

## COVER PAGE

### PROJECT INFORMATION

Please complete the fields below with information regarding your project.

**Project Title** Reusable Menstrual Product Initiative

**Brief Description** For the Reusable Menstrual Product Initiative, we want to give out free reusable menstrual products to all members of the downtown McGill community and an educational campaign to increase adoption.

**Total Estimated Project Budget** \$110,000      **Amount Requested from SPF** \$50,000

**Campus(es) Impacted**  Downtown  Macdonald  Gault Nature Reserve  Other \_\_\_\_\_

### CONTACT INFORMATION

#### Project Leader

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

Name	<u>Kerry Yang</u>	Affiliation	<u>Undergraduate</u>
Email	<u>kerry.yang@mail.mcgill.ca</u>	Campus	<u>Downtown</u>
Faculty/Unit/Organization	<u>Science (SSMU)</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 complete a second cover page. You may email it to [SPF Staff](#) to include with your application.*

Name	<u>Julia Miracle</u>	Affiliation	<u>Undergraduate</u>
Email	<u>julia.miracle@mail.mcgill.ca</u>	Faculty/Unit/Organization	<u>Arts (SSMU)</u>
Name	<u>Phoebe Holt-Reiss</u>	Affiliation	<u>Undergraduate</u>
Email	<u>phoebe.holt-reiss@mail.mcgill.ca</u>	Faculty/Unit/Organization	<u>Arts (SSMU)</u>
Name	<u>Simone Caruso</u>	Affiliation	<u>Undergraduate</u>
Email	<u>simone.caruso@mail.mcgill.ca</u>	Faculty/Unit/Organization	<u>Science (SSMU)</u>
Name	<u>Kate MacLeod</u>	Affiliation	<u>Undergraduate</u>
Email	<u>katherine.macleod@mail.mcgill.ca</u>	Faculty/Unit/Organization	<u>Arts/Science (SSMU)</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 and, if approved, on the SPF website.  Yes  No

## PART 1: PROJECT OVERVIEW

**Instructions:** Please answer the questions below as clearly and concisely as possible. You will be able to detail your project further in Part 2 of the Over \$5,000 application process, the Project Plan, as well as submit relevant appendices. Once you have completed this Project Overview, save it and submit it online. SPF Staff will respond with feedback on your application within two weeks and send you Part 2. Once all sections are complete, the combined 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 the [Climate & Sustainability Strategy 2020-2025](#).

### 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.** *Note: Please wait to detail your project idea in response to Question 5. Limit ~100 words*

Around 800 million people menstruate on a given day and use some type of menstrual product to manage their periods. Many of the products used, including at McGill, are disposable, meaning they are used once and are then thrown away. Green Periods estimates that about 30 billion lb (14 billion kg) of disposable menstrual products will end up in landfills and oceans in 2022 alone. Moreover, one pack of pads can contain 5 supermarket bags' worth of plastic. Once thrown away, pads and tampons can take more than 800 years to break down and result in microplastics that are harmful.

- 2. How do you know this is a need/issue? What research have you done on this need/issue (e.g. consultation, observation, survey)?** *Limit ~100 words*

From studies we have read, the environmental impacts of disposable period products are detrimental to the planet due to the plastic they contain. But sustainable products are expensive and are poorly understood, making it harder to switch to more sustainable menstrual products. Last year, people could choose whether they wanted disposable or reusable products. Many chose disposables and told us the reason why they picked them was because they were unfamiliar with reusables. We also received feedback directly from people asking for free reusable products because they were expensive, making price a big barrier to adoption.

- 3. What relevant information and/or best practices have you found that relate to this need/issue? In addition to information from external sources, detail any relevant related initiatives (past or current) that you are aware of at McGill.** *Limit ~100 words*

We run the Menstrual Health Project where we provide free pads and tampons across campus. Last year, we ran pick-ups where members could order and pick-up products of their choice, but we got mixed feedback about it. This year, we started running our revamped monthly pick-ups for McGill members. We offer reusable pads, menstrual cups, and menstrual underwear from a Canadian company called Period Aisle, who we partnered with to get much cheaper products, and from another Canadian company called joni, which has biodegradable products. Our first pick-up this year was September 14th, and we gave out over 150 reusables in minutes.

