

**Social Inclusion of Young People in the Labor Market.  
The Case of La TOHU in Montreal\***

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## List of Acronymes

- ACEF Association coopérative d'économie familiale
- ARUC Alliance de Recherche universités-communautés / Community-University Research Alliances
- CCA Canada Council for the Arts
- CdS Cirque du Soleil
- CLSC Centre locaux de services communautaires / Local Community Service Centres
- CS Customer service
- CSSS Centre de santé et de services sociaux / Health and Social Services Centres
- DCAP Développement des communautés par le biais des arts et du patrimoine / Building Communities Through Arts and Heritage Program
- HRDC Human Resources Development Canada
- NCS National Circus School
- FTQ Fédération des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec / Quebec Federation of Labour
- MAMROT Ministère des affaires municipales et de l'occupation du territoire / Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Regions and Land Occupancy
- MICC Ministère de l'immigration et des communautés culturelles / Ministry of Immigration and Cultural Communities
- MW Minimum wage
- NPO Non-profit organization
- OFQJM Office franco-québécois pour la jeunesse / France-Québec Youth Office
- SROI Social return on investment
- UQAM Université du Québec à Montréal
- VSMPE Villeray-Saint-Michel-Parc-Extension
- VSMS Vivre Saint-Michel en Santé

## ABSTRACT

Saint-Michel belongs to the group of Montreal neighbourhoods affected by the negative impacts of economic globalization and the decline of Fordism, namely greater inequality and territorial and social divides. These neighbourhoods, as spaces on the margins of economic growth and victims of disintegrating social cohesion, are “orphan neighbourhoods” (Fontan et al., 2003), in other words, they are left to their own devices in times of profound social and economic changes, leading to their devitalization (Trudelle et al., 2011). To combat this loss of quality of life, actors are mobilizing to find answers and solutions, giving rise to local redevelopment initiatives. One such initiative is la Tohu, an open, social economy cultural institution in the Saint-Michel neighbourhood of Montreal. Established in 2004, its mission was to contribute to urban revitalization of this marginalized community by creating an innovative cultural space. To achieve its goal of urban renewal, La Tohu developed a number of employment and social inclusion programs for youth, a strategy that, widely used in Quebec and in Canada, has tangible socioeconomic benefits for society.

Researchers are exploring the “social return on investment” of social economy enterprises in a variety of ways using different methodologies. Our study is part of a pan-Canadian project funded by the SSHRC, and similar studies on the social return on investment have been conducted across the country. This study was carried out in a partnership between la Tohu and Concordia University. The research objectives, parameters and methodology were defined with La Tohu.

This study is based on qualitative methodology and involved 18 semi-structured interviews. The research results validated our hypotheses, namely: a) The cultural project of La Tohu and its implementation, together with good governance practices, has had structural impacts on the urban revitalization in the Saint-Michel neighbourhood; b) The young people who participated in the integration programs acquired sufficient skills to improve their situation and currently hold a job or are students or student employees; c) The social return on investment of youth employment programs established at la Tohu extends beyond the direct beneficiaries and has significant impact on the managers, the organization, the neighbourhood and society as a whole; and d) la Tohu is an organization capable of establishing the conditions to stimulate creativity among its employees and to fulfill its mission.

This research identifies indicators of the social return on investment of youth employment programs. We observed that these programs have direct benefits for the young participants as well as positive effects on society and the urban revitalization of Saint-Michel neighbourhood. Our calculation of the socioeconomic impact and social return on investment demonstrates that the resources invested by the government in employment integration programs for young people, far from representing a tax burden for the various levels of government, on the contrary contribute to economic growth and to improving citizens’ quality of life. Government support for this type of program is an investment in the future of Quebec society.

Keywords: social inclusion, urban revitalization, social economy, development and culture, social mobilization



# Introduction

To achieve its goal of urban renewal, La Tohu offers a number of work integration and social inclusion programs for youth, a strategy that, widely used in Quebec and in Canada, has significant socioeconomic benefits for society.

