

## COVER PAGE

### PROJECT INFORMATION

Please complete the fields below with information regarding your project.

**Project Title** How to Do Anti-Racist and Decolonial Work Within the Academy and Beyond

**Brief Description** This is a webinar / speaker series for the 74 graduate students and 36 faculty members of McGill's Department of English

**Total Estimated Project Budget** \$7500 **Amount Requested from SPF** \$5000

**Campus(es) Impacted**  Downtown  Macdonald  Gault Nature Reserve  Other Online event

### CONTACT INFORMATION

#### Project Leader

*This person must be a current McGill University student, administrative staff, or academic staff.*

Name	<u>Natasha R. Chenier</u>	Affiliation	<u>Postgraduate</u>
Phone	<u>514-404-7713</u>	Faculty/Unit/Organization	<u>Arts</u>
Email	<u>natasha.chenier@mail.mcgill.ca</u>	Campus	<u>Downtown</u>

#### Project Team Members

*The SPF encourages you to be inclusive, collaborative (especially between staff and students), diverse, and interdisciplinary when possible. To list more members, please e-mail the list to [SPF Staff](#) to include with your application.*

Name	<u>Trevor Ponech</u>	Affiliation	<u>Academic Staff</u>
Email	<u>trevor.ponech@mcgill.ca</u>	Faculty/Unit/Organization	<u>Arts</u>
Name	<u>Fiona Ritchie</u>	Affiliation	<u>Academic Staff</u>
Email	<u>fiona.ritchie@mcgill.ca</u>	Faculty/Unit/Organization	<u>Arts</u>
Name	<u></u>	Affiliation	<u>Choose one.</u>
Email	<u></u>	Faculty/Unit/Organization	<u></u>
Name	<u></u>	Affiliation	<u>Choose one.</u>
Email	<u></u>	Faculty/Unit/Organization	<u></u>
Name	<u></u>	Affiliation	<u>Choose one.</u>
Email	<u></u>	Faculty/Unit/Organization	<u></u>

### SUBMISSION INFORMATION

In line with the [SPF Eligibility Criteria](#), our team certifies that this project takes place at [McGill University](#), is sustainability focused, is requesting seed funding, and is action oriented.  Yes  No

Our team has read the [SPF Terms & Conditions](#) and agrees to respect them.  Yes  No

Our team understands that this application is not confidential and consents to have its contents shared with relevant stakeholders during the review process and, if approved, on the SPF website.  Yes  No

Our team agrees to have [their contact information](#) included in the complete and shared application.  Yes  No

## PROJECT OVERVIEW + PLAN

**Instructions:** Please answer the questions as clearly and concisely as possible; then, submit your draft online. SPF Staff will respond with feedback on your application within 2 weeks. Once finalized, the application will be provided to the SPF Governance Council for their review and decision. As a reminder, all SPF applications are assessed using the [SPF Eligibility & Evaluation Criteria](#):

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA		EVALUATION CRITERIA		
AT MCGILL	SUSTAINABILITY FOCUSED	ANALYSIS	IMPACT	FEASIBILITY
SEED FUNDING	ACTION ORIENTED	COLLABORATION	SUPPORT	CAPACITY BUILDING

Before starting, you may find it helpful to consult the [SPF Sustainability Brief](#) and [Vision 2020 Climate & Sustainability Action Plan](#).

### CONTEXT

Criteria assessed in this section: **SUSTAINABILITY FOCUSED, ANALYSIS**

- 1. What specific sustainability-related need/issue have you identified at McGill and aim to address through your project? In your response, please describe clearly how the need/issue is related to sustainability and what research you have done on this issue, if any.** *Note: Please wait to detail your project idea in Question 2. Limit ~200 Words*

Our current climate crisis is inextricably linked with colonialism and systemic racism; it is self-defeating to fight for climate justice while presuming the settler state and upholding white supremacy (see Dr. Kyle Whyte's 2018 article entitled "Settler Colonialism, Ecology, and Environmental Injustice.") The graduate students and faculty members of McGill's Department of English have the power to practice abolitionist teaching (see Bettina Love's 2019 book entitled *We Want to Do More Than Survive: Abolitionist Teaching and the Pursuit of Educational Freedom*) and fight for racial and climate justice in their work and broader lives, yet conversations about these issues are almost entirely lacking within our department. We need to learn how we, as academics, can use our privilege to fight for the sweeping systemic changes that are urgently required.

### PROJECT IDEA

Criteria assessed in this section: **ALL ELIGIBILITY & EVALUATION CRITERIA**

- 2. What is your project idea? Please describe the idea thoroughly and concisely. In your response, share how the project is new or how it complements, builds upon, or scales existing initiatives.** *Limit ~400 Words*

My project focuses on the social branch of sustainability and involves four events. The first is a 3-hour webinar with Dr. Beth Berila on engaging structural racism in trauma-informed ways. The second event is a discussion with / between Cree/Métis Elder Vicky Boldo, and her colleagues Autumn Godwin (nehithaw iskwew) and Laurence Lainesse (White settler) about doing decolonial work as settler / scholars (some of our students are Indigenous, while most are non-Native). The third event is a Q & A with Dr. Bettina Love about abolitionist teaching and pedagogy. The fourth and final event is a talk by Dr. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson. These events comprise a call-to-action. Academia and activism can and must converge in the fight for real and lasting change. I am the chair of the English Graduate Student Association's 2020-21 Equity and Diversity Committee and I want to use my position to bolster anti-racist and decolonial BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and people of colour) voices and to encourage my colleagues to join in the current global efforts to dismantle all systems of power which are killing BIPOC and the planet.

