbying** = A strategic form of advocacy that seeks to directly influence legislators, regulatory agencies, and other government decision-makers to shape policies, laws, or regulations in favor of specific interests, missions, movements or campaigns.
- Actions** = Planned collective mobilization of the masses
- Public pressure** = influence exerted by the general public on individuals, organizations, institutions, or governments to encourage/discourage certain actions or policies
 - This includes boycotts, social media campaigns, petitions, protests, etc.
- Care-based organizing** = A form of activism and community mobilization that centers care, mutual aid, and collective well-being as foundational to political and

social change. It treats relationships, interdependence, and daily survival needs as vital to sustaining movements.

- **Mutual aid** = a form of voluntary community support to help meet needs of others, often in response to systematic failures or crises
 - Examples include: community fridges, emergency funds managed for/by marginalized groups, etc,
- **NGOs** = Non-governmental organizations that help people experiencing social injustice by providing humanitarian aid, advocating for human rights, and raising awareness on environmental and social issues.
- **Constituency groups** = represents the interest of specific groups of people. They advocate for their members' needs and provide resources and support services. Constituency groups on SFU include:
 - Disability and Neurodiversity Alliance (DNA)
 - SFU First Nations, Métis & Inuit Student Association (FNMISA)
 - Out on Campus Collective (OOC)
 - Students of Caribbean & African Ancestry (SOCA)
 - Women Centre Collective (WCC)
- **Coalitions** = temporary alliance of different groups that join forces to achieve a common goal.
- **Grassroot groups** = groups of people, often civilians (rather than established authority, institutions, etc), working together to advocate for a cause.
- **Formal partnerships** = relationships with enforceable commitments