

QPIRG-McGill Annual Report 2022-2023

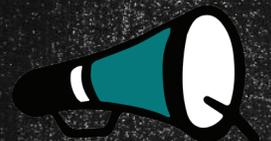


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About QPIRG-McGill



Mandate

The Quebec Public Interest Research Group at McGill (QPIRG-McGill) is a resource centre for students and community members working towards social and environmental justice. We strive to engage students in research, public education and action, and to support grassroots activism around diverse social and environmental issues. We seek to build campus-community alliances and inspire social change through inclusive and non-hierarchical approaches.

QPIRG-McGill is opposed to all forms of discrimination on the basis of: race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and dis/ability. QPIRG-McGill is committed to engaging in research and action that are rooted in an anti-oppression analysis and practice.

History

In 1970-71, Ralph Nader, in the US, encouraged the formation of the first two PIRGs by university students and their organizing efforts and structures became the blueprint for the hundreds of groups to follow. By 1973, there were chapters on 135 campuses in 19 states across the US. In Canada, the first PIRG was set up in Ontario during the 1972-73 school year at the University of Waterloo. In Quebec, QPIRG has been an organization at both Concordia and McGill Universities since 1980. However, it was not until 1988 that a referendum was passed at McGill making QPIRG at McGill the first student-funded, autonomous PIRG in Quebec. Now, there are student-funded PIRGs at Concordia, McGill and UQAM.

Over the course of their thirty year development, Canadian PIRGs have diverged in important ways from their US counterparts. Most importantly, they are interested in encouraging grassroots organizing and changing public attitudes, rather than engaging in government lobbying. The PIRGs' mandate has been to provide a structure within which students and community members can develop the knowledge and practical skills needed for activism and community work. By providing a forum and training ground for people to be engaged members of their community, the PIRGs also provide a bridge between academia and organizing, by linking theory and practice.

In the last five years, QPIRG McGill has been instrumental in promoting and supporting progressive movements on McGill's campus, through the formation of events like Culture Shock and Social Justice Days. As well, QPIRG regularly collaborates with other campus groups who are working for social and environmental justice.

Since 2001, QPIRG has adopted an anti-oppression framework, seeking to oppose all forms of oppression as they play-out within society at large as well as within our organizing work.

As of 1988, all McGill undergraduate and graduate students are automatically members of QPIRG-McGill and are entitled to all the organization's services by virtue of a refundable semester fee. Community members are eligible for membership if they are members of a QPIRG working group or complete 15 hours of volunteer work at QPIRG-McGill.

QPIRG-McGill structure

QPIRG-McGill Board

A volunteer Board of Directors, elected at the Annual General Meeting, runs QPIRG-McGill. The Board is responsible for all the decisions pertaining to the operation of the organization. The Board defines the vision and direction of the organization, allocates the budget, and also organizes independent QPIRG events.

QPIRG-McGill's voluntary Board members gain valuable skills and receive hands-on, practical training in running a non-profit organization. This year the Board formed the following committees: Staff Committee, Popular Education Committee, and Space Committee.

Student Board Members

Shelly Bahng
Mira Cantor
Amanda Chiu
Sofia Di Gironimo
Emma Gurney
Beth Hales
Avery Haley-Lock

Community Board Members

Saba Thackurdeen

SSMU Rep

none

PGSS Rep

Tyler Paetkau

Staff

QPIRG-McGill has three core staff members who coordinate the day-to-day operations of the organization. The staff works hard to insure reliability, continuity and skill sharing within the organization. In addition to daily operations, the staff is responsible for programming, finances, outreach, working groups, programs, coordinating resources, volunteers, projects, grant research, and policy development among many other things. This year, the Finance and Administrative Coordinator was Ivory Tong. The Outreach and Promotions Coordinator was Nelly Wat. The Working Groups and Community Research Coordinator was Sasha Simmons until December 2022, and was replaced by Carl Bystram in January 2023.

This year our part-time staff members were Ha Nhuan Dong (Resource Centre Coordinator), Sarah Hollyer-Carney (outgoing CURE Coordinator), Karonhia'nó:ron Dallas Canady-Binette (CURE Coordinator), Maria Radu (outgoing Campus Outreach Coordinator), and Fatima Khalladi (Campus Outreach Coordinator). The 2022-2023 accountants were Dan Lacroix and Stephen Kamp.

In the summer of 2022, QPIRG-McGill hired two Rad Frosh Coordinators: Hannah Jackson and Laine McCrory; and two School Schmoor Coordinators: Taylor Douglas and Sophie O'Reilly. We funded two summer research stipends of \$3000.

