



Update on the Innovation Agenda

Research and International Relations

February 2016

Executive Summary

The following document provides information on the initiatives, programs, and projects that have been launched or expanded during the past two years in support of McGill's innovation agenda. In brief:

- The Innovation Steering Committee has put forward four sets of recommendations, relating to entrepreneurship education; recognizing and rewarding innovative and entrepreneurial activity in the academic career path; enhancing McGill's capacity for successful industrial partnerships; and, revising/updating McGill's Policy on Intellectual Property. All are being implemented.
- McGill's commercialization team has been reorganized under the Invention Development and Entrepreneurship Assistance office, and IDEA staff members are successfully delivering high-quality support for technology transfer activities within the Faculties.
- The Dobson Centre for Entrepreneurship has continued to expand its offerings, including new streams within the Dobson Cup competition related to agribusiness entrepreneurship and social innovation, and a new on-campus accelerator program launched this summer.
- The position of Associate Vice-Principal (Innovation and Partnerships) has been developed to continue to build on McGill's innovation agenda, and a recruitment plan is being rolled out for this position.
- A novel model for offering modular minors in entrepreneurship with Faculty-specific elements was developed by the Marcel Desautels Institute for Integrated Management. FAES launched its Minor in Agribusiness Entrepreneurship this September. The Faculties of Engineering and Science are revising existing programs to align with this new model, with an expected re-launch in September 2016. The Faculty of Arts expects to launch a new Minor in Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship in September 2016. In addition, the Faculties of Law, Music, and Religious Studies are each in talks with Desautels to launch their own minors based on this model.
- A proposal is being refined, in cooperation with the Office of the Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, to offer a certificate in entrepreneurship for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows.
- Experiential learning opportunities are being expanded for students interested in innovation and entrepreneurship via MITACS and through the Quartier de l'Innovation.
- RIR, together with the Innovation Steering Committee, University Advancement and the Faculties of Management and Engineering, has developed a proposal for "nodes of innovation excellence" at McGill. These nodes will act to catalyze invention and innovative activity in the McGill community, serving as anchors in their respective sectors – and key points of connection with one another – with entrepreneurship programs and support services at the Dobson Centre for Entrepreneurship, the broader University community, and with alumni and external partners. Proposed nodes include: social innovation, technological innovation; pharmaceutical, biochemical and biomedical innovation and medical devices; and, food, agribusiness, biomaterials and biofuels innovation.
- The [Innovation Constellation](#) website has been launched, featuring a [Guide for Faculty Inventors](#) and a [Guide for Student Entrepreneurs](#), to bring together information about all services, programs, supports and projects related to innovation at McGill.
- RIR, together with the Dobson Centre, is piloting a platform for enabling mentorship interactions between McGill project teams and qualified innovation mentors as well as a mentor's toolkit.
- MUBEC has facilitated significant master research agreements with world-class corporate partners.

- The Quartier de l'innovation, launched in 2013 and supported by the highly engaged Innovation in Practice Steering Committee, has grown to become home to a wide array of incubators, accelerators, networks, laboratories and facilities all in support of the innovation and commercialization process.

Actions and Next Steps

1. Discuss with the senior administration, deans and other stakeholders how to operationalize the Nodes of Innovation Excellence at McGill in the Fall of 2015, agree on a plan of action and coordinate implementation with UA and the Faculties.
2. Recruit additional qualified volunteer mentors to participate in the pilot rollout of the mentorship platform and toolkit; refine both aspects of the mentorship program and launch the McGill-wide platform in Winter 2016.
3. Receive recommendations from the Innovation Steering Committee on a model for entrepreneurship education for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows in Fall 2016.
4. Identify and recruit an exceptional candidate as McGill's first Associate Vice-Principal (Innovation and Partnerships), Winter 2016.
5. Obtain Senate approval of changes to guidelines for tenure and promotion related to recognizing innovative/entrepreneurial activity in Winter 2016, and clarify policies and procedures related to merit assessment and leaves, Winter 2016.
6. Complete and obtain Senate approval for a revised Policy on Intellectual Property and associated guidelines in Spring 2016.
7. Work with the Faculties of Engineering and Science to revise and re-launch a Minor in Technological Entrepreneurship and continue work with the Faculty of Arts to launch a new Minor in Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Fall 2016.
8. Continue to add content and promote awareness through the Innovation Constellation website.
9. Continue to develop appropriate fundraising strategies to support the innovation agenda.
10. Continue to deepen and expand McGill's links with the local innovation community and external partners through the QI.

