

Sustainability Project Fund Application Form

Project Title: Child Care Constraints: The Impact of McGill's Lack of Available of Child Care

Budget Requested: \$5820

Applicant/Project Leader: Vanessa Conzon (Student)

Faculty/Department: Economics/Arts

Email: vanessa.conzon@mail.mcgill.ca

Daytime Phone: 5148236743

Applicant/Project Leader: Ruthanne Huising (Professor)

Faculty/Department: Organizational Behaviour/Management

Email: ruthanne.huising@mcgill.ca

Daytime Phone: 4388731648

Note: Professor Celine Le Bourdais of the sociology department will be providing advice regarding the project in an informal manner. We are meeting with a professor in the economics department this week, and she may additional help.

I. Project Overview

Project summary:

The McGill downtown campus* currently has a serious shortage of available child care spots. This undoubtedly impacts child care accessibility for both graduate students and professors. Unfortunately, there has been no formal research examining the nature or extent of this problem.** Our aim is to bridge this knowledge gap. Firstly, we will measure the magnitude of the lack of child care spots. Secondly, we will study how the unavailability of child care impacts professor and student productivity rates. Finally, we will perform a qualitative analysis in order to gain additional in sights into the difficulties posed by the lack of child care.

Our findings will be summarized in a final report. This final report will highlight the current demand for child care at McGill and the constraints that are preventing this demand from being fulfilled. It will also focus on the impact of the lack of spots on various areas of sustainability (see below). We will make the report available to the McGill community at large, and we will make sure that a copy of the report is provided to key stakeholders (listed below). Our plan is to display the report online.

We hope our findings will be used to shape the future development of child care availability on the downtown McGill campus. In particular, we hope that key stakeholders will use the information provided by the report to find solutions to the problems posed by McGill's current lack of child care spots.

*We will not include the MacDonald Campus, as we wish to keep the size of the project manageable. However, we recognize the importance of examining the child

care situation at MacDonald Campus, and hope that its interests may eventually be included in this project or one similar to it.

**Currently, MAUT and PGSS have performed some informal research as to the extent of the lack of child care spaces. However, neither has performed formal or extensive research. When we talked to members of MAUT's ad hoc daycare committee, they informed us that they had been previously planning on distributing surveys such as our own, but that they were unable to due to time constraints- as professors, members were simply too busy to undergo a major task such as this. PGSS members face similar constraints. Our project will help MAUT, PGSS and other key stakeholders to receive the information they desire, while avoiding the difficulties that have previously constrained them.

Project eligibility:

Our project is focused upon three major areas of sustainability. Firstly, we are focused upon the sustainability of employment relations. Over the past few years, McGill has been accused of failure to maintain positive employment relations, for instance in regards to its dealings with MUNACA. As a lack of child care may cause tension within employee-employer relations, our project will address the extent and degree of this strain at McGill.

Secondly, we will examine economic sustainability. As child care is an important factor in determining productivity rates, the current lack of child care may have an impact on McGill's financial outcomes (Glass, 2002). This area of research is particularly important in the face of McGill's current fiscal crisis.

Finally, we are concerned with family sustainability. For instance, when workers are faced with constrained access to child care services, their levels of family conflict are frequently increased (Glass, 2002). Obviously, it is important to investigate if McGill's lack of child care has an impact on such outcomes.

Timeframe/Milestones:

The project will begin on May 1st, 2013. From May through July, a literature review will be performed, followed by the preparation of our data collection methods. Data collection will begin in the end of August or the start of September. Data will be analyzed from October through December, and a final report will be completed by February. This final report will be shared with the community.

Stakeholders:

The key stakeholders of our project are McGill's faculty members and graduate students*, along with McGill's current child care centres. The administration of McGill also has a stakeholder interest in our research, in so far as it affects worker and student productivity.

Please see attached letters of support from the following key stakeholders: SSMU Daycare, McGill Childcare Centre, MAUT and PGSS.

*We will not include staff, as we would like to keep the size of the project manageable. However, we recognize the importance of this group and hope that its interests may eventually be included in this project or one similar to it.

II. Project Implementation

Tasks and Responsibilities:

Type of Activity - Task	Estimate Time Required	Group Member in Charge
<p><i>Background Research</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review current academic research regarding workplace childcare policies. Areas of focus will include the impact of such policies on worker productivity rates, stress, and absenteeism. This background research will ultimately be assembled into a literature review. 	6 weeks	Vanessa Conzon
<p><i>Data Collection Preparation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a survey in order to measure the current demand for McGill's child care services. Prepare interview questions in order to understand the impact of McGill's current child care arrangements on professors and graduate students. Interviews may also be held with key stakeholders at McGill's child care centres. Assemble diaries in order to measure the effects of child care location on work productivity. These diaries will record the daily schedule of a group of professors/students for approximately 3 weeks. 	5 weeks	Vanessa Conzon
<p><i>Data Collection</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribute & collect surveys and diaries. Complete interviews with stakeholders. 	4 weeks	Vanessa Conzon
<p><i>Data Analysis</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perform data analysis on survey responses. Code interviews and diaries. Calculate productivity effects using diaries. 	8 weeks	Vanessa Conzon
<p><i>Summarize Findings</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete a final report. Make final report available to McGill community at large, and key stakeholders in particular. 	8 weeks	Vanessa Conzon

III. Financials

Critical Date: There is no critical date for funding, although the project will commence on May 1st, 2013.

Detailed expenses:

Expense Description	Estimated Cost
Stipend for an undergraduate student working a total of 485 hours at \$12/hour.	\$5820

Detailed revenues:

Revenue Source	Amount Requested	Confirmed?
Sustainability Projects Fund	\$5820	No

IV. Additional Information:

We are aware of our need to apply to the Ethics Review Board, and we are preparing our application.