QPIRG–McGill structure

Conflict Resolution & Complaints Committee (CRCC)

The purpose of the Conflict Resolution and Complaints Committee (CRCC) is to review complaints entailing decisions made by the QPIRG Board or Staff, or any other internal disputes, which cannot otherwise be resolved. The CRCC holds no regular meetings; it meets only when the need arises and for one training session (which will take place approximately one month after being elected). Decisions of the CRCC are final and not subject to further appeal and can include disciplinary measures outlined in the QPIRG McGill Disciplinary Procedures. The CRCC follows a CRCC policy to address complaints involving QPIRG-McGill members that cannot be resolved by the Board of Directors.

At the Annual General Meeting in April 2022, the following member was elected to the CRCC: Emma McKay, Hani Rukh E Qamar, and Jessica Szarek. This year, CRCC revised QPIRG's Conflict Resolution and Complaints Policy.

Report from the Board of Directors

Overview & Responsibilities

The Board of Directors is composed of students and community members who have been elected and committed to planning the direction and development of the organization, fulfilling the organization's financial duties and supporting staff members and their programs.

Timeline of Board Responsibilities & Actions

Month	General yearly schedule	2022-2023 specific
May	Board training, Summer Research Stipend selection, summer staff hiring	Space committee, cleaning, and moving QPIRG offices.
June		
July		
August	Rad Frosh & School Schmool	
September		
October		Culture Shock planning and events
November		
December	Office closure	
January		Winter board recruitment, Working Groups & Community Research Coordinator hiring, Campus Outreach Coordinator hiring, CURE Coordinator hiring, Popular Education coordinator hiring
February		Board visioning, Spring Into Action planning + events
March		
April	AGM	

Report from the Board of Directors

Board Training

The board received trainings on the following topics, between May-October 2022 (Facilitators are mentioned in parenthesis):

- Consensus-decision Making, Non-profit Legal Responsibilities, QPIRG history & structure (QPIRG staff)
- Accessibility (Paul Tshuma)
- Anti-Oppression for Community Orgs (Karine-Myrgianie Jean-François)
- Anti-Colonialism for Community Organizing (Michelle Wouters)
- HR & Board / Staff Relations (Isabelle Oke)
- Conflict Training (Kai Cheng Thom) (w/ participation from QPIRG Concordia and the Centre for Gender Advocacy)

Major Themes/Issues

This year, the major issue faced by our Board was low participation, partly due to high turnover.

We held a Board visioning meeting in early 2023, in which we discussed challenges faced by the board structure and how to make improvements moving forward. We want to boost morale and stress the positive social impact created by the Board. We switched to hybrid meetings, and attempted to recruit more members.

Our weekly meetings did manage to meet quorum and fulfill weekly organizational commitments - such as looking over discretionary funding applications - but developing committees and addressing

institutional demands beyond the normal responsibilities of the board could at times become challenging.

Committee Updates

Staff Committee

QPIRG's StaffComm is a group of Board members who take on many of the HR-like responsibilities for the organization. As employers of 3 full-time, 3 part-time and many project-specific staff, StaffComm is meant to facilitate easier communication between the Board and Staff. Year-long commitments include contract signing, contract renewals, monthly meetings and bimonthly staff check-ins.

Unfortunately, StaffComm was not able to function this year, due to low board capacity. As a result, staff members have had to step in to coordinate tasks such as contract writing, although board members still do contract signings. This also means staff check-ins have not been occurring; it is thus a priority for our organizational health to reconstitute the Staff Committee as soon as possible.

Finance Committee

Finance Committee did not meet frequently this year, and instead all budgets and financial decisions were brought to the full board at board meetings when necessary.

Space Committee

After successfully applying for a grant from Employment and Social Development Canada to make our new space more accessible, Space Committee met frequently near the

Report from the Board of Directors

beginning of the 2022/23 year to work on obtaining a ramp permit. Work on this project has been on a hiatus since fall semester, but we hope to begin reconvening soon to continue improving the accessibility of our office. Special thanks to our Space Committee members from outside of QPIRG, including Katie Jung, Nathan McDonnell, Val Masny, Jessica Szarek, and Ekaterina Frank.

Board Dynamics

Board dynamics this year were largely positive, though having meetings largely on Zoom put a damper on the development of board friendships. The move also meant that the physical space of QPIRG did not make it easier for us to get to know each other. These constraints aside, however, we largely got along and learned from each other. We are moving towards hybrid meetings and trying to organize more social events in order to boost board morale and cohesion.

Future Goals

Our main goal for the board moving forward is to collaborate on making regular meetings feel more impactful, in order to increase motivation and engagement. For example, while QPIRG funding makes an enormous difference in the community, this is not always very visible to the members of the board, who might feel disconnected from these activities. Hopefully, by increasing board engagement, we can resume tasks related to our organizational health and structure, such as Staff Committee and policy review.

