

PROPOSAL TO THE
ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR PERSONS WITH
DISABILITIES FOR THE CITY OF HAMILTON
FOR THE
MCMASTER UNIVERSITY
PLEASE OFFER ME A SEAT and
I WILL OFFER MY SEAT CAMPAIGN

September 7, 2018

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Executive Summary

“At McMaster, we measure our success by the degree to which we improve people's lives, contribute to our global knowledge base and advance the societies in which we live.” By doing this, McMaster University is committed to creating a Brighter World. This is aligned with the City of Hamilton’s vision in creating an accessible and inclusive environment that supports residents through all of life’s stages. Both organizations want to make Hamilton a better place for everyone. By working together we can achieve this vision.

McMaster University, Student Success Centre (SSC) respectfully requests that the committee adopt and invest in the Please Offer Me A Seat (POMAS) and I Will Offer My Seat Campaign for buses and shelters on route to our campus.

HSR’s goal to provide a courteous, compassionate and respectful environment for the community can be supported by POMAS and I Will Offer My Seat campaign. This initiative also provides an opportunity for our students to be proactive and make a positive impact in their community. It raises awareness of the needs of people with invisible disabilities and creates an inclusive community that is empathetic and caring towards the needs of others. Sometimes we all need a little reminder that accessibility is a journey, not a destination.

This campaign is about joining forces and getting our youth involved, now and in the future, in creating a more inclusive, diverse, and accessible Hamilton. A better Hamilton.

Statement of Need

There are countless studies, articles, and school programs related to and built on empathy profiling the positive outcomes on health, social interactions, and workplace relationships. “We all want to be seen and heard and have our needs responded to, that is the essence of empathy.” The power of empathy: Helen Riess at TEDxMiddlebury

“Nearly everyone faces hardships and difficulties at one time or another. But for people with disabilities, barriers can be more frequent and have greater impact. The World Health Organization (WHO) describes barriers as being more than just physical obstacles. Here is the WHO definition of barriers:

“Factors in a person’s environment that, through their absence or presence, limit functioning and create disability. These include aspects such as:

- a physical environment that is not accessible,
- lack of relevant assistive technology (assistive, adaptive, and rehabilitative devices),
- negative attitudes of people towards disability,
- services, systems and policies that are either nonexistent or that hinder the involvement of all people with a health condition in all areas of life.” World Health Organization, International classification of functioning, disability and health. Geneva: 2001, WHO. p. 214.
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Hamilton Demographic Profile of Persons with Disabilities

“The City of Hamilton currently has a population of 509,635 people. In 2011, there were 120,250 persons with disabilities in Hamilton representing 23.6% of the total population (509,635). Hamilton’s percentage of persons with disabilities was higher than the provincial rate (20.3%) and the national rate (18.8%).” Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Report, City of Hamilton 2016

McMaster University Demographic Profile

McMaster University Fact Book 2016-2017 reported a total student registration of 31,265, which excluded students on co-op work term. The report also noted an employee count as of July 4, 2017 of 10,891, which excludes McMaster University Faculty, Clinical Faculty, and Senior Academic Librarians.

McMaster University, Student Accessibility Services (SAS), which provides academic accommodation assistance and related supports to students with disabilities, served 2,700 students the 2016-2017 academic year.

Working from the one in seven Canadians aged 15 years or older reporting a disability, Canadian Survey on Disability, 2012, and based on our university overall population of 42,156 student and staff we surmise 6,022 would have a visible or invisible disability. The overall student population of 31,265 would equate to 4,466 presenting with a visible or invisible disability.

“Canadians recognize there's a problem with inclusion - According to 2004 Environics research, just 10% of Canadians believe people with disabilities are fully included in society. The majority of Canadians also want to help improve the lives of people with disabilities and agree the social benefit is worth the cost.”
Unstoppable, Disability in Canada: Facts and Figures - Easter Seals Canada

Campaign Background

Please Offer Me A Seat and I Will Offer My Seat Campaign launched September 2018. The campaign is an initiative by the Career Access Program for Students (CAPS) under the Student Success Centre (SSC) to improve accessibility for transit users who need a seat while travelling. This campaign reflects McMaster University's commitment to provide an inclusive community for all.

