FWI FUNDING STATEMENT RESULTS: THE McMaster SOCIAL INNOVATION LAB
Project Leaders: Brianna Smrke and Michael Hewlett

1. How has the project fostered collaboration and interdisciplinary?

a. Have other projects been initiated as a result of this project?
   At the workshop meeting, a representative from the McMaster Poverty Roundtable connected with Dr. Church of Engineering & Society. They discussed collaborating together on a course for the upcoming school year. We have not received an update on the state of this agreement but think collaboration is likely.

b. If it was recommended in your award letter that you connect with particular individuals/groups, have you done so and what was the result?
   We were not asked to pursue particular connections.

c. Have you worked with others who have or have not been funded through the current RFP?
   We collaborated with the following people:
   
   Student Groups
   • Computer Science Society – offered website hosting and design;
   • Mechatronics Student Society – offered access to three project rooms for pilot projects;
   • McMaster Social Innovation Lab Student Committee – came together to form an interdisciplinary team of 22 students working on anything needed for the development of this space;
   • MSU (Spencer Graham) – generating a survey to determine student support for the project
   • Engineers Without Borders McMaster – ran a student engagement night focused on the Social Innovation Lab

   Faculty
   • Dr. John Maclachlan – offered ArtSci 4CK3 Climate Change & Global Warming Inquiry as a course for the pilot project and provided insight about faculty concerns
   • Dr. Jay Brodeur – suggested he would use this space in his experiential education courses if it existed, offered to consult regarding faculty concerns, helped secure space for the workshop in the Sherman Centre
   • Dr. Doubleday – brought Brianna into her class to discuss MSIL, declared an intention to make a link between her to-be-created Humanities Institute for Peace Process and Conflict Resolution and MSIL
   • Ms. Jeannie An – An’s FWI project group aims to create an online compendium of experiential learning opportunities and sees our project as the offline component to theirs.

   Administration
   • Dr. Jean Wilson – offered her support and network at McMaster, as director of the Arts & Science program, offered administrative support for the FWI funds
   • Dr. Brian Baetz – consulted on the design of the space and the relevance of the idea to the Engineering and Society program; open to including designing the space as a project in a Society and Engineering course;
   • Student Success Centre (Adam Kuhn) – offered to help develop operational logistics and provide student facilitators;
   • Dr. Elise Quaite-Randall, Executive Director, McMaster Industry Liaison Office – offered access to office space and support with relevant legal forms to ensure students retain ownership of their ideas
   • Dr. Lynn Stewart – connected us to resources in the Engineering Department.
   • Dr. Fiona McNeill, AVP Research – offered to make introductions, provide a discretionary budget including a 3-D printer, and help support future proposals;
   • Dr. Laura Harrington, Project Director, Forward with Integrity – critiqued the idea and helped identify important elements to make it a successful project at McMaster

   Hamilton Citizens
   • Tyler Wright, Innovation Factory – sees our project as a ‘testing ground’ for his work in uniting McMaster and Hamilton interests. Tyler is open for future collaboration and mutual benefit and has made several introductions for us;
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- Colina Maxwell, Director of Centre3 – shared her story about establishing and running the Print Studio in Hamilton, offered to provide pro-bono consultation on our media and logo design;
- James Arlen, Founder of ThinkHaus – critically appraised our idea, offered to connect us to people who have established several successful Maker Spaces for mentorship purposes.

2. **How has the project exposed students to new or emerging research?**
   We have started a small student working group (of approximately twenty students) to help us develop the social innovation lab. They were exposed to the emerging idea of a "social innovation lab". Still, as this grant was for a workshop, exposing students to new or emerging research was not a short-term goal.

3. **How has the project offered students an experience beyond traditional borders?**
   This project has offered and will offer students unconventional educational experiences. Developing the project required us to connect with many different stakeholders at the university; arguably people we would have never met within the confines of a traditional course. We learned about the importance of social capital, an idea rarely covered in courses. The team of students we worked with were also challenged to develop the MSIL platform from scratch using their own knowledge and experiences. Once MSIL is running, students will be able to pursue unconventional experiences in a supportive environment.

4. **How has the project challenged the confines of existing programming and advanced new paradigms of research or education?**
   The Social Innovation Lab challenges traditional paradigms of education. Each time we have met with an individual or group, we share the ideas that anchor the space, politely challenging existing paradigms. When the Lab launches, student work may challenge these paradigms further.

5. **How will the outcomes of the project be sustained or expanded?**
   The outcomes are currently being expanded by summer activities (carried out by Brianna Smrke and Michael Hewlett) focused on development of the administrative, legal, financial, promotional, locational and recruitment aspects of running pilot projects next year.

6. **Please outline any barriers or challenges that may have prevented you from achieving some of your project goals.**
   We were fortunate enough that the people we contacted were willing to listen and agreed to support our project in their own way. We have experienced very few barriers. The funding for this initial proposal was sufficient for the work we had to do and we are thankful for the guidance provided to us in our initial award letter. Hosting the workshop provided us with a clear target to work towards and gave us a reason to build a network of support from which we have benefitted greatly.