Report from the staff

QPIRG finally moved offices this year, and we are happy to share a space at 3516 Av du Parc with like-minded groups. It has been a pleasure to interact with our new neighbours, including Commun, TENK and Comité Citoyen Milton-Parc. Throughout the year, we dedicated a significant amount of time to setting up and adjusting to our new workspace, and hope to continue to make our office more welcoming to visitors in the coming year. We also hope to make the library and our other resources more accessible to the community as a whole; we have been working towards ensuring step-free access to our new office space, and this may take some time to complete but has been a rewarding process so far. Plans for the summer include making the space more accessible. Work is now stably in hybrid format at the staff's discretion.

Challenges for the future include resuming board responsibilities to their pre-pandemic extent, re-constituting the Staffcomm, Finance, and Research committees, and boosting overall Board engagement.

In our three permanent positions: Ivory Tong is now in their fourth year as Finance & Administration Coordinator, and Nelly Wat is in their second year as Outreach & Promotions Coordinator. Sasha Simmons left her position as the Working Groups & Community Research Coordinator in December 2022 after more than 3 years, and Carl Bystram has now been happily in the role since January.

As part-time staff: Sarah Hollyer-Carney stayed on as the CURE Coordinator until January 2023, and was replaced by Dallas Canady-Binette in February. Ha Nhuan Dong is in his second year as Resource Centre Coordinator. Maria Radu was our Campus Outreach Coordinator until

December, and was replaced by Fatima Khalladi in January. After a vacancy of about one semester, Emily Hardie joined us as our SSMU Popular Education Coordinator in winter semester. Our summer staff were Sophie O'Reilly and Taylor Douglas as School Schmoool Coordinators, and Hannah Jackson and Laine McCrory as Rad Frosh Coordinators.

We thank all our volunteers and our Board of Directors, without whom our work would be both impossible and much less enjoyable! Shout-out to our friends at Midnight Kitchen, the UGE, MUNACA, AMUSE, AMURE, AGSEM, Black Students' Network, Divest McGill, Queer McGill, the McGill Daily, CKUT, ECOLE, SACOMSS, SSMU VP External Office, the Concordia Students' Union, the Centre for Gender Advocacy, the Milton Parc Citizen's Committee, QPIRG-Concordia, Le Frigo Vert, Comm-un, and GRIP-UQAM. We love collaborating with you all and we look forward to continuing to grow and strengthen our relationship in the coming year! <3

Our organizational priorities this year will be to highlight the difference that our funding can make by focusing on small events rather than large open-ended projects, to establish clearer benchmarks and support for researchers and organizers, and to strengthen internal structures so that our committees can feel more impactful. We would also like to increase our visibility on campus through further tabling and expanding the volunteer base.

In Solidarity,

The Current QPIRG Staff (Carl Bystram, Karonhia'nó:ron Dallas Canady-Binette, Ha Nhuan Dong, Fatima Khalladi, Ivory Tong, and Nelly Wat)

Popular Education

Rad Frosh

Hannah Jackson & Laine McCrory

Rad Frosh is a three-day orientation weekend for incoming students at McGill, taking place from Friday, August 26th to Sunday, August 28th in 2022. The program is centered on introducing people to McGill and Montreal's vibrant activist communities. We had 60 actual participants with 15 facilitators during the weekend programming. Because one of our central goals this year was to foster connections between McGill activism and organising out in the community, we took special care to foreground connections with important local issues and organisations when developing programming (eg. connections with Kanehsatà:ke, Schools without Police, and community organising in Milton Parc, Parc Ex and Pointe Saint Charles).

Our theme for 2022 was "Reaching Across, Reaching Towards": thinking about how we can each help grow healthy, long-lasting activist communities. The blurb was, "When dreaming of what these communities can look like, we imagine reaching across generational divides to connect with the knowledge and experience of activist elders. We imagine reaching across different activist communities, across borders and prison walls to learn from and build solidarity with those whose struggles are both similar and different from us. We begin to question the lines that separate different "social issues", and see the ways that they are all connected to each other. When we reach across these divides, together we can begin to reach towards our collective futures, realising our dreams of peace, freedom, and justice for all."

We used the SSMU building as the home base for most of our indoor activities. The other venues we ended up booking were: Batiment 7, Bar Le Ritz PDB, Notre Dame des Quilles (NDQ) and Bar le Cocktail. They were all wheelchair accessible, but all a decent ways away from campus, which is often the tradeoff.

For two of the three evening events we offered sober alternative events that could also accommodate froshies under 17 and people with concerns about large crowds. In terms of COVID precautions we required masks at all times for indoor events (except for eating), and found that people complied maybe 80% of the time. Another measure that we did was to have some events outside (like the clay workshop).

