

Recruitment for two Masters Students/RAs - AI for the rest of us (SSHRC)

We are seeking two graduate students to assist in a SSHRC funded research, called Artificial Intelligence (AI) for the Rest of Us. This research project builds a new model of public (civic) engagement in government decision making processes that are increasingly automated with AI. The challenge for public (non-expert) participation is that AI systems like automated decision making (ADM) require highly sophisticated knowledge; the systems have complex software architectures and they are opaque (a “black box”). Our model and deliverables (e.g., surveys, workshops) hope to advance the knowledge on public engagement with AI up to and including a level of technical empowerment. That is a difficult challenge so we co-conduct this research with civil society organizations (CSOs), who possess a successful track record in evaluating technological innovations in government (e.g., initiatives like smart cities, software like geographic information systems, and digital data like open government data).

There are **two positions** available:

Research position 1: conduct research that analyzes the rhetoric and proposals for meaningful civic engagement in AI development and deployment by the public and private sectors.

Research position 2: explore the role of CSOs to serve as intermediaries for meaningful engagement in AI (e.g., in expanding digital literacies).

We are looking for individuals who have a degree in Geography, Communication, Journalism, Political Science, Media Studies, Public Policy or a related field. The individuals should possess strong writing and editing skills, especially in synthesising complex ideas and multiple perspectives, as well as knowledge of and interest in media and democracy, technology governance and public policy.

Salary: Masters student stipend for 2 years (\$16,400/year) OR part time research assistantship for 52 weeks (\$25/hour), depending on expertise.

The deadline to apply is **December 30, 2020**. Please send the following to Renee Sieber (renee.sieber@mcgill.ca) and Ana Brandusescu (ana.brandusescu@mcgill.ca) indicating in the Subject line the research position you are interested in:

- 1 page statement of interest
- 1 sample of written work
- CV

Important note: to apply for a research assistantship to start in mid-January 2021 (existing McGill University students or individuals with Masters degrees preferred) or entry into the McGill University graduate program to start in September 2021.