

Appendix 1

McGill Sustainability Project Fund Application

Project Title: The Hub of Sustainability Science Outreach

Budget Requested: \$39 580

Applicant/Project Leaders:

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Project Team:

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8. Dr. Sylvestre Delmotte, Post-doctoral Researcher, Natural Resource Sciences
9. Dr. Thomas Nesme, Visiting Professor, Natural Resource Sciences
10. Dr. Claire Salisbury, Postdoctoral Researcher, Biology, claire.salisbury@gmail.com
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I. Project Overview

Project Summary:

McGill University is home to a host of world-class researchers who tackle issues of sustainability in their day-to-day research and teaching. However, communication of this research is typically directed at other scientists, where it is couched in the highly specialized format and language of academic journals or conferences. Despite the importance of scientific research for creating a sustainable society, scientific literacy among the public is low, with many people struggling to even name a living scientist, much less explain what scientists actually *do*. Even within the McGill community, many students, staff, and faculty would be hard-pressed to explain the research of their professors and colleagues, particularly across faculties or departments. **Our project, *The Hub of Sustainability Science Outreach* aims to effectively promote and communicate sustainability science at McGill by providing a platform to consolidate existing science outreach initiatives, with a focus on social media.** *The Hub of Sustainability Science Outreach* builds off of existing McGill communication efforts, including *McGill at Work/au Travail*, *Montréal à Votre Service Écologique*, and the *McGill Liber Ero Communication Training*.

McGill at Work/au Travail (<https://www.facebook.com/mcgillatwork>) is an existing collaboration between Dr. Catherine Potvin, Biology, and the *McGill Media Office*, which aims to increase awareness and understanding of climate change using short videos to communicate complex science to a broad audience. Since inception in March 2013, the *McGill at Work/au Travail* team has produced and aired 50 (French and English) videos with contributions from over 30 McGill undergraduates, graduate students and alumni. With 570 “facebook friends” *McGill at Work/au Travail* is a unique and successful science outreach initiative followed by several groups in Quebec and Canada. The *McGill Media Office* helps support this initiative by partially funding video postproduction and a marketing agent to increase the visibility of the facebook page and videos. Dr Potvin’s initial commitment to *McGill at Work/au Travail* will end in January with a series of videos featuring positive actions reducing greenhouse gas emissions in Quebec and Canada. The success and reach of this program makes it an ideal platform from which to build a science outreach hub for the broader McGill community. Thus, our proposed hub will start with a partnership between the *McGill at Work/au Travail* team and the team behind the successful *Montréal à Votre Service Écologique* initiative (led by Matt Mitchell/Dr. Elena Bennett, www.esmontreal.ca), to create a magnet for science outreach at McGill.

While McGill is home to a large number of unique groups and individuals involved in science outreach, there currently exists a dearth of linkages between these disparate initiatives. The combined expertise of both the *McGill at Work/au Travail* and *Montréal à Votre Service Écologique* team members regarding the use of social media, video, and storytelling to communicate science puts us in a unique position to unite various factions of sustainability science outreach at McGill. *The Hub of Sustainability Science Outreach* will create partnerships between members of the McGill research community currently involved in (or interested in becoming involved in) science outreach providing a platform for training, advice, and collaboration. By creating these linkages between successful, but isolated, initiatives we can build institutional capacity for science and sustainability outreach, create a strong framework for communicating science through video, storytelling, and social media, and increase the visibility of the exciting work happening across a range of disciplines at McGill, for audiences both within McGill and outside of the university community!

Project Objectives and Outcomes:

In creating *The Hub of Sustainability Science Outreach*, we aim to:

- a) Develop an open and integrated social-media platform on sustainability, combining facebook, website and twitter, that will strengthen the culture of science communication and outreach within the McGill community
- b) Build lasting linkages across a diversity of campus groups and academic units working on issues of sustainability science at McGill
- c) Facilitate the use of multiple tools such as the videos, stories/blogs, and twitter, to showcase the high quality sustainability work of McGill scientists
- d) Increase the visibility of sustainability initiatives (using social media) to improve science literacy

both within and outside of McGill, raising awareness of scientists' perspectives and showing the relevance of McGill research to the broader community we serve.

