



## **THE MCGILL DOBSON CUP 2018 GUIDELINES**

The McGill Dobson Cup (MDC), **powered by National Bank**, is McGill's flagship startup competition that enables emerging McGill entrepreneurs to compete for over **\$100,000 in prize money**. MDC teams will also benefit from the opportunity to present their ideas to a panel of world-class entrepreneurs who will offer guidance on how to move their ideas forward. The MDC begins with an electronic written application and is followed by the Semi-Finals and Finals of live pitching and judging.

**ALL MATERIAL AND INFORMATION SUBMITTED IN RELATION TO THE MCGILL DOBSON CUP SHOULD BE NON-CONFIDENTIAL IN NATURE AND YOU HEREBY AGREE THAT YOUR INFORMATION MAY BE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC.**

**THE MCGILL DOBSON CUP ASSUMES NO RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS ISSUES THAT MAY ARISE. IT IS THE INDIVIDUAL TEAM'S RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT THEIR INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY. ALSO, IT IS THE INDIVIDUAL TEAM'S RESPONSIBILITY TO ENSURE THAT THERE IS NO VIOLATION OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS BELONGING TO THIRD PARTIES.**

### **TEAM STRUCTURE**

In order to be eligible to apply to the MDC, at least one founder of the team must have a McGill affiliation, meaning any of the following:

- enrolled in an undergraduate program at McGill;
- enrolled in a graduate program at McGill;
- staff, faculty or postdoctoral position at McGill;
- McGill Alumni\*

\*If the sole McGill affiliation on a team is a McGill Alumni, they must have graduated within the last 5 years - the cut-off point is **January 31, 2013**.

### **TEAM SIZE**

1. The maximum number of team members allowed to present for the MDC is five, though there is no restriction on the total size of the company.
2. Only these five team members can register for the competition and pitch.

### **COMPANY OWNERSHIP**

1. McGill affiliated team members are expected to also own equity in the company. It is anticipated that McGill affiliated team members on the competing/presenting team should own at least 20% of the equity that is allocated to the management team OR at least 10% total equity. **In the case that an equity split has not yet been made, this rule does not apply.** For teams without an equity split, the McGill Dobson Centre for Entrepreneurship suggests all McGill affiliated team members seek to own at least 20% of the company they enter into the MDC. One objective of this rule is to exclude teams who solicit the help of McGill affiliated individuals and give little or no equity for writing their startup plan and/or allowing teams to meet eligibility requirements.
2. A team is also ineligible if they have raised more than \$100,000 for their company from sources other than friends and family.

### **TEAMS WHO HAVE PREVIOUSLY ENTERED THE MDC**

A team cannot compete in two consecutive MDC's with the same idea, **unless very significant progress & development from the previous year** can be demonstrated. Teams who have won prize money at the MDC are not allowed to enter in subsequent years.

- The MDC is only open to teams that are less than two years old as of **January 31, 2018**.
- The MDC does not take any equity in your company.
- If it is discovered that misleading or falsified personal, company, or other information has been submitted to the MDC, the McGill Dobson Centre for Entrepreneurship reserves the right to disqualify the whole team from the MDC at any point in time and without any warning.
- All requirements outlined in this document must be met in order to participate in the MDC. Failure to comply may lead to disqualification at the discretion of the MDC organizing team.

## DEADLINES

- It is highly recommended that a team submit their startup plan at least 24 hours before the deadline date of **11:59 PM. EST, Wednesday, January 17, 2018.**
- Startup plans will NOT be accepted after the specified deadlines.
- The startup plan should be received from each team prior to each submission deadline.
- If any portion of a startup plan is received after 11:59 PM on the final day of registration, the MDC reserves the right to deny entry into the competition.

