Quebec Public Interest Research Group at McGill
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www.qpirgmcgill.org

QPIRG-McGill Board Nomination Package

ABOUT QPIRG-McGill

The Quebec Public Interest Research Group at McGill (QPIRG-McGill) is a non-profit, student-run organization that conducts research, education, and action on environmental and social justice issues at McGill University and in the Montreal community. With such a broad mandate, QPIRG-McGill brings together a wide range of people interested in many different issues.

QPIRG-McGill is run by a volunteer Board of Directors responsible for QPIRG's management, budgeting, project development, staff, working groups and vision. In addition, the Councils of the Students' Society of McGill University (SSMU) and of the Post-Graduate Students' Society (PGSS) each have one representative on the Board.

Mandate

The broad mandate of QPIRG-McGill is to help McGill students link up with the broader Montreal community through social and environmental justice organizing; since 1988, we've served to bridge the gap between the frequently isolated McGill community and the rest of the city, through the social and environmental issues that affect all of us. QPIRG-McGill works from an anti-oppression framework, seeking to oppose all forms of oppression as they play out within society at large as well as within our work. Oppression can be defined as the institutionalized, systematic, pervasive, day-in, day-out, mistreatment of a person or group of individuals based solely on their race, sexual orientation, gender, age, class or ability.

Some QPIRG History

Public Interest Research Groups (PIRGs) were initiated by American consumer activist Ralph Nader and they began on American and Canadian University campuses in the 1970s. Today, there are over 200 PIRGs across North America, all autonomous groups with the broad mandate to advocate for social and environmental justice. In Montreal, there are PIRGs on the McGill Concordia and UQAM campuses; QPIRG-McGill was the first PIRG in Quebec established in 1980.

QPIRG Membership

McGill students are members of QPIRG-McGill because they pay a $3.75 per semester membership fee. Students and community members run QPIRG-McGill; there is a volunteer board of directors who determine the direction of the organization and what we fund. There are annual elections to join the board, as well as an Annual General Meeting where the membership can be involved in the governance of the organization. Members are welcome to attend board meetings and join committees; all of the organization's documents are open to the membership.

QPIRG-McGill, like CKUT, is autonomous from the SSMU and has a different mandate than the organizations that work under SSMU (namely, linking campus and community). However, QPIRG-McGill and SSMU have historically worked together on a number of different projects, including Culture Shock and Social Justice Days (more below), two annual event series.

Consensus-Based Decision Making

QPIRG-McGill aims to be a non-hierarchical, inclusive and democratic organization. As part of this goal, QPIRG-McGill uses consensus-based decision-making, which allows for the full and active participation of all group members. Instead of working by majority rule, consensus decision making works to include everyone's input into decision making processes and encourages quieter participants to speak up, while encouraging more dominant voices to listen.

Volunteers

Volunteers can help plan fun and educational events for social and environmental justice, participate in inspiring campaigns, maintain the library, offer translation, childcare and help with publicity. Volunteers can be community members or students. If you are a student, you might even be able to get course credit for volunteering, by planning ahead and doing it as an internship.

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Board of Directors Description

What does the QPIRG-McGill Board do?

There are twelve (12) positions on the QPIRG-McGill Board, at least six (6) of those positions must be filled by McGill students who have not opted out in the last two semesters prior to joining. Non-students or community members can join the QPIRG-McGill Board, but they must have volunteered with the organization for at least fifteen (15) hours in the last year. If you need more information about membership or being a Board member, please contact QPIRG-McGill or consult our Board Policy, Bylaws and/or Elections Policy (all documents available to our membership). QPIRG-McGill works as a non-hierarchical organization.

Role of the QPIRG-McGill Board:

- Support the work of QPIRG-McGill's projects, working groups, and committees.
- Be part of the planning, visioning and setting of priorities for the organization.
- Be the employer as defined by the QPIRG-McGill bylaws and board policy.
- Work collectively with the staff to oversee the work of the organization.
- Help QPIRG-McGill perform socially and environmentally meaningful work.

Board members cannot receive any remuneration for their work at QPIRG-McGill.

No experience necessary to join the QPIRG-McGill board, but some skills and experiences would be an asset:

- Ability to work well and communicate within a volunteer based, grassroots, non-profit setting.
- Experience with consensus decision-making.
- Experience with drafting policy.
- Conflict resolution skills.
- Awareness of/networking on issues of social, economic and environmental justice.
- Knowledge of QPIRG-McGill

You can gain skills!

Many skills can be gained or improved through your participation on the QPIRG-McGill board. These include:

- Consensus decision-making
- Successful meeting facilitation
- Administrative and computer skills
- Education on various social and environmental justice issues.
- Non-profit organizational skills.
- Financial Management skills.
- Skills development, including group decision-making, organizational skills, staff supervision, etc.

Equity Statement for the QPIRG-McGill Board:

QPIRG McGill recognizes and welcomes the unique contributions that individuals from marginalized and oppressed communities bring to our organization, and invites these individuals to apply. We encourage applicants to describe the unique contributions they, as individuals with diverse experiences, would bring to the QPIRG-McGill in their application.