This year we decided instead of making t-shirts for all froshies that we would provide them with tote bags. This decision was based in part on cutting costs as well as avoiding the mass amounts of leftover t-shirts that often happens at the end of Rad Frosh. We decided to still print t-shirts for staff and facilitators, both as a gift for their volunteering and as an easy way for froshies to identify them.

FRIDAY

Sign In

Campus Tour

Milton Parc Tour

Dinner and Community Group Fair (w/SSMU)

Ellelui x Queer McGill Dance Party

Board Game Night

SATURDAY

Breakfast

Popular Education

Ellen Gabriel Keynote Address:

Ellen Gabriel gave a thorough rundown of her time as the representative for Kanehsatà:ke during the Oka crisis in 1990, her subsequent work as a land defender and talked a lot about what it means to be a settler in meaningful solidarity with Indigenous people and the importance of adjusting our ways of life away from fossil fuels and resource extraction economies.

Workshops:

Understanding Anti-Blackness

Sex Work 101

Tenant Organising 101

Lunch

Tours:

Alternative Libraries Tour

Batiment 7 Tour

Parc Ex Tour

Karaoke Night

Zinemaking

SUNDAY

Workshops:

Police-free schools: safety on campus beyond carceral systems

Prison Abolition

Radical Research Methods

Intersectional Approaches to Eating Disorders

Palestine 101 in a McGill Context

Cultivating Food Justice

Lunch

Hands-on Workshops:

Plaster Slip Casting

Harm Reduction

Collective Quilt-Making and South Asian Textiles

Dinner

Drag Show



Final thoughts

Overall one of our biggest surprises was the low level of turnout (it turns out the high number of attendees from the previous year is because they took both 1st and 2nd year students because of the pandemic), which led to us spending more than we needed to on things like food and tote bags and receiving less revenue, but we were assured that going over budget was coverable by QPIRG that year. What we could have done better is to make sure we kept better track of invoice payments, as a number of people's

Popular Education

payments were not processed until after our contracts had ended.

Organizations that contributed to the success of the weekend included MSERT, ACCM, CATIE, CUCCR, the Parc-Ex Curry Collective, QPIRG Concordia, ElleLui, Sidetrax, the House of Gahd, artist Sam Garritano, CCMP, SSMU, as well as many individual volunteers, facilitators QPIRG-McGill board members. Rad Frosh is community-driven and supported, and the efforts and love from these groups and those of the past fueled our weekend, and really demonstrated the ways in which communities show up for one another.

This report was adapted by Ivory Tong from the exit report written by Hannah Jackson.

School Schmoool

Taylor Douglas & Sophie O'Reilly

This summer, the 2022-2023 edition of School Schmoool, an annual activist planner produced by QPIRG-Concordia and QPIRG-McGill, was successfully published. This year's edition was coordinated by Sophie O'Reilly and Taylor Douglas.

The agenda dates back to 1994, beginning as a bi-annual publication that brought together group profiles, articles, and practical resources of use to all students, especially those interested in environmental and social justice issues. It was resurrected as an agenda and resource book in the summer of 2006, and has been connecting the Concordia, McGill and Montreal communities ever since.



This year's theme is Queer Joy. The term queer is a political metaphor with no fixed meaning - it instead is used to describe any identity subverting (or "queering") the norm. Therefore radical identities are inherently queer, and queerness itself is a radical reimagining of the current paradigm into a world where care, empathy, and mutual aid is centered for the enjoyment of all marginalized identities. We invited you to use queerness as a starting point to understanding how the world could exist in different ways, and how you can contribute to liberation for all.

We continued to prioritize work from LGBTQ+ and BIPOC contributors this year. As done in previous years, we compensated contributors whose

Popular Education

submissions were accepted, based on previous year's honorarium amounts. We received funding from the Sustainability Action Fund, which covered a significant portion of printing costs, as well as discretionary funding from Midnight Kitchen, AMUSE, and SACOMSS. We continued to provide fair compensation to the contributors of this edition, giving honorariums to new content published in the agenda based on last year's rates.

We published 1000 copies of the planner this year, which have been distributed to new students at Rad Frosh and a number of McGill and Concordia organizations. The two QPIRGs successfully distributed the rest of the agendas throughout the year.

We also continued to print the agendas on recycled paper with local printer Katasoho, who has been printing our School Schmoos for over a decade. This year, we elected to print 1000 copies, 200 copies less than last year to minimize waste. We distributed copies among student groups at McGill and Concordia, and at a few independent bookstores and community locations on a by-donation basis.

We would recommend future coordinators to keep record of donations, as it was pointed out during the funding application process that we consistently fail to keep track of donations from year to year. We would also recommend implementing a more concrete distribution plan in August, given that we have at least 100 issues left undistributed every year, and to strive to distribute as many agendas as possible in September. We will also update the School Schmoos website with this year's edition at schoolschoos.com.