The Hub of Sustainability Science Outreach is inspired by the recent successes of the *Liber Ero Communications Training* led by Dr. Elena Bennett in September. This training brought together 30 members of the McGill community, including professors and graduate students from 12 departments across the university, for a two day training workshop on science communication outreach. We believe that the next step in sustaining this initial interest in communicating sustainability science is to create a common social media platform whereby McGill researchers can share their science in an engaging, accessible way. *The Hub of Sustainability Science Outreach* would not only maintain associated facebook, website and twitter accounts, it would offer advice, technical support and concrete training on outreach strategies.

To help develop science communication capability within the broader McGill community, we will run a **series of workshops** on science outreach techniques. This will increase the number of McGill scientists trained in, and actively participating in, engagement around sustainability issues within the McGill community. Our initial outreach training will focus predominantly on the following:

Videos: Using the low-cost, accessible technology and methodology developed by *McGill at Work/au Travail*, and with the help of a post-production partnership with the McGill Media Office, our team will facilitate the production of short, engaging videos featuring McGill researchers engaged in issues of sustainability. Each of these 2-3 minute videos will highlight the work of a McGill scientist, and how they tackle issues of sustainability through their work. The goals for each video will be accessibility, entertainment, and accuracy – we want to communicate with non-specialists in a way that is easily understood and engaging, but that involves sound, fact-based information. Videos will be disseminated using the *McGill at Work/au Travail* facebook site, as well as with the existing *Montréal à Votre Service Écologique* web platform.

Storytelling: Researchers whose work can be linked to ecosystem services will have the option to publish a story with *Montréal à Votre Service Écologique*. Collaborating will also give the opportunity to participants to publish an article in *The Reporter* as part of the series of articles related to *McGill at Work/au Travail* (e.g. <http://publications.mcgill.ca/reporter/2013/10/luces-camara-accion/>).

Social Media: We will provide training and support on using social media such as twitter for science outreach and communication.

Using these non-traditional means to publicize science will allow us to reach a broad audience that may not otherwise be exposed to scientific research. A first set of videos will be completed by Dr. Elena Bennett's lab. By working within this established group, we will have an opportunity to troubleshoot our methods prior to engaging with the broader McGill community. Following this, we will host a first workshop for attendees of the *Liber Ero Communications Training*, an audience with *a priori* knowledge of the importance of science communication. This partnership will allow us to establish a successful history before running a second workshop open to the broader McGill sustainability science community. While our initial focus is on McGill scientists, we hope to eventually expand the initiative to include student groups, support staff, and other members of the McGill community who play a role in sustainability science and sustainability on campus.

Our project will be based out of Dr. Catherine Potvin and Dr. Elena Bennett's labs at McGill. Catherine Potvin is a world leader in global change biology who received the Miroslaw Romanovski Medal of the Royal Society of Canada in 2012 for her exceptional contribution to the use of science for the conservation of tropical forests. She was named Canadian Woman Pioneer in 2013 by Status of Women in Canada. Elena Bennett is an expert in ecosystem service science, a member of the Global Young Academy, and has received training in communication and stakeholder engagement through the Leopold Leadership Program. Both Elena and Catherine currently hold Trottier Public Science Policy Fellowships, and have considerable experience engaging with stakeholders and communicating their science to the broader community. Their extensive experience in science outreach and communication provides an ideal environment to facilitate the building of *The Hub of Sustainability Science Outreach* at McGill.

Project eligibility:

There are numerous research activities at McGill that touch upon sustainability science. However, these initiatives are fragmented across various academic units, and the nature of this research is often unclear to those outside of the immediate research group. Fortunately, the culture of the “ivory tower” is changing, with scientists becoming increasingly aware of the benefits of, and demand for, science outreach and communication beyond institutional walls. Yet, the majority of research labs lack a concrete strategy for engagement outside of academia, and those that do engage are isolated from each other, lacking an effective means by which to communicate and collaborate. Often, scientists who wish to engage with the “public” face the stigma that outreach and communication take away valuable time and energy from research (with the most commonly cited reasons for avoiding science outreach being lack of time and lack of recognition). By establishing and facilitating a central hub through which sustainability scientists can communicate their work, we will maximize the efficiency of sustainability science outreach, reducing the time and energy constraints researchers face when choosing to engage in science communication. Additionally, by building a recognized science communication hub at McGill, we hope to reduce the stigma of participating in science communication initiatives. This will foster a community of researchers that cares about communicating their work to the broader public, adding to the culture of sustainability at McGill. Our project addresses three of McGill’s Vision 2020 sustainability goals – Research, Education, and Connectivity. Fostering a sustainable university, city, or society is not about doing research in isolation. It necessarily involves linking different initiatives together to engage people in finding collaborative solutions, as well as strong communications and outreach to engage a broader audience in this process. Our choice of target audience is supported by a social marketing analysis done by Dr. Potvin and the *McGill Media Office* (in spring 2013), suggesting that the ideal audience for social media based science outreach is the McGill community, citizens interested in environmental issues, and the CEGEP students through the green CEGEP network, with which we are working on developing a formal relationship.

Timeframe/Milestones:

The first year of our project centers on building institutional capacity, creating strong linkages between partner organizations, and developing a communication strategy to ensure continuity. As the underlying platforms upon which we will build our initiative exist already, we are prepared to start work immediately.

Task	Winter 2014	Spring 2014	Summer 2014	Fall 2014
Announcement of the initiative through existing <i>McGill at Work</i> and <i>Montréal à Votre Service Écologique</i> web/social media platforms	X			
Development of a communications strategy	X	X		
Production of first set of outreach videos by the Bennett Lab	X	X		
Identify and reach out to groups already involved in science communication at McGill	X			
Identify and reach out to academic units involved in sustainability science at McGill	X			
Reach out to Green CEGEP	X	X		
Video production, Storytelling, and Social Media Workshop # 1	X			
Video production, Storytelling, and Social Media Workshop # 2		X		
Video production, Storytelling, and Social Media Workshop # 3			X	
Partnering with Liber Ero communications fellows (ongoing)	X	X	X	X
Ongoing video and story production and promotion	X	X	X	X
Evaluation of impact with Green CEGEP				X

Indicators of our success will include: (1) a launch of the initiative in January/February 2013, (2) successful publication of new videos on a twice monthly basis, and the number of video views, (3) successful interaction with the McGill and Montreal communities measured by social media analytics (number of friends/followers, page views, etc.), (4) number of participating McGill students/professors/initiatives, (5)

number of workshop participants (6) number of groups, e.g. CEGEP vert, with whom we have established links. Using social media gives us the unique opportunity to quantify our success at regular intervals and adjust our approach as necessary.

Stakeholders:

Our project has two main groups of stakeholders – those who engage in learning about sustainability science by watching our videos and interacting on the facebook and webpage sites, and actors with whom we will partner in a more active way to create new content. There are also groups with whom we will partner in order to extend our project’s reach (see section IV for a list of additional prospective partners).

Montréal à Votre Service Écologique: The current *McGill at Work/au Travail* facebook page will be linked with the existing Montréal à Votre Service website, which will also serve as a platform for stories to be told about research related to ecosystem services. The two teams will work together to build a stronger online presence for sustainability science at McGill and throughout Montreal beyond these two initiatives.

McGill Media Office (existing partner): responsible for the post-filming production of the outreach videos.

Liber Ero Communications Fellows: We will work with each of McGill’s Liber Ero Communications Fellows, and their research groups, to create outreach videos. This is a logical next step to the recent Liber Ero Communications Training led by Dr. Elena Bennett, and will help to strengthen a culture of science communication and outreach among McGill researchers across a range of disciplines.

Green CEGEP: In 2004, ENvironnement JEunesse introduced a green certification for college education in Quebec, called Green CEGEP (<http://enjeu.qc.ca/-Cegep-vert-du-Quebec-.html>). Certification entails taking concrete actions toward sustainability in daily operations, applying the principles of education for sustainable development and offering sustainability training to students. The green CEGEP network offers a unique opportunity for outreach as reaches a group of motivated stakeholders that are interested in environmental issues, as well as a potential recruitment pool for McGill.

