

# innovation assistance



## *Who we are & what we do:*

Innovation Assistance was born out of a collaboration with other community organisations in Peter-McGill in the first months of the COVID-19 pandemic to serve the emergency food needs of the neighbourhood, which is not served by other emergency food services. We operate as a primarily vegetarian food bank focused on providing healthy food in the form of shelf-stable goods, fresh produce, and lean proteins. Innovation Assistance is primarily volunteer-run and community-led with a small, part-time core staff and rotating supplementary staff.

by Maria Chabelnik

### **Funding:**

Innovation Assistance is a project of Innovation Youth, a community centre serving Peter-McGill since 2004. We are funded in part by emergency funding through various levels of government, in part by Centraide, and in part by individuals and groups who believe in our mission. Donation information is also available on our website.

### **Where do we get our food from?**

A large portion of the fresh produce, canned and packaged goods we distribute comes from Moisson Montreal, the largest food bank distributor in Canada. We also source locally from our farmer partners at Jardins Carya and Les Jardins de Montreal as the growing season in Quebec permits. Food products and supplies are also provided by L'Autre Choix Mini Marché. Throughout the year, we also accept donations from community members.

### **Our food dream:**

We imagine a shared space for community integration, interaction, learning, and engagement centered around food sovereignty in Peter-McGill, Montreal. We envision a movement starting with good food as the central heartbeat of the neighborhood, creating a space for interaction and connection and for telling the story of the neighborhood. We dream of community members, organizations and churches providing solutions for themselves instead of relying on outside corporations. We envision a central ground for integration of newcomers, with community serving community. We dream of good food as a catalyst for community development around food, culture, security, health, and economics.

### **How can I get involved?**

Visit our website for more information on different volunteer opportunities and to fill out a form to get involved. We will contact you within 10 days.

- **Call team:** Callers are involved in coordination and member communication. Callers work on their own schedule, but most often on weekends, Monday evenings, and Tuesday mornings.

- **Deliveries:** The delivery team is involved in food delivery on-foot or by car. The delivery team works in 2-hour shifts every second Wednesday between 1pm and 6pm.

- **Floor team:** The floor team is involved in pickup coordination, food triage and transformation, cleanup, and maintenance. The floor team works in shifts between 1pm-3pm on Mondays, and 12pm-5pm on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. Every fourth Friday of the month volunteers can help at our pay-what-you-can farmer's market from 12pm-3pm.

- **Urban agriculture:** Volunteers are welcome any morning or afternoon to help water and care for our gardens located throughout the Peter-McGill neighbourhood. \*\*We especially need help on the 1st and 2nd of October (12pm-5pm) and the 4th of October (8am-11am).

### **Are you in need of assistance?**

We provide healthy food for weekly pickups or biweekly deliveries throughout our service zone, which is limited to: H3A, H3B, H3C, H3H, H3J, H3Y, H3Z. This area is currently not served by other emergency food services, therefore it is our priority. If you or anyone you know residing in the Peter-McGill neighbourhood needs help getting free groceries, visit our website to fill out a request form and get on our waiting list (wait times usually last two months).

If you are not in our service zone but are in need of food, please consult [211qc.ca](http://211qc.ca) for a list of services available in your area. For an extensive list of resources within the Peter-McGill neighbourhood, check out this [interactive map](#).

### **Contact Information**

Address: 2154 Ste Catherine Ouest

Website: [innovation-assistance.org](http://innovation-assistance.org)

Email contact: [innov-coord@direction.ca](mailto:innov-coord@direction.ca)

Floor phone: 514-647-6964

Instagram: [innovation\\_jeunes](#)

Facebook: [Innovation Jeunes – Innovation Youth](#)