Culture Shock & Spring into Action

Emily Hardie

In January, Emily Hardie joined us as our SSMU Popular Education Coordinator in winter semester! This year's Popular Education Committee was comprised of the staff, Popular Education coordinator, and volunteers. We additionally commissioned Kezna Dalz and Armando Rivas to design posters for the two event series.

Our two major event series, organized by our Popular Education committee, were a success! This year's Culture Shock took place from November 21st to Dec. 1st, and focused on themes of joy, pleasure, and celebration as a form of community building.

We organized 1 panel, and 6 workshops, a comedy night, and a kiki ball, for a total of 8 events:



Popular Education

- Nightlife as Community Building: a panel discussion
- Un(PAC)k: Caring for ourselves and each other
- Places of Rest: An Interactive Mapping Experience
- Filthy Wholesome Dirty Talk
- All My Relations
- Clowning Around
- QTBIPOC Comedy Night with They Go Low, We Go Laugh
- The Fortuna Kiki Ball

Moving forward, we would like to allocate more time for the planning and promotion of events by spacing out our events over the span of a month. We would also like to run the PopEd committee year-round, with monthly meetings in the summer to organize monthly film screenings.

This year, Social Justice Days, renamed Spring into Action, took place from March 10th-22nd, and was centered around the theme of access, communication, and digital literacy.

We organized 1 keynote workshop, 8 workshops, one film screening, and an open mic/dance party, for a total of 11 events.

- Decolonizing Healing and Medicine, Re-imagining Community Care with Dr. Ayesha Khan (online)
- Un(PAC)k: Digital Diasporas
- My Puzzle is Your Sound: Fielding Recording with Joey Zaurini
- Recognizing misinformation in the age of social media
- Security Culture Sharing Circle
- Digital Literacy for Grassroots Groups 101



- An Intro to Technofeminism - How to Use (and Critique) Tech for Social Good
- Defend Press Freedom: A Thousand Cuts Film Screening and Discussion
- Ultraviolet Waves: The Spectrum of Futurisms

Some challenges we faced this year include low turnout at events. The low turnout was likely due to our outreach strategies, the time of year, and the frequency and saturation of events hosted by QPIRG as well as other organizations during certain weeks in the semester. In the future, the PopEd committee may try to spread out events over a longer time period, enabling students to attend more events and also allowing more time for planning and promotion.

We would like to thank all of our volunteers and everyone who supported our PopEd committee for making this year's event series a success! We look forward to working with you all again next year!

Community Research

Community–University Research Exchange

Karonhia'nó:ron Dallas Canady–Binette

As the incumbent coordinator of Project CURE, I have been following the efforts undertaken by the previous coordinator, Sarah. We are continuing to aid the Kanien'kehà:ka Kahnistènsèra (Mohawk Mothers) in their investigation into unmarked graves at the Royal Victoria Hospital and Allan Memorial Institute sites.

Under Sarah, Project CURE focused on gathering archival data to help build the Kahnistènsèra's case against McGill University and the Société québécoise des infrastructures (SQI), who were against searching for unmarked graves. The Kahnistènsèra are still interested in archival research, but since September 2022, they have been focused on creating and implementing an archaeological plan that follows best practices as outlined in the Canadian Archaeological Association's Code of Ethics.

Their court case was only settled last Thursday. On April 19th, a panel of three archaeologists who were appointed by the Kahnistènsèra, McGill and the SQI began their work on mapping archaeological priority zones and deciding which techniques can be implemented where. This panel is to produce a preliminary report regarding the sites by May 10th, 2023. I have been asked by the Kahnistènsèra to accompany the archaeologists as a cultural monitor, and will contribute to this report. Further, archaeological work will continue throughout the summer.

Archival work was mandated as per the Court settlement. However, McGill has delayed in providing immediate access to pertinent archives for over a week. This is concerning, particularly given McGill's plans to move most of the McLennan-Redpath collection off-island and the pursuant construction work on the McLennan-Redpath Library complex. Additionally, these archives are not readily accessible to the public.

The Kahnistènsèra expressed interest in continuing the partnership with Project CURE. Currently, the Kahnistènsèra are most interested in accessing the McLennan-Redpath and Osler Medical Library collections. I'm actively in discussions with them regarding the development of a plan for Project CURE's engagement regarding this archival work, and hope to have this plan finalized by mid- to late May.

Summer Research Stipends

coming soon

Community Research

Community Research

Resource Centre/Alternative Library

Ha Nhuan Dong

Events

- Archival Display, Preserving the Memory of Activist Work. Building an Activist Community, November 5, 2022, SSMU Building.
- Zoom presentation with The ArQuives, The ArQuives: Preserving Canada's LGBTQ2S+ Heritage, October 27, 2022.
- Guided Tour with Archives gaies du Quebec, June 27, 2022. AGQ, 1000 Atateken, Montreal.

