PROJECT TITLE: SP0250 Pick Your Path!

Please answer the following questions and return the completed form to the SPF Staff via e-mail.

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Actual Project Start Date   2020-06-01   Actual Project End Date   2020-08-31

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)

Pick Your Path! (PYP!) is a 4-week online learning experience through which Indigenous students have a paid professional development and education experience from a distance. The goal of PYP! is for every participant to feel comfortable and empowered to make decisions about their post-secondary path at the end of the 4-week period. During the program, participants attend online sessions facilitated by McGill professors and graduate students from various faculties to get an in-depth view into McGill's post-secondary education, provide them with career exploration opportunities, and exposure to research and academia.

Furthermore, throughout the program, participants work in a final project to answer the guiding question "What are my next steps in my education path?". To guide the participants in the creation of their final project and their educational path exploration, each week they meet with their mentor, a McGill Indigenous post-secondary student. The pilot for PYP! ran from June 1st to June 25th, with the deadline of submission for the final project being July 3rd.

One of the key accomplishments is that we received 12 applications to participate in the program, with 5 spots available. Likewise, we received a total of 9 applications of McGill students and alumni for the mentoring positions. Having such a positive response to the program is promising, as this is only the pilot. Through this program, the selected 4 PYP! participants had the opportunity to hear from McGill faculty and students, and to reflect on their path when working on their final project. In the evaluation session, they commented their interest was piqued by areas of study they had not considered before, as well as feeling more confident about their educational path, therefore meeting our goal.

A second accomplishment was that, participants attended 10 sessions with McGill professors and graduate students from Arts, Engineering, Science, Medicine, Social Work and Nutrition. This allowed for McGill professors and graduate students to benefit from interacting with the participants, as some professors shared they were impressed by the discussions. this allowed for all involved to reflect on different topics. Likewise, PYP! mentors shared in their evaluation form that they not only enjoyed the mentoring experience, but they also learned from the participants reflections and experiences.

A third accomplishment is regarding our Indigenous community partners and their relationship with McGill. We involved the partners from the beginning as we sent the project for them to share with their youth. Moreover, as some of the participants are part of Native Montreal, we heard from them, that the youth expressed to them how happy they were with PYP!. The positive experience the participants had strengthens and positively impacts the relationship between McGill and community partners; this is especially relevant given that community partners might be hesitant to work with McGill due to past experiences.

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)

We have had several key successes whilst running PYP!. We had the opportunity to accept 4 amazing participants and mentors who provided support in the exploration of their career path. Through the evaluation session we conducted with the participants and the evaluation form we sent to the mentors, we received positive comments regarding PYP!, including that they found the sessions, their final project and their mentorship experience to be meaningful. It was incredibly relevant to conduct this evaluation, as the positive response from all involved is promising. Additionally, the information gathered through this evaluation is and will be key to plan future PYP! cycles and apply for institutional and long-term funding; we have already used that information to draft two funding proposals which are yet to be submitted.

We also had some challenges whilst running PYP!. Firstly, we had planned to have 5 participants and 5 mentors. Unfortunately, after selecting them, the fifth participant had to withdraw her participation due to their availability to take part in the program. It is important for us to consider if the month of June is the best for PYP! to take place during the summer, as not all applicants might be available during that month because of school.

One of the main challenges was regarding the payment of the monetary award for participants and mentors. As the participants were not McGill students and one of the mentors is a McGill alumnus, the process was not clear cut. However, we are grateful that this was resolved in time for everyone to receive their payment as scheduled. As we learned through this experience, future PYP! cycles will be less hectic.

In addition, we had the challenge of including a session of an area of study the participants were interested in that was not originally included as these were planned before selecting the participants. Nonetheless, we are grateful we were able to include the session with the Indigenous Health Professions Program as to benefit the participants. It is important for us to keep this in mind for future PYP! cycles, as we might want to change the areas of study selection process and professors we reach out to for participating in PYP!.

The final challenge we faced was last minute changes or cancellations of sessions, which happened twice. The session of Law was rescheduled, and the mental health workshop was unfortunately cancelled due to an emergency. To compensate that lost session, the project assistant, who is a counsellor, sent the participants information and resources regarding mental health. This experience will help us prepare for similar eventualities in future PYP! cycles.