Individual Science Communicators at McGill: Professors and Graduate students who currently blog (or are interested in blogging) about their work, or are active on social media for science

II. Project Implementation

Tasks and Responsibilities:

Type of Activity – Task	Estimated Time Required	Group Member in Charge
Announcement of initiative, cross-referencing of McGill at Work/ Montréal à Votre Service	2 wks	Carly Ziter
Production of first set of McGill at Work videos (in collaboration with the Bennett Lab)	2 mo	Bennett Lab Members (overseen by McGill at Work Team)
Social media management	ongoing monitoring / updates	Carly Ziter, and undergraduate ambassador
Creation of partnerships with McGill stakeholders	2 mo initially (to connect with priority groups), then ongoing	Carly Ziter, and undergraduate ambassador
Ongoing video production with Liber ero fellows and other members of the McGill community	8 hours/video	Carly Ziter, undergraduate ambassador
Post-filming video production	3 hours/video	McGill Media Office
Project management	Ongoing	Carly Ziter (directed by Elena Bennett, Catherine Potvin)
Green CEGEP Partnership	Ongoing	Potvin Lab members
Development of Communication Strategy	2 mo	(TBD – new hire)
Workshop Series	9 mo (1 every 3 mo, x3)	Carly, Catherine, Elena

II. Financials

Our project requires a strong initial effort to create a well-connected network of researchers and students at McGill and to effectively link with the various McGill and Montreal groups that will be interested in contributing to the project. We are seeking funding from the SPF to hire a project manager and undergraduate ambassadors who will help establish our project, develop the connections with McGill researchers and student groups it requires, and ensure institutionalization of the project within McGill. We will also consult with a professional to aid us in developing a strong communications strategy to ensure that we maximize our opportunities for reaching new audiences. While there is clear interest in this type of work given the demonstrated success of existing initiatives such as McGill at Work, a broader platform is needed to both ensure continuity of this work, and to make sure it is representative of the broader McGill community. This is a task that is presently out of reach, as the current funding situation of the project precludes the means to expand beyond the Potvin lab. We would use the SPF funds to grow *McGill at Work* and *Montréal à Votre Service Écologique* from sole-lab endeavors to a hub for sustainability science outreach and communication at McGill, through collaboration with existing McGill communications initiatives. One year of SPF funding would give us the necessary time and resources to build institutional capacity, forge strong linkages across groups within the McGill Community, and develop the strong management and communications strategies necessary to ensure long-term sustainability of this initiative. While developing a strategy for future continuity and growth over the next year will substantially reduce future funding needs, any residual funding needs beyond this initial 1 year period will be supported by Dr. Potvin through her Canada Research Chair and Trottier Fellowship.

Expense Description	Estimated Cost
Workshop expenses	\$2400 (3 x \$800/workshop)
Undergraduate Ambassador Salary – Winter semester 2014	\$960 (1 × 5hrs/week at \$12/hr for 16 weeks)
Undergraduate Ambassador Salary – Summer semester 2014	\$960 (1 × 5hrs/week at \$12/hr for 16 weeks)
Undergraduate Ambassador Salary – Fall semester 2014	\$960 (1 × 5hrs/week at \$12/hr for 16 weeks)
Salary: Project Manager & Outreach Coordinator	\$24 960 (24hrs/week at \$20/hr for 52 weeks)
Communication strategy and development consultant	\$16 000 (\$5000 provided by Dr. Potvin, \$6000 provided by McGill Media Office, SPF \$5000)
Video postproduction	\$3840 (8 hrs/week at \$20/hr for 6 months)
Materials/supplies (promotional materials, office supplies, etc)	\$500
Computers, Video equipment	\$6000 (\$1000 provided by Dr. Potvin, \$5000 provided by Dr. Bennett)

Revenue Source	Amount Requested	Confirmed?
Sustainability Projects Fund	\$39 580	No
Dr. Elena Bennett	\$5000	Yes
Dr. Catherine Potvin	\$6000	Yes
McGill Media Office	\$6000	Yes

IV. Additional Information

Project Team Description:

Our project team has a wide range of skills that will allow us to facilitate the creation of a hub for sustainability science outreach and communication. Our team also includes both native English and French speakers to ensure a truly bilingual project. Below, we briefly describe the skills and expertise of each team member.

