

PROJET 4 ANNUAL



REPORT

➞ 2024-25

Projet 4 is an instance of 4 Learning

Mission – Vision – Values

Mission: To end learner disengagement through inspiring, joyful, creative, lifelong learning opportunities that empower and liberate young people and their communities.

Vision: We envision a world where education institutions respect and reflect the diversity of the young people they serve in all manners of social location and identity; where adults support young people in developing knowledge of themselves rooted in their strengths, talents and unique bent of genius; and where each young person is seen as a phenomenon with gifts to offer their community.

Values

At Projet 4, our core values—**Family, Respect, Community, and Education**—have guided the High School for Recording Arts—and, by extension, 4 Learning and Projet 4—since 1998 when the High School for Recording Arts first opened. We put people first by honoring diverse identities and perspectives, because real growth happens when we face challenges together. Through arts- and technology-rich, student-centered programs, we address poverty, houselessness, and mental-health struggles to help young people earn their diplomas and become lifelong learners.

Join us in our 2024–25 data story to see how these values transform our students and communities.

A Message from Michael B. Lipset – Project Manager, Projet 4



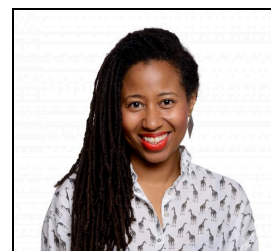
This past year represented some of the most exciting impact work in the legacy of the High School for Recording Arts. Our small but mighty community has been welcomed by the beautiful, cosmopolitan, pedestrian friendly city of Montréal and its communities of Côte-des-Neiges and Montréal Nord. This is the first of our work to engage a non-English community and do so entirely in the beautiful French language through our partners in Montréal Nord. It is also our first, formal, international project, taking what has been a years-long partnership with the Chalet Kent Youth Community Center and growing it into a formal education program serving local youth in collaboration.

Our students found housing, got prescription eyeglasses, received counseling on indigenous ways of being, transitioned out of prison, and made some of the best music we've ever heard out of our programs anywhere. They finished their time with us this year by performing at the state-of-the-art Ausgang Plaza located on the historic Plaza St. Hubert. During this student-produced showcase, 10 student performers and 8 student-produced music videos were featured alongside a ceremony celebrating the successes and accomplishments of the youth during their time with us. This annual report presents our organization's accomplishments and, more importantly, our students' accomplishments, as they grew as people, scholars, and artists under our guidance.

- Michael Lipset

Project Manager, Projet 4

A MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD PRESIDENT - NANTALI INDONGO



By reigniting an interest in learning through a passion for the arts, it is quite special to see how Projet/Project 4 has joined a Montreal tradition of community organizing that commits to recognizing the value of every individual and their positive desires to reach their own potential. The success of the pilot projects this year began with the initial enrolment of French and English speaking young people who knew themselves well-enough to recognize a space where they could make education work for them.

The project has been an example of care, starting with its vision and executed by all of the people who got involved to imagine, research, build, connect, teach, execute, guide, record, encourage and celebrate the first cohorts at the NBS and CAUSE campuses. Projet/Project4 is paving a way forward for those who too often have been told that they do not belong and that paths are closed to them.

We are excited for the next session of programming, with a continued goal of reaching more young people, helping them identify and achieve their academic and artistic goals, and especially, being a source of positivity, support and inspiration.

- Nantali Indongo

Board Chair, Projet 4



ORGANIZATIONAL GOVERNANCE – PROJET 4

OFFICER	OFFICE
Nantali Indongo	President
Sam Karimi Harati	Vice-President
Bronwen Elisabeth Low	Secretary-Treasurer



ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY – PROJET 4

PROJET4 Org History

YEAR	EVENT	DESCRIPTION
1998	 TC ELLIS FOUNDS FLAGSHIP HIGH SCHOOL FOR RECORDING ARTS	In 1998, David "TC" Ellis opened the commercial Studio 4 in Downtown St. Paul, MN. Finding young people coming to learn about music and the industry instead of going to school, he turned his studio into a free, public high school for out-of-school youth. He hired Tony Simmons as his founding Executive Director.
2018	 TC, TONY, AND MICHAEL LIPSET FOUND THE HIGH SCHOOL FOR RECORDING ARTS LOS ANGELES	Ellis, Simmons, and Lipset launch the second chapter in the HSRA network in LA, a school now known as Studio 4 LA. From this work, 4 Learning was born to help transform existing school systems through the HSRA model.
2019	 TC, TONY, AND LIPSET FOUND 4 LEARNING	4 Learning becomes the outward facing sister org to HSRA, serving schools, districts, and state DOE's in implementing culturally sustaining, arts-rich, democratic, student-centered education options in the style of HSRA.
2023	 MONTREAL FEASIBILITY STUDY BEGINS	Having conducted his doctoral research in Montreal on school change via the HSRA model, Lipset wonders if opening an HSRA-style school in Montreal might be possible. The Somers Family Foundation awards 4 Learning a grant of roughly \$150,000 to answer this question.
2024-25	FEASIBILITY STUDY LEADS TO PROJET 4, THE CANADIAN BRANCH OF 4 LEARNING	Having found a pathway to creating an HSRA-style school in Montreal, Projet 4 is incorporated to serve the needs of out-of-school youth in the neighborhoods of Côte-des-Neiges and Montréal Nord. Projet 4 partners with the organizations to the left to pilot two programs, each serving 10 youth over 3 months, the story and impact of which is reflected in the remainder of this annual report.
  CHALET KENT  		

OUR APPROACH

HSRA's arts- and technology-rich, student-centered model pairs recording-industry pathways with wraparound supports—housing, food, counseling, re-entry services and more—to disrupt the school-to-prison pipeline, reduce homelessness, and help young people earn diplomas. 4 Learning expands HSRA's democratic, competency-based approach across existing schools and districts, installing professional studios as core classrooms and supporting the delivery of advisory structures, personal learning plans, competency-based progressions of learning, democratic schooling principles, and culturally sustaining pedagogical practices.