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)

We have four pieces of advice or lessons we learned through Pick Your Path. One that we believe can be applicable to any project, is that constant communication between the project's team is key for the success of any program. As we planned and facilitated the project online, having the easiness of talking to other team members regarding tasks and deadlines and sharing ideas was incredibly important. It solidified the trust we already had in one another. Likewise, having an open-line of communication with the participants or volunteers of the project is very important; we found that even communicating or sending emails every week to check-in helped the participants and mentors of PYP feel supported, which they commented in the evaluation session and form. Another lesson we learned is that having good organization and time management skills are needed for managing and facilitating the project; we found that having weekly meetings to discuss progress, distribute tasks and checking deadlines helped keeping us moving in the development of the project. Another lesson that might not be applicable to all projects is that having a formal discussion with HR and Finance regarding the project's budget and payment method processes for participants of the project is incredibly important. Not only having a formal discussion with them but following up and checking-in to make sure that there has been no change to what was previously discussed and approved, is needed.

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)

We have four recommendations for the future of the project. Firstly, have a formal conversation with HR and Finance in advance to finalize and approve payment methods. This was one of the challenges we had for this project, which we overcame, but it is important to keep it in mind for the future. Secondly, one of the feedback points we got from mentors is that they would like to be more involved in PYP. A recommendation would be to give them more tasks such as: presenting their path to all the participants in an online session; and provide a weekly space for all mentors to talk between themselves and discuss the progress of their mentees, so they can help each other with concerns or struggles they might have regarding their mentorship. Likewise, providing a weekly space for participants to socialize between themselves and/or with mentors. Lastly, consider doing the application and selection process of participants before reaching out to professors. This is to tailor the program to the participants as much as possible, as for all of them to hear from a professor in one of their areas of interest.

Regarding opportunities for complementary projects, we have several. One of the complementary projects we are advising on is for the implementation of PYP for underrepresented communities at McGill (non-Indigenous), which will be led by the Recruitment team at Enrolment Services. They are planning on implementing PYP during March break for high school students, all online and with the same goal but shorter. Furthermore, we are working on expanding PYP to be tailored for Indigenous McGill undergraduate students who want to enroll in post-graduate studies, but are not sure on which program they want to go in. As will be discussed further in Question 8, we are working in conjunction with Graduate & Post-doctoral Studies (GPS) to submit a funding proposal for this complementary project. Both PYP and complementary projects or expansions will be led by the Branches Outreach Program at Enrolment Services, unless stated otherwise. Interested persons can get in touch through email at outreach.branches@mcgill.ca

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

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

Faculty of Engineering	$2,000.00	Confirmed
"Indigenous Studies and Community Engagement Initiative (ISCEI)" funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation	$2,000.00	Confirmed
Branches Core Funding	$3,500.00	Confirmed

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)

We received funding from the sources. Please find attached two pdf files with the email correspondence confirming the funding by ISCEI and the Faculty of Engineering.

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 Indigenous students participating in IMPRESS/PYP	5	4
# of Indigenous students who applied to IMPRESS/PYP	XX	13
# of stakeholders using the guideline; # of funding applications submitted using the report	XX	X/2
# of Indigenous students enrolled at McGill by 2022	XX	XX
# of Indigenous McGill students participating as mentors in IMPRESS/PYP	5	4

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)

We have planned to have 5 Indigenous participants in PYP, and selected 5 students; however, unfortunately one of them had to drop out of the program given she was offered a full-time job. Likewise, since we had one student less, we only selected 4 Indigenous mentors instead of 5.
Regarding the number of stakeholders using the guideline, we will have the data after we upload the PYP guideline to the Branches website and share it with our partners.
We are glad to inform that we are working on submitting two funding applications using information gathered through PYP. One of the funding applications is for the Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur (MEES); we are waiting for the official posting of the funding availability to submit our proposal. Through preparing for this funding application, we have partnered with the Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies Office, to ensure we have the human resources and support from McGill University to develop and facilitate the programs. The second funding proposal is for a new donor who we met through University Advancement; the donor is looking forward to donating funds for programs that promote diversity and equity in the undergraduate students' population. We have sent the first draft of the proposal to UA and the new donor, and we are currently waiting on more news. It is relevant to note that these will not be the only funding proposals we plan on submitting, and the results from PYP will continue helping us to secure sustainable funding.

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	-
# of people (student, staff, or other) trained in the context of the project	4
$ raised for project activities subsequent to SPF funding	X
# of tons of GHG emissions reduced by your project	-
# 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.	8

Regarding the last Key Success Indicator, please list the groups and/or organizations that you counted.
(Unlimited characters; point form acceptable.)

