

Director of McGill Growth Lab and Assistant or Associate Professor

The Max Bell School of Public Policy at McGill University invites applications for the position of Director of the McGill Growth Lab and Assistant or Associate Professor. This is a leadership position responsible for establishing and directing a new applied policy research centre focused on economic growth in Canada. The position is a unique opportunity to shape a new institution from the ground up, and to contribute to critical economic policy research and debate.

Reporting to the Director of the Max Bell School of Public Policy, and working in close partnership with the Harvard Kennedy School's Growth Lab, the Director of the McGill Growth Lab will build the organizational infrastructure for the McGill Growth Lab, develop and manage a portfolio of research projects with government and foundation partners, and position the Lab as Canada's pre-eminent centre for growth-focused policy analysis.

Terms of Appointment

The position is a full-time, three-year contract academic position. The position is renewable, subject to performance review and funding. Compensation is competitive and will be commensurate with qualifications and experience.

Key Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership and Organizational Development

The Director will define and execute the strategic vision for the McGill Growth Lab, working with the Max Bell School leadership to establish organizational structures, governance processes, and operational systems. This includes building a team of researchers and analysts, developing internal policies and procedures, and ensuring the Lab operates effectively within McGill's institutional context. The Director will represent the McGill Growth Lab in the governance of the MBSPP and wider University, where appropriate, and contribute to the Max Bell School's broader strategic objectives.

Business Development and Fundraising

The Director will identify, cultivate, and secure funding for McGill Growth Lab projects from government, foundation, and private sector sources. This involves developing a pipeline of potential engagements, preparing proposals and concept notes, negotiating contracts and partnership agreements, and managing relationships with funders throughout project lifecycles. The Director will work closely with McGill University's research administration and advancement offices to ensure compliance with university policies.

Project Leadership and Client Engagement

The Director will oversee the design and delivery of research projects, serving as the primary point of contact for government counterparts and project sponsors. This includes scoping project parameters, assembling project teams, ensuring quality control on deliverables, and translating research findings into actionable policy recommendations. The Director will maintain productive working relationships with senior policymakers and ensure the Lab's work drives real-world policy impact.

Partnership Management

The Director will manage the McGill Growth Lab's partnership with the Harvard Kennedy School Growth Lab, including coordinating joint research activities, facilitating knowledge transfer, and ensuring productive collaboration across institutions. The Director will also cultivate and sustain relationships with other Growth Co-Labs (LSE, Monterrey, CEU) and relevant Canadian policy organizations.

Strategic Positioning and Communications

The Director will contribute to public debate through op-eds, public speaking, and media engagement, establishing the McGill Growth Lab's reputation in Canadian policy discourse and positioning it as a leading voice on economic growth issues. The Director will also need to develop a launch and brand strategy for the McGill Growth Lab, in collaboration with the Max Bell School's communications team.

Academic Duties

While this role is primarily outward facing, the Director will also be part of the Max Bell School's academic staff and will be expected to connect the new Growth Lab to the broader applied research and teaching communities at the School. This means teaching in the School's academic programs – including its flagship Master of Public Policy program and new programs under development – as well as engaging in the academic life of the School.

Qualifications

Required Qualifications

The successful candidate will hold a graduate degree in economics, public policy, or a related field, with at least 8-10 years of progressively responsible experience in applied economic policy work. Demonstrated experience leading complex, multi-stakeholder projects involving government counterparts is essential. The candidate must have a strong track record of fundraising, business development, or partnership cultivation.

Excellent written and verbal communication skills are required, including the ability to translate complex analytical findings for policy audiences. The candidate must be comfortable operating at senior levels of government and possess a network of relationships in Canadian economic policy circles.

Preferred Qualifications

The ideal candidate will have direct experience building or leading an organization or department, demonstrating entrepreneurial capacity and comfort with ambiguity. French language capability, while not an essential qualification, would be an asset for engagement with Quebec government counterparts. Experience working in applied economic policy with Canadian federal or provincial governments, central banks, international economic organizations, or economic policy think tanks is strongly preferred.

Familiarity with economic complexity methods, growth diagnostics, or related analytical frameworks is an asset.