A 2023 Montréal feasibility study, identified two ideal partners for our Montréal education program startup initiative via Projet 4—CAUSE in Montréal Nord and Chalet Kent/NBS in Côte-des-Neiges—and helped Projet 4 secure \$378,615 to pilot Projet 4 the following year. During 2024-25, we delivered two 12-week recording arts and high school education programs, laying the groundwork for a QC Ministry-accredited HSRA-style education program in Québec.

PRIMARY PARTNER PROFILES

CAUSE

Carrefour Artistique Uni-Son Ensemble is a francophone nonprofit organization in Montréal Nord supporting and professionalizing youth and artists by providing alternatives through art, culture, and community engagement. Their programming is wide-ranging, including hosting Studio 4 MTL, organizing the annual Three-for-Cheeze basketball contest, and other community events such as the public viewing of the NBA Finals in support of youth athletes in Montréal Nord.

Chalet Kent

Chalet Kent is a non-for-profit organization committed to creating safer spaces and opportunities for support and mentorship to young people between the ages of 11 to 18. Their mission is to inspire and empower youth through various projects and programs and allow for young people to build meaningful relations, engage in critical thinking, and (re)imagine more sustainable futures. The team brings years of experience with different backgrounds and a common passion for community work. CK offers youth a safe space where they can express their stories, passions, and opinions.

OUR GOALS FOR THE 2024-25 YEAR

- To see if the community wants and needs a program like this for its youth ages 16-24?
 - A resounding **YES** from both communities and Montreal as a whole
 - To see if we could be successful in reengaging out-of-school youth/adult learners ages 16-24?
 - A resounding **YES** in both locations
 - To see if one location was more in-need than another (Mtl N or CDN)?
 - Yes and no
 - Both locations proved to be feasible locations for the provision of a High School for Recording Arts-style program
 - Both communities seeing large rates of young people in need of such a program as evidenced by early enrollment and an ability to maintain high enrollment goals
 - Both pilots “staff-able”
 - Côte-des-Neiges is a community with greater community support systems and pre-existing community organizations. Montréal Nord in-need of greater support in this manner.
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OUR DATA STORY

This year, Projet 4 partnered with CAUSE in Montréal Nord and Chalet Kent/NBS in Côte-des-Neiges to deliver two concurrent 12-week recording-arts and high school credit programs. Before launch, all site teams completed intensive training at Chalet Kent in DEAL (Distance Education Adult Learning)/FADA (formation à distance assistée) education systems, trauma-informed practice, and personalized-learning strategies. These preparatory endeavors, the planning that went into them, and our recruitment/enrollment events, comprised the majority of our pre-program operations as an organization. We also trained our newly hired studio facilitators in the Projet 4 signature Studio Certification competency-based curriculum to prepare

studio facilitators to guide students through progressions of learning in Singing / Songwriting, Audio Engineering, Beatmaking, Studio Habits of Mind, and more.

Each site received two educators, two studio facilitators, two fully equipped recording studios, student laptops, monthly unlimited transit passes, and daily meals. One site also provided door-to-door transport for the most vulnerable participants. Each student who completed the program received a \$500 completion stipend. Students co-created personal, academic, and artistic goals, setting benchmarks that surpassed traditional school progress in a compact timeframe.

Programs ran January 13–April 4, 2025, and culminated in the student-led (R)Évolution showcase at Ausgang Plaza on April 6. Across both sites, students matched or exceeded US reengagement benchmarks—60% weekly attendance and 67% retention—and achieved credit gains at or above the expected pace for a 12-week cycle in a traditional school setting. These early results demonstrate the power of our model in its inaugural Québec pilot.

Montréal Nord – C.A.U.S.E.

Our small but mighty team of educators and teaching artists in Montréal Nord was managed by Rondo Brown, founder of our partner/host organization CAUSE. This team consisted of Rondo, Charnelle Mbougie (MA), Selma Lardjane (PhD), and John Brown (internationally credentialed recording artist). They began with the same resources as Chalet Kent but greater startup costs as an organization that had recently taken up residence in their location in the Southwest corner of Montréal Nord. Here, community partnerships were harder to come by. Selma, Charnelle, Rondo, and John, by building a space rich with family and respect, established a safe haven for young people that was so culturally in tune with their needs that three out of the ten youth enrolled strictly for the academic programming. They achieved incredible results for a program in its first year, operating in a new linguistic context and in partnership with a young organization (CAUSE).