1 Introduction

The Conference Board of Canada has suggested that innovation can be thought of as “a process through which economic or social value is extracted from knowledge—through the creating, diffusing, and transforming of ideas—to produce new or improved products, services, processes, strategies, or capabilities.” At McGill, our use of the term “innovation” is inclusive, embracing the development of scientific and technological solutions to market problems as well as novel approaches to meeting societal needs, to advancing the public good, and to adding to our collective culture in meaningful and enduring ways. McGill is pursuing an innovation agenda with three overarching objectives:

- a) **Stimulate** entrepreneurial and innovative activity on campus on the part of students, researchers and faculty;
- b) **Expand** significantly our zone of interaction with key players in the local, national and international innovation ecosystem, to build and strengthen partnerships in this area and

develop pathways for McGill innovators to take their inventions and ideas to the next stage;

- c) **Accelerate** the process by which students, researchers and faculty launch entrepreneurial and social ventures.

To meet these objectives, a number of programs, initiatives, policy changes, and partnerships have been launched or are in progress. Many of the initiatives and projects outlined below are in the early stages of implementation, but they form an important foundation upon which to build and strengthen our innovation agenda. The following sections outline progress on each of these.

2 Organizing for Innovation

2.1 The Innovation Steering Committee

In the fall of 2013 the [Innovation Steering Committee](#), convened by Research and International Relations, came together under Dr. Phil Barker to “*coordinate, implement and track innovation strategy at McGill, identifying and stewarding a new era in innovation and business engagement at the University and with its community.*”¹ The ISC, made up of influential and innovative academic leaders, put forward four sets of recommendations on the following topics over the course of the 2013-14 academic year:

1. Entrepreneurship training
2. Recognizing and rewarding innovative and entrepreneurial activities in the academic career path
3. Enhancing McGill’s capacity for successful industrial partnerships
4. Revising and updating McGill’s Policy on Intellectual Property

Each of these sets of recommendations is now being implemented, and now in its third year, the ISC is under new leadership with a renewed Committee membership.

2.2 Innovation in Practice Steering Committee

The Innovation in Practice Steering Committee advises University leadership on strategies to promote multidisciplinary and multi-partner initiatives within the local community. In particular, the Committee shapes McGill’s involvement in the Quartier de l’innovation (QI), seeking input from senior leadership and key McGill stakeholders on the strategic decisions regarding collaborations and partnerships with local actors. The Committee is mandated to support innovative initiatives within the community, enrich student experience and leverage research funding.

2.3 Invention Development and Entrepreneurship Assistance Office (IDEA)

McGill’s Commercialization team has recently reorganized under [IDEA](#). IDEA is the primary resource for innovation and entrepreneurship support for faculty and researchers. IDEA also works collaboratively with the Dobson Centre to provide a comprehensive suite of supporting services for technology transfer, start-up formation and on-going venture development

¹ Excerpt from Innovation Steering Committee mandate.

assistance. The IDEA office is staffed with team members with sectoral expertise who are specialists in business development, entrepreneurship, commercialization and technology transfer. Although it is a centrally-reporting unit, the IDEA team supports knowledge and technology transfer across the University, and the team members are based throughout McGill's Faculties and affiliated hospitals.

With the recent efforts of the IDEA office to update and streamline policies and practices related to technology transfer and locate the technology transfer managers within the Faculties and hospitals, McGill is benefitting from a higher standard of service and a much better aligned technology transfer process. As well, significant progress has been made to re-cast McGill as a partner of choice for industry.

IDEA Technology Transfer Managers are now based in McGill's Faculties and affiliated hospitals. These staff members spend about 90% of their time in their designated unit, returning to the central office for weekly meetings and updates. Deal-flow remains low but the following examples illustrate the success of this new, more agile and responsive approach.