- 4. What expertise or qualifications does your team have regarding this need/issue, if any?** *Limit ~100 words*

Having run the Menstrual Health Project, we have lots of experience with the logistics behind a free menstrual product project in the McGill community. This project has been running since 2017, and over time, we have developed the institutional knowledge of not only the campus environment, but of the menstrual product space in general. This is why free menstrual health initiatives at other universities reach out to us for guidance on how to run their project. We also partner with leading companies in the sustainable menstrual product space to help provide the best, most environmentally conscious products to members.

## PROJECT IDEA

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

5. **What is your project idea? Please describe the idea thoroughly and concisely. Identify how SPF funding will be used, key contributions to sustainability at McGill, and, if your project is happening in different stages, core phases in the project.** *Note: You may also share how the project is new or how it complements, builds upon, or scales existing initiatives. Limit ~400 words*

The Menstrual Health Team will occupy a space on campus and hand out menstrual products to all members who menstruate at no cost once a month, without needing to register. Although not new, we only offered products containing plastic or diva cups when we ran it last year, so this year we want to revamp it to be more sustainability focused and scaled-up with help from the Sustainability Project Fund. We will offer single-use products that are biodegradable, chemical-free, and made from organic cotton from a brand called Joni and reusables menstrual cups, pads, and underwear from Period Aisle with our yearly budget provided by student fees.

In doing this, we hope to help menstruators manage their periods and reduce their waste in an accessible way. Over the course of 40 years, reusable menstrual products generate 5,000 times less waste than disposable products. Furthermore, the long term cost of reusable products is 30 times less than disposables in a lifetime. In order to help those who cannot make the switch to reusable products (due to high initial costs, lack of availability in stores, and lack of access to proper sanitation or privacy), we are looking to the SPF for help.

With the \$50 000 from the SPF, we would get over 3000 reusable Period Aisle products to give out. This will allow us to greatly increase the amount of products we can give out. This would not only reduce our waste and help progress social sustainability by addressing period poverty, it will also be economically sustainable in the long run due to the long-term savings reusable products bring.

Along with giving out free products, we will be doing a social media and education campaign alongside it. Every single month will have a different theme, from topics such as period poverty to product gendering. Through this campaign, we hope to educate students about the social sustainability behind giving out free reusable and biodegradable products, as well as encourage people to spread the benefits of reusables through word-of-mouth.

To achieve lasting cultural change, we want to have people transmit the benefits of sustainable products through community means. This will hopefully help normalize reusable and biodegradable products, allowing us to achieve our goal of having 50% of the McGill population that menstruate use sustainable products. If we can help alleviate the stress of something as common as a period, we would be positively benefitting the entire McGill community.

6. Is your project related to the University's [Climate & Sustainability Strategy 2020-2025](#)?  Yes  No
7. Is your project related to the University's [Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Strategic Plan 2020-2025](#)?  Yes  No
8. If you answered yes to Question 6 or 7, how does it relate? Please refer to the relevant strategy category, theme, goal, and/or action in your response. *Limit ~200 words*

Our project is relevant to both the Climate and Sustainability Strategy and EDI plan. One of the long term targets for McGill is to become zero-waste by 2035. We can support this goal by providing reusable menstrual products that produce zero-waste. People who menstruate use on average 20 products a cycle, or 240 products a year. One

disposable pad or tampon releases on average 0.0186kgCO<sub>2</sub>, uses 0.347MJ of energy, and creates 0.0055kg of waste. If we achieve our goal of getting 50% of the population that menstruates at McGill, which we estimated to be 12,000, to switch to reusables, we would prevent 53618.05kg of greenhouse gasses from being emitted, save 998460.15MJ of energy, and divert 15827.41kg of waste a year, progressing zero-waste and carbon neutrality goals.