Operation & Management

- Settling into 3516 Av du Parc, organizing space and negotiating with CCMP, shelving
- Purchasing & collecting library equipment: bookshelves, label printer, shelf labels, utility cart, bookends, magazine boxes
- New library catalogue hosted on Librarika and shared with other Alternative Libraries: <https://alternativelibraries.librarika.com/>.

Finance

- Budget extension motion to the Board in June 2022: Approved by the Board
- Annual library budget extension: \$1000 -> \$2000
- Working hour extension: 8.5 hours/week -> 10 hours/week
- Proposal application for Arts Undergraduate Improvement Fund: Approved
- Budget: Proposed \$8000. Approved \$3000 for bookshelf purchase and installation in Arts Lounge or elsewhere. Rejected \$5000 textbook allocation.



- Plan for textbook funding: \$1000 in annual library budget each year for initial 5 years. Buy new textbooks & secondhand ones from students.
- Summer Stipend for Library Volunteers: \$15.25/hour for 5 hours/week for 11 weeks. Total payment: \$838.75 - to be divided among 3 selected volunteers
- Books & zines purchase: \$2,192.64. 104 books, 3 zines, 3 journals.
- Logistics purchase (volunteer snacks, printing, event, library equipment, etc.): \$451.6
- Librarika subscription: \$139/year. Last year paid by QPIRG-Concordia. This year, possibly contributing \$80/year. Pending consensus to upgrade to larger plan: \$299/year.
- Total purchases: \$2,644.24 - Budget: \$2000 = -\$644.24 deficit

Promotion & Communications

- Tabling at Winter and Fall SSMU Activities Nights; tabling in the library

Community Research

- Growing social media Instagram and Facebook in the last 12 months:
- Instagram reach: 7,861; Facebook reach: 2,723
- 798 Instagram followers (increased by 266%) & 20 Facebook Page followers
- 61 Instagram posts & 57 Facebook posts -> consistent at least 1 post/week
- Instagram name change: @alternativelibraries -> @qpirgmcgill_library
- New, permanent library logo & cute library tote bags by Nelly -> increased online branding visibility & physical presence
- LGBTQIA2S+ Activism at McGill (Prof. Alex Ketchum)
- Assisted the researchers to archive queer-related posters in our archive. Progress: 11/2022-04/2023. Finished and published.
- Researcher: Prof. Alex Ketchum; Research assistant: Shannon Salick
- Archival Project 2: QPIRG-McGill x SNAP Student News and Protest Archive (PI: Prof. Carrie Rentschler)
- Assisted the researchers to archive QPIRG-McGill and the library's internal documents: library forms (membership registration, checkout), classification system, PMB manual, volunteer forms, etc.
- Progress: 10-11/2022. On halt.
- Researcher: Prof. Carrie Rentschler. Researcher assistant: Catherine Plawutsky

Resource Development

Free Textbook Loan Program

The Free Textbook Loan Program is a student-led initiative of @qpirgmcgill_library, to be piloted in Fall 2023. Students donate their textbooks to us in return for a modest compensation. Every semester, we lend these books out free of charge to students upon request, with extended loan periods. We aim to address the lack of access to physical textbooks and lessen the financial burden of higher education. Our program is independent of the Course Reserves system of McGill Library and partly funded by @ausmcgill through the Arts Undergraduate Improvement Fund.

- Secondhand textbook drive: \$5 for 1 approved book.
- First textbook drive event: Collab with Trash2Treasure, QPIRG-M will table on May 2 & May 3, 2023 to collect books and pay the donors.
- Archival Project 1: QPIRG-McGill x

Trans Resources Database

This project is a regularly updated compilation of trans-affirmative support networks, services, and resources in and beyond Montreal, Canada. The list is divided into ten categories: Immediate support; On-campus; Off-campus, Montreal; Quebec-wide; Canada-wide; Online; Books; Legal matters & safety; Human extraordinaires; Miscellaneous. It is currently an online database hosted on a Google Sheet document, which can be accessed through the library's linktree (link in bio). We acknowledge that our list is not exhaustive, so we welcome all feedback and suggestions from the community to help refine and grow the project.

- English and online only at the moment; French translation and physical publication in the future.

Community Research

- Currently at 59 diverse resources.
- Volunteer help: Chanelle, Ezra-Jean, Nadia, Jade

Dispersal: a Montreal-wide mobile library display

A library is a site of gathering where everyone should feel welcome to be, read, and exchange. But since we moved out in May, our library has yet to be “habitable” enough (although you are still more than welcome to visit us). Much cleaning and reorganizing need to be done before we can confidently welcome you back. Born out of this context, this project aims to sustain and accelerate our community’s engagement with the diverse collection at QPIRG-McGill Library by physically distributing a selection from our inventory across Montréal-based resource centers, libraries, bookstores, and pop-up events. It also helps us reflect on the state of our alternative library and rethink modalities of knowledge sharing. After all, isn’t it the role of the library to disperse as much of the knowledge it holds as possible, just like the perseverance of dandelions, a species that still lives on despite terminating efforts? Dispersal, not removal. Towards a mobile library that breathes, connects, and persists.