- Accelerated start-up formation: The University entered into an agreement with the Jewish General Hospital to co-fund a technology transfer manager at this location. The technology transfer manager's presence has significantly enhanced McGill's capacity to support technology transfer and commercialization in this area. The technology transfer manager recently worked closely with Gerald Batist, a leading cancer researcher, to troubleshoot intellectual property issues on a number of his inventions and aid him in finalizing the creation of a spin-off.
- Immediate support for intellectual property retention: During a meeting between an industry representative and a researcher, the company expressed an interest in engaging the professor in a research project. The professor was able to involve his Faculty's technology transfer manager in this dialogue immediately by walking a few paces down the hall to his technology transfer manager's office. This team member was quickly able to suggest a course of action that would allow the project to proceed while preventing the professor from giving away his intellectual property.
- Negotiation support, flexibility and rapid turnaround: A professor working with a large company on a project with attractive commercial potential was having difficulty negotiating commercial strategies within the boundaries of a research project. The Faculty's technology transfer manager was able to devise a strategy that effectively separated the research from the commercial terms while leaving control of the technology with McGill. The agreement was drafted and signed the next day.

2.1 [The Dobson Centre for Entrepreneurship](#)

The [Dobson Centre](#) is a hub for student-centered entrepreneurial activity at McGill and in the greater Montreal community. The Centre offers entrepreneurial education and provides resources, including peer-to-peer and expert mentorship, bootcamps, workshops, networking

events and an array of other activities to support the development of McGill's student entrepreneurs.

The [McGill Dobson Cup \(MDC\)](#) gives budding entrepreneurs the opportunity to receive valuable advising and a chance to win start-up capital for their enterprise. The competition is a bridge between classroom theory and practical entrepreneurship experience. In 2015, 237 applicant teams (536 students, faculty, staff and alumni) representing 10/11 faculties competed through three phases for \$100K in start-up awards. Three distinct tracks (Innovation Driven, Small & Medium Enterprise & Social Enterprise) serve as vehicles to help as many projects as possible. 52 seasoned judges including distinguished alumni and other professionals help mentor Dobson Cup start-ups throughout the competition. Since its inaugural year in 2009, the Dobson Cup has helped build 121 active start-ups from 676 competition submissions.

New this year, the [McGill X-1 Accelerator](#) is an educational program emerging from the Dobson Centre that empowers the McGill community to build innovative companies. The McGill X-1 Accelerator is an intensive 10-week summer program designed to give students the skills they need to become better entrepreneurs. The program includes a speaker-series, workshops, advisory board meetings, and time-to-build hours. Activities range from discussions on user acquisition to intensive lectures on inbound marketing, user profiling, and much more. For the 2015 cohort, five teams were chosen from the McGill Dobson Cup to participate.

2.2 Associate Vice-Principal, Innovation and Partnerships

In order to advance McGill's innovation agenda and to consolidate and build on the work of RIR and the Faculties to implement programs in support of innovation and entrepreneurship, RIR is seeking to appoint an [Associate Vice-Principal, Innovation and Partnerships](#), whose duties would include the following:

- Serve as the primary spokesperson for innovation in all its forms, both within the McGill community and with external partners, and build on current momentum to serve as a unifying influence, ensuring that this new approach to innovation takes hold across our campuses.
- Build on the work of the Innovation Steering Committee to consolidate an integrated vision for innovation at McGill and develop an implementation plan, consulting widely, enhancing pan-University collaborations, and ensuring buy-in across the institution.
- Encourage innovation and entrepreneurship among professors, students, staff, and external partners by developing a business case for changed or additional resource flows to support strategic investment in these activities and enhanced incentives across the University.
- Oversee the efficient integration of three existing University units, the Invention Development and Entrepreneurship Assistance team (IDEA), the McGill University Business Engagement Centre (MUBEC), and Innovation in Practice, into the Office of Innovation and Partnerships, and to use this streamlined platform to lead the institutional innovation agenda.

- Provide strategic guidance to the VP-RIR and other members of McGill's senior administration, including the Principal, Vice-Principals, and Deans, on subjects related to innovation, entrepreneurship, and community engagement.

3 Expanding entrepreneurship education

3.1 Minors in Entrepreneurship for undergraduate students

A modular model for cross-disciplinary undergraduate minors in entrepreneurship was developed by the Desautels Faculty of Management with the support of the Marcel Desautels Institute for Integrated Management (MDIIM); and approved at a meeting of the Deans Working Group in November 2014. These new minors, customized for different Faculties, include two new Desautels courses in management essentials for non-Management students (6 credits), entrepreneurship-oriented Desautels courses (3-12 credits), and Faculty or discipline-specific content (up to 9 credits) for participating Faculties.

