



McGill

Sustainability Projects Fund
McGill Office of Sustainability (MOOS)
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Fonds des projets durables
Bureau du développement durable
1010, rue Sherbrooke Ouest, Suite 1200
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May 16, 2017

TO: MCSS, PGSS, and SSMU Students and the McGill Administration

FROM: Sustainability Projects Fund Working Group

SUBJECT: Response to 2017 External Review of the Sustainability Projects Fund

The Sustainability Projects Fund (SPF) was created in 2009-2010 through student referenda pledging \$0.50 per student per credit, which was matched dollar-for-dollar by the McGill administration. After a three-year pilot phase, the students and administration financial commitment to the SPF was again renewed through referendum in 2013, this time for a five-year mandate, until spring 2018.

The Sustainability Projects Fund Working Group (WG) guides the management of the SPF and allocates its funds. As a good governance practice, the year before the SPF mandate comes to term, the WG requests an independent body to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the performance of the SPF. As the SPF will be up for renewal in the academic year 2017-2018, the McGill Business Consulting Group (MBCG)¹ was engaged in December 2016 to conduct the external review of the fund for the period covering January 2014 to January 2017. The complete report including the results of this review, including the mandate's Terms of Reference, can be found at www.mcgill.ca/sustainability/vision-2020-sustainability-strategy/governance-administration/spf-reports. This letter is our response to the recommendations of the MBCG.

We are pleased that the findings of the MBCG were generally very positive. The reviewers concluded that: "The fund has helped facilitate a culture of sustainability and innovation; through having an open application platform they have allowed all stakeholders to be involved. The fund is adequately managed and all funding is going toward projects and supporting activities. [...] the McGill Sustainability Projects Fund continues to be a vital part of the McGill community and all its participants." The MBCG also makes four recommendations for improvement, all of which we acknowledge are important and have already begun to address, more specifically:

¹ You can find more about the McGill Business Consulting Group (MBCG) at www.mcgill.ca/desautels/programs/mba-programs/mba/student-life/mcgill-business-consulting-group-mbcg.



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Recommendation 1: Increase Communications and Visibility across Campus

- For 2017-2018, the WG will significantly increase the budget allocated to communications around the SPF and its impacts, including funding a project showcase event and a customized visibility campaign.

Recommendation 2: Collaborate with Peer Funding Groups in the McGill Community

- While the SPF Staff created and leads the Network of McGill Student Funds for Change, which provides a platform for collaboration, it has limited control over what the group members decide to accomplish together. This being said, where possible under their jurisdiction, we will encourage the SPF Staff to maintain that Network and explore with its members the possibility of organizing a joint event and issuing one or more joint communication(s).

Recommendation 3: Enhance Communications with Project Applicants

- The WG will continue asking the SPF Staff to report on their communication processes with applicants to ensure that the staff response time to application documents remains under 10 working days and that clear feedback on the status is given. The WG will encourage the SPF Staff to explore a more comprehensive or automated tracking system if the amount of applications should significantly increase in the coming year(s).

Recommendation 4: Create Mentorship Opportunities

- A question will be added to the SPF Final Report to ask exiting team members if they would be willing to mentor new project teams. Mentors will be listed on the SPF website for potential applicants and active project teams to refer to and contact.

We thank all of you for your support of the Sustainability Projects Fund over the past seven years. We look forward to continuing to work with the entire campus community on projects that help McGill University become even more sustainable and serve as a higher education leader in that realm. Please be in touch with any questions or comments:

kim.mcgrath@mcgill.ca. You can find out more about the SPF at www.mcgill.ca/sustainability/spf.

Sincerely,

The Sustainability Projects Fund Working Group