Table 1. Overall Student Outcomes – Montréal Nord

Metric	US National Average*	Montréal Nord Studio 4 MTL
Average weekly attendance	60%	67%

% Students accomplishing artistic goals	N/A	100%
# of Studio Certifications earned	N/A	5 certificates across 4 domains
% Personal growth goals accomplished	N/A	89%
% Academic goals accomplished	N/A	78%
Average % of one year's worth of work accomplished in 12 weeks	33%	47%
Stick Rate (# of students who, after 2 weeks, remained for the entire program)	60-66%	64%
% Students who were out-of-school before Studio 4 MTL	N/A	100%
Ratio Women:Men	N/A	3:7

*No national data of this kind exists or could be found for Canada and/or Québec.

Figure 1. Total Enrollment by Week at Montréal Nord

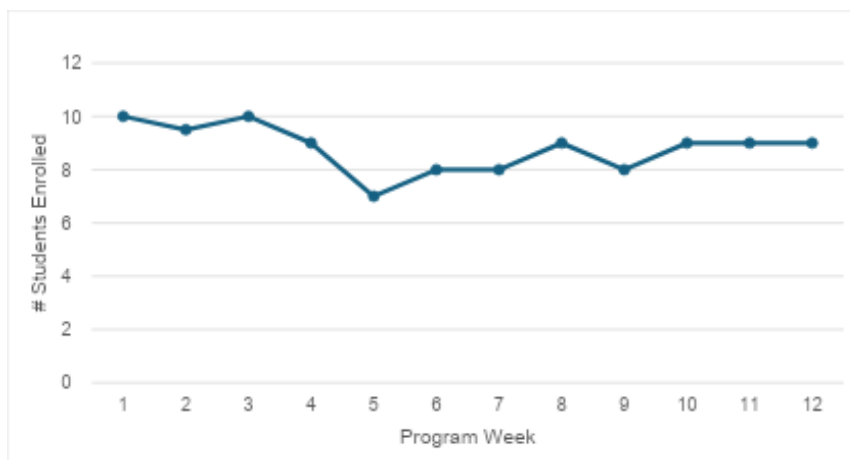
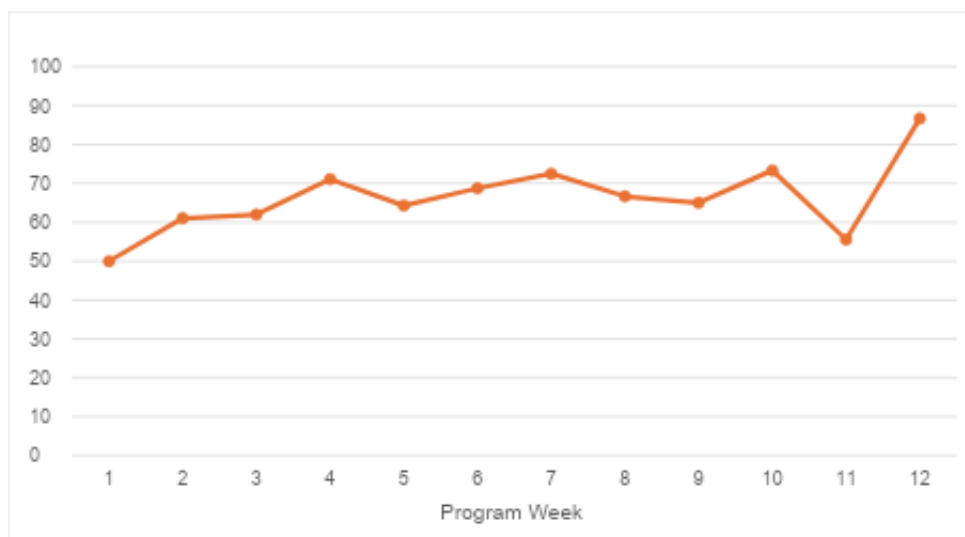


Figure 2. Weekly Attendance as percentage of total enrollment at Montréal Nord



The two graphs above show total enrollment over the course of 12 weeks (top) and weekly attendance as a percent of total enrollment over 12 weeks.

What's not represented in the quantitative data above are certain qualitative data points that tell a deeper story.

- Two students finished their TDG, a high school equivalency test, allowing them to apply for jobs that would increase their abilities to earn income for themselves and family.
- Another student went from having been homeless to being welcomed back into his house by his father.
- The young people of Montréal Nord, as a cohort, lived entirely below the Québec poverty line, two were gang-affiliated, one was recently released from prison, and all showed tremendous commitment to both their studies and their artistic goals.
- Three students came explicitly for the academic programming, indicating that our work is not just important for aspiring artists.

Côte-des-Neiges – Chalet Kent/NBS Studios

Our team at Chalet Kent grew by leaps and bounds over the course of the program. They began with the same resources as CAUSE, but fewer startup costs having been

in operation for more than a decade. Chalet Kent also benefits from a location provided to them by the city at a very low cost. The team was initially made up of site leader Karl-André St.-Viktor, educators Mohamed Barkhoune (MA), Freddy Tsopfack Fofack (MA), Nicolas Palacios-Hardy of Nomadic Massive fame, and Perry Mabansag (youth animator and multihyphenate creative artist).