Quebec's work integration enterprises contribute in many other ways to the socioeconomic development of the province. They are established in local settings in which they maintain close partnership links. As such, they are often located in neighbourhoods or regions where economic conditions are less favourable, thereby helping to respond to market imperfections and to solve social problems. (Comeau, M., 20)

Cultural development is more complex than its primary focus on the arts. Its legitimacy is increasingly determined by its contribution to contemporary challenges, and its definition tends to expand as new social actors become involved. As such, it calls for a new system of governance within which society's various interest groups may play a role. (Payette, J., 2011)

## Report Outline

Part I of the report presents the objectives, research methodology and a sociodemographic and socioeconomic portrait of the Saint-Michel neighbourhood, which is where La Tohu is located. This same section offers a portrait of La Tohu based on quantitative and historical data from internal documents provided by la Tohu and on case studies on la Tohu.

Part II of the report is a synthesis of the data generated from 18 interviews conducted with participants from social inclusion programs for youth at risk—namely the la Falla project and la Tohu's Customer Service, as well as with the managers and one administrator of la Tohu.

Part III of the report presents the results of an economic and social impact assessment of youth employment and social inclusion programs. In this section, we illustrate the results of our adapted application of the social return on investment (SROI) methodology on 10 participants of the 2013 edition of the la Falla project.



# **1. PART I. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES, METHODOLOGY AND A SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIOECONOMIC PORTRAIT OF THE SAINT-MICHEL NEIGHBOURHOOD**

## **1.1 Research objectives**

The research examines the “social return on investment” of social economy enterprises, particularly the impact of the integration of youth into the labour market. Conducted as a pan-Canadian study, the enterprises included in the research from the other regions across the country the same question exploring a wide variety and diversity of case studies. From the outset, we note the difficulty in measuring this return. That said, we used existing indicators and developed other relevant indicators in the course of our study.

This project is financed by the Community-University Research Alliance (CURA) of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), an alliance between universities and practitioners.

The aim of the research is to study the impact of the programs of work insertion for young people currently employed at la Tohu or who have worked there in the past. The pan-Canadian project is oriented toward youth with disabilities, defined broadly as intellectual, physical or emotional disability. We have expanded this definition to include youth who are excluded due to their socioeconomic situation or who have dropped out of school. In fact, high school drop-out is also an important consideration.

The profile of the youth hired by La Tohu is diverse; for example, it also includes young people deliberately seeking employment in a stimulating cultural organization. Likewise, the profile of the youth hired by la Tohu may differ depending on the nature of the work. For example, those employed in Customer Service will have a very different experience from those working in la Falla, a work integration program for youth between 15 to 30 years of age who are at risk of exclusion.

Our study must also respond to the mandate of la Tohu, which is to create opportunities for young people seeking entry into the labour market or an incentive to continue their education. In designing this research partnership with la Tohu, they expressed an interest in learning whether the young people who worked there are now more likely to find stable employment, return to school or have a better self-esteem and quality of life. What happened to them after their work experience at la Falla? How did this experience influence their future? La Tohu also wished to learn more about the work environment and challenges of the managers at la Tohu who mentor the young people.

In this study, we put forward the following hypotheses: a) The cultural project of la Tohu and its implementation, together with good governance practices, has had structural impacts on urban revitalization in the Saint-Michel neighbourhood; b) Those who participated in the integration

programs acquired sufficient skills to improve their situation and currently hold a job or are students or student employees; c) The social return on investment of youth employment programs offered at la Tohu extends beyond the direct beneficiaries and has an impact on the managers, the organization, the neighbourhood and society as a whole; d) La Tohu is an organization capable of establishing the conditions to stimulate creativity among its employees and to fulfill its mission.

## 1.2 Methodology

As a partnership between practitioners and academics, the research objectives, parameters, methodology and target population were defined (co-defined) with representatives of la Tohu.

The study is based on the use of a qualitative methodology based on 18 semi-structured interviews with people who met the following criteria:

- a) individuals who participated in the la Falla project
- b) individuals who work or have worked in la Tohu's Customer Service
- c) managers of work integration programs
- d) directors/administrators of la Tohu

These interviewed gave their consent to be recorded. To ensure the confidentiality of the responses gathered during the interviews, the individuals interviewed remain anonymous. Furthermore, in compliance with the ethical standards of the university, we presented the interviewees a consent form informing them about the research and their rights in this respect. On average, the interviews lasted one hour, the longest lasting two hours and 10 minutes (Table 1).