- Chapter 1: Reading Asia, 06-09/2022, Concordia Co-op Bookstore
- Chapter 2: Housing Crisis, 10-11/2022, Concordia Co-op Bookstore
- New resource purchase: 104 books, 3 zines, 3 journals

Library Volunteers

- Total registered volunteers: 62.
- Past to present honorable mentions: Serena Zhang, Noah Ciubotaru, Gabriela Corluka, Mira

Cantor, Tatianna Sitounis, Hannah Jackson, Jade Jasmin, Nadia Mariyan Smith, Cynthia Tarlao, Chanelle Lajoie, Natasha Fisher, Nour Desrousseau.

Grassroots Mobilization

Discretionary funding

One way in which QPIRG-McGill supports grassroots organizing is by providing funding for smaller-scale, non-institutional projects and initiatives.

An annual budget is set aside each year by the QPIRG-McGill Board of Directors to fund such external projects. Campus and community groups are encouraged to submit requests for goal-oriented events that align with our mandate, up to a maximum of \$250.

2022-05-11	McGill Journal of Feminist Studies
2022-05-11	Kahnistensera documentary
2022-06-16	Radical Book Club x Dira
2022-06-16	MSSAT Fundraising events
2022-06-16	Eviction film
2022-06-16	Justice for Deepan
2022-07-14	Queer Kuwentuhan
2022-07-14	Alay Larawan Photowalk & Exhibition
2022-07-14	Feminist Health Conference
2022-07-14	AIDS 2022 Conference Panel & Vogue Ball
2022-08-17	IRSAM Community Consultations
2022-08-17	Briarpatch Special Issues
2022-10-26	Rising from our Roots
2022-10-26	Painting with Food N Ting
2022-10-26	Persevere Multimedia Art Exhibit
2022-09-11	Diversity in Math
2022-09-11	Organisation révolutionnaire-rencontres d'organisation
2022-09-11	Status for All
2022-09-11	2022 Yellow Door Benefit Dinner
2022-09-11	Person-Centered & Trauma-Informed Care
2022-11-30	Comm-Un Bracelet Workshop
2022-11-30	La Restive
2023-01-24	Community Carrot
2023-01-24	Litrato at Tula
2023-01-24	Earthbound Futures
2023-01-24	Dira Anarchist Library
2023-02-14	Territoires en jeu
2023-02-14	700 Jarry Ouest

Grassroots Mobilization

2023-02-14	700 Jarry Ouest
2023-02-14	Young Roots Farm
2023-02-21	RadLaw Movement Lawyering Panel
2023-03-07	Solidarité sans frontières - Mar 18th
2023-03-21	CLAC
2023-04-04	Affordable Food Week
2023-04-11	Show beneficio - Centro Social Manuel Gonzales Prada

Total spent: \$4895

Co-sponsorships

2022-06-16	Prisoners' Justice Day
2022-07-14	Defund the Police Festival
2022-08-17	South Asian Diaspora Action Collective talk with Raqib Hameed Naik
2022-11-09	Montreal Citizen Summit
2022-11-09	Root-to-Branch Winter Solstice Swap
2022-11-29	Red Light District Gala by ASTTeQ
2022-11-29	Hands Performance Vogue Workshop
2023-01-24	Pink Line Cabaret
2023-01-24	Dance for Disarmement
2023-01-24	Constellations
2023-02-14	Israeli Apartheid Week 2023
2023-03-07	Kairos Blanket Exercise
2023-04-11	Belzarre Ball

Total spent: \$5200

Endorsements

2022-10-26	Defund the Police Coalition - Call on Montreal to decriminalize possession of drugs
2022-11-29	EDI in the Arts - ELAN
2023-03-21	Anishnabe Moose Committee
2023-04-11	75th anniversary of the Nakba
2023-04-18	An Open Letter from Academics Against Vancouver's encampment evictions

Outreach Report

Outreach

Nelly Wat & Fatima Khalladi

The Outreach team (Outreach and Promotions Coordinator and Campus Outreach Coordinator) are responsible for: volunteer and campus outreach; the promotion of QPIRG events, research and funding opportunities; and events and opportunities from QPIRG's working groups and affiliated organizations.

One of our main goals last year was to “relaunch” QPIRG and boost our presence on campus. More volunteers became actively involved with QPIRG this year, and many were particularly interested in the library! We have also enjoyed welcoming volunteers, community members, and new friends to our office space at 3516 Av du Parc.