## ADMINISTRATION

- The five-page startup plan limitation should **NOT** be exceeded, as those startup plans will not be considered. Please see page 6 for further information.
- The Semi-Final and Final pitches are not open to the public. The only people allowed in the rooms during the pitches are team members, judges and McGill Dobson Centre for Entrepreneurship personnel.
- At least one member per team must be present to pitch in person. **NO** Skype or video conferencing allowed.
- **Your team does NOT need to be a registered company to enter to compete in the McGill Dobson Cup. However, IF your team ends up making it to the Finals on March 28 AND win prize money, only then will you have to register your company. Prize money will only be paid to registered companies with bank accounts in Canadian funds with no exceptions. If your company is not registered please visit <https://www.incorporate-in-canada.com/> for help.**
- **No confidentiality agreements (NDA's) will be signed by anyone acting as judge-mentor or working for the MDC organizing team. All information disclosed in startup plans and pitches is considered public information.**
- **Upon entering the MDC, teams are expected to be available for all competition dates as outlined in the Key Dates section, including the Awards Ceremony on April 5, 2018.**
- The decisions of the judges are final and the enforcement of the rules of the competition is solely at the discretion of the judges and the McGill Dobson Centre for Entrepreneurship.
- By submitting a startup plan to the MDC, teams agree that their information can be stored on McGill servers, other cloud based servers, as well as other electronic storage spaces and devices.
- If appropriate, the MDC reserves the right to switch teams to another track.

## MEDIA RELEASE

In exchange for allowing you to enter the MDC, you hereby:

- Grant us the right to film, tape, sound record and/or photograph specific activities in connection with the MDC and (if applicable) any prizes provided. However, you will be made aware of any filming or photographs to be taken of your team. If you do not want the MDC to film, tape, sound record and/or photograph your team, the MDC will respect your wishes.
- Agree that we may use your name and/or likeness, voice, photographs and/or video footage of you, biographical information provided by you and/or any statement made by you concerning the MDC and/or the prize(s) in connection with publicizing the MDC.

## DEFINITION OF MDC TRACKS

### HEALTH SCIENCES (HS) TRACK - DEFINITION

Startups in the Health Sciences (HS) Track build primarily on research and technology in the sciences of biology, chemistry, physics, medicine and dentistry as well as a variety of multidisciplinary fields to improve health, prevent and cure diseases, and understand how humans and animals function. It focuses on the design and evaluation of medical, technological, behavioural and organizational interventions as well as the application of that knowledge to improve health and patient centered health care, and to ultimately improve the quality of life.

### SOCIAL ENTERPRISE (SE) TRACK – DEFINITION

A Social Enterprise is an organization that applies commercial strategies to maximize improvements in human and environmental well-being, rather than maximizing profits for external shareholders. Social enterprises differ in that they do not aim to offer any benefit to their investors, except where they believe that doing so will ultimately further their capacity to realize their social and environmental goals. Social enterprises can take many forms, for-profit, non-profit or a hybrid.

### SMALL & MEDIUM ENTERPRISE (SME) TRACK - DEFINITION

The Small & Medium Enterprise (SME) Track is for those startups that likely are started by an individual or group to serve a local market. Size may vary and SME entrepreneurs are those that may value personal independence, cash-flow and

lifestyle over exponential growth. The jobs that they create are generally non-tradable meaning that they cannot be outsourced. A distinct feature of an SME startup is that they mainly focus on local markets.

## **INNOVATION DRIVEN ENTERPRISE (IDE) TRACK - DEFINITION**

Innovation Driven Enterprise (IDE) Track startups generally build their business upon a technology, science or idea that will give them a significant or radically disruptive advantage compared to their peers. They endeavor to service markets that are non-local (global or regional). More time and capital is generally required versus SME enterprises, as exponential growth is sought to eventually serve global markets.

## **KEY DATES**

Five-page startup plans will be accepted between **December 4, 2017 – January 17, 2018**. The online registration form during those dates is located at [www.mcgill.ca/dobsoncup](http://www.mcgill.ca/dobsoncup). Teams moving onto the Semi-Finals will be directly notified and posted on [dobsonchronicles.com](http://dobsonchronicles.com) on **January 30, 2018**.

- Semi-Finals Pitch HS Track – **February 20, 2018**
- Semi-Finals Pitch SE Track – **February 21, 2018**
- Semi-Finals Pitch SME Track – **February 22, 2018**
- Semi-Finals Pitch IDE Track – **February 23, 2018**

## **SEMI-FINALS**

Qualifying teams will be chosen by the MDC organizing team and judges. A **maximum of 50 teams** per Track will pitch their startup ideas to a panel of judge-mentors (format is 5 minute presentation, 15 minute Q&A with feedback and mentorship). All decisions are at the discretion of the judges and are final. Teams moving onto the finals of the MDC will be notified on **February 27, 2018**. At least one member per team must be present to pitch in person. **NO** Skype or video conferencing allowed.

