Dear Colleagues:

As many of us are shifting our research focus to COVID-19, we want to share with you some of the resources available to researchers based at McGill and its affiliated institutions, as well as an announcement regarding the launch of the MI4 Clinical Research Platform (MI4-CRP).

Best regards,
Don, Marcel and Marie

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1. COVID-19 Resources Available to McGill Researchers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Contact Person / Email</th>
<th>Current Status / Anticipated Availability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MI4 Clinical Research Platform (MI4-CRP)</td>
<td>Aims to support the MI4 community to conduct world class investigator-initiated and industry sponsored studies and allow us to contribute to global research efforts to address COVID-19 immediately and offer therapeutic options to our patients.</td>
<td>Jonathan Roger Project Manager <a href="mailto:jonathan.roger@muhc.mcgill.ca">jonathan.roger@muhc.mcgill.ca</a></td>
<td>See announcement below.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Biosafety Level 3 (BSL3) Lab</td>
<td>This platform is based at the RI-MUHC, approved by Public Health Agency of Canada, and is open to all McGill researchers for COVID-19 related research. This facility supports studies involving live SARS-CoV-2 (the causative agent of COVID-19) in tissue culture and in animal models.</td>
<td>Marcel Behr <a href="mailto:marcel.behr@mcgill.ca">marcel.behr@mcgill.ca</a> Dac Vuong* <a href="mailto:DacHien.Vuong@MUHC.MCGILL.CA">DacHien.Vuong@MUHC.MCGILL.CA</a></td>
<td>Approved by PHAC, awaiting live SARS-CoV-2 this week.</td>
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<tr>
<td>BSL3 Animal Models Platform</td>
<td>Working to establish animal models (mouse, ferret, hamster) that will eventually be available for COVID-19 studies.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Hamster model should be up and running by mid-April; ferret model by early May; and mouse model in mid-June.</td>
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<tr>
<td>BSL3 Viral Studies Platform</td>
<td>Support studies involving live SARS-CoV-2 in cultured cells and in animal models. Trained level 3 technicians will perform the experiments that are designed by the PIs and are feasible with the resources at the COVID platform. Costs of reagents, materials, and part of the technician time will be charged to the PIs.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Early May, 2020</td>
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**Biobank Québec COVID-19**

The “Biobank Quebec COVID-19” is currently collecting samples from a network of hospitals across the province. The McGill Genome Centre will generate genomic sequence and expression data from these samples, which will be made available to researchers. Other biological specimens (blood, PBMCs, plasma) will be included in the biobank. Further information will become available as the program matures. [https://reporter.mcgill.ca/fr-q-to-create-a-province-wide-covid-19-biobank/](https://reporter.mcgill.ca/fr-q-to-create-a-province-wide-covid-19-biobank/)

**Dan Auld**
Head of Operations
BQC Task Force
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**Ongoing**

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**MI4 Emergency COVID-19 Research Funding (ECRF)**

The ECRF program provides one-time funding for McGill researchers for 6-month projects that can provide immediate answers, in preparation for sustained transmission or resurgence of the pandemic after initial control.

**Kevin O’Neill**
MI4 Program Manager
[MI4Programmgr.med@mcgill.ca](mailto:MI4Programmgr.med@mcgill.ca)

Round 1: 40 proposals received, 16 projects funded.

Round 2: Application deadline was Wed April 8th at 12:00 PM. Results to be announced soon.

Future rounds: None confirmed. TBD depending on availability of funds. Stayed tuned to MI4 website.

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**COVID-19 Resources Canada**

McGill has helped create a network of researchers, students, and web developers who launched a national portal to help those involved in COVID-19 research and development locate human resources, reagents, equipment and information in a timely manner.

**Guillaume Bourque**
[guil.bourque@mcgill.ca](mailto:guil.bourque@mcgill.ca)

Launched March 31st.

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2. **Announcing the launch of the MI4 Clinical Research Platform (MI4-CRP)**

As the COVID-19 epidemic expands, there is an urgent need to ramp up our capacity to support the conduct of clinical trials across the McGill Health System. We are pleased to announce the formation of the MI4 Clinical Research Platform (MI4-CRP) that will be co-led by Dr. Marina Klein (MUHC) and Dr. Christina Greenaway (JGH). This initiative expands upon the successful MI4 MUHC Clinical Trials Platform for Complex and Emerging Diseases, led by Dr Todd Lee, to rapidly deliver infrastructure for the conduct of trials at both the MUHC and JGH. The aim is to support the MI4 community to conduct world class investigator-initiated and industry sponsored studies and allow us to contribute to global research efforts to address COVID-19 immediately and offer therapeutic options to our patients. Building this structure now will also serve to position us to expand the range of clinical studies in infectious diseases and immunology going forward.

A COVID Clinical Trials Committee has been struck to advise the MI4-CRP on 1) Defining areas of priority to conduct clinical research and 2) Assessing which trials should be prioritized (e.g. based on need, promise, feasibility, competition with similar patient populations).

If you feel that you have studies that may require support, please contact Jonathan Roger (Project Manager) at [Jonathan.Roger@muhc.mcgill.ca](mailto:Jonathan.Roger@muhc.mcgill.ca) so that MI4-CRP can help you to evaluate your needs.

Finally, MI4-CRP will be reaching out separately to those leading clinical cohorts and biobanking initiatives to ensure that we can maximize the translational research potential of MI4-CRP.

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