- Faculty of Arts: Indigenous Studies, Linguistics, and School of Social Work. Worked with Associate Professors Rebekah Elkerton, Jessica Coon, James Crippen, and Wanda Gabriel.
- "Indigenous Studies and Community Engagement Initiative (ISCEI)" funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Partnered with Jessica Coon.
- Faculty of Engineering: Materials Engineering and Chemical Engineering. Worked with Associate Professors Martha Cerruti and Noémie Dorval. Partnered with Dean Richard Chromik.
- Faculty of Science: Physics. Worked with Associate Professor Nicolas Cowan. Collaborated with Jacqueline Farrell, Science Outreach Program Advisor.
- Faculty of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences: School of Human Nutrition. Worked with Associate Professor Treena Delormier.
- Faculty of Medicine: Indigenous Health Professions Program. Worked with Director Dr. Kent Saylor and Alex Allard-Gray, IHPP Outreach Administrator
- Office of the Provost, Indigenous Initiatives. Worked with Janelle Kasperski, Indigenous Education Advisor Janelle.
- CaPS. Worked with Career Advisor Melanie Walkty.

If you have any additional information to share about the Standard SPF Key Success Indicators, please include it below.
(1,800 characters maximum)

As we had originally planned for the in-person summer program IMPRESS, we had scheduled a cultural sensitivity training for the professors involved. Even if we were not able to run IMPRESS, the 4 professors involved (Jessica Coon, Nicolas Cowan, Martha Cerruti and Noémie Dorval) all participated in the training, which was facilitated by Janelle Kasperski, Indigenous Education Advisor.

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)

The only feedback we can give is positive. Since the beginning, the SPF team was incredibly supportive and replied to all our emails with the doubts we had before submitting our application. During the preparation for the program and throughout it, SPF staff (Stéphanie in specific) was very supportive of us, by advising us on the changes we had to make to budgets, or doubts we had about monetary awards, amendments and reports.

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 <u>professional growth</u>? Please choose one. If you would like to elaborate, please use the field below.
    (800 characters maximum)

    ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Prefer Not to Share

Being involved in this SPF project has positively impacted our team's professional growth. Through this project, we learned how to develop and manage a successful program fully online. This allowed us to enhance our communication and organizational skills, as well as our technological skills as we used different online platforms (e.g. Microsoft Teams, Zoom) to plan and deliver our program. We also grew our writing skills through the process of evaluating PYP, writing reports for stakeholders and SPF, and drafting funding proposals using the information gathered through PYP.

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

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Prefer Not to Share

> PYP has also positively impacted our personal growth. As a member of the team who is non-Indigenous, I was hesitant on how to be involved in the project. However, I was welcomed into this project by the PYP Coordinator and all the professors, participants and mentors, for which I am thankful for. I learned about how different educational and career paths can look like, and how they are intertwined with not only personal struggles, but also structural systems who at times impede growth and are unwelcoming of paths that are different from the expected or the norm. I learned how difficult it can be for Indigenous youth to pick and follow their path, as besides uncertainty or struggle of picking, the structures and institutions put in place hinder and impede that process. It is quite different reading about it from an academic point of view, to hearing it from people that you are getting to know. Most of all, I learned that programs like PYP can have an impact on everyone involved, not only the participants.

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

☒ Budgeting	☒ Networking	☐ Systems Thinking
☐ Communications	☒ Planning	☒ Teamwork
☐ Conflict Resolution	☒ Problem Solving	☒ Technology
☐ Leadership	☒ Project Management	☐ Time Management
☒ Listening	☐ Public Speaking	☒ Writing
☒ Mentoring	☒ Stakeholder Engagement	☐ Other (Please specify in
☒ Negotiating	☒ 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

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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, LGBTTQI, student parents, members of ethnic minorities, immigrants, people with disabilities)
(1,800 characters maximum)

> Larissa States, Janelle Kasperski, Rebekah Elkerton, Wanda Gabriel, Treena Delormier: Indigenous women.
> James Crippen, Dr. Kent Saylor, Alex Allard-Gray, Aaron Mills: Indigenous men.

Veronica Amberg, Jessica Coon, Noémie Dorval, Marta Cerruti, Melanie Walkty, Jacqueline Farrell: women
Mayela Lozano: member of ethic minority (Mexican), immigrant, woman.

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.