



**CAMPUS LIFE &
ENGAGEMENT**

**CLIMATE AND
SUSTAINABILITY
ACTION PLAN**

1. About Campus Life & Engagement

We support students through the different stages of their lives at McGill. We collaborate with various University departments and student groups to act as the go-to hub connecting students to the resources and opportunities that will help make the most of their time at McGill.

Demographics

Our team consists of ~20 staff members throughout the year. We offer a wide range of programs including orientation events, support for underrepresented student populations (francophone, transfer, first generation, mature, etc.), leadership building, parents and family support, and much more. We host some of the largest events on campus, with over 5000 new students at our orientation events, and approximately 1800 volunteers helping us each year.

Sustainability Mission – *what we offer to sustainability at McGill*

We are the first point of contact for most first-year students at McGill. We provide them the resources and tools they need to be successful during their time here, and work to provide an inclusive, safe, and accessible campus community. By weaving sustainability into our department, we hope to promote a culture of sustainability at McGill, starting from day one.

Current initiatives

We try to practice **environmental sustainability** through our event planning. In the fall of 2018, we reduced our water bottle purchasing by ~3000 bottles, eliminated almost all food packaging, and provided compost at major outdoor events. We practice **social sustainability** by completing accessibility walkthroughs with the Office for Students with Disabilities every year and by designating *Access Ally* volunteers at events. Through our work of supporting underrepresented student populations, we strive to provide equitable opportunities to students from different backgrounds.

2. University Context

McGill adopted a Climate and Sustainability Action Plan that covers the 2017-2020 period. It outlines the University's commitment to reach two ambitious long-term targets:

- Achieve carbon neutrality by 2040
- Attain a Platinum sustainability rating by 2030.

To start closing the gap towards these targets, the Action Plan also includes 22 actions to be implemented by 2020, separated among 5 categories:

Research

Education

Connectivity

Operations

Governance & Administration

Beyond the actions laid out in the Climate and Sustainability Action Plan, a widespread effort from specific units is essential to advance the climate and sustainability agenda at McGill and to reach our long-term targets. Consequently, we are writing our own Climate & Sustainability Action Plan that is relevant to our own needs and challenges as a department.

3. 2020 Action Plan

In the summer of 2018, we collaborated with the Office of Sustainability to reduce the number of single-use bottles distributed at orientation. We were so impressed with the student engagement we encountered at those events that we decided to find more ways to promote sustainability through our work. This plan came about through a collaborative consultation process with the Office of Sustainability.

Before writing this plan, we collectively decided on our sustainability vision, representing how we imagine Campus Life & Engagement at its most sustainable. We came up with the following vision:

Sustainability is no longer just something we're striving towards, it's embedded in all aspects of planning and program operations. Also, no garbage.

We are excited to present this strategy consisting of 9 actions and 19 deliverables, to help realize our sustainability vision.

Education

1. Educate students on proper waste sorting at events
 - Designate "Sustainability Superstar" volunteers who are trained to help sort waste at major events

Connectivity

2. Integrate sustainability into regular communications
 - Include everyday tips at the end of FY5 emails
 - Suggest bringing a refillable water bottle in all event correspondences
3. Add sustainability and accessibility information to our website
 - Create Sustainability & Accessibility page, outlining our commitments and providing resources to students who want to learn more
 - Add items to First Year Packing List that promote waste reduction
4. Continue improving physical accessibility at events
 - Develop an event accessibility protocol with the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD)

Operations

5. Significantly reduce the number of plastic water bottles distributed at orientation events by 2020
 - Find sponsorship to purchase reusable bottles for distribution
 - Pilot distribution of reusable bottles at CEGEP Student Orientation (CSI) in June 2019
 - Eliminate distribution of single-use plastic bottles at events with under 1000 attendees
 - Supply only one single-use bottle to students at Discover McGill, and ensure they are able to fill up at least once during the day (50% decrease from 2017)
6. Receive Sustainable Event certification for all orientation events
 - Attain at least Silver level designation
 - Strive to achieve gold at 1 event
7. Strive for zero waste at events
 - Provide composting at outdoor events
 - Favour food options with compostable or no packaging
 - Ensure volunteers properly sort unavoidable packaging such as pizza boxes (compostable!)

Governance and Administration

8. Add sustainability information to orientation leader and facilitator trainings
 - Create “short training” to cover how leaders can encourage sustainable behaviour in their students
 - Create “long training” which goes into depth about what sustainability means, what’s happening on campus, and what we encourage students to do at our events
9. Receive Sustainable Workplace Certification for our office
 - Bronze in 2018-19
 - Silver in 2019-20

4. Implementation

Monitoring

Our full-time staff members will be overseeing the new initiatives, and ensuring that each of the 9 actions outlined above are assigned to someone in our office. We will draft a short progress report during fall 2019 after orientation events to evaluate the progress, and determine areas for improvement by 2020.

Partnerships

Through this process of integrating sustainability into our department, we recognize that we are not experts when it comes to sustainability. Luckily, McGill has a wealth of passionate students, staff, and faculty to draw inspiration and ideas from. We have already begun creating partnerships with groups across campus, namely the Office of Sustainability and the Office for Students with Disabilities. We hope to broaden our partnerships to include more environmentally-minded student groups.