The campaign is modeled after a campaign in the United Kingdom, September 2016. “A survey of about 400 badge users carried out in December 2017 showed that 78% found it easier to get a seat and 95% would recommend the scheme to a friend, TfL said.” “Mark Evers, chief customer officer for London Underground, said the scheme “made a real difference to passengers who need a seat but may not have felt confident enough to ask for one.” New figures show huge success of ‘Please Offer Me a Seat’ badge, Transport London, 20 December 2017

The TTC also launched a new initiative, which is aimed at making it easier for people with disabilities to get a seat on a bus, streetcar or train. May 2018, staff at TTC stations provided a blue button that says “Please offer me a seat” to anyone in need.

CAPS badges can be found at various on-campus locations including, the Student Success Centre (SSC), Student Accessibility Services (SAS), McMaster Student Union Maccess, the Student Health Education Centre (SHEC), and Compass Information Centre.

Disclosure of personal information is not required to obtain or when wearing a badge. Badges are not required to sit in priority seating and do not guarantee seating. When you see those wearing the Please Offer Me A Seat button, we encourage riders on Hamilton transit to offer their priority seat.

Caps extended the campaign to include, “I Will Offer My Seat” running in conjunction with “Please Offer Me a Seat” to bring awareness to the need for priority seating by users with invisible disabilities. The buttons are used as an indirect means of self-identifying someone with an invisible disability. The campaign will also encourage riders to consider offering their seat to those who may need it, regardless of them wearing a campaign sticker.

CAPS and HSR Campaign Promotional Materials

Student Success Centre has produced various promotional materials to advertise the Please Offer Me A Seat and I Will Offer My Seat campaign to students, staff, and visitors on campus. The Student Success Centre is investing \$5,000 - \$7,000 toward production costs for on campus promotion. Listed below are the planned activities and how they would be revised if working in partnership with HSR.

Stickers and Button

There will be more buttons in multiple designs compared to the stickers. SSC is encouraging students to use the buttons unless they have an accessibility concern that prevents them from doing so, as buttons are reusable and more durable to wear. For this reason, more buttons in more designs have been produced. For the on campus campaign, we also hope that the small quantity will discourage their misuse through placement of the stickers on surfaces (i.e. on a student’s laptop or binder).

Information Cards (business card)

The cards are available to those that inquire about the badges if an individual wearing one is uncomfortable discussing their need or the campaign. Some individuals prefer to not wear the button because of the stigma that is associated with having a disability and may instead prefer to hand a card discretely to request a seat. The person that receives the card may legitimately require that seat as well.

Posters

Student Success Centre will expand the poster production to include the printing cost for placement within buses and shelters for the on campus routes (1, 5, and 51).

Promotional Commercial and Print Media

CAPS has produced a 15 second commercial providing a snap shot of the campaign filmed on McMaster campus where a student is standing in front of museum at the bus stop. Within the segment a visual representation of the badges appears on screen. The script along with captioning reads:

“Sometimes we all need a little reminder/Accessibility is a journey, not a destination. If you see someone wearing one of these badges, please offer them a seat. Not all disabilities are visible. Help us build a brighter and more inclusive Hamilton.”

The commercial will run from September – December across 35 Digital TVs on campus. SSC is also promoting the campaign in The Silhouette, McMaster University's Student Newspaper and the Welcome Week Preview Booklet.

FAQ

The FAQ has been produced to address questions from those on campus and would be distributed at the same locations as the badges.

SSC is investing between \$ in support of the on campaign awareness. campaign.