Led by MDIIM, Desautels is currently working with partner Faculties to create and roll out these new minors. The Faculty of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences is launching its new minor in September 2015. The Faculties of Engineering and Science are revising existing programs to align with the modular design and incorporate the new courses, with an expected re-launch in September 2016. Similarly, the Faculty of Arts expects to launch a new Minor in Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship in September 2016. In addition, the Faculties of Law, Music, and Religious Studies are each in talks with Desautels to launch their own minors based on this model. Implementation of the new minors has been supported by seed funding from the Provost, and subsequent scaling will depend upon demand and resource availability.

Students from all participating Faculties will have an opportunity to interact in a highly interdisciplinary environment through the management essentials and entrepreneurship courses they will take together. As well, the minor incorporates a substantial experiential learning component to provide students with a practical understanding of entrepreneurship in action.

3.2 Certificate in Entrepreneurship for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows

In response to strong interest from graduate students and postdoctoral fellows, RIR is facilitating consultations and gathering data to develop a Certificate in Entrepreneurship for these constituencies. The Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, the Deputy Provost, and the Dean of the School of Continuing Studies are participating in this consultation, and an initial concept has been proposed which features an intensive summer boot-camp session followed by on-going online and peer support to develop projects into start-ups.

Next steps for this initiative include surveys to explore demand and price sensitivity, internal consultations to examine conditions and requirements for establishing the program, a determination of how teaching activities and associated costs could be funded, further consultation with the Innovation Steering Committee, and the development of a proposal for formal consideration.

3.3 Experiential learning opportunities

Through the Quartier de l’Innovation and the Desautels Faculty of Management, opportunities for “Impact Internships” at social economy organizations, internships at start-up companies, MBA consulting for start-ups, and in-course start-up-related projects are continually being expanded. Over the past year there has been a 50% increase in the number of non-profit organizations applying to be part of the Impact Internships program led by the Marcel Desautels Institute for Integrated Management through its Social Economy Initiative, in collaboration with the QI where about half of students are placed. As well, Mitacs-sponsored internship and research opportunities are continuing to expand along with the available funding envelope.

- **Mitacs Accelerate** enables both interns (graduate students and postdoctoral fellows) and faculty members to broaden their research impact by connecting with organizations in the private sector and applying their skills to new challenges. Interns transfer their skills from theory to real-world application, while the companies gain a competitive advantage by accessing high-quality research expertise. McGill applications went from 4 (in 2008-2009) to 105 (in 2013-2014). Our estimate for 2014-2015 is 164 awards.
- **Mitacs Elevate** offers postdoctoral fellows a two-year professional development plan and collaborative research project, building capacity for the next generation of R&D management leaders. McGill applications went from 1 (in 2012-2013) to 7 (in 2013-2014). Our estimate for 2014-2015 is 12 awards.
- **Mitacs Globalink** promotes Canada as a top destination for graduate student opportunities and showcases the research and development expertise of Canadians abroad. McGill research internships and fellowships went from 2 (in 2011-2012) to 144 (in 2013-2014). There were 2 Globalink research awards in 2013-2014 and our estimate for 2014-2015 is 11 awards.

The QI is also home to an ever-expanding array of research projects, outreach activities, workshops, networking events and other initiatives offering formal and informal experiential learning opportunities.

4 Structuring innovation pathways for seamless project development support

RIR, together with the Innovation Steering Committee, University Advancement and the Faculties of Management and Engineering, has developed a proposal for “nodes of innovation excellence” at McGill. Through these nodes, we seek to:

- a) Create clear pathways for innovative ideas to take shape at McGill, with support coming from the nodes of excellence for idea development, invention and innovation, and subsequent assistance available to students from the Dobson Centre for Entrepreneurship and to faculty and researchers from the IDEA team for launching an enterprise or social venture.
- b) Leverage all the innovation and entrepreneurship assets, programs and initiatives of the University in a coherent and integrated ecosystem of support.

- c) Ensure the on-going alignment of new initiatives, programs, partnerships and projects launched in the University community with the overarching innovation agenda.