This team grew to include Marcelle Partouche-Gutierrez, founder of MYCASA, who would provide accompaniment, transportation, and psychosocial support services to the youth at Chalet Kent, many of whom were youth in care and presented a greater preponderance of mental health challenges than those in Montréal Nord. She was joined by Fabiana Diaz, a psychosocial support worker from Chalet Kent. They would also be joined by Gat Leon, educator and founder of the CJE-NDG's tutoring program, who would shore up the site's relationships with DEAL and FADA and support the educators in liaising with those organizations. All positions were made possible by Projet 4 funding.

Table 2. Overall Student Outcomes – Côte-des-Neiges

Metric	US National Average*	Côte-des-Neiges Studio 4 MTL
Average weekly attendance	60%	68%
% Artistic goals accomplished	N/A	89%
# of Studio Certifications earned	N/A	9 certificates across 5 domains
% Personal growth goals accomplished	N/A	100%
% Academic goals accomplished	N/A	100%
Average % of one year's worth of work accomplished in 12 weeks	33%	44%

Stick Rate (# of students who, after 2 weeks, remained for the entire program)	60-66%	69%
% Students who were out-of-school before Studio 4 MTL	N/A	78%
Ratio of Women:Men	N/A	5:5

*No national data of this kind exists or could be found for Canada and/or Québec.

Figure 1. Total Enrollment by Week at Côte-des-Neiges

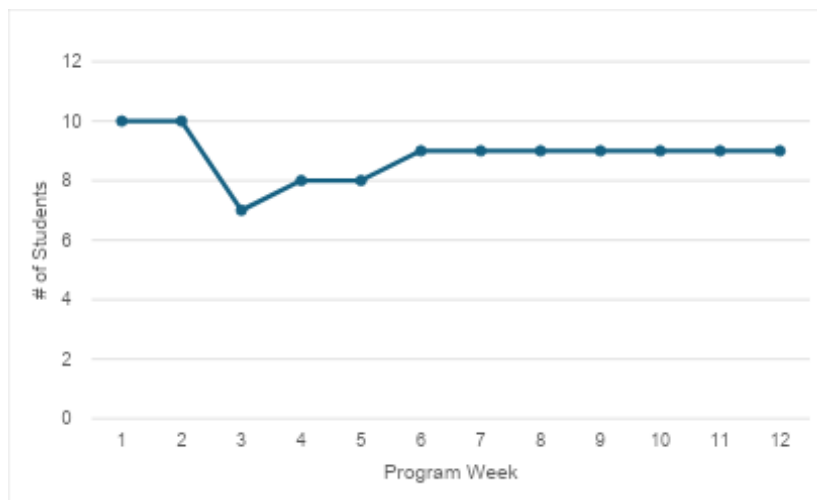


Figure 2. Weekly Attendance as percentage of total enrollment at Côte-des-Neiges



The two graphs above show total enrollment over the course of 12 weeks (top) and weekly attendance as a percent of total enrollment over 12 weeks.

Again, some qualitative data points tell a deeper story.

- One student received free eyeglasses and was able to study for the first time in years.
- One found sobriety after having battled substance abuse.
- One found stable housing by accessing funds only available to young adults enrolled in an education program.
- Two youth identified as LGBTQI2S+, three were youth in care, five were dealing with someone battling substance abuse in the home, and four had experienced some form of violence in the past year. Through our program, they built a community that collectively dealt with cyberbullying, substance abuse, depression/mental health, and general obstacles to success through a peer-led culture of care.

Staff Reflections:

- “Le projet pilote Studio 4 MTL – CA.U.S.E. a été bien plus qu’une expérience éducative : il a été une rencontre humaine, un espace de reconstruction, de réconciliation avec l’apprentissage, et surtout un lieu de vie pour des jeunes trop souvent exclus des structures traditionnelles.
- En seulement 12 semaines, malgré des débuts administratifs complexes, un encadrement limité et des réalités de vie profondément marquées, le programme a démontré une chose essentielle : quand on offre aux jeunes un cadre humain, souple, respectueux et cohérent, ils répondent présents. Ils s’impliquent, ils reviennent, ils partagent, ils grandissent.
- Les liens tissés entre les jeunes, mais aussi entre les jeunes et l’équipe, ont été la véritable colonne vertébrale du projet. Ce n’est ni la quantité de devoirs rendus, ni le nombre de TDG passés qui définit la réussite de cette cohorte, mais bien le sentiment d’appartenance, la reconstruction de la confiance, et la découverte d’une nouvelle façon d’apprendre.”
- “Providing a caring, creative, compassionate environment that was (despite a few SNAFU) structured for success. Also, undoubtedly, the opportunity to shine and have their skills (emerging and existing) recognised and validated. Perhaps as well, to establish or re-establish trust with those in the realm of education.”
- “Sur mon site je pense que les étudiants se sont très bien adaptés car il faut observer que malgré que l’étudiant Josaphat est arrivé après un mois du début, il a pu achever avec succès son parcours en mathématiques concernant maths 3, preuve que approche et la motivation surtout le libre champs de m’écrit à n’importe quelle heure a bien fonctionné, et les résultats parlent pour eux mêmes.”

- “The beginning was challenging, as we needed to build trust and establish a connection with the students. However, as the program progressed, we saw a steady increase in engagement. The group gradually transformed—first into a team, and then into a family. That spirit is at the core of CK’s success, so we were thrilled to see it reflected in Studio 4. It played a key role in the program’s overall success.”