HSR Campaign

The HSR partnership would allow for a greater reach out to community members. The promotional activities would align with the on campus campaign with the promotion materials and distribution process being revised in the following ways:

Buttons and Information Cards

CAPS buttons would be affixed to the information cards with HSR contact information as an educational piece and for ease of delivery to riders. In addition to on-campus locations, in consultation with HSR, designated locations would align to routes (1, 5, 6, and 10) that sell bus passes/presto cards for campaign material distribution.

Posters

The cost for posters in the buses and large posters for the shelters would be an HSR cost associated with off campus routes (1, 5, 6, and 10).

Promotional Commercial How the Campaign Works

CAPS 15-second commercial providing a snap shot of the campaign would be revised to a 30 Second Commercial: How the Campaign Works. The 30 second promotional video would be produced in partnership with HSR.

The commercial would show someone walking on the bus wearing the Please Offer Me A Seat button and another rider wearing the I Will Offer My Seat, who offers their seat. The script would also be revised. The commercial would run from the campaign launch to April 2019. SSC and HSR would review if any of the HSR locations would air the spot. SSC and HSR would work together on having local media pick up the campaign story.

FAQ

The FAQ would be revised geared to the broader Hamilton community regarding the campaign.

HSR An Investment Towards Inclusion

Hamilton and McMaster have a long and strong history of partnering on projects from research, technology, to business development. SSC is seeking HSR to invest **\$30,000 to \$35,000** in the **Please Offer Me A Seat** and **I Will Offer My Seat** campaign. The partnership will expand the scope of the campaign to riders within designated routes. The investment will cover production of:

Please Offer Me A Seat and I Will Offer My Seat Buttons and Information Cards

Ad Posters in Bus

Ad Posters in Shelter

Promotional Commercial

In estimating the promotional materials the production is based on 10,953 for button and cards with a half the buttons for the Please Offer Me A Seat, and half I Will Offer My Seat. The production number is based on 0.05% of the 2015, 9.2 million rides alone routes 1, 5, 10 and 51 in that corridor. System wide, Hamilton's total ridership was 21,906,762 trips. HSR workers should operate Hamilton's new LRT system: Jackson, CBC News October 13, 2016

Note – The campaign investment is based on pricing where McMaster University is responsibility for design and production costs compared to HSR suppliers.

Assessment & Evaluation

Phase I of the campaign would run September 2018 – April 30, 2019. McMaster University would track on campus activity based on participation through the badges distribution locations.

On location and Online Survey would be made available to students and staff from the Student Success Centre (SSC), Student Accessibility Services (SAS), Maccess, the Student Health Education Centre (SHEC), and Compass to seek feedback.

Working with HSR, campaign feedback would be obtained via the Transit process in place for managing, evaluating and taking action on customer feedback.

As part of the Customer Service Standard implementation, Transit existing customer contacts system in place would be available to customers to provide feedback. Customer feedback which is offered through various communication methods including in-person (i.e. customer service counter – ATS & GO Station), telephone, City website (transit section), e-mail and printed media (i.e. Passenger Service Bulletins such as “Bus News”) would receive customer feedback.

The annually public meeting (usually during the fall) involving persons with disabilities to ensure that they have an opportunity to review and provide feedback on the City’s accessibility plan would also provide an opportunity for feedback.

Based on the outcomes of Phase I, Phase II would involve the Please Offer Me A Seat and I Will Offer My Seat citywide campaign rollout.

Recognition

The HSR partnership will be recognized on the marketing materials along with McMaster University.

Attachments

Please Offer Me A Seat Button Blue, Yellow, Maroon Samples

I Will Offer My Seat Text Sample

Information Card Two Sided

FAQ McMaster University

Please Offer Me A Seat McMaster University Poster

Please Offer Me A Seat 15 Second Video Clip with Text Description

Contact Information

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McMaster University recognizes and acknowledges that it is located on the traditional territories of the Mississauga and Haudenosaunee nations, and within the lands protected by the “Dish With One Spoon” wampum agreement.