- 3. Is your project related to the University's [Vision 2020 Sustainability Strategy](#)?**  Yes  No  Not sure

**If yes, how does it relate? Please refer to the [strategy category or related action](#) from the [2017-2020 Climate & Sustainability Action Plan](#) in your response.** *Limit ~100 Words*

This project is related to the university's Vision 2020 Sustainability Strategy in its efforts to educate McGill students about the deep-rooted issues underlying the climate crisis.

## IMPLEMENTATION

Criteria assessed in this section: **ACTION ORIENTED, FEASIBILITY, IMPACT**

4. List the key **activities** for your project and indicate the timing for these on the right. Please be specific and realistic when formulating your activities, ensuring that they are achievable within the indicated timeframe.

Key Project Activities	Start Date (MM-DD-YY)	End Date (MM-DD-YY)
3-hour Zoom webinar with Dr. Beth Berila	01/18/2021	
Zoom event with Vicky Boldo, Autumn Godwin, Laurence Lainesse	01/30/2021	
Q & A with Dr. Bettina Love	02/13/2021	
Talk by Dr. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson	02/27/2021	

5. Please describe what will happen to your project after the SPF funding ends. Additionally, please share if anything will be produced or installed (e.g. a workshop guide, equipment, a toolkit, a network, website, etc) and indicate how this will be maintained. *Limit ~200 Words*

Going forward our dept will admit more BIPOC graduate students, hire more BIPOC professors into tenure-stream appointments, and create an inclusive community within the Department to support these students and faculty members. The Graduate Administration Committee will draw up an action plan for creating a welcoming and inclusive environment for new BIPOC graduate students. This action plan will set out guidelines that focus on promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion in the mandatory orientation session for all new MAs and PhDs, the required courses they take in their first year (ENGL 694 Research Methods for MA students and ENGL 787 and 788 Proseminar I and II for PhD students), and graduate seminar pedagogy more broadly. Furthermore, these sessions will encourage faculty members to understand the systemic racism and colonialism inherent in academia and to address our own implicit biases. The Department is actively working on a proposal for a new tenure-stream position in Black literature and cultural studies which we will put forward in response to the hiring initiative outlined in the Provost's recently-announced Action Plan to Address Anti-Black Racism. Faculty participation in this antiracist and decolonial seminar series will enable us to work towards making our Department a welcoming and inclusive milieu for such a hire.

## TRANSFORMING CAMPUS

Criteria assessed in this section: **AT MCGILL, IMPACT**

6. In the table below, describe the project's 1-3 main impacts on the McGill community or its main goals to accomplish. Please check the McGill stakeholders that will be impacted. Finally, please list at least one key **success indicator** for each impact (e.g. # people engaged, % waste diverted, # buildings certified, etc.)

Main Impacts/Goals	McGill Stakeholders Impacted (check all that apply)	Key Success Indicator(s)

<b>REQUIRED</b>	1	Encouraging those working within the Department of English to do anti-racist and decolonial work	<input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate <input type="checkbox"/> Alumni	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Academic Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Admin. Staff	# people engaged (up to 110)
<b>OPTIONAL</b>	2		<input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate <input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate <input type="checkbox"/> Alumni	<input type="checkbox"/> Academic Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Admin. Staff	
	3		<input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate <input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate <input type="checkbox"/> Alumni	<input type="checkbox"/> Academic Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Admin. Staff	

## STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Criteria assessed in this section: **AT MCGILL, COLLABORATION, SUPPORT, CAPACITY BUILDING**

7. Please list 3-5 key stakeholders involved in your project, indicating their role and support. If the stakeholder has provided a support letter, please indicate so here and attach it as an appendix document. *Note: Projects involving modifying a space on campus, making a permanent installation, hiring a full-time staff, or adding/modifying a garden, etc., must seek permission from the appropriate stakeholder(s) (e.g. building director, Campus Planning and Development office, staff supervisor, etc.). SPF Staff can help you assess if any key stakeholders need to be added to your list.*

Stakeholder's Name(s)	Title	Role in the Project	Support/Permission	Support Letter
Trevor Ponech	Dept Chair		Confirmed support	Attached
Jérémie LeClerc	EGSA President		Confirmed	Yes
Jessica Coon	ISCEI Director		Confirmed	Yes
			Choose one.	Choose one.
			Choose one.	Choose one.

