

FOSSA RECAP



SARA DESOUSA...

on creating a FOSSA community

When I stepped onto campus in my first year, I wanted to feel a sense of belonging. I'm sure many of you share a similar sentiment. University can feel like an isolating experience because we are expected to do so much in very little time. However, there is one thing that can combat these feelings of isolation—our community. When I am feeling overwhelmed by school or life, I turn to my community to help me through it. I have been lucky enough to surround myself with amazing people, both on and off FOSSA, who have helped me through these times. When I was campaigning to become President of FOSSA, I had this in the back of my mind the entire time. I wanted to create a sense of community within the Faculty of Science to uplift our students and build a space that is inclusive of everyone. Through various events and initiatives, I believe we have successfully created a community that supports one another through our undergraduate experience.

As President, I am required to fill many different roles. At first, I felt overwhelmed by the workload until I learned how to pull back and trust the team. I would like to take a moment to acknowledge all the hard work they have put into this year. Without them, we would not be the FOSSA you see today. Every single person on our executive team has been crucial to our success. I am so lucky to have such a supportive, dedicated, and hardworking team alongside me. They have given me the opportunity to learn more about myself through my shortcomings and successes. I have learned that leadership is not about knowing all the answers, but rather about how you work with others to create the best solution. To my team and those I have worked with in years past, thank you for allowing me to learn and grow throughout this journey.



Sara at FOSSA Formal!



FOSSA Friends!

WHAT YOU DON'T SEE...

the EVP experience



**Arfan Sivarooban, EVP
of FOSSA**

Reflecting on the past year, I feel incredibly grateful to be a part of this team. Last year, I chose to apply for Executive Vice President (EVP) because I wanted to step outside of my comfort zone. I was very comfortable being VP of Academics and had always told myself I would continue in that role during my time at Laurier. But a part of me wanted more. I wanted to support each team in a more impactful way, and this role has given me that and so much more.

In the beginning, there was a bit of a learning curve as I figured out how to best support Sara while also supporting the rest of the team. At times, it felt like I wasn't doing my job as well as I could have. But once the fall semester rolled around, I started to find my groove. I began learning not only how to act like a leader, but also how to speak like one. One of my favourite memories was taking the time to speak with all the first years at the Get Involved Fair who were interested in FOSSA, explaining how to join and how FOSSA enhances the undergraduate experience at Laurier.

By now, I've learned that my main job is to support people from behind the scenes. There will always be speed bumps along the way, and it's my responsibility to be the support system not only for the President, but for the entire team.

I've thoroughly enjoyed connecting not only with the FOSSA execs, but also with the science community at Laurier. I'm thankful for Sara, who trusted that I was the right person for the role and taught me how to be a leader. I'm incredibly grateful for the opportunity to be Co-President in the upcoming academic year and hope to do as great a job as Sara and those who came before her. The biggest lesson I've taken away from my year as EVP of FOSSA is to step outside your comfort zone. Be comfortable with being uncomfortable, and you'll grow in ways you never imagined.

THE EVENTS TEAM...

on facing change and overcoming challenges

This year, the events team faced multiple changes. Some of these changes were positive and some negative, but all these changes allowed us to grow as a team. These positive changes came in the form of new team members. This included new team members on events and new team members on FOSSA, such as Joice, our health and wellness coordinator. Joice planned multiple health and wellness events, allowing the events team to have more time to focus greater on other events. Some negative changes came in the form of changing deadlines and policies. Nonetheless, our new and returning team members handled it all with grace. I would go as far as to say these negative changes and challenges made us much closer as a team.

What we've learned as a team is that change and challenges can be frustrating, but it's how you grow from these that matters the most.

All the best,
The events team



Ciara Morin and Alyssa
Scheifele



Shaylene Gray, Riya Rakkar,
and Ash Penumaka

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES...

never back down never what?!

Hey everyone!! This year, FOSSA Finance did a fabulous job of managing our funds and exploring new opportunities to bring in even more. The finance team is a crucial part of FOSSA's success. You can have all the plans and ideas in the world, but demands were high, and supplies were looking a little low. This meant that we had to expand our horizons and think outside the box.