Student Reflections – Côte-des-Neiges:

- “I think it could motivate a lot of students to attend school more regularly.”
- “In my personal experience this program is helping me become the artist that I want to be.”
- “[I would like] to make it become a real school so the youth can succeed and get their high school diploma and more outings on learning music history or just to engineer.”

The most valuable parts of the program were:

- “The opportunities they give us to create art on another level.”
- “The recording part and bonding on everyone’s skills.”
- “Talking and seeing others similar to you or situations.”

Describe the program in 2 words:

- “Amazing for artists”
- “Encouraging amazing”
- “Amazing, joyful”
- “Good vibez”
- “A way out of my life”
- “Educational and i feel like i evolved as a person during the program”

Student Reflections – Montréal Nord:

Quelle importance le programme Studio 4 MTL a-t-il pour toi ?

- À faire évoluer des jeunes chanteurs ou les faire avancer dans leurs parcours scolaire
- Je suis arrivé en retard, mais j’aurais aimé expérimenté le programme depuis le début. Si jamais ils vont refaire ce programme je vais m’inscrire automatiquement sans hésiter.
- Je trouve qu’il est très important de supporter ce programme car j’ai adoré faire partie de ce projet
- Le programme a une grande importance pour moi. J’ai adoré l’expérience

- Ça m'a donné de la motivation, et de la force à continuer d'avancer dans la vie
- Réussir mes études et avoir un bon entourage
- Le programme m'a permis d'acquérir de nouvelles compétences tout en poursuivant mes études

En deux mots, comment décrirais-tu Project 4

- Projet à refaire
- Honnêtement pour le peu de temps que j'ai fait, j'aime beaucoup. Les profs sont vraiment gentilles. Elles donnent beaucoup d'amour et d'attention.
- Ce programme représente pour moi une meilleure chance face aux études et à l'avenir pour ceux qui ont une passion musicale.
- C'est un projet très intéressant, le programme me motive à compléter mon DES
- Proactif et stimulant
- Performance- dédication
- Ce programme est une grande opportunité pour moi car elle il me permet de poursuivre mes études et de pratiquer ma passion



ACTIVITIES REPORT 2024-25

Given the Studio 4 MTL programs are a combination of professional training in the recording arts and targeted support towards high school credit-earning opportunities in the subject areas of mathematics, French (second language and language of instruction), and English (second language and language of instruction) via DEAL and FADA, the following activities are considered endemic to our program, core to everything we do day-in and day-out, with our youth and staff.

Literacy

- *Popular literacy workshops (French, mathematics, computer science, oral expression, etc.)*
- *Learning through artistic, cultural, scientific, manual projects, etc.*
- *Illiteracy prevention/family literacy activities, reading and writing awareness (ÉLÉ), parent-child reading circles, etc.*
- *Alpha-francization and francization activities*

Narrative: Our program provides targeted academic support to students for the opportunity to earn credit towards their high school diploma in either of the following subjects: Mathematics (all levels), French (as a second language and as a language of instruction), English (as a second language and as a language of instruction). For this reason, we consider our program as delivering activities across all of the abovementioned literacy domains.

Fight Against Dropping Out

- *Learning support/homework and lesson assistance (academic and educational support primarily for elementary school students)*
- *Teaching academic concepts through artistic, cultural, scientific, and manual projects, etc.*
- *Alternative to schooling/Out-of-school academic support (aimed at adolescents aged 13 to 17 who are at risk or in a situation of dropping out of school – program lasting several months to a year or more, depending on needs)*
- *Activities related to psychosocial intervention (listening, information, guidance, support, counseling, referral)*
- *Motivational activities (information, awareness, and academic success promotion activities and sessions)*
- *Implementation (activities aimed at reconnecting young adults aged 16 and over who are experiencing academic and social disruption)*

Narrative: As our program combines high school education with the recording arts, both through separate recording arts training specific to a young person's artistic goals and as an opportunity to connect the core content areas of Mathematics, French, and English to a passion area of students' interests, we consider our Studio 4 MTL programs as having achieved all of the above activity domains under the category of Fight Against Dropping Out. Our Studio 4 MTL programs provided psychosocial supports, activities related to psychosocial intervention, and workshops to support youth transitioning to education programs to continue their studies after the conclusion of Studio 4 MTL, all of which built on the motivational nature of the program described by our students in their testimonies above.

Street Schools

- *Individual activities related to psychosocial intervention (listening, information, support, advice, referrals; e.g., street outreach)*
- *Schooling activities*
- *Emergency assistance to meet basic needs (materials, food, clothing, health, transportation)*
- *Activities related to employability or socio-professional integration*

Narrative: In addition to the narrative descriptions of the above activity categories, Studio 4 MTL programs also offered free transportation in the form of unlimited metro passes to each student, free study materials, and free breakfast and lunch every day. As well, one of our psychosocial support workers would provide rides to students with elevated obstacles to transportation, as well as support identifying housing and remediate certain needs regarding personal health and wellness. Our team members also helped students secure employment, as noted in our Data Story above. We also covered all fees related to enrollment with DEAL and FADA.

