Year of Creativity at the McMaster Museum of Art
A McMaster University Forward With Integrity Project Report September 2015
Proposal Lead Name/Faculty:
Nicole Knibb, Education Coordinator, McMaster Museum of Art

Collaborators/Faculties:
Irena Radisevic, PhD Candidate, Department of Linguistics and Languages
Peter Self and Andrea Cole, McMaster School of Graduate Studies

FWI Funding Statement

Grant total: $3600

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>description</th>
<th>amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salaries and benefits</td>
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<tr>
<td>Speakers’/facilitators’ fees and gifts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
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<td>Art supplies</td>
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<td>Event costs</td>
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<td>Food</td>
<td>$610</td>
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<td>Promotion</td>
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<td>Robinson Theatre rental</td>
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<td>Travel</td>
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<td>Parking</td>
<td>$140</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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<td>Books and resources</td>
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<td><strong>Total spent</strong></td>
<td><strong>$3400</strong></td>
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1. How did the initiative foster collaboration and interdisciplinarity?
The Year of Creativity project was coordinated by McMaster graduate student Irena Radisevic in partnership with Nicole Knibb, McMaster Museum of Art Education Coordinator, and the Graduate Student Life Team at the McMaster School of Graduate Studies. This series of workshops, exhibition and symposium for graduate students encouraged the exploration of creativity for innovation through discussion and personal expression in visual art. Our goal was to foster creative thinking in a creative and safe space in hopes of building a multidisciplinary community that supports dialogue outside of the classroom.

2. How did the initiative demonstrate innovation and risk taking?
The Year of Creativity was innovative and risky because it brought graduate students from all faculties/disciplines together in an unfamiliar, nontraditional classroom or lab setting. For most, being in an art gallery and looking at visual art in general was a new experience. The topics (creativity and creative thinking, visual literacy and art making) were also new.
Exploring the Museum’s art collection, exhibitions and the creative space of the galleries hopefully inspired graduate students to take creative risks in their own personal lives and academic work. The program brought together a diversity of speakers and participants and through combined talks, interviews, art making, games, writing, and creative thinking exercises we asked participants to take a risk in demonstrating how visual arts can advance and challenge personal and academic work.

3. How did the initiative enhance McMaster’s position as a research-focused student-centered institution?
The initiative challenged students to approach research from a new point of view. Graduate students were invited to explore the possibilities of really looking beyond habitual ways of perceiving themselves and the world of research. These experiential workshops offered creative practices to cultivate curiosity and an attitude of open inquiry.

4./5. How did the initiative collaboration between faculty members and students? What were the outcomes of the project? How was success measured and demonstrated? (Combined response)
The Year of Creativity workshops, exhibition and symposium provided a variety of interactions between students and McMaster faculty, departmental staff and alumni. Below is a list of each event and guest speaker. Evaluations and success was measured in terms of feedback from students who attended and this is also listed below.

**Introduction to Creative Thinking at the McMaster Museum of Art**
Facilitator: Nicole Knibb, Education Coordinator, McMaster Museum of Art
Participants: Electrical and Computer Engineering, Engineering in Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Material Science and Engineering
Some feedback from participants:
• “Keep it up!”
• “Keep more workshops coming!”
• “Really enjoyed it, would come again, with friends.”

**Exploring art and the brain: problems and possibilities and the impact of art on cognition**
Facilitator: Dr. Sally McKay, School of the Arts
Participants: Mechanical Engineering, Cognitive Science of Language, Biomedical Engineering and Civil Engineering
Some feedback from participants:
• “Learned a lot from the Museum.”
• “Thank you for this, it was fun to explore my dormant creative side.”

**Creativity and the Art of Really Seeing**
Facilitator: Marybeth Leis Druery, Expressive Artist & Workshop Facilitator, McMaster Student Open Circles
Participants from: Mechanical Engineering, Political Science, Business, Finance, Civil Engineering, and Chemical Biology.

Some feedback from participants:

- “I'm very satisfied with this workshop, you hit the nail on the head! Nice voice, too!”
- “Great atmosphere and great participants.”
- “I always like art and feel strongly the lack of it in my academic life.”

**Lunch’n’Play Workshop**

**Facilitator: Alise deBie, Mad Students Society**


**Reception and Artists Talk for Year of Creativity Graduate Student Amateur Art Exhibition**

Participants displaying their work (some did not want their last names used): Irena Radisevic (PhD Linguistics), Tara Packham (PhD Rehabilitation Sciences), Mary Ann (English), Jessica Kafka (PhD Medical Sciences), Yasmeen Mezil (PhD Medical Sciences), Alise deBie (PhD Social Work), Cynthia Mu (PhD Business), Rachel Dengate (MA English), Hoda Rezaee Kaviani (PhD Electrical Engineering), Sonia Padwal (PhD Medical Sciences), Mary Lynn Tobiasz (MA Archaeology)

**Inside the Professor’s Studio: Creativity in Teaching and Learning**

Panel Discussion featuring Dr. Robert Fleisig (Engineering) and Dr. Kim Dej (Science) and Irena Radisevic, held at Robinson Memorial Theatre

**Paint Your Own Monet Painting Workshop**

**Facilitator: Leslie Furness, Hamilton Artist and McMaster Fine Art alumnus**

Participants from: Communications and New Media, Electrical Engineering, Mathematics, Biochemistry, Science

Some feedback from participants:

- “So fun! Everything worked for me. I should have brought some friends.”
- “Everything was great, awesome and amazing! The instruction was great. Leslie is an excellent teacher. The session was perfect although I’d like more time…”
- “I enjoyed learning the basic skills of composing a picture.”
- “Amazing teacher and beautiful, serene atmosphere at the Museum. I would love to do this all day long.”

6. How will the impact of the project be sustained now that the initial funding has been exhausted?

The McMaster Museum of Art and Graduate Student Life at the School of Graduate Studies will continue to work together to host events for graduate students to explore creativity and build community. Another painting workshop has been scheduled, and a third-annual amateur graduate student-led art exhibition will be held. SGS will assist in ongoing promotion of the Museum of Art’s exhibitions, events and programs to graduate students.