## **FINALS**

Qualifying teams from the Semi-Finals will advance to the Finals. A **maximum of 10 teams** per Track will submit a second updated startup plan and pitch their startup ideas to a panel of judge-mentors (format is 5 minute pitch, 15 minute Q&A with feedback and mentorship). All decisions are at the discretion of the judges and are final. At least one member per team must be present to pitch in person. **NO** Skype or video conferencing allowed.

- Final startup plans which will be sent to finalist judge-mentors due on **March 12, 2018**
- Final Pitches all 4 Tracks – **March 28, 2018**

## **AWARDS CEREMONY – April 5, 2018**

The winning teams will be announced at the Awards Ceremony. All teams who participated in the MDC are invited to join us at the Awards Ceremony. All prize recipients will be given the opportunity to give a one-minute pitch in front of a public audience.

For information about upcoming events please visit [dobsonchronicles.com](http://dobsonchronicles.com).

To book a mentorship session with a McGill Dobson Centre for Entrepreneurship mentor please visit [dobsonchronicles.com/mentorship](http://dobsonchronicles.com/mentorship).

## **JUDGING CRITERIA**

Judging will focus on the categories outlined below. Judges will also look at the feasibility, growth potential, and innovation, as presented by the teams. Specifically for the SE Track, social impact will also be assessed.

## **IDE, SME AND HS STARTUP PLANS**

The startup plan must be rigorous. It should be prepared with an outside audience in mind, such as an angel investor or venture capitalist. Numbers and facts should be used to back up your claims. Technical descriptions should be accurate and concise. Credibility and viability are key components of a startup plan. To help us streamline the evaluation, feedback and mentorship process, please ensure that your startup plan is divided into the sections listed below. The following seven sections **MUST** be discussed in this order, though all suggested points do not need to be addressed. Note that your startup plan must **ONLY** include these headings (a section for appendix and works cited can be added if necessary), information

outside these headings will not be weighted appropriately in the evaluation and could hinder your chances of moving on to subsequent phases of the competition.

### **1. Value Proposition**

- Describe your product or service.
- What pain points are you solving for your target customer?
- Lead with the most compelling summary of your idea and be direct and specific.
- Describe the market opportunity.
- What is unique and what are the main benefits of your product or service?
- At what stage is your startup?

### **2. Customers/Beneficiaries**

- Who are the potential customers of your company?
- What is the size of the total addressable market, serviceable addressable market and serviceable obtainable market?
- Describe your beachhead market?

### **3. Marketing**

- How will you reach your target customers?
- How will you advertise and/or distribute your product or service?
- How are you going to acquire your first customer?

### **4. Competition**

- Who are the main competitors of your company?
- What is your competitive advantage compared to your competitors?
- Why has this not been done before or what is different about your product compared to industry standards?
- What do customers use now instead of your product or service?
- What stops others from copying you?

### **5. Business and Financial Model**

- What is the proposed business model i.e. how is your company going to make money?
- Is there evidence they will buy the product or use your service?
- What are the high-level projections for revenue and costs?
- How much money do you need, when, and what for?
- When will your company be cash flow positive?

### **6. Team Composition**

- Why are you doing this?
- List team members and their main areas of expertise.
- Does your team have all the skills needed to run the company?
- What is your track record of success?
- Why will your team succeed?

### **7. Other Considerations**

- What are one or two major risks that can influence your company?
- How would you react if these risks occurred?
- What (if any) partnership opportunities can you leverage?
- Building a company requires a significant amount of “hustle”. Tell us how many potential customers your team has spoken with. What was their feedback? If your company is in a two-sided market place, tell us about feedback you received from both sides.
- What is the likelihood that you will actually proceed with this project, full time?
- What are your key next steps?

## **SE STARTUP PLAN**

The startup plan must be rigorous. It should be prepared with an outside audience in mind, such as an angel investor or venture philanthropist. Numbers and facts should be used to back up your claims. Technical descriptions should be accurate and concise. Social impact will also be assessed. Credibility and viability are key components of a startup plan. To help us streamline the evaluation, feedback and mentorship process, please ensure that your startup plan is divided into the sections

listed below. The following eight sections **MUST** be discussed in this order, though all suggested points do not need to be addressed. Note that your startup plan must **ONLY** include these headings (a section for appendix and works cited can be added if necessary), information outside these headings will not be weighted appropriately in the evaluation and could hinder your chances of moving on to subsequent phases of the competition.