Continuing Education

- *Training Sessions*
- *Support for Organizations (Strategic Planning, Organizational Assessment, Evaluation, Restructuring, etc.)*
- *Conference/Forum/Seminar*
- *Research Activities*
- *Dissemination of Results (Written or Audiovisual Productions, Publications, Websites, Conferences)*

Narrative: Each year, Projet 4 sponsors a handful of our educators in attending the annual RemixED Conference, hosted by 4 Learning at the High School for Recording Arts. This is the single best opportunity for our educators to experience our model in-person at its finest and most developed stage while surrounded by educators doing similar work across the continent. At the end of our 2024-25 programming, we gathered all adults involved in program delivery and engaged them in a SWOT analysis for the ongoing development of our offerings. The findings are summarized below. To ensure the dissemination of our results, we will review feedback surveys and collaboratively developed SWOT Analyses, making all information publicly available via our annual report. Our Board Treasurer, Dr. Bronwen Low, has raised funds in support of researching our programs via SSHRC research funds and her position as Chair of the Department of Education at McGill University. She and her research assistants are working with us to stage interviews with our students and staff to analyze the ways in which Studio 4 MTL programs support out-of-school youth and their surrounding communities.

The following is a list of specific activities, events, workshops, or outings that fall into the categories mentioned above but deserve individual attention.

Literacy

- *Reception, assessment, and referral activities*
 - Week 1 Orientation saw staff and students engage in team-building activities that included making music together, eating meals together, sharing unique artistic creations, and more. As well, this week served as an opportunity to baseline students academically, get them registered with DEAL and FADA, and begin developing their unique personal learning plans.
- *Mutual aid, coaching, and individual or group support activities*
 - Indigenous Culture 101 (March 26th, 2025)
 - This workshop, led by Des Gregoire of the Innu Nation, introduced students to Indigenous approaches to teaching and learning, including land-based pedagogies and oral storytelling. Des led students and members of the community from the local Aire Ouverte office through a decolonial experience designed to deepen participants' understandings of land-based knowledge, relational capital, and conflict resolution.

- Monday Night Live Music Workshop w/ The Cypher Lab (March 24th, 2025)
 - This workshop, hosted by The Cypher Lab, coached students in the art of live music instrumentation with regard to both creation and performance. Students received a free crash course on what it means to work with a band as opposed to performing solely from what in the industry is referred to as a “backing track” played by a DJ. This workshop helped students prepare for their showcase by offering a unique space within which they could rehearse their content and learn new fundamentals of music artistry.
- Cabane à Sucre w/ CJE NDG (March 20th, 2025)
 - Each year the CJE of NDG hosts a free trip to a local Cabane À Sucre for community members. As the CJE served as the fiduciary to Projet 4 during the 2024-25 fiscal year, they extended this invitation to the Côte-des-Neiges site as it was the closest site to their facilities.
- *Activities related to employability or socio-professional integration*
 - Business of Music and Media workshops throughout the programs at both sites and the student-produced showcase at Ausgang Plaza (April 4th, 2025). As well, Projet 4 hired Elisa Shenkir, longtime education professional and music-industry contractor, to support youth in transitioning out of our programs during weeks 10 and 11. Her work included two workshops at each location identifying and helping students enroll in next-step education programs or to apply for jobs in career fields of interest. This work resulted in 12 of our youth continuing their education at adjacent education service providers.
- *Training of workers and volunteers*
 - Pre-program training and development was conducted ahead of the Studio 4 MTL programs for all educators, studio facilitators, psycho-social workers, and site leaders. This training included workshops on DEAL, FADA, student tracking spreadsheets, the Projet 4 Studio Competencies Curriculum, transformative justice, and the nuances of working with opportunity youth. They occurred during the last week of November and the first two weeks of December of 2024.
 - The summer of 2025 was spent planning for upcoming recruitment and enrollment events to be hosted during the fall of 2025, as well as gathering our materials for our AGM and ensuring our organization was in good-standing as a non-profit. We worked closely with Taharima

Habib, a non-profit management consultant with rich experience working to ensure non-profit accountability in Québec and Canada. This included writing our first Annual Report, hosting our first AGM, and engaging in all the accompanying requirements therein, such as budgetary approvals, recruitment of new board members, and doing so in a way that matched our community and democratic values.

- *Creation and development of tools, teaching and learning materials, pedagogical approaches, etc.*
 - Each site took templates for tracking attendance, enrollment, and educational progress and fine-tuned them to meet their own needs. The results are bespoke student tracking tools that will be used by each Studio 4 MTL program moving forward.
- *Popular education activities*
 - Three Collaborative Event Planning/Rehearsal Sessions
 - These sessions brought students and staff from both locations together to collaboratively plan the student showcase, held on August 6th, 2025 at Ausgang Plaza. These sessions involved collaboratively naming the event, designing promotional materials, liaising with venue staff, reviewing and finalizing a venue contract, identifying other needs such as catering and transportation, developing a promotion plan and executing on that plan, listening to each others' music to develop a coherent performance order/run-of-show, and rehearsing their performances. These sessions served as an opportunity to engage our participants in our signature Business of Music and Media programming.
 - Business of Music and Media Event – Digital Distribution
 - These events were hosted by Nicolas Palacios Hardy during the summer of 2025. As the lead studio facilitator at Studio 4 MTL Côte-des-Neiges, he supported participants from both sites in distributing their creations digitally to platforms such as Spotify, Apple Music, YouTube, and more. Students created music and music videos during their time with us, which they owned the rights to and, as a result, were supported through the process of learning how to retain ownership over their content while distributing it to the world for all to see and hear. These workshops were also part of our signature Business of Music and Media program, designed to develop entrepreneurial skills in the business of music and media for aspiring young artists.