How much time is required?

The board requires a time commitment, which sometimes varies from week-to-week, but generally looks like:

- 3-5 hours a week
- Serve on the board from April 3th, 2014- AGM 2015.
- One 1-2 hour meeting or training every other week (must be able to stick to a 'fixed' meeting schedule, which changes at the beginning of every semester).
- Participation in at least one committee.

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Committee Work

Committees are an important part of the ongoing work of QPIRG-McGill. Some of the current committees are

- ***Staff:*** The staff committee plays a crucial role in maintaining good communications between staff and board. This work is a less visible but integral part of board contributions to the QPIRG-McGill.
- ***Finance:*** This committee's mandate is to give direction on financial decisions, advise the board on financial matters, develop transparent and accessible financial practices, and maintain a more in-depth understanding of QPIRG's financial position than is possible at the general board level. They are also responsible for cheque signing.
- ***Programming:*** The Programming Committee at QPIRG -McGill organizes diverse activities throughout the year, including films, workshops, panels and speakers. Open to the membership at large.
- ***Outreach & Media:*** This committee aims to make students and community members as informed and involved with QPIRG-McGill. They work to inform people about the history and ongoing social and environmental justice work of the organization, as well as ensure that other portrayals of the organization on campus are as accurate as possible. Open to the membership at large.
- ***Legal:*** The mandate of this committee is to assist the staff at the QPIRG-McGill with legal matters such as MOA negotiations.
- ***Policy:*** The purpose of this committee is to review, update and develop policy to better the functioning of the QPIRG-McGill.
- ***Community University Research Exchange (CURE)***: CURE is a database by which students can integrate their academic research with the work of local movements and activist organizations. The CURE project includes an active committee, which supports CURE and the community groups, students and professors involved with the project.

Other Board Responsibilities:

Fiduciary Duties:

- **Skill:** in carrying out obligations, board members are expected to use an appropriate degree of skill. This means using the skills each board member has to make competent decision on behalf of the organization.
- **Diligence:** board members are expected to attend meeting and to become as fully informed as possible regarding all aspects of the QPIRG-McGill operations, including any issues that affect the organization.
- **Loyalty:** Board members must act with honesty and in good faith in what they reasonably believe to be the best interests of QPIRG-McGill. Board members must act with loyalty at all times. Loyalty includes:
  - o *Honesty:* disclosing benefits and threats to the organization.
  - o *No Conflict of Interest:* Board members cannot place themselves in a situation where their duty as a Board member conflicts with their interest or with their duty to others.
  - o *No Personal Profit:* Board members may not profit in any way from their relationship with the organization
  - o *Confidentiality:* Board members are expected to keep confidential matters including (but not limited to) sensitive personal information about members, applicants, former members, employees of QPIRG, and anything specifically determined by the Board to be confidential. When a Board member is uncertain about whether something is a matter of confidence, they should seek direction from the organization.

Once you become a board member, you are also responsible for the following:

QPIRG-McGill board members are responsible for the operation of the organization within the confines of the bylaws, mandate and established policies. In most cases, the Board will be assisted in these responsibilities by staff. Specific Board duties include:

1. Attending board meetings. Meetings are normally held every two weeks and are approximately 1-2 hours in length. Additional time must be spent in preparation, reading minutes or other documents, developing your documents, developing your thoughts and completing tasks taken on.

2. Facilitation and recording. The jobs of recording (minute-taking) and facilitation (leading discussion) are rotated among Board members in order to develop skills.

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3. Budgeting and finance. The Board is responsible for financial planning and for ensuring that money is properly spent and that appropriate records are kept. The Board works with the Bookkeeper and Internal Coordinator to ensure fiscal responsibility.

4. Planning and Evaluation. The Board is responsible for visioning and setting the goals of QPIRG-McGill for the year and evaluating the success in reaching those objectives at the end of the year.

5. Projects and Programming. The Board is responsible for developing ideas for QPIRG-McGill projects and events. The planning and carrying out of these activities is done in conjunction with the External Coordinator.

6. Board/Working Group relations. Board members are responsible for acting as liaisons between Working Groups coordinator and the board.

7. Board/Staff relations. As employers, the Board is responsible for hiring and supervising staff, developing staff job descriptions and evaluating staff.

8. Campus relations. Board members are responsible for promoting and networking for QPIRG-McGill informally and formally on campus, recruiting new Board members and volunteers, and liaising with other student groups. The Board is also responsible for liaising with the McGill Administration and the appropriate McGill departments. T

You are also required to be familiar with the QPIRG-McGill's:

- Working groups, projects and committees
- Mandate
- Equity Policy
- Memorandum of Agreement
- Bylaws
- Budget and Financial Statements
- Policies

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Nomination & Elections Info

Overview

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If you are interested in being on the QPIRG-McGill Board, you will need to fill out/collect the following documents:

(1) Candidate Personal Information
(2) Candidate Questions
(3) Release of Standing (if it applies)
(4.a) If you are a student: 50 signatures from McGill Students
(4.b) If you are a community member: statement demonstrating at least 15 hours of involvment with QPIRG-McGill in the last year.