### 1. Concept

- What social issue does your SE address?
- What pain points are you solving for your target customers?
- What specific product(s), service(s) or intervention(s) will your SE offer to address this social issue?
- How will you measure success?
- Why is your team inspired by your SE?

### 2. Customers/Beneficiaries

- Who are the target customers and/or beneficiaries of your SE?
- What is the size of the market and why and how will your customers buy your product(s) and/or use your service?
- Have you leveraged design thinking (or human centred-design) to develop your SE and if so, how?

### 3. Marketing

- How will/did you acquire your first customer/beneficiary?
- How will you reach a larger target audience of customers/beneficiaries?
- What is your media and communications plan?

### 4. Competition

- Who are the main competitors of your SE?
- What is your competitive advantage compared to your competitors?
- Why has this not been done before or what is different about your product compared to industry standards?
- What do customers use now instead of your product or service?
- What stops others from copying you?

### 5. Business and Financial Model

- What form of SE are you adopting: for-profit, non-profit or hybrid?
- What is your SE's business model for sustainability?
- If your SE is non-profit or hybrid, what are your sources of funding?
- What evidence do you have that your customers/beneficiaries will want to buy/use your product/service?
- What are the high-level projections for revenue and costs?
- How much money do you need, when, and what for?
- When will your SE be cash flow positive?

### 6. Team Composition

- Why are you working on this specific social issue?
- List team members and their main areas of expertise.
- What set of skills does your team possess that will enable you to successfully launch and manage your SE?
- What is your track record of success?
- Why do you believe you will succeed?

### 7. Social Impact

- What is your Theory of Change, i.e. please describe how and why a desired change is expected to happen as a result of your SE?
- How do you foresee scaling your SE?
- How will you measure your social impact?

### 8. Other Considerations

- What are the potential risks that your SE may face?
- How would you react if these risks occurred?
- What (if any) partnership opportunities can you leverage?

- Building a company requires a significant amount of “hustle”. Tell us how many potential customers your team has spoken with. What was their feedback? If your company is in a two-sided market place, tell us about feedback you received from both sides.
- Besides financial support, what other resources do you need and how would they be deployed?
- How does your team demonstrate persistence and progress?
- What is the likelihood that your group will champion your SE full-time?
- What are your key next steps?

## **THE FIVE-PAGE STARTUP PLAN**

- Teams must register using the MDC registration process, available at [www.mcgill.ca/dobsoncup](http://www.mcgill.ca/dobsoncup) from **December 4, 2017 – January 17, 2018**.

- **IMPORTANT:**

Teams must submit their startup plan as a PDF with the file named in the following format:  
**NameOfStartup-TrackEntered(IDEorSMEorHSorSE)-Semi-Finals-MDC2018.pdf.**

For example, if a team is named "Technology for All" and they are entering the IDE Track, the file name will be:  
**TechnologyForAll\_IDE\_Semi-Finals\_MDC2018**

- **Font Size:** Minimum 12 point font.
- **Margins:** 1 inch on all sides (or 2.54 cm).
- **Spacing:** 1.5 spacing.
- **Document Size and Layout:** One cover page, followed by no more than **five pages of text**.
- If an appendix and/or works cited is required, it must be included in the five pages. **The total number of pages of a team’s startup plan cannot exceed 3 double-sided sheets of size 8.5” x 11” paper.**
- **Cover Page:** The cover page of the startup plan **MUST ONLY** include:
  1. **Name of startup and logo** (if you have a logo) and Semi-Final or Final
  2. **Track entered:** IDE, SME, HS or SE.
  3. **30-word short description** of your company that can be made public. Please also include a link to your website and to any relevant social media links.
  4. Identify one main contact person (aka Team Leader) and include his/her phone number and e-mail address. List the **full name of all team members** (up to a max of five) and state their **McGill affiliation** (choose from: ‘McGill Student’, ‘McGill Staff’, ‘McGill Faculty’, ‘McGill Alumni’, or ‘no McGill affiliation’).
    - For ‘McGill Student’: please indicate faculty of study
    - For ‘McGill Staff’: please indicate the faculty where they work
    - For ‘McGill Faculty’: please indicate faculty where they teach
    - For ‘McGill Alumni’: please indicate their faculty, as well as the month and year they obtained their last degree from McGill
    - For ‘no McGill affiliation’: please indicate if they are a student or alumni from another educational institution. Indicate the educational institute as well as the month and year they obtained their last degree.



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