- Workshop with APEM (Association of Music Publishing Professionals)
 - Our Montréal Nord site held a digital distribution and intellectual property workshop. The goals were the same as those provided by Palacios-Hardy and served as a prerequisite to the workshops offered by Palacios-Hardy during the summer.
- Den Talk with Fabrice Vil – Writer, Activist, Founder
 - Fabrice Vil is a former lawyer, the founder of Pour-3-Points, a youth-centered basketball non-profit seeking to uplift youth who have been pushed to the margins, and the author of a new book that explores the intricacies of being Black and middle-class in Québec. Vil visited the Montréal Nord site to talk about his work, inspire the youth towards social change, and give away free copies of his book.
- An immersive visit to the "La Troisième Solitude" exhibition presented by Tribut
 - This exhibit highlighted the Black experience in Montréal. As 90% of students at our Montréal Nord site identified as Black, and ¾ adult staff members identified as Black, this exhibit served as an opportunity to deepen our team's understanding of themselves and their work within the context of Montréal and Québec.
- Ace Woodz – Professional Producer Masterclass
 - In this masterclass, a professional hip hop producer guided participants through the full creative process of making a track—from beat selection and sampling to mixing and final mastering. Attendees gained hands-on experience with industry-standard software and tools while exploring the artistic and business sides of music production. The session also included a Q&A where the producer shared insights on collaboration, building a signature sound, and breaking into the industry.
- *Special project*
 - **(R)ÉVOLUTION STUDENT SHOWCASE (BOTH SITES)**
 - The (R)Évolution student showcase was the end-of-cycle event planned and performed by the students and staff of the Studio 4 MTL programs in Côte-des-Neiges and Montréal Nord. The event, initially capped at 150 attendees, ended up receiving just shy of 250 registrants ahead of the event itself. As a result, we had to expand capacity and welcomed a total of 144 people on the night of the performances themselves. The event was a space to

thank our program partners, funders, the Projet 4 and Studio 4 MTL team members, and more. We celebrated the academic achievements of the youth by presenting them with program completion certificates and giving them the studio certificates they earned throughout the program. We showcased the music videos made by the students, which can be watched [HERE](#), and saw 9 students perform more than 15 songs made during their time in our program.

- o 144 in Attendance
- o 210 Registered
- o 9 Student Performances
- o 8 Student Music Videos Shown
- o 14 Studio Competency Certificates Awarded
- o 18 Program Completion Certificates Awarded

Street Schools

- *Individual activities related to psychosocial intervention (listening, information, support, advice, referrals; e.g., street outreach)*
 - o Clinique Béatitudes – Social Worker, Specialist in Mental Health (2 Sessions + 1-on-1s)
 - Studio 4 MTL brought Clinique Béatitudes into the Montréal Nord site to support students with personal challenges relating to mental health and the issues that beget mental illness among young, racialized, low-income people of Montréal Nord. They provided 2 group sessions and one-on-one's to all students and staff.
- *Collective activities focused on personal and social development (sociocultural and leisure activities)*
 - o Paintball
 - Youth and staff from both locations met to play paintball at a local paintball complex and build camaraderie in support of their efforts to organize the Student Showcase.

Continuing Education

- *Training with Support*
 - o Attending the RemixED Conference at the High School for Recording Arts
 - In October 2024, Lipset traveled with Elisa Shenkir and Rondo Brown to the High School for Recording Arts to attend 4 Learning's

- annual RemixED Conference. The goal was to share a vision for what the Studio 4 MTL programs might look like 25 years from now, as the High School for Recording Arts represents the flagship model for our work but with a 25 year history. Over the course of three days they participated in workshops and collaborative learning sessions with educators and recording artists from around the world, preparing for their work with Studio 4 MTL.
- Future Education Planning Sessions (2× w/ Elisa Shenkir, MTL Public Education Professional)
 - As program organizers understood the program was in a pilot phase and would only last for 12 weeks in its first iteration, there was a shared understanding that supporting our students in transitioning from Projet 4 programming to another education opportunity would insure students' continued growth towards their high school graduation. Elisa Shenkir is an education professional with over 25 years of experience teaching in public, alternative, and adult education settings in Montréal and whom Projet 4 contracted to support students through this transition. Her sessions included information on program options outside of Projet 4's Studio 4 MTL, the processes required to register for those programs, as well as a transition plan.
 - *Support/Advice (Regulation Review, Workplace Policy Review)*
 - Visit from High School for Recording Arts Founder David "TC" Ellis and Founding Executive Director Tony Simmons
 - To support the development of a healthy program culture and inspire students towards what Studio 4 MTL could be, David "TC" Ellis and Tony Simmons of the High School for Recording Arts in St. Paul, MN flew to Montréal for three days to spend time with students and staff of the Studio 4 MTL programs. During these visits, students spoke with, performed for, and held listening sessions of their music with Ellis and Simmons. Program leadership also engaged in conversation with Ellis and Simmons consisting of leadership training topics related to democratic, student-centered teaching and learning for young people forced to live at the margins of society.
 - *Working Group Facilitation*
 - During our Studio 4 MTL program debriefs in mid-April 2025, which included all adults involved in the program, staff completed feedback

surveys, participated in a SWOT analysis (summarized below), and shared meals together over the course of two days.