In the first semester, we focused on not only managing our club budgets but also implementing new strategies to manage our own. To reach this goal, we introduced our brand new colour-coded BIG BUDGET tracker, which summarizes all of our expenditures by semester and cost. Having an overview of our yearly expenses allowed us to be proactive and plan for our events and initiatives in a cost-effective manner to ensure all operations were executed to their full potential.

Now that we had an outline of the year and handled

business with what we already had, we decided to take it one step further and seek external aid. After all, progress requires pushing beyond what you already have. We started reaching out and were lucky enough to hear back from two on-campus partners. For one of the partners, we were tasked to create a budget proposal and present an outline of our request. After a brief application process and a 10-minute presentation, we had successfully secured the bag, and FOSSA was in good hands once again!

The rest of the year consisted of Research Assistant Scholarships, Textbook Reimbursements, donations, and well-funded events. Thanks to our efforts in the first semester, we were able to glide through the rest of the year gracefully.

This year taught us to keep high spirits and emphasized the importance of organization, but above all, NEVER BACK DOWN NEVER WHAT?! (Never give up!).

Fear not FOSSA Fam, FOSSA Finance is the (wo)MAN!



Gurleen Banger and Imaan Khandwala at FOSSA Formal

THE REP TEAM...

and their favourite FOSSA memories

Being the representative team for FOSSA this year has been a wonderful experience – one that we'll cherish for years to come. We are beyond grateful for the opportunity to represent the Faculty of Science and meet such amazing and inspiring individuals. Applying for this position was both nerve-wracking and exciting. We're sure many can relate when we say that nothing is scarier than being grilled by Sara, all while having a very serious Arfan take notes during your interview. Nevertheless, we can wholeheartedly say that joining FOSSA has been the highlight of our year, leaving us with unforgettable memories and lifelong friendships. One of our favourite memories from this year was karaoke night. Even though we didn't always know the lyrics, the laughter and shared energy brought us even closer as a team. Another highlight was our Paint & Sip Event, which challenged us to collaborate to plan our first event. From planning logistics such as food, supplies, and event setup to seeing the fantastic turnout, it was a rewarding experience that emphasized the importance of teamwork and organization. Overall, this experience has definitely been worthwhile. We would highly recommend applying for any clubs if

you're looking to get into extracurriculars to represent your student body. Something good will always come out of taking a risk! For our future reps, our advice would be to try new experiences and not be afraid of them! Always be proud of the small wins, accomplishments, and the effort you put into all your work (in and out of FOSSA). Juggling new roles can be a challenge, but with such a supportive team that you can lean on and depend on for help, it'll all be much easier – don't take it for granted! With all that said, remember to have fun and enjoy the experience. Good luck!



Andrew Shehata, Muskaan Sahi, and Sohan Rasul at our Social Bowling Night

BEN SHAOLIAN...

working with FOSSA clubs

Being the VP of Clubs and Associations for FOSSA this past year has been an incredible experience. In this position, I have had the pleasure of working with the highly ambitious clubs within FOSSA, and hearing about all the incredible event and initiative ideas our clubs have. Further, I have had the chance to watch them achieve these feats. A highlight of this position was organizing and presenting the FOSSA awards, where executives and clubs were recognized for their achievements this past year. It was an incredible feeling being able to recognize some of the people who have contributed greatly to the FOSSA community this past year. Thank you to all of our amazing clubs, which help make students engaged in the science community at Laurier. It has truly been a pleasure to work with each and every one of you.



Ben at FOSSA's Holiday Gift Exchange!

THE PHOTO/VID TEAM...

stepping out of your comfort zone



Michelle Beyer and Hiya Sheehn at O-Day

As the Photo/Video Team this year, we really learned the importance of stepping outside of our comfort zones and embracing new experiences! Taking risks is the absolute best way to erase self-doubt and grow as a person. From approaching people in the Science Atrium for interviews, filming in public, and even meeting with professors for Prof Fails, we quickly became comfortable and confident in our roles despite it seeming intimidating at first. It was truly rewarding to be able to interact with people and foster an inclusive environment through our work. Being on Photo/Vid is more than just taking pictures and

creating content - it is about capturing and showcasing the community we have in the Faculty of Science, and we're so grateful to have been part of that.