Qualifications of Vanessa Conzon:

Vanessa has an extensive background in research. For the past two years, she has been involved in research regarding historical micro-economic data of the United States, which was presented at the 2013 American Economic Association Annual Meeting. Last summer, she was an intern at McGill's Institute for Health and Social Policy. Additionally, next fall Vanessa will be leading the Social Science Research Symposium, which will be a place for undergraduate students to present their research on a weekly basis.

As a student in McGill's rigorous Economics Honours program and a minor in mathematics, Vanessa has a strong background in quantitative research. However, her minor in philosophy provides her with the writing and critical thinking skills necessary to create and prepare the Child Care Constraints project.

Moreover, Vanessa has been involved in sustainability work in the past. She is the founder and president of NetRoots, a McGill club that helps non-profits achieve sustainable social media solutions.

Please see Vanessa's attached CV for details.

Note: Vanessa cannot receive credit for this project because she does not have any electives left.

V. Bibliography:

Glass, Jennifer L., and Ashley Finley. "Coverage and effectiveness of family-responsive workplace policies." *Human Resource Management Review* (2002).



The Post-Graduate Students' Society of McGill University Inc.
L'Association des étudiantes et étudiants des 2e et 3e cycles de l'Université McGill inc.

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5 March 2013

Dear Sir or Madam,

I write with respect to Vanessa Conzon's application for funding for the project Child Care Constraints: The Impact of McGill's Lack of Available of Child Care. The Post-Graduate Students' Society of McGill University (PGSS) strongly supports this project, which analyzes a critical issue faced by McGill's graduate students and postdoctoral fellows. Our informal research has already indicated that roughly 15% of graduate students and 30% of postdoctoral fellows have childcare needs, yet the social support structures to meet this challenge are often not available to these vulnerable students. The need for greater support has only recently received recognition and support by the university and society at large.

Ms. Conzon's project will provide a scholarly and critical treatment of this problem using reliable quantitative and qualitative methods. The success of this project will be not only an academic achievement but the report will serve as a crucial asset for members of the university community who are actively seeking to improve the situation of students caring for dependents. The PGSS will provide unlimited support via its communication and outreach apparatus for the implementation of the project and will happily assist Ms. Conzon to connect with members via interviews and surveys. Moreover, we are thoroughly impressed with Ms. Conzon's qualifications in quantitative and qualitative analysis as well as the quality of the project overview and proposed implementation. In short, the PGSS views this project as responding to a critical need of our members and is fully supportive of moving forward with it.

Yours Faithfully,

Jonathan Mooney
Secretary-General
Post-Graduate Students' Society

MAUT • APBM

McGill Association of University Teachers
Association des professeurs(e)s et bibliothécaires de McGill

March 06, 2013

To whom it may concern,

MAUT would like to support the application of Ms. Vanessa Conzon and Prof. Ruthanne Huising for the summer project entitled "*Child Care Constraints: The Impact of McGill's Lack of Available of Child Care*".

This project will involve a literature review, a phase of data collection including interviews of professors and students impacted by this situation and a last phase of analysis and report.

MAUT has a strong interest in the results of such a research project as we have been working on this topic in the past years, notably through our ad hoc committee on DayCare.

The research proposed here is original and has not been conducted in the recent years. This committee also agrees to meet with the student to offer some help in terms of sharing the knowledge accumulated by MAUT on this topic.

Yours truly,



Alvin Shrier
MAUT President

CC: Vanessa Conzon
Prof. Ruth Huising



McGill Childcare Centre
Centre de la petite enfance de McGill

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March 5, 2013

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Subject: Research Project on McGill's lack of childcare availability

Dear Vanessa Conzon,

On behalf of the McGill Childcare Centre's research committee, we thank you for contacting us regarding the above mentioned research proposal. As the largest of the three McGill childcare facilities, we will be happy to support this initiative as per your request.

The McGill Childcare Centre (CPE McGill) currently has 749 applications registered on our waiting list:

	Faculty	Staff	Graduate Students	U-Grads
0-17 mos	70	98	78	9
18-23 mos	25	28	28	5
24-35 mos	31	41	45	8
36-47 mos	39	52	64	12
48-59 mos	27	37	44	8

In February 2012, we submitted an application to the Quebec Minister of the Family to increase our operating permit capacity from its current 106 children to 186, in part, to alleviate the waiting list. The proposed development project was supported by MAUT, PGSS and McGill University. Unfortunately, we were not successful in our efforts. It is our intention to resubmit for the second call for projects by June of 2013.

While the results of your research will not be available in time for our second attempt at expanding the McGill Childcare Centre's capacity, we share the desire to address the issue of lack of available childcare spaces for the McGill community and look forward to collaborating with you to that end.

On behalf of the McGill Childcare Centre,

Erik Cook, Research Committee Chair

Lisa Gallagher, Executive Director



March 11th, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is in support of the research project, "Child Care Constraints: The Impact of McGill's Lack of Available Childcare", proposed by Ms Vanessa Conzon and Prof. Ruthanne Huising.

The members of the SSMU Daycare Centre strongly believe that the availability and accessibility of childcare for students plays an invaluable role in the success of student parents at McGill. As is the case throughout the province of Quebec, the demand for childcare spots on campus is high, and the study of the impact of the lack of availability of childcare on campus is a topic relevant to many stakeholders. The results of this original research project may provide an important contribution to the McGill community and we support the initiative.

As part of this summer project, the SSMU Daycare Centre would be willing to provide support to the researcher through facilitating contact with parent users of the Daycare and with staff who provide childcare services.

Sincerely,

Amy Vincent
Manager, SSMU Daycare Centre