From 2021-2022, we addressed the issue of QPIRG's reduced presence on campus by focusing on online modes of outreach, including social media and cross-promotion with other organizations. From 2022-2023, many on-campus events and initiatives fully returned to being hosted in person, and we saw a resurgence of interest in volunteering, in-person events, and general involvement with QPIRG. We continued to rely on social media while increasing in-person outreach, including Activities Night, tabling in Redpath Library, and connecting with those who attended our Popular Education events. We distributed new stickers, bookmarks, business cards, and tote bags, which was received with enthusiasm and a renewed interest in QPIRG on campus!

Some challenges we faced this year include low turnout at events, which was likely due to time constraints and outreach strategies. Goals for this coming year include revisiting and improving our outreach strategies, expanding our volunteer base, and bringing more people into active roles at QPIRG. We also hope to find new ways of recruiting new board members and retaining volunteers in the long term.

We hope to produce new promotional materials such as stickers, bookmarks, and other “merch” for QPIRG in the future to increase our visibility on campus.



Financial Report

Finances

Ivory Tong

This previous year has seen some major changes for QPIRG, as we moved into our new space and are working on making it wheelchair accessible. Additionally, our expenses over the past few years have remained low due to circumstances caused by the pandemic, such as hosting events online; as in-person events resume, our budget is shifting back to pre-pandemic levels. As I settle into my fourth year in this role, I hope to use my experience to help guide QPIRG towards strengthening our financial controls and maximizing the use of our budget.

In the financial year ending August 31, 2022, we had a deficit of \$16,203.85. Considering our previous years' surpluses of roughly \$31,000 and \$15,000 each, this deficit mostly represents our efforts to use up our surplus.

The Finance Committee was also affected by a lack of capacity, and did not functionally exist separate to the Board of Directors this year. I am grateful to the Board for participating as a whole in such essential functions as assembling our budget, and reviewing it mid-way through the year. Potential tasks for the Finance Committee next year include improving areas for improvement identified by the auditors, and publicizing our discretionary funding opportunities.

Importantly, we completed our audit dated Aug 31, 2022. Our audit was conducted by an independent auditor's office, APSV Chartered Professional Accountants inc., by Caroline Pombert and Mélanie Desmarais-Sénécal. Working with

Caroline and Mélanie was a great experience and we thank them for their patience and hard work. The report outlines our major financial policies and shows that while QPIRG is at low risk for fraud overall, we still have improvements to make in terms of documentation and communication with our accountants. Their full breakdown can be found after this report.

Other updates from this year:

Programming costs have nearly returned to pre-pandemic levels, particularly for Rad Frosh, as most events have gone back to being in person.

As is the case every year, we apply to employment-based grants through government funding bodies, namely the Young Canada Works (YCW) and the Canada Summer Jobs (CSJ) programs. For our summer 2022 jobs, we received one YCW grant, for School Schmoool. The position was funded at 70%. We did not receive the other YCW grant we applied for, nor the CSJ grant.

We continue to hold onto our two grants from the Enabling Accessibility Fund - Youth, part of Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC), to work on accessibility improvements for our new office space. One grant, for \$10,000.00, is for the materials and labour to build a ramp, making the ground floor accessible to mobility aid users. The second grant, for \$7,719.00, will be used for miscellaneous accessibility improvements, as well as the automatic door opener for the ramp.

As of March, we have switched over from manually doing payroll in a spreadsheet

Financial Report

provided by our accountants to the payroll service PaymentEvolution. Although this has increased our accounting fees, it will also increase the rigor of our financial bookkeeping, and has been recommended by our auditing firm for several years.

Due to the rising cost of living and inflation, I strongly recommend QPIRG increase its fee levy from \$5.00 per semester in a future referendum. It was last raised in 2015, and it will become difficult for us to maintain our current level of programming without either sacrificing staff roles, or receiving additional funding.

Our opt-outs are fairly standard and stabilized at approximately 11% of the student population, as has been the case over the past couple of years. For us, this amounted to a total of \$35,817.50 for the 2022-2023 year. We do not predict a change in this unless there are active opt-out campaigns or other forms of organized backlash, which we haven't seen much of over the last few years.

Our accountants are Dan Lacroix and Stephen Kamp, whose diligence and knowledge is greatly appreciated, and they do so much for the financial health of QPIRG-McGill. Our deepest gratitude to the many groups and organizations with whom we collaborated with this year, or supported us in various ways, including but not limited to: the Students' Society of McGill University, the Centre for Gender Advocacy, the Association of McGill University Support Employees, QPIRG Concordia, Midnight Kitchen, Frigo Vert, the Sustainability Action Fund, Queer McGill, and many others.



2022-2023