These nodes will act to catalyze invention and innovative activity in the McGill community, serving as anchors in their respective sectors, and key points of connection with one another, with entrepreneurship programs and support services at the Dobson Centre for Entrepreneurship, the broader University community, and with alumni and external partners. The nodes of innovation excellence will have the freedom to:

- Develop infrastructure, programs, supports and opportunities aimed at stimulating invention and innovation;
- Refer students and project teams with inventions to the Dobson Centre for Entrepreneurship, for venture development and support, and refer faculty and researchers to the IDEA office for technology transfer and start-up formation support;
- Raise funding in support of invention and innovation activities;
- Leverage the knowledge and expertise of the Invention Development and Entrepreneurship Assistance personnel distributed across the campuses;
- Connect project teams with qualified mentors in their sectors;
- Track and report on the impact of their activities;
- Collaborate with RIR to advise on needs and opportunities arising from these activities.

The following nodes are proposed for McGill.

- Social innovation
- Technological innovation
- Pharmaceutical, biochemical and biomedical innovation and medical devices
- Food, agribusiness, biomaterials and biofuels innovation

This framework is presently being reviewed and validated by stakeholders across campus. In the coming weeks and months, RIR will focus on engaging with the implicated Faculties to understand how their interests can be best served through the implementation of the Nodes.

5 Engaging qualified alumni as innovation and entrepreneurship mentors

RIR is working with the Dobson Centre for Entrepreneurship and University Advancement, as well as stakeholders within the Faculties and IDEA, to develop a Dobson-centered mentorship platform and accompanying supports to effectively engage qualified alumni in high-quality mentorship relationships with McGill teams involved in innovative entrepreneurial and social-purpose projects. The concept and platforms are being rolled out for testing by stakeholders within the Faculties. Once qualified, McGill mentors will have the option of participating in an onboarding workshop and receiving a mentorship toolkit. They will be matched with appropriate individuals or project teams based on their sector of expertise, preferred mode of interaction and level. The mentors will then have the option of booking time, meeting space, or virtual space,

together with the project teams in an online interface developed by the Dobson Centre for Entrepreneurship, which will be accessible to stakeholders across McGill's two campuses, including students, faculty, researchers, University Advancement, and administrators.

6 Engaging with McGill's Faculties to help define McGill's innovation agenda

Research and International Relations is mapping out McGill's innovation agenda in close consultation with Faculty deans, both individually and as a group. Each Faculty has a distinct approach to innovation and RIR is working to enable each of these, while also supporting broader integration, where appropriate.

7 Updating our Intellectual Property policy and encouraging open innovation

7.1 Intellectual property policy

RIR is collaborating with the Secretariat and Legal Services to implement a series of updates and revisions to McGill's *Policy on Intellectual Property*. These revisions include recommendations submitted by the Innovation Steering Committee in November 2014. In particular, it was recognized that the revised policy needs to clearly articulate:

- a) The philosophy, vision, and intent that underpins the Policy, as well as what institutional objectives are enhanced and protected with its implementation.
- b) That intellectual property protection and commercialization are valued, supported and worthwhile endeavours, encouraged by McGill, and recognized for their contribution to the University's academic and social missions.

These changes will accompany a broader exercise to update and refine the current policy as well as develop guidelines directing how the Policy will be applied. The hope is to complete these revisions during the 2015-2016 fiscal year. A working group has been convened with the aim of bringing forward revised documents for approval at Senate in the spring of 2016, following a period of broad and rigorous consultation.

7.2 Open innovation

It is becoming increasingly important for the University to clarify its stance on open innovation and open access. To this end, RIR has launched consultations with best-in-class organizations engaged in open innovation and open access research endeavours. A preliminary outcome of these consultations will be to explore possibilities for engaging in a limited pilot in a well-suited research area. This model of research collaboration is not appropriate for all sectors, but may represent a powerful means of accelerating technology transfer in certain areas. The RIR External Advisory Board is strongly positive about the possibilities for a collaboration of this nature and has committed to supporting the University as we move forward on this initiative.