Personal Attributes

The successful candidate will be entrepreneurial and self-directed, comfortable building systems and processes from the ground up. They will demonstrate intellectual curiosity about economic growth challenges and a genuine commitment to driving policy impact. Strong interpersonal skills and the ability to build trust with diverse stakeholders—academics, policymakers, foundation executives—are essential.

Application Process

The following supporting documents are required:

- Cover letter and curriculum vitae (in pdf format)
- Statement of purpose and/or academic plans if successful in obtaining this position
- Names and contact information of three referees

Please include a personal email address when creating an account in Workday to submit your application. Do not use @mail.mcgill.ca or @mcgill.ca email accounts to apply. A review of applications will begin March 20, 2026, and will continue until the position is filled.

Application Portal:

https://mcgill.wd3.myworkdayjobs.com/McGill_Careers/job/Sherbrooke-680/Director-of-McGill-Growth-Lab-and-Assistant-or-Associate-Professor_JR0000073467-1

McGill University is an English-language university where most teaching and research activities are conducted in the English language, thereby requiring English communication both verbally and in writing.

L'Université McGill est une institution de langue anglaise dans laquelle la majorité des activités d'enseignement et de recherche s'effectuent en langue anglaise, rendant essentielle l'utilisation de l'anglais pour la communication orale et écrite.

McGill University is committed to equity and diversity within its community and values academic rigour and excellence. We welcome and encourage applications from racialized persons/visible minorities, women, Indigenous persons, persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities, and persons of minority sexual orientations and gender identities, as well as from all qualified candidates with the skills and knowledge to engage productively with diverse communities.

At McGill, research that reflects diverse intellectual traditions, methodologies, and modes of dissemination and translation is valued and encouraged. Candidates are invited to demonstrate their research impact both within and across academic disciplines and in other sectors, such as government, communities, or industry.

McGill further recognizes and fairly considers the impact of leaves (e.g., family care or health-related) that may contribute to career interruptions or slowdowns. Candidates are encouraged to signal any leave that affected productivity, or that may have had an effect on their career path. This information will be considered to ensure the equitable assessment of the candidate's record.

McGill implements an employment equity program and encourages members of designated equity groups to self-identify. It further seeks to ensure the equitable treatment and full inclusion of persons with disabilities by striving for the implementation of universal design principles transversally, across all facets of the University community, and through [accommodation policies and procedures](#). Persons with disabilities who anticipate needing accommodations for any part of the application process may contact, in confidence, accessibilityrequest.hr@mcgill.ca.

All qualified applicants are encouraged to apply; however, in accordance with Canadian immigration requirements, Canadians and permanent residents will be given priority.

About the Harvard Growth Lab

The [Harvard Growth Lab](#) is a research group at the Harvard Kennedy School that advances knowledge in the area of growth, works with governments around the world to enact economic growth policies, advances quantitative methods to diagnose growth issues, and

puts them online. It has engaged in policy projects in more than 30 countries across every inhabited continent, in both developed and developing settings, at the national, provincial and city levels. Professor Ricardo Hausmann leads the Growth Lab from its headquarters at Harvard University, and its network of affiliated Growth Labs in London (London School of Economics), Vienna (Central European University), and Mexico (Monterrey Tec - School of Public Policy).

Researchers at the Growth Lab have published more than 85 scientific papers that collectively have 74,000 citations. Journals the Growth Lab has published in include Science, PNAS, Nature Human Behavior, the Journal of Urban Economics, the Journal of Economic Growth, Journal of Development Economics and the Journal of International Economics, among others. Some of the Growth Lab's key contributions include core methods in [Economic Complexity](#), which is a quantitative discipline that analyzes the productive capabilities of places (countries, provinces, and cities); and Growth Diagnostics, which identifies place-specific constraints to economic growth.

In the course of its work, the Growth Lab has built a variety of digital tools for policymakers to leverage. The [Atlas](#) of Economic Complexity visualizes the export performance of and new opportunities for countries around the world; [Metroverse](#) does this for cities' employment composition by industry; and the [Greenplexity](#) tool showcases each country's opportunities to enter green value chains.