JOICE SOLIMAN...

and her health and wellness experience

Being the Health and Wellness Coordinator for FOSSA this year has been an incredible privilege and one of the most memorable parts of my university experience. From tote bag paint night to dog therapy, FOSSA fitness, and journal night, I had so much fun organizing each of these events. While every event had its own unique vibe, whether cozy, energetic, or calming, they all shared one thing in common: the Faculty of Science students who attended never failed to bring light, warmth, and joy into the space.

Seeing people walk in, excited and open, made each event so special. It was incredibly rewarding to watch them come to life and to see students genuinely enjoying themselves. There's something truly meaningful about creating spaces where people feel safe to relax, connect, and take a breath from their busy lives.

My favorite part of it all was being able to personally connect with students at

every event. Those little conversations and shared moments made everything feel more personal and reminded me of the joy and impact we can bring to one another. I will truly cherish this experience forever. Being part of FOSSA and having the opportunity to create meaningful moments for our student community has been a true highlight of my year, and I'm so grateful to have been a part of it.



Joice and Gurleen at FOSSA Fuel!

MARKETING...

a year of creativity, collaboration and community

This was my first year as a FOSSA executive team member – an opportunity I had long looked forward to and deeply valued. As soon as I joined the team back in October, I felt a little anxious yet motivated to make an immediate impact within the marketing team as a Co-Director of Marketing. From the beginning, I was welcomed with open arms by our wonderful Vice-President of Marketing, Kaylyn, our hardworking Marketing Co-Directors Nuha, Geena and Tiffany, President Sara and Executive Vice-President Arfan. Their relentless support and genuine kindness made the new environment feel natural and seamless, like I've been part of the team since the jump. With this new collaborative team, we achieved huge turnouts at our events through our marketing outreach (e.g. FOSSA Formal, Paint & Sip Event) and sold out our entire merch line. I am very proud of what we accomplished this year and grateful for the experiences I've had along the way. - Arsh Verma

I absolutely loved my time on FOSSA's marketing team - it has been such a supportive and encouraging environment. Being a part of the team provided me with the space to learn, ask questions, and grow both personally and professionally. I really appreciated the trust I was given by my VP of Marketing, Kaylyn, Co-Directors Geena, Arsh, and Tiffany, President Sara, and EVP Arfan which helped me take initiative and step into more leadership responsibilities. It was a space where I felt motivated to contribute, push myself creatively, and be surrounded by people who genuinely wanted each other to succeed. Marketing has also been an outlet for my artistic side, which I don't always get to express as a STEM student. It has been a rewarding experience to explore my creativity and bring ideas to life in ways I hadn't imagined before. - Nuha Moostofa

I'm genuinely so grateful for my time on marketing, and I owe a lot of it to this team. This is my second year on the marketing team, and I love being surrounded by such creative and supportive people who make this role so enjoyable! Being able to create all the promotional content that brings FOSSA to life is so fulfilling and an experience I wouldn't trade for anything! - Geena Melbourne

I don't think words can fully describe the love, trust, and support this team has built. Working alongside my VP, Kaylyn and co-directors Geena, Nuha, and Arsh has been more than I ever could've imagined. It's not just about creating visual posts, it's about the teamwork and collaboration that make it all happen. Being part of FOSSA has been incredibly rewarding, from the friendships we've built to the effort we've put in together. I can't wait to work with my new team next year! - Tiffany Lu



**The Marketing Team at FOSSA's
Winter Social!**

As this year's VP of Marketing, I've had the privilege of overseeing and communicating all promotional materials for FOSSA. In my final year at Laurier and second year with FOSSA, I've built lasting friendships and embraced countless opportunities for which I'm incredibly grateful. Managing FOSSA's digital presence and advertising strategy has been no small task, but it's one I've approached with dedication and enthusiasm.

While fourth year might seem more manageable, the Marketing Team works diligently to plan and schedule our content. Beyond strategic planning, we bring a creative eye to everything we do, ensuring our visuals and messaging are not only effective but also cohesive and reflective of FOSSA's identity. A motto I've carried with me through challenges over the past two years is that nothing is ever too difficult with passion and determination.

Working alongside my Directors (Geena, Nuha, Tiffany, and Arsh) and witnessing their growth and shared passion has been especially rewarding. Seeing their dedication and creativity flourish makes me incredibly proud and excited to see what the next year holds for FOSSA.