8 Recognizing and rewarding innovative and entrepreneurial activities in the academic career path

Faculty incentives and the leadership of Chairs and Directors are important factors in successfully transforming McGill into a more open and actively engaged participant in the global innovation ecosystem. The Innovation Steering Committee has made a number of recommendations to ensure that McGill's policy climate is hospitable and supportive of innovative activity. The Office of the Provost has given assurances that these recommendations will be implemented in the 2015-16 academic year. The recommendations include highlighting the importance and value of innovative and entrepreneurial activity for faculty member within the tenure, merit and sabbatic leave processes, and recognizing that time spent on innovative and entrepreneurial ventures can contribute valuably to McGill's academic mission. . In January 2015, the Provost hosted an Academic Leadership Forum of all Deans, Chairs and Directors on this subject, and the proposed recommendations garnered strong support from the group.

9 Leveraging external collaborations to support innovation and accelerate spinoff and start-up formation

RIR has worked to rapidly expand McGill's engagement with innovation-supporting external partners in order to provide innovative entrepreneurial and social ventures founded at McGill with a pathway into the broader market and community. These partnerships represent a high-quality ecosystem of support across an array of sectors. Working hand-in-hand with representatives from each of these organizations, personnel in IDEA, MUBEC and Innovation in Practice (formerly the QI team) are able to provide individuals and project teams from McGill with referrals to these organizations and follow their progress.

9.1 McGill University Business Engagement Centre

The [McGill University Business Engagement Centre](#) (MUBEC) was developed in response to the University's corporate partners' expectations of streamlined, holistic interactions with our University, which will ultimately contribute to the impact and growth of their business. MUBEC contributes to stimulating engagement with industry, as it aligns with McGill's strengths in research, technologies, students, and services. Through MUBEC, McGill's novel approach to corporate relationship management is the first of its kind being implemented in Canada. MUBEC strives to be an integral contributor to the rich innovation ecosystems in Montreal, Quebec, and Canada by offering best-in-class services to industry (both SMEs and global organizations alike), optimizing synergies across campus, as well as nurturing and enriching the student experience. While hosted in Research and International Relations, MUBEC is a cross-campus strategic initiative at McGill, where relationship managers tap into the entire spectrum of McGill expertise in order to identify which collaboration opportunities would best match the organizational needs of its potential partners. The following examples highlight the success of the MUBEC office.

L'Oreal

MUBEC team members facilitated the execution of a master research agreement with L'Oreal. Through the agreement, McGill and L'Oreal established areas of exploration aligned with strategic priorities: Green chemistry, green engineering, sustainability and advanced materials, aging and neurobiology, experiential learning, and entrepreneurship.

The agreement has allowed McGill to expand this research partnership to the Faculties of Medicine, Science, Management and Engineering, implementing a holistic approach with regard to research, experiential learning, recruitment, etc. Here are some highlights from the partnership:

- Investments in research is ten times the initial target (\$1M)
- 8 research collaborations in Medicine and Science
- 2 joint publications
- Visiting professors and students at L'Oreal Research Centers in France and USA
- Effective channel of communication and follow up process with MUBEC and L'Oreal France, USA and Canada with visits on the campus on a regular basis
- L'Oreal Brandstorm Competition organized each year at Desautels School of Management
- Global Director, Open Research is Adjunct Professor at McGill Department of Pharmacology and Therapeutics
- 2014 L'Oreal Unesco Women in Science is a McGill Recipient (Brigitte Kieffer, Douglas Mental Health Institute)

CAE

The collaborative research agreement MUBEC facilitated with CAE focuses on expanding research partnership in the Faculties of Education, Science, Management and Engineering. Areas of exploration designated within the agreement include advanced learning science, advanced manufacturing, and experiential learning. Some of the partnership's highlights include:

- \$750,000 total contribution is important
- Innovative research collaboration with the Faculty of Education on the next generation of flight and health simulator training systems
- 4 research collaborations in Engineering and Education across CAE Canada and USA
- Partnership in CRIAQ precompetitive network
- Visiting students at CAE research and manufacturing facilities
- 34 McGill interns recruited to CAE from the Faculty of Engineering
- Students supported with "CAE Scholarship in Engineering Excellence" and "CAE Graduate Award in Engineering Excellence"
- CAE executives engaged on strategic committees at McGill
- Effective channel of communication and follow up process with MUBEC and CAE with visits on the campus on a regular basis

9.2 Quartier de l'innovation

McGill University and École de technologie supérieure (ETS) launched the [Quartier de l'Innovation](#) (QI) in 2013 to catalyze innovative initiatives and entrepreneurial culture in Montreal's South West. The QI aims to connect interdisciplinary leaders and stakeholders, facilitate partnerships, and generate research projects in the community. The QI is a “living laboratory” which seeks to increase collaborations and partnerships with local actors. It offers students, researchers and professors opportunities to explore innovative solutions to expressed needs, with the goal of improving the quality of life for the community.