Furthermore, we are enhancing community building by creating an inclusive environment that welcomes anyone that menstruates to take part in using reusable products at no cost and provides a community of support within this. We are also promoting student wellness, success, and support from the EDI Plan by providing menstrual products at no cost and are raising student awareness about menstrual discrimination, oppression, and their effects.

## TRANSFORMING CAMPUS

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

9. In the table below, describe your proposed project's 2-5 main impacts on the McGill community or its main goals to accomplish. Please check the stakeholders that will be impacted. Finally, list at least one key success indicator for each impact (e.g. # people will be engaged, % waste will be diverted, # buildings certified). Note: Indicate a realistic target for each success indicator (e.g., rather than "# people engaged," include a target such as "50 people engaged").

Main Impacts/Goals		McGill Stakeholders Impacted (check all that apply)	Key Success Indicator(s)
REQUIRED	1 Help McGill achieve their zero-waste by 2035 and their carbon neutrality by 2040 goals	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Academic Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Admin. Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Alumni	2880000 disposables saved 53618.05kg GHG averted 15827.41kg waste diverted 998460.15MJ energy saved
	2 Help progress menstrual equity forward by offering free products to all McGillians who need it	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Academic Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Admin. Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Alumni	Products to 10000 people Reduce total amount spent on menstrual products by half at McGill
OPTIONAL	3 Encourage long-term economic savings by facilitating the transition to reusable products	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Academic Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Admin. Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Alumni	Directly have 6400 people transition to reusables Indirectly get 12000 people to make the transition
	4 Promote social sustainability and equity through an educational campaign alongside the giveaways	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Academic Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Admin. Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Alumni	Directly reach 6400 members of McGill Indirectly reach 15000 members
	5	<input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate <input type="checkbox"/> Academic Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate <input type="checkbox"/> Admin. Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Alumni	

10. Have you considered implementing your project at more than one McGill campus? (e.g. If your project is downtown, could it be implemented at Macdonald Campus as well?)

Yes  No

11. Please describe your choice of campus(es) and why this choice is best for your project. Limit ~150 words

For now, we are focusing on the downtown campus because that is where our project was started and has been operating for the past five years. We have already set up dispensers or baskets in a majority of buildings on the downtown campus and work closely with the building staff downtown. Because of this established rapport with the downtown campus, we can continue to expand our services here. This makes our work logistically easier, especially

because we would have to transit over the McDonald Campus and get our system set up there. But if the project is successful this year, we would love to partner with MCSS to expand the initiative to the Macdonald campus and see if we could run a similar project, or at the very least provide reusable menstrual products that could be given out..

*To complete the application process, please submit this form on the SPF website. The SPF Staff will be in touch regarding your application within two weeks and will send you Part 2 for the Over \$5,000 application process, the Project Plan.*

## PART 2: PROJECT PLAN

**Instructions:** Please answer the questions below as clearly and concisely as possible. Once you have completed this Project Plan, save it and submit it online. SPF Staff will respond with feedback on your application within 2 weeks. Once all sections are complete, the combined 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](#):

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### IMPLEMENTATION

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

1. 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 (DD-MM-YY)	End Date (DD-MM-YY)
Monthly pick up and general project overview pamphlets 11am-3pm	14-09-22	14-09-22
Monthly pick up and educational campaign about disabilities and periods Oct 5th 11am-3pm	05-10-22	05-10-22
Monthly pick up and educational campaign about ending the stigma Nov 2 11am-3pm	02-11-22	02-11-22
Monthly pick up and educational campaign about environmental sustainability & planet positive	07-12-22	07-12-22
Monthly pick up and educational campaign about period poverty Jan 11 11am-3pm	11-01-23	11-01-23
Monthly pick up and educational campaign about health and well-being Feb1 11am-3pm	01-02-23	01-02-23
Monthly pick up and educational campaign about product gendering and price discrimination	01-03-23	01-03-23
Monthly pick up and educational campaign about social sustainability April 5th 11am-3pm	05-04-23	05-04-23
**location most likely in SSMU building		
Book a room in the university centre for product pick up	02-11-22	05-04-23
Launch a large scale advertising campaign to make sure people know about the pick-ups	14-09-22	05-04-23
Create project overview pamphlets so students know what the campaign is	01-09-22	14-09-22
Create educational pamphlets on each of the monthly educational topics we are focusing on	01-10-22	05-04-23
Ensure the coordinators are understand how to educate people about the topic	01-10-22	05-04-23
Make social media posts on the SSMU University Affairs Instagram about the topics and pick-ups	01-09-22	05-04-23