Dr. Catherine Potvin (Project Co-Leader) – Catherine is a Professor in the McGill department of biology, and a Trottier Public Science Policy Fellow. She works on issues related to global climate change, the theme of her PhD in physiological ecology. She is a specialist of tropical forest ecology and carbon storage. Currently, her research in Panama spans a broad range of issues related to forest conservation, from remote sensing to capacity building and conflict resolution. She is interested in initiatives that some Latin American countries have adopted in the forest sector in the context of climate change mitigation and in bringing on the table Canada's contribution to the international efforts to combat climate change.

Dr. Elena Bennett (Project Co-Leader) – Elena is an Associate Professor in the department of Natural Resource Sciences and the McGill School of the Environment. Her research focuses on how ecosystem services interact in landscapes and on building models that include this interaction for more accurate assessment of how land use change will impact service provision. She is a Trottier Public Science Policy Fellow, and has received training in communication and stakeholder engagement through the Leopold Leadership Program. In fall 2013, she initiated the Liber Ero Communications Training for McGill scientists.

Carly Ziter (Project Co-Leader) – Carly holds a biology MSc. with an emphasis on ecosystem services and biodiversity. She has served since June as the Project Manager and Social Media Coordinator for SPF project Montréal à Votre Service Écologique, where her responsibilities include managing social media feeds (facebook, twitter), writing and editing blog posts, website maintenance, communicating with stakeholders, and supervising student ambassadors. She is knowledgeable of the sustainability players at McGill, and is passionate about making science exciting and accessible to those beyond academia.

Dr. Barbara Frei – Barbara is a recently finished PhD student in NRS co-supervised by Drs. Jim Fyles (McGill) and Joe Nocera (Trent U.) Her research focuses on conservation of species-at-risk in rapidly changing anthropogenic landscapes. Her work balances theoretical ecology and realistic management for habitat needs by wildlife and humans.

Aerin Jacob – Aerin is a PhD student in Biology with Dr. Martin Lechowicz. Her research investigates restoration ecology in tropical rainforests, including the interactions between animals and plants in forests recovering from different anthropogenic disturbances.

Dorothy Maguire – Dorothy is a PhD student in NRS with Drs. Elena Bennett and Christopher Buddle. Her research investigates how forest structure in agricultural landscapes affects the ecosystem services that insects provide and influence.

Geneviève Metson – A Ph.D. student in NRS with Dr. Elena Bennett, Geneviève studies urban ecology, ecosystem services, and biogeochemistry. Her focus is on phosphorus management and food systems, specifically urban and peri-urban agriculture.

Matthew Mitchell – Matt is a Ph.D. student in NRS and Biology with Drs. Elena Bennett and Andrew Gonzalez. His research investigates how forests and fields interact to provide multiple ecosystem services in

the agricultural landscapes east of Montreal. He is a co-lead on the SPF project Montréal à Votre Service Écologique.

Dr. Delphine Renard – Delphine is a post-doctoral researcher in NRS and Geography with Drs. Elena Bennett and Jeanine Rhemtulla. Her research explores how relationships between land-use change and the provision of multiple ecosystem services change through time.

Ira Sutherland – Ira is a MSc. student in NRS with Dr. Elena Bennett and Dr. Sarah Gergel (UBC), Ira’s research addresses the provision and recovery of ecosystem services in logged old growth forests.

Dr. Sylvestre Delmotte – Sylvestre is a post-doctoral Researcher, Department of Natural Resources Sciences with Dr. Elena Bennett. His research involves assisting local stakeholders in their reflections and decision making processes for future landscapes.

Dr. Thomas Nesme – Thomas is a visiting professor in NRS. His research focuses on understanding nutrient flows in agricultural systems, focusing mainly on phosphorous, and nitrogen.

Dr. Claire Salisbury - Claire is a postdoctoral researcher with Dr. Catherine Potvin. Her research investigates the links between biodiversity and ecosystem function in tropical forests, with a focus on carbon accumulation.

Ignacia Holmes – Ignacia is a PhD candidate in Biology with Dr. Catherine Potvin. Her research explores alternative ways to reconcile carbon sequestration and forest conservation with local livelihoods, with a focus on local and indigenous communities of Latin America.

