

INTEGRATING SUSTAINABILITY INTO YOUR SPF PROJECT

The mandate of the Sustainability Projects Fund is to: *“Build a culture of sustainability on McGill campuses through the development and seed-funding of interdisciplinary projects.”* Throughout the SPF application form, you will be asked to demonstrate how your team will address the three dimensions of sustainability (social, environmental, and economic) into your project’s planning and activities. This document is intended to help you become familiar with what sustainability means at McGill and how you can integrate these concepts into all stages of your project.

PART I: CONNECTING YOUR PROJECT TO THE MANDATE OF THE SPF

The mandate of the SPF can be explained in smaller phrases:

“Build a culture... Changing the way things are done: Impact the structures/processes/systems to provoke a positive transformative and enduring change in ideas/assumptions/habits/behaviors.

...of sustainability... Recognizing the interdependence and complexity of systems, striving for equilibrium and responsibility towards environmental integrity and social and economic justice.

... at McGill... Current McGill staff, faculty or students leading the initiative first and foremost for the McGill campuses and its direct stakeholders.

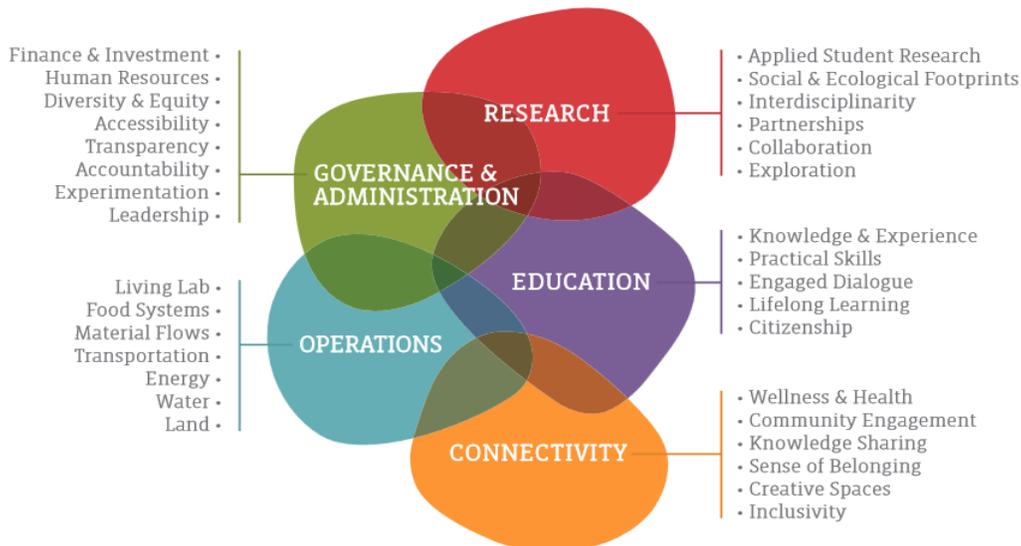
... through seed-funding... Helping kick-start the project.

... of interdisciplinary projects.”Fostering projects that are well planned and embrace various perspectives, thus involving a diversity of team members and stakeholders from different domains, background, profiles, etc.