2. 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 future maintenance plans. Limit ~200 words

We will continue to use our funds to pay for reusable products. We are currently collecting a Menstrual Product Fund from students that we use to fund the majority of our operations. But with that said, the SPF funding will help us get money to invest in an even greater variety of products and aid in our promotion and education materials. Future years will be equipped with a robust way to run monthly pick ups, establish connections with brands, and have good relations with building directors and staff across campus to ensure a smooth continuation of this project. The big reason why we want to use SPF funding this year to distribute free reusable menstrual products is because we want to change the culture, education, and conversation around sustainable menstruation. We see, with trends such as #PeriodTikTok and the proliferation of new reusable Menstrual product companies, that people are getting excited to try reusable menstrual procts. Many don't make the jump because of the high upfront cost. We want to create a big wave of change all at once, and that is what the SPF will help us do.

3. Please list any potential risks associated with your project and the measures you will take to reduce their likelihood.

Main Risks	Preventative Measures
Because we're holding the giveaways once a month, we might be getting the same people taking reusable products	We will clearly communicate people are only allowed one product each time and use different communication channels
We might have trouble increasing adoption and usage of products and not give everything out	We will work to use different ways of educating people, convince people individually, and use word of mouth
People might find it inconvenient to use reusables so they no longer continue to use it	Explain to people how to use and store the products while giving them out and provide them with online resources



## STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

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

4. Please list all the 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
Lauren Macdonald	Sustainability Officer (Implementation)	Support, guidance, and resource provision	Confirmed	Yes
Wallace Sealy	University Centre Building Director	Member of Menstrual Health Team (former supervisor)	Confirmed	No
Shuchita Dia	SSMU Sustainability Commissioner	Support and guidance (although not yet hired)	Not Confirmed/Asked	No
			Choose one.	Choose one.
			Choose one.	Choose one.

5. How will you communicate about your project and share its impacts with your stakeholders and the McGill community? Please describe your tactics (e.g. social media, workshops, tabling, newsletters, etc.) and any related timing (e.g. at the beginning, during, or after the project). Related activities can also be included in Question 1. *Limit ~200 words*

We promote our monthly pick ups through social media, email listservs and word of mouth. By tabling at the Y-intersection in the middle of campus, we attract many members of the community to spread the word about our project. We also have promotional materials, like pamphlets, a banner, and a tablecloth, all with specific branding, that help increase our presence on campus. Although we just started actively promoting the project, the Menstrual Health Project is becoming one of the most asked about and talked about initiatives at the SSMU. We also are beginning to employ the use of the screens in residence cafeterias to further promote our services. We will also use these communication networks to update the community on how many students we have impacted, how much waste we are diverting from landfills and oceans, and more products in more buildings on campus. We are also planning to have interviews and news articles with campus media, such as the McGill Tribune, to further promote the project. We started our promotion via social media and listservs before we began our monthly pick-ups. During our monthly pick-ups, we maintained our social media and listserv presence, but we also began tabling, giving pamphlets, and spreading through word-of-mouth.

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

There are two jobs involved in this project. One is the menstrual health commissioner who works closely with the VP Student Affairs to calculate orders, number of products that go out, communications with building directors and staff, and generally oversees the project. The other job involved is the menstrual health coordinator who stocks washrooms across campus with supplies. Both positions work together to run the monthly pick ups and create educational material.





**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 max 10). Please include any relevant support letters.*

Doc #	Appendix Document Title	# of Pages
1	Appendix A - Comparison Grid, Menstrual Equity	3
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10	<a href="#">Staff Position Information Appendix</a> , if applicable	