In two years, the QI has grown to become home to a wide array of incubators, accelerators, networks, laboratories and facilities all in support of the innovation and commercialization process. As a diverse and dynamic innovation ecosystem, the Quartier de l'innovation serves as a launch point for many entrepreneurial ventures and social enterprises emerging from McGill University.

Since its launch in 2013, the Quartier de l'innovation has proven to be a highly successful model for establishing community partnerships which are aligned with McGill's priorities. The QI's multidisciplinary approach has created opportunities for several Faculties to come together around innovative projects, which has enhanced the University's capacity for collaboration and has opened new avenues for funding. The QI has also proven highly effective at meeting student demand for joining their academic experiences at McGill with participation in concrete initiatives aimed at answering real needs in society. Some QI-facilitated partnerships and projects are outlined in the following sections.

9.2.1 Centre d'entreprises et d'innovation de Montréal (CEIM)

The [Centre d'entreprises et d'innovation de Montréal](#) (CEIM) is a world-class start-up incubator facility located in the heart of the QI district. The CEIM supports an average of 50 start-ups every year, with a dozen of these being housed in the CEIM facility. The CEIM works to identify innovative projects with strong commercial and growth potential, and provides start-up teams with a wide array of supporting services tailored to their specific corporate development needs to ensure their long-term viability. In November of 2014, the Honourable Maxime Bernier, Minister of State announced a funding contribution of \$ 6.2 million to the CEIM over the next 5 years to support the creation and development of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Part of this arrangement includes a partnership with McGill University, allowing McGill start-ups to benefit from substantially reduced rates for consulting and incubation services. With this partnership, McGill innovators have access to coaching and consultation in various aspects of the commercialization process, including strategic planning, raising capital, identifying laboratory or production facilities, structuring legal and financial agreements, developing intellectual property and initiating domestic and international sales, among others.

9.2.2 Centech

The Centre de l'entrepreneurship technologique ([Centech](#)) is a business incubator created by l'École de technologie supérieure (ÉTS) to help students and graduates who want to start their own companies. Centech has opened its services to the McGill entrepreneurial community, as

part of its founding partnership with the Quartier de l'Innovation. This formal partnership gives McGill students, graduates, professors and staff an opportunity to receive specialized support services in the field of high-tech and engineering for their start-up ideas as well as to collaborate with other institutions.

9.2.3 Griffin Camp

Located near ETS, [Griffin Camp](#) is a co-working space exclusively for technology companies transitioning from an idea or a prototype to the commercialization phase. Griffin Camp operates on a rent-based model with programs in place to encourage networking and co-development among the entrepreneurs in residence.

9.2.4 EcoFuel

The [EcoFuel Accelerator](#) is a cleantech accelerator based in Montreal and backed by venture capital firm Cycle Capital. EcoFuel aims to foster the development of local clean technology into globally competitive companies. EcoFuel offers seed financing as well as an intensive curriculum of workshops and mentorship for founders to develop the knowledge and skills they need to advance their cleantech ventures. EcoFuel has entered into a formal MOU with McGill to offer additional opportunities for innovation-driven student internships, and an avenue for developing clean-tech spin-off companies.

9.2.5 échoFab Fabrication Laboratory

[échoFab](#) is certified by the MIT as an "Operating Fab Lab" and an experimental digital fabrication laboratory for community-based fabrication projects. Its end goal is to create a community based around its creative space, in an effort to demonstrate the social, economic, and innovative potential of Fab Labs. échoFab specialized services to businesses and educational institutions, such as custom training for rapid prototyping, 3D printing and expertise on digital fabrication.

9.2.6 Salon 1861

The [Salon 1861](#), launched in November 2015, is a socially responsible real estate development in the QI, designed in partnership with industry-leader Quo Vadis. The Salon 1861, a refurbished church, is a space dedicated to enabling social innovation projects, and is the future home of Social Innovation Platform, the Social Innovators Integration Lab, and the Laboratory of Urban Culture, among others. Five of McGill's faculties are involved in Salon 1861 projects, and the McConnell Foundation is preparing a report on the Salon 1861 as a model for driving social innovation.