Once you've collected all the documents, please ***submit them to the QPIRG-McGill Electoral Officer's mailbox,*** located in the lobby of the QPIRG-McGill offices (3647 University Street, 3rd Floor) between 12-6pm Monday to Friday or email them to qpirg.elections@gmail.com

2014 Nomination/Elections Timeline

Nominations Open: Wednesday, March 12th 2014
- Nomination packages and forms will be available on the QPIRG-McGill Website and in the office.

Nominations Information Meeting: Tuesday, March 25th 2014 at 5pm (QPIRG-McGill Offices)
- Come if you are interested in being on the board to find out more about what is involved, including more about QPIRG, board responsibilities & time commitment, the nomination procedure and other information.
- An overview of the process, election guidelines and answering of questions.

Nominations Close: Friday, March 28th 2014 at 5pm.
- All nominations must be submitted to the QPIRG-McGill Electoral Officer mailbox by 5pm in order to be considered for eligibility or emailed to qpirg.elections@gmail.com.

Election Day: Thursday, April 3th 2014 at 6pm - Bronfman Building, Room 151, 1001 Rue Sherbrooke O
- You will be asked to present yourself to the QPIRG-McGill Annual General Meeting (AGM) at 6pm.
- We ask that you prepare a short oral presentation abour yourself and why you are running . The audience will have a copy of the questions you answered and your brief bio.
- The AGM will take place on April 3rd at 6pm in Room 151 of the Bronfman Building, 1001 Rue Sherbrooke O

Results:
- Will be posted on the QPIRG-McGill website within 48hrs of the election day.

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QPIRG McGill Board of Directors Nomination Form:

(1) CANDIDATE PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name: _____

Student # (if it applies): _____

Faculty (if it applies):_____Year (if it applies): _____

Phone Number:_____ Email:_____

Address:_____

_____

I have read and understood QPIRG McGill's mandate and the responsibilities of being a board member. I agree to abide by these and wish to put myself forth as a nominee for the board.

Name:_____

Signature:_____Date:_____

(2) CANDIDATE QUESTIONS

* Please provide the answers for these questions in a separate document. These questions will be used to inform our members and for our website (If possible, please send them as an email to qpirg.elections@gmail.com).

1) Please provide us with a bio of yourself (50 words max).

2) Why do you want to be a board member of QPIRG-McGill?

2) Have you read and do you agree with and commit to abiding by QPIRG-McGill's mandate?

3) What plans do you have for your term on the QPIRG-McGill board?

4) What do you understand social and and environmental justice to be?

5) What social and environmental issues are you passionate about?

6) What life expereinces do you have that will contribute to your work as a board member of QPIRG and the diversity of the organization?

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(3) RELEASE OF STANDING
(fill out if it applies)

I, _____, hereby agree that the Chief Returning Officer of the Quebec Public Interest Research Group (QPIRG) may confirm with the Registrar the following information along with my academic standing.

Name:_____ Student #: _____

Faculty: _____ Year:_____

Phone Number: _____ Email:_____

Address:_____

_____

Please mark the appropriate line: Yes No

Satisfactory standing: _____ _____

Please Sign:_____ Date: _____

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(4.A) SIGNATURES (FOR STUDENT BOARD MEMBERS)

Name: _____ Student # (If it applies): _____

Faculty (if it applies) :_____ Year (if it applies):_____

*We, the undersigned, confirm that we are McGill students and nominate this candidate for a position on the Board of Directors of the Quebec Public Interest Research Group (QPIRG) at McGill. We understand that this indicates simply our confidence in the candidate's ability to perform the tasks of the aforementioned position (*Note: Students may nominate more than one candidate *) (* Note: Please fill out all the information completely legibly as illegible or incomplete signatures shall be discounted).*

	Name	**Student #**	**Signature**
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(4.A) SIGNATURES

Name: _____ Student # (If it applies): _____

Faculty (if it applies) :_____ Year (if it applies):_____

*We, the undersigned, confirm that we are McGill students and nominate this candidate for a position on the Board of Directors of the Quebec Public Interest Research Group (QPIRG) at McGill. We understand that this indicates simply our confidence in the candidate's ability to perform the tasks of the aforementioned position (*Note: Students may nominate more than one candidate *) (* Note: Please fill out all the information completely legibly as illegible or incomplete signatures shall be discounted).*

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(4.B) STATEMENT QPIRG INVOLVMENT (FOR COMMUNITY BOARD MEMBERS)

Please explain how you've been involved with QPIRG-McGill in the last year and demonstrate that you've been at volunteer for at least 15 hours with the organization, its working groups, or committees. Please limit yourself to 150 words. This form must be submitted along with the rest of the nomination materials.