Consolidated SWOT Analysis



Strengths

- Flexible, learner-centered design: Quickly shifted from a rigid, linear program to a paced, student-centered model that accommodated varied skill levels and complex realities.
- Robust human support infrastructure: From Day 1, psychosocial check-ins, a dedicated project coordinator, and two-staff outings built trust and ensured individual well-being.
- Strong peer-community culture: Collective songwriting, shared meals, and a youth-run group chat fostered cohesion, ownership, and sustained engagement.

Weaknesses

- Administrative bottlenecks: Delays in enrollment and material procurement repeatedly stalled onboarding and progress.
- Coordination & communication gaps: No shared calendar or collaborative framework between sites led to uneven scheduling, missed sessions, and frustration.
- Overly rigid scheduling: Fixed hours and attendance requirements didn't align with participants' varied work/personal commitments, driving absenteeism.

Opportunities

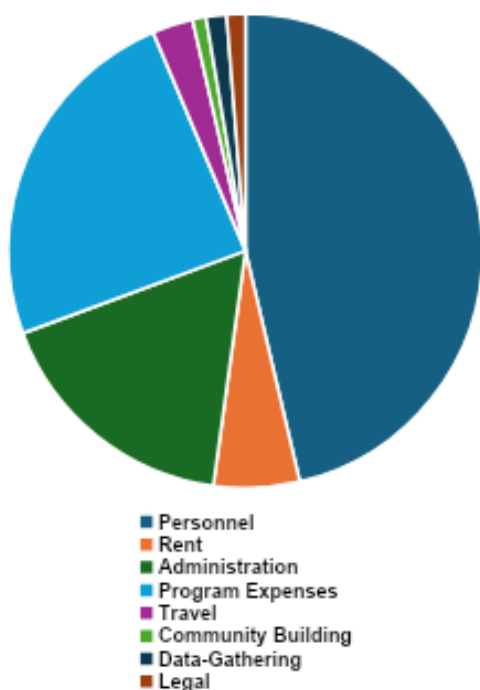
- “Week 0” onboarding: A preparatory week for program overview, level assessments, site tours, and expectation-setting would eliminate early downtime.
- Flexible, differentiated schedules & goal-setting: Allowing youth to choose mornings vs. afternoons or 2–3 days/week, plus personalized milestones, would boost ownership.
- Expanded partnerships & enhanced facilities: Engaging pilot alumni and community organizations, adding workstations, and running music-business workshops can deepen resources and reach.

Threats

- Persistent bureaucratic dependence: Continued reliance on external enrollment processes risks repeating past delays.
- Complex participant realities: Socioeconomic and personal challenges may undermine engagement if not continuously supported.
- Staff burnout risk: Without built-in supervision and relief, facilitators may face exhaustion under the high support demands.

Financial Overview 2024-25

Expense Category by Percentage of Total



Funding Source: The Somers Family Foundation

Our relationship with our primary funder, the Somers Family Foundation, began in 2023. In 2024 we received financial support to pilot our proposed program, the Studio 4 MTL recording arts high school programs in an amount of **\$378,615**. This was the entirety of our funding in the first year.

Summary of Goals for 2025-26

1. Expand existing programming at both locations
 - a. Maintain participation from 10 youth for first cycle at both sites
 - b. Maintain programming length of 12 weeks for first cycle at both sites
 - c. Extend programming by 12 weeks by adding a second cycle at Montreal Nord location
2. Expand our psycho-social support services
3. Begin student onboarding and registration with academic organizations before program delivery begins
4. Broaden our circle of community partners

5. Secure funding for program expansion
 6. Apply for PACTE Accreditation through the Québec Ministry of Education
-

Thank You

PROJET 4

- David "TC" Ellis
- Tony Simmons
- Michael B. Lipset
- Nantali Indongo
- Sam Karimi
- Bronwen Low
- Habib Siam
- Mohamed Barkhoun
- Freddy Tsopack Fofack
- Charnelle Mbougi
- Selma Lardjane
- Elisa Shenkir

CAUSE

- Rondo
- John Brown

CHALET KENT

- Karl-André St.-Viktor
- Butta Beats
- Don Perry
- Fabiana Diaz

WORD

- Lynn Worrell
- Gat Leon

MYCASA

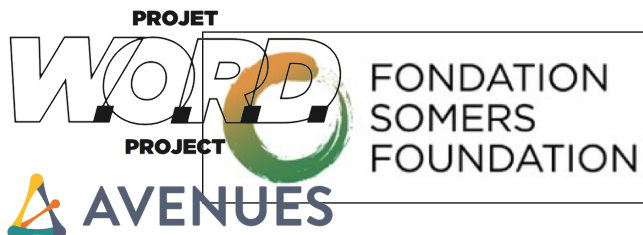
- Marcelle Partouche-Gutierrez
- Dez Gregoire
- Elijah Olise
- Daphnée Partouche

McGILL INTERNS

- Mohit Kumar
- Marcus Pavico



CHALET
KENT



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