

**PROJECT TITLE:** SP0178 Zero-Waste Action Plan Implementation

Please answer the following questions and return the completed form to the [SPF Staff](#) via e-mail.

Final Report prepared by Kendra Pomerantz

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Actual Project Start Date 2018-05-02 Actual Project End Date 2020-05-15

**Questions**

1. Please summarize the project and its key accomplishments to date. In your answer, consider the impact your project has had so far on McGill's campus(es).

*(Unlimited characters, suggested minimum ½ page or approximately 250 words)*

The first eight months of this project were as per the original application. Kendra Pomerantz was hired into the zero-waste coordinator position. In her 8 months as Zero-Waste Coordinator, she completed a detailed diagnostic of McGill's waste system, benchmarked it against other universities to learn best practices, and then kickstarted major system improvements, most notably new collection contracts and increased contractor management and traceability of materials, a uniformization of waste and recycling signage, the replacement of all stand-alone garbage bins with integrated sorting stations, a preliminary waste education curriculum, and the strategic planning of an eventual organic waste management system. As of January 2019, she was moved into a permanent position as Buildings and Grounds Sustainability Supervisor where she was able to bring these exciting initiatives with her (and will be finished implementing all of them by the end of 2020!).

Following the replacement of the Zero-Waste Coordinator position with a permanent role paid by Buildings and Grounds, Kendra requested a budget amendment to convert the remaining funds on the SPF contract into intern salaries to allow the continuation of the ZWC mandates despite no longer being devoted to them full time. As a result of the acceptance of that request, she was able to extend the funds by a year and hire students into the following roles:

(1) Infrastructure Analysis Intern: (Full time, Summer 2019). Helped perform building walk-throughs, counts and initial plans for bin and signage infrastructure across the many buildings of the downtown campus. This generated much-needed data for the rehaul of the waste bin and signage system across the entirety of McGill's downtown academic buildings.

(2) Project Implementation Intern: (Part time, 2019-2020 school year). Provided support throughout the year on bin and signage purchase and implementation, organic waste management planning and implementation and recycling operational optimization.

(3) Waste Communications Intern: (Part time, 2019-2020 school year). Provided support throughout the year on the creation and implementation of waste sorting communication and education material. This included social media and web content, publicization of projects and milestones, and content creation for the waste educator program.

(4) Waste Educators: (Part time, 2019-2020 school year). A team of 6 students hired to work several hours a week in teams of 2, to visit academic buildings across the campus and do face-to-face waste sorting education for community members, mainly through class presentations and tabling.

2. Please describe the key successes and challenges of your project. (Minimum of two examples for each)

*(Unlimited characters, suggested minimum ½ page or approximately 250 words)*

**Key Successes:**

Having the ZWC position give way to an institutionalized job was a massive success which speaks to the SPF's ability to

kickstart permanent change at the university. Thanks to projects kickstarted under the original SPF-funded contract, very large strides forwards have been made in standardizing the waste system on campus, most notably large operational and contractual improvements, a \$ 2million project to replace all stand-alone garbage cans with integrated sorting stations which will kick off in June 2020, and the roll-out of an organic waste collection system across major academic buildings as of the post-COVID campus reopening.

The intern project also yielded many notable successes. The Infrastructure Analysis intern contributed to the auditing and standardization of the signage of over 2000 bins across the campus. The Communication Intern's online campaign reached over 13,000 Facebook users, and she was also able to generate a preliminary webpage detailing waste management improvement projects. The waste educators provided face-to-face education to over 6000 campus users.

#### Challenges:

The main initial challenge faced during the initial ZWC term was the disjointed, sometimes misunderstood nature of the McGill waste system. Since no centralized coordinator was previously in place, there existed few resources or data sources to help create an initial understanding of the system. This meant that, especially at the beginning of the contract, the ZWC had to start from scratch in an unfamiliar environment, independently identifying key stakeholders and generating baseline data and insights.

In the intern phase of the project, the main challenge was one of bandwidth, as supervising 8 interns simultaneously was no small feat! Luckily, the support of the Buildings and Grounds team and the enthusiasm and flexibility of the student interns made this ambitious program feasible and successful.

3. What key points of advice or *lessons learned* would you give to other SPF teams either regarding your experience managing your project or the project itself?