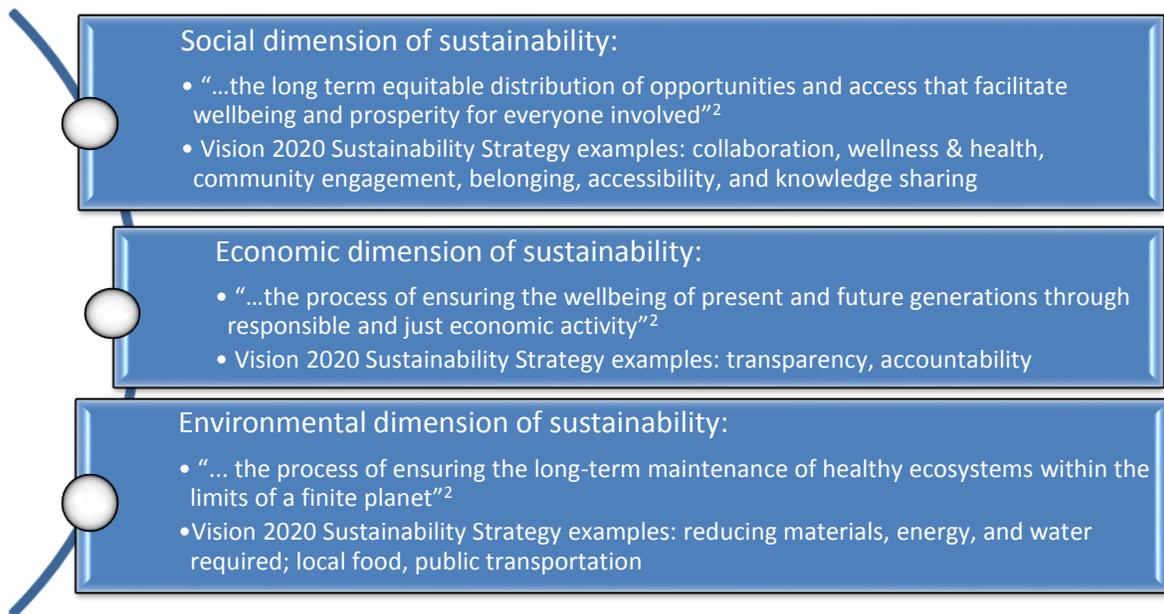
PART II: WHAT DOES SUSTAINABILITY LOOK LIKE AT MCGILL?

Sustainability is defined at McGill as: “working together toward a shared vision for a flourishing future in a manner that integrates social, economic, and environmental dimensions”.

Between 2012 and 2013, McGill initiated an innovative community engagement process called Vision 2020 to guide and connect sustainability initiatives on campus. This led to the creation of The Vision 2020 Sustainability Strategy, which lays out a framework for reaching our collective sustainability goals and was approved in 2014. The Vision 2020 Sustainability Strategy consists of 1 vision, 23 goals, and 14 priority actions across five categories: [Research](#), [Education](#), [Connectivity](#), [Operations](#) and [Governance & Administration](#).



Sustainability incorporates three dimensions¹:



PART III: INTEGRATING SUSTAINABILITY INTO YOUR PROJECT

While designing your SPF project idea, sustainability should be integrated not only into the project’s goals and objectives, but also into how your team plans and manages the project.

For example, if your project is focused on an environmental issue (e.g. planting a garden), think about how economic and social aspects can also be incorporated throughout planning and implementation. Your team could include elements of the economic dimension of sustainability by using reused materials, donating excess produce, and maintaining accounting transparency, among others. Providing learning opportunities, collaborating with those affected by the project, and ensuring that the space is accessible for people with different abilities are some ways to include elements of the social dimension of sustainability into the project through its process and activities.

Throughout the various stages of your project, here are some ways your team can incorporate sustainability:

- ***Initial brainstorming:*** When starting your project, think about how your project can foster a sense of belonging, inclusivity, and wellness. Your initiative should involve and be accessible to individuals with a wide range of perspectives and backgrounds.
- ***Collaborating with others:*** Build teams that are diverse, interdisciplinary, inclusive, and equitable.³
- ***Budgeting:*** While creating and monitoring your budget, incorporate financial transparency and accountability. Plan for additional funding sources and how your project can transition to becoming financially self-sufficient after the SPF funding ends.
- ***Inputs/resources:*** Choose resources that have small environmental and are ethically sourced.
- ***Activities:*** Include learning opportunities, such as raising awareness, incorporating [applied student research](#), facilitating knowledge-sharing, learning practical skills, and engaging in dialogue.
- ***Project completion:*** While wrapping up your project, share lessons learned and continue with lifelong learning.

¹ For more resources on what is sustainability: www.mcgill.ca/sustainability/get-involved/sustainability-basics.

² McGill Office of Sustainability Glossary: <http://www.mcgill.ca/sustainability/files/sustainability/glossary.pdf>

³ Equitable: Equity is an ethical concept that represents fairness, rather than equality or sameness. An equitable community is one in which barriers to or disparities in the distribution of opportunities and services are acknowledged and actively addressed.