

ESRI ECCE APP CHALLENGE 2016 SUBMISSION from McGill University



Mission statement

AccessMTL is an interactive mapping platform for Montreal citizens to call attention to accessibility issues in the city. As a “Citizen Science” initiative, users will be able to contribute to a reference map for other users while highlighting locations and destinations that need to improve their accessibility design and accommodations. While Montreal may represent a cultural hub of innovation in Canada, it bears an inversely proportional reputation for the inaccessibility of its built environment. By contributing accessibility ratings based on personal experiences, Montreal will be able to better work towards creating a more inclusive and socially sustainable urban environment for all of its citizens.

Application Characteristics and Features

Accessibility information can be difficult to find. For those who need to think about accessibility concerns day to day, this can make life unnecessarily stressful. AccessMTL is a first-steps attempt to bring this information all into one easy-to-understand place. The website grants its userbase the ability to add sites to a map and rate the location/building’s different accessibility and universal design features. Every location marker gets a metascore out of 20. Destinations will be rated as 1) Accessible; 2) Somewhat Accessible; and 3) Inaccessible based on the relative score determined. Once added, ratings will go through a brief review process before other users will be able to reference them in order to plan out their days and activities.

If you're visiting or new to Montreal, the information will be invaluable to having an equitable and thus enjoyable experience. Universal design is becoming an integral part of the way we think about design in cities and is a key building block for socially sustainable communities. We hope that with increasing usage, establishments and sites around the city will work to offer more inclusive facilities and by extension, improve their accessibility ratings at the same time.

Conceptual Disclaimer

In terms of our accessibility criteria for each location, we identified three primary categories under which different universal design features could be tallied: Accessibility fields; Washroom Facility Fields; and Inclusivity Fields. We acknowledge that our list represents only a starting point and is by no means a catch-all. We provided the option to write comments in the hopes of providing users with an opportunity to elaborate on the nuances of their experience in a manner similar to blog entries on “Is This Venue Accessible” (a webpage located on our website’s *Resource List*). In other words, the accessibility needs present in an urban environment are only as diverse as the people who need them. With use, the website and its database should begin to reflect this notion over time.