*(Unlimited characters, suggested minimum ½ page or approximately 250 words)*

The most important lesson learned is the value of benchmarking systems against other similar institutions and organizations. At the beginning of the ZWC contract, Kendra visited and interviewed over a dozen universities at all stages of their waste management journey. This created a road map of best practices, tips and tricks for attaining the waste strategy goals. This knowledge was invaluable to create a roadmap for McGill's waste management journey, as well as create a network of experts to offer guidance along the way.

4. What recommendations do you have for the future of this project to be continued and are there any opportunities for complementary projects? Who will take responsibility for the project's future and how can interested persons be in touch? The SPF team will also be in touch with this contact for updates on the project's progress in coming years, if ongoing.

*(Unlimited characters, suggested minimum 1 paragraph)*

Since she is now in a permanent role as Buildings and Grounds Sustainability Supervisor, and has taken the waste portfolio with her, Kendra will continue to oversee initiatives kickstarted under SP0178 and ensure their continuity.

5. Would you or your project team member(s) be willing to serve as a mentor to SPF project teams? Please choose one. If yes, SPF Staff will contact you with more information.

*(800 characters maximum)*

Yes  No

Kendra is willing to serve as a mentor to waste-related project teams, insofar as she aims to be aware of and liaise between waste-related activities on campus. Furthermore, her knowledge of the waste system and its stakeholders

could likely be useful to future initiatives. However, given her limited bandwidth, she would likely not be able to involve herself beyond offering suggestions and/or advice.

6. In your application, you listed the following sources of funding:

Please confirm if you received this funding in the space below. In your response, please list the actual amount (in dollars) that you received. Note: If you received funding from a McGill Department or Unit, please attach a letter from its Financial/Budget Officer confirming the actual amount of support.  
(1,800 characters maximum)

7. Did you purchase equipment or make an installation on campus?  Yes  No  
If yes, please briefly describe how these items will be maintained and used in the future.  
(1,800 characters maximum)

8. The following Key Success Indicators were indicated in your project application and selected for tracking. Please indicate the actual results that you have achieved in the “Actual” column.

Selected Key Success Indicators	Target	Actual
# of campus building have waste station improvements, as well as staff waste training	5	Soon to be 31
# of students engaged through applied student research, waste audits, and education efforts	50+	Over 6000
One data management system created to organize relevant waste data by category	Complete	Complete

If there is a significant difference in the target numbers and the actual numbers achieved, please explain. If you have any additional information to share about these success indicators, please also include it below.  
(1,800 characters maximum)

As opposed to proceeding with a building-by-building waste station improvement plan, capital funding was approved and attained to remove stand-alone bins and replace them with integrated sorting stations across public spaces on every floor of the 31 largest academic buildings. This massive installation will be done all at once, and is scheduled to begin at the beginning of June, 2020.

Throughout the project, approximately 45 students were engaged in Applied Student Research, 3 performed a waste audit, and over 6000 received face-to-face waste sorting education (not even counting the thousands more engaged on Facebook and hundred reached through other workshops and presentations).

9. Please report on your progress with the standard SPF Key Success Indicators in the “Actual” column.

Standard SPF Key Success Indicators	Actual
# of volunteers directly or indirectly engaged in the project	0
# of people (student, staff, or other) trained in the context of the project	>6000
\$ raised for project activities subsequent to SPF funding	>\$2 million
# of tons of GHG emissions reduced by your project	TBD

# of partnerships or collaborations developed between the project team and other McGill administrative units, student groups, community groups, other universities, and/or other groups/organizations.	26
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Regarding the last Key Success Indicator, please list the groups and/or organizations that you counted.  
(Unlimited characters; point form acceptable.)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Student Housing and Hospitality Services</li> <li>- McGill Athletics</li> <li>- McGill Design Services</li> <li>- SSMU</li> <li>- Gorilla Compost</li> <li>- ENVR401 research group #10</li> <li>- Compass Group</li> <li>Recycling Pioneers</li> <li>GoLEAD</li> <li>Students of CHEE-301</li> <li>Students of MSUS 401</li> <li>- Ville de Montréal, Service de l'environnement</li> <li>Université Laval</li> <li>Concordia University</li> <li>Université de Montréal</li> <li>UQAM</li> <li>ÉTS</li> <li>Univeristé de Sherbrooke</li> <li>Laurier University</li> <li>Dawson College</li> <li>UBC</li> <li>King's College London</li> <li>UCLA</li> <li>Simon Fraser University</li> <li>University of Toronto</li> <li>University of Calgary</li> </ul>
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If you have any additional information to share about the Standard SPF Key Success Indicators, please include it below.  
(1,800 characters maximum)