For those thinking about joining FOSSA or wondering what it's like to be part of the team, I can confidently say it's like joining a family. We work seamlessly together, supporting each other through every challenge and celebrating every success.

As I look ahead, I will forever be grateful for my time in FOSSA and at Laurier, knowing that this experience has shaped me in ways I'll cherish for a lifetime. - Kaylyn Chuson



**Arsh, Nuha, Kaylyn, Tiffany, and Geena
at FOSSA Formal**



ACADEMICS...

team work makes the dream work

Over my time working as VP of Academics on FOSSA this year, I've learned one very important lesson: it's okay to ask for help. Although this role was largely independent and much of the work fell on my shoulders, I quickly realized that I was never truly alone. Whether it was brainstorming ideas for FURC, navigating challenges with RAS, or just needing a second opinion, I could always count on the support of my fellow FOSSA Executive members.

This team is an incredibly warm, driven, and welcoming group of individuals who never hesitate to come together and collaborate. No matter how big or small the task, we were always willing to "gang up" (in the best way possible!) to bring every initiative to life. Through this experience, I not only grew more confident in my leadership abilities but also learned the value of teamwork, community, and mutual support. Being part of this executive team has been such a rewarding experience, and I am so excited to continue in this role next year!



**Zara Belanger-Pepper at our
Holiday Gift Exchange**



**FOSSA Winter Bowling
Social!**

THE EDII TEAM...

how they have connected with the community

As EDII members on FOSSA this year, we're proud of the work we've done to create space for students and push important conversations forward. Contributing to the HE IDEA event and giving students spotlights in our newsletters, especially during Black History Month, were big highlights. It felt good to make sure students were seen and celebrated by FOSSA.

Supporting TRC Day, advocating for safe spaces, and working on the student advocacy form were moments that reminded us why this work matters. We're also proud of the role we played in the Peer Mentorship program, making sure mentors were EDII-informed and able to support first-years in a meaningful and inclusive way.

We're excited to keep building on this work, especially with our upcoming Heart to Heart event with LSPIRG focused on menstrual equity. Overall, it's been a year full of moments that showed us the impact of amplifying student voices and creating space where everyone feels valued.

This year has helped us feel more connected to our campus community and peers. It has provided opportunities to build friendships and gain the confidence to form new connections in our classes. Through this experience, we have also developed the ability to speak up as advocates, not just for ourselves, but for others who may not be able to do so themselves. Most importantly, we've learned that we can make a real difference with the support of valuable resources like CSEDI and the FOSSA team. Seeing the positive impact of EDII in our campus community has been incredibly rewarding and continues to motivate us to create meaningful change every day.

We have been able to view EDII as a key driver of innovation, finding new ways to benefit each individual, regardless of their identity. The most bittersweet part of this team has been integrating EDII to each event, role and initiative. We have been able to advocate for a variety of individuals, especially those who feel unheard, as though they can't speak up for themselves. Showing us the significance of ensuring that each individual feels safe, supported and included. EDII is a sign of progress in this world, and we couldn't be prouder to be part of it.



**Rushell Campbell, Humjit Kaur, and
Chloe Gibson at FOSSA Formal**

Joining FOSSA in my fourth and final year allowed me to make 25 new friends, and it is an experience that is truly unmatched. I will be forever grateful for the environment and the connections I have made through FOSSA, and I am so grateful for the experience to relay 10 pages worth of information to you all each month.

I will leave you in the extremely capable hands of my favourite director (soon to be VP), Shunit, and I know she won't disappoint!

Sami Poulsen, FOSSA's VP of Communications

Looking back at this past year, I am so incredibly grateful to be part of such an amazing and close-knit family on FOSSA. I feel truly lucky to have been given the opportunity to write these monthly newsletters and convey all the amazing things FOSSA has been up to this past year.

I've learned and grown so much thanks to the FOSSA team—and especially Sami. I'll do my best to make you proud next year!

Shunit Waisenberg, FOSSA's Director of Communications

We feel so lucky to have been able to make these newsletters each month, and to be able to put these out into the Laurier Science Community. We have loved working with the FOSSA family and appreciate those who helped to make the newsletter come true each month. Thank you for taking the time to read the messages and articles we have shared, and with each edition we have enjoyed making it more of our own each time.



Signing Off,

2024-2025 comms team