Javier Mateo-Vega – Javier is a biology PhD student with Dr. Catherine Potvin. His research interests lie in understanding the forces and trade-offs that drive and constrain forest conservation and other land-uses in complex multicultural and multifunctional landscapes in the tropics.

Divya Sharma – Divya is an MSc. student in Biology with Dr. Catherine Potvin. Her research investigates the social and ecological factors that influence land use changes and cultural changes in an indigenous community in Eastern Panama.

David Ross – David is a neotropical biology MSc student with Dr. Hector Guzmán (at STRI, in Panama) and Dr. Catherine Potvin. He is looking at the contamination levels of toxic heavy metals in sea turtle eggs on the Pacific coast of Panama, and the potential negative health effects of this contamination on the people who consume these eggs.

List of Partners/Stakeholders:

Our project will partner with a number of on-campus groups and academic units to ensure that our outreach activities are representative of the larger McGill sustainability science community. Below, we have listed possible partners and stakeholders. This list is not exhaustive and will expand once the project is underway.

McGill Groups:

McGill’s Vision 2020 Initiative – Our project addresses three of McGill’s Vision 2020 sustainability goals – Research, Education, and Connectivity. We envision working with this program to ensure that our project fits in with McGill’s larger sustainability goals as they evolve over the future years.

McGill Office of Sustainability (MOOS) – we hope to work with existing SPF projects through MOOS,

raising awareness about what they are doing through the creation of outreach videos. Additionally, we can facilitate video and social media training through MOOS for interested SPF projects as part of our proposed workshop series.

Academic Units: we will work with academic units to connect with research groups that are good candidates for creating videos as part of the program. The following is (non-exhaustive) list of academic units likely to host researchers working on issues of sustainability science.

- McGill School of Environment
- School of Urban Planning
- Interdisciplinary Program in Sustainability, Science and Society
- Department of Natural Resource Sciences
- Department of Bioresource Engineering
- Department of Biology
- Department of Geography
- Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences
- Redpath Museum
- Brace centre for water resources management
- Global Environmental and Climate Change Centre
- Quebec Centre for Biodiversity Science
- Institute for Sustainability in Engineering and Design
- The Office for Science and Society
- Gault Nature Reserve

Liber Ero Communications Fellows:

Name	Title	Department
Barrett, Christopher	Associate Professor	Chemistry, MSE Associate Member
Barrington Leigh, Chris	Assistant Professor	MSE and Institute for Health and Social Policy
Baumgartner, Jill	Assistant Professor (joint)	Institute for Health and Social Policy; Epidemiology, Biostatistics and Occupational Health
Bennett, Elena	Associate Professor	MSE and NRS
Berrang Ford, Lea	Assistant Professor	Geography
Buddle, Chris	Associate Professor	Natural Resource Science
Freeman, Julia	Faculty Lecturer	MSE
Frei, Barbara	PhD candidate	Natural Resource Science

Ghoshai, Subhasis	Associate Professor	Civil Engineering
Glesson, Tom	Assistant Professor and CIFAR Global Scholar	Civil Engineering
Gordon Hickey	Associate Professor	Natural Resource Science
Goulet-Hanssens, Alexis	PhD candidate	Chemistry
Jacob, Aerin	PhD student	Biology
Leung, Brian	Associate Professor	Biology, School of Environment
Mann, Koren Kathleen	Assistant Professor	Oncology
Metson, Geneviève	PhD student	Natural Resource Science
Milne, Isla	PhD student	Desautels Faculty of Management
Mitchell, Matthew	PhD candidate	Natural Resource Sciences, Biology
Neeley, Liz	COMPASS	
Otero, José	PhD candidate	School of Urban Planning
Potvin, Catherine	Full Professor	Biology
Rak, Monika	PhD candidate	Chemistry
Singleton, Thomas	PhD student	Chemistry
Solomon, Chris	Assistant Professor	Natural Resource Science
Struben, Jeroen	Assistant Professor	Desautels Faculty of Management
Vaccaro, Ismael	Associate Professor	Anthropology\MSE