<p>There are two primary reasons that a GHG indicator cannot be established at this point. First, it took over a year to develop a complete and reliable database to track the production of waste on the campus. As a result, there is not a reliable baseline year based on which to compare progress. Furthermore, the present campus closure creates a major data discrepancy (no pandemic period data can be used for any sort of waste reduction statistics because of the extremely limited campus activity). Finally, the majority of the actions kicked off by the ZWC and expected to drastically reduce the waste footprint of the university will be implemented imminently and so their effect has not yet kicked in (namely, the installation of multi-stream sorting stations in all 31 major academic building and the roll-out of organic waste collection).</p> <p>The silver lining is that a year's worth of reliable baseline waste data was created prior to the campus shut-down, illustrating that McGill produces around 1200 tonnes of non-hazardous building waste annually on the downtown campus. As a result, once the campus activity resumes at 100% after the pandemic, it will be possible to calculate the waste reduction achieved (and thus GHG reduction achieved) as a result of these significant efforts.</p>
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10. Please indicate the McGill stakeholder groups that were involved with your project as a team member or collaborator/partner. Choose all that apply.

Undergraduate  Postgraduate  Administrative Staff  Academic Staff  Alumni

11. Please rate your project team's overall satisfaction with the support provided by the SPF Staff. Choose only one response.

Very Dissatisfied  Dissatisfied  Neither Satisfied Nor Dissatisfied  Satisfied  Very Satisfied

12. Please provide any feedback or recommendations regarding your team's experience with the SPF  
(Unlimited characters, suggested minimum 1 paragraph)

Their great advice and speedy replies from the SPF team were always very appreciated!

13. If there is additional information you would like to share about your project, please use the field below.  
(Unlimited characters)

14. Has involvement in this SPF project positively impacted your team in the area of professional growth? Please choose one. If you would like to elaborate, please use the field below.  
(800 characters maximum)

Yes  No  Prefer Not to Share

On a personal note, thanks to this SPF project, I have been able to work at my dream job for the past two years. Because Buildings and Grounds ended up institutionalizing the ZWC role created by this SPF, I consider myself so fortunate to now have a permanent job working on a topic I'm passionate about and which positively and concretely contributes to the university and environmental sustainability. I owe a huge debt of gratitude to the SPF for the opportunities this project has created. Thank you!

15. Has involvement in this SPF project positively impacted your team in the area of personal growth? Please choose one. If you would like to elaborate, please use the field below.  
(800 characters maximum)

Yes  No  Prefer Not to Share

16. Which of the following skills or attributes has your team improved through involvement in your SPF project? Choose all that apply.

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|--|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Budgeting      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Networking             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Systems Thinking |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Planning               | <input type="checkbox"/> Teamwork                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict Resolution       | <input type="checkbox"/> Problem Solving                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Technology                  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leadership     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Project Management     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Time Management  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Listening                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public Speaking        | <input type="checkbox"/> Writing                     |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mentoring      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stakeholder Engagement | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify in    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Negotiating               | <input type="checkbox"/> Stakeholder Identification        | the field below)                                     |

Other:

17. Since starting your SPF project, has your team improved its knowledge of sustainability? Please choose one. If you would like to elaborate, please use the field below.

*(800 characters maximum)*

Yes  No  Prefer Not to Share

Especially related to the massive amount of knowledge obtained around sustainable waste management!

18. (Optional) If applicable, please list the total number of team members voluntarily self-identifying as members of marginalized communities:

Please identify the represented communities below. (e.g. women, Indigenous people, people of colour, LBGTQI, student parents, members of ethnic minorities, immigrants, people with disabilities)

*(1,800 characters maximum)*

### THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING YOUR FINAL REPORT!

Please e-mail your report to the [SPF Staff](#) attaching any additional information that you would like to share about your project (e.g. other reports, research, documents, photos, etc.). Please note that this Final Report will be shared publicly on your SPF project's webpage.