8. How will you communicate about your project and share its impacts with the McGill community? Please describe your key tactics (e.g. social media, workshops, tabling, etc.). *Limit ~200 Words*

Trevor Ponech, Fiona Ritchie, and Jérémie LeClerc will promote the series within our department, as will I.

9. If applicable, are there any training, volunteer opportunities, jobs, or complementary applied student research integrated in your project? Please describe. *Limit ~100 Words*



## APPENDIX

### Relevant Support Documents

List any appendix documents in order in the table, below.

*Please keep the total number of pages as low as possible (recommended maximum is 5). Please include any relevant support letters.*

Doc #	Appendix Document Title	# of Pages
1	Department of English	1
2	EGSA	1
3	ISCEI	1
4		
5	<a href="#">Staff Position Information Appendix</a> , if applicable	



# McGill

Department of English    Département  
d'anglais

14 October 2020

Dear SPF Governance Council,

As the Chair and Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of English, we write to voice our support for the online speaker series “How to Do Anti-Racist and Decolonial Work Within the Academy and Beyond” proposed by the Equity and Diversity Committee of the English Graduate Students Association (EGSA). These events would be open to both graduate students and faculty members, bringing us together in support of our shared goal of increasing diversity in the Department by admitting more BIPOC graduate students, hiring more BIPOC professors into tenure-stream appointments, and creating an inclusive community within the Department to support these students and faculty members.

The participation of faculty members in these events, particularly the webinar with Dr Beth Berila on engaging structural racism and the discussion with Vicky Boldo and her colleagues on doing decolonial work as settler scholars, will strengthen the Department’s commitment to diversity in important and tangible ways. In particular, engagement with the issues and techniques of decolonial and anti-racist work explored in this speaker series will allow the Department’s Graduate Administration Committee to draw up an action plan for creating a welcoming and inclusive environment for new BIPOC graduate students. This action plan will set out guidelines that focus on promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion in the mandatory orientation session for all new MAs and PhDs, the required courses they take in their first year (ENGL 694 Research Methods for MA students and ENGL 787 and 788 Proseminar I and II for PhD students), and graduate seminar pedagogy more broadly.

Furthermore, these sessions will encourage faculty members to understand the systemic racism and colonialism inherent in academia and to address our own implicit biases. The Department is actively working on a proposal for a new tenure-stream position in Black literature and cultural studies which we will put forward in response to the hiring initiative outlined in the Provost’s recently-announced Action Plan to Address Anti-Black Racism. Faculty participation in this anti-racist and decolonial seminar series will enable us to work towards making our Department a welcoming and inclusive milieu for such a hire. We therefore strongly encourage and support this initiative’s request for financial support from the Sustainability Projects Fund.

Sincerely,

Trevor Ponech  
Associate Professor  
Chair  
Department of English

Fiona Ritchie  
Associate Professor  
Director of Graduate Studies  
Department of English

Oct. 13, 2020



Dear SPF Governance Council,

As the President of the English Graduate Student Association (EGSA), I wish to voice my support for the webinar/speaker series “How to Do Anti-Racist and Decolonial Work Within the Academy and Beyond.”

The various branches of EGSA organize events and activities throughout the year to enrich the experience of the English Department’s graduate students, and to foster a sense of community and responsibility among students and between students and faculty.

It is in my opinion that this project, organized by EGSA’s Equity and Diversity Committee, will advance these goals by engaging a much-needed dialogue on the intertwined nature of colonialism, systemic racism, and our current climate crisis. This webinar will create a space for English graduate students and faculty alike to reflect on and discuss how their academic and professional activities impact, are impacted by, and participate in these broader societal issues.

As EGSA President, I will support this project by offering administrative support throughout its planning and organization, by helping the applicant liaise with the Department’s faculty and staff as well as other EGSA committees and members, and by promoting the webinar among the English Department.

I therefore strongly encourage and support this initiative’s request for funding from the Sustainability Projects Fund.

Sincerely,

Jérémie LeClerc

EGSA President





Indigenous Studies and Community Engagement Initiative  
McGill University  
iscei@mcgill.ca

Initiatives d'études autochtones et engagement  
communautaire  
Université McGill

October 13, 2020

Dear SPF Governance Council,

The Indigenous Studies and Community Engagement Initiative (ISCEI) wishes to voice support for 2021 webinar / speaker series entitled "How to Do Anti-Racist and Decolonial Work Within the Academy and Beyond", organized by Natasha Chenier. ISCEI is supported by a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and is designed to support the growth of the Indigenous Studies Program and aims to build and expand on existing Indigenous initiatives on and off campus.

It is in our opinion that this project has value and is in line with our goal to foster Indigenous engagement on campus. This project will help attendees further understand the relationship they have to academia as a whole, as well as understanding the colonial legacy that institutions have on Indigenous communities. We believe that this project will foster new conversations and discourse concerning decolonization and Indigenous inclusion.

ISCEI therefore strongly encourages and supports this initiative's request for funding from the Sustainability Projects Fund.

Sincerely,

Vanessa Racine

Administrative Coordinator (ISCEI)

Jessica Coon

Director (ISCEI)