Salon 1861 is an example of a socially responsible project undertaken by a variety of partners – private, community and academic – that will protect the architectural heritage of the St-Joseph Church in Little Burgundy and help it to become a destination for social and cultural entrepreneurship. This multifaceted project links students, researchers, professors, community organizations, residents and more in the district. QI partner and Board member, Natalie Volland (CEO of Quo Vadis, a certified Benefit Corporation) has stated: *“The concept of Salon 1861 – where actors from different fields of expertise and strong links with academia and the community in each phase can be found – has really been inspired by the QI’s vision. The Salon 1861 will be*

at the heart of community and will be a real destination for cultural and social innovation in the district”.

9.3 Notman House

McGill enjoys a close relationship with [Notman House](#), providing McGill entrepreneurs with regular opportunities to tour the Notman House facilities, interact with other Notman House start-up teams, be mentored by Notman House’s mentors-in-residence (see FounderFuel below), and connect to the greater Montreal innovation ecosystem.

9.3.1 FounderFuel

[FounderFuel](#), is a mentorship-driven start-up accelerator for early stage web, mobile and software-as-a-service start-ups. McGill’s relationship with FounderFuel allows the University to refer innovative project teams to FounderFuel’s mentoring program, with referral opportunities through the Dobson Centre for Entrepreneurship and via McGill’s X-1 Accelerator.

9.4 Hacking Health Montreal

[Hacking Health](#) is an organization that works to improve healthcare by inviting technology creators and healthcare professionals to collaborate on realistic, human-centric solutions to front-line problems. During the 2014 Montreal Innovation Week, organizers cooperated to conduct a major Hacking Health event in Montreal. The relationship between McGill and Hacking Health continues to expand.

10 Enhancing communication and promotion of innovation opportunities

10.1 The Innovation Constellation at McGill

Each of the elements described in this document form part of a network of support for innovative and entrepreneurial activity originating at McGill. To link each of these into a coherent, integrated network and to help students, faculty, and research navigate this network, RIR launched a dedicated [website](#) in September which provides details on support and services offered centrally, through the Faculties, across our two campuses, and through our external partners. The Innovation Constellation will become a central part of McGill’s innovation identity, and fill a crucial gap in our narrative to our internal and external communities.

10.2 Guide for faculty inventors

An important new resource available on the innovation constellation website is a [Guide for Faculty Inventors](#). The text of the guide underwent legal review, and was validated by the members of the Innovation Steering Committee and other stakeholders. The Guide, drafted with the help of the Innovation Development and Entrepreneurship Assistance team, aims to become a valuable asset, presenting the commercialization process for McGill faculty and researchers straightforwardly, with clear language.

10.3 Guide for student entrepreneurs

A [guide for student entrepreneurs](#) was developed to complement the information available on the Innovation Constellation website, aimed directly at addressing the needs of students interested in entrepreneurship or getting involved in an entrepreneurial venture. Preliminary discussions with the Deputy Provost indicate that this may be made part of McGill's student recruitment materials as well as a welcome package for new students. The Guide continues to be updated and will be promoted broadly with the help of Communications and External Relations.

10.4 McGill Innovation Week

Created in 2013, [McGill Innovation Week](#) (MIW) is an opportunity to raise awareness about McGill's innovation and entrepreneurship activities on campus and in the Quartier de l'innovation, as well as to reach out to various communities, student associations and internal stakeholders. Under the leadership of the Innovation in Practice team and in collaboration with the Office of External Relations, MIW highlights innovation as an economic driver as well as an opportunity for creativity and collaboration. In November 2014, McGill Innovation Week included 14 activities and drew in over 1,500 participants.

McGill Innovation Week 2015 was held between November 15th and 20th. A large number of this year's participating groups held events focused on issues related to innovation in education and entrepreneurship. MIW's 2015 aim was to empower students to help shape their educational experiences.

11 Conclusion

Over the past three years, innovation and entrepreneurship have become part of our defining narrative at McGill, with broad-ranging implications for how we teach, how we work, and how we interface with the broader community. RIR has made considerable progress in establishing the organizational and advisory infrastructures needed to implement and support programs and partnerships which serve to strengthen McGill's performance and positioning relative to the innovation and entrepreneurship agenda.