**Table 1. People interviewed**

Interviews	Duration of the interview	Date of the interview
<b>People who work in Customer Service</b>		
Employee 1	1 hour and 04 min	13/02/2014
Employee 2	1 hour and 05 min	13/02/2014
Employee 3	55 min	13/02/2014
Employee 4	50 min	07/03/2014
Employee 5	1 hour and 02 min	14/03/2014
<b>People who have worked on a specific project, such as la Falla</b>		

Fallero 1	1 hour and 20 min	27/02/2014
Fallero 2	48 min	10/04/2014
Fallero 3	55 min	10/04/2014
Fallero 4	40 min	11/04/2014
Fallero 5	45 min	18/04/2014
<b>Managers in Customer Service</b>		
Manager 1	1 hour and 05 min	21/02/2014
Manager 2	1 hour	27/02/2014
Manager 3	1 hour and 04 min	27/02/2014
<b>Managers of the la Falla project</b>		
Manager 1	1 hour and 40 min	28/03/2014
Manager 2	1 hour and 06 min	21/03/2014
Manager 4	1 hour and 05 min	23/05/2014
Manager 5	1 hour and 12 min	23/05/2014
Administrator	2 hours and 10 min	10/04/2014

The overall research approach was participatory. To this end, we established a monitoring or oversight committee comprised of representatives of the staff of la Tohu and representatives of the university to oversee the entire study. We held three meetings to co-determine the objectives and the research methodology.

The initial team was composed of: François Béchar, Director, Human Resources and Organizational Development, la Tohu; Élodie Choqueux, Director of Programming, la Tohu; Marguerite Mendell, coordinator of the research team, Concordia University; and Wilfredo Angulo Baudin, researcher and PhD candidate in the Department of Urban Studies and Tourism at UQAM.

Later, Carmen Izabel Barrios, professional support and training consultant at la Tohu, succeeded François Béchar.

### 1.3 Profile of the Saint-Michel neighbourhood

La Tohu is located in the neighbourhood of Saint-Michel, east of the borough Villeray–Saint-Michel–Parc-Extension (Fig. 1). The Saint-Michel neighbourhood is surrounded by the boroughs Montréal-Nord to the north, by Saint-Léonard to the east, by the neighbourhoods Rosemont–La Petite-Patrie to the south and by Villeray and Ahuntsic to the west (Fig. 1). In 1968, Saint-Michel

was annexed to the City of Montreal to become the neighbourhood of Saint-Michel. In the late 1980s, it was integrated into the borough Villeray–Saint-Michel–Parc-Extension (VSMPE).

The economic crisis of the 1980s led to a rapid decline of the neighbourhood and an increase in poverty and exclusion. Today, despite showing a high level of poverty and exclusion, the neighbourhood has nevertheless undergone a certain urban revitalization. The arrival of the Cirque du Soleil in 1994 followed by the creation of the Cité des arts du cirque in 1999 were key elements of this socio-territorial revival. (Trudelle et al., 2011, p. 19)

According to 2011 data, 55,665 people live in this area, a slight increase of 1.29% compared to the 2006 census. “The Saint-Michel neighbourhood is one of the most sensitive neighbourhoods in Canada. High school drop-out and low levels of education among residents have an impact on the labour force participation rate and unemployment, especially among young people from 15 to 24 years of age” (La Tohu, 2009).

A comparison of the Saint-Michel neighbourhood with that of the entire VSMPE borough and that of the City of Montreal reveals the extent of disadvantage in Saint-Michel. We note the following sociodemographic characteristics: For the year 2011, 25% of the population living in Saint-Michel was 20 years old and under, a percentage that is higher than the average of the borough (22.1%) and greater than that of the City of Montreal (20%). The percentage of households with three or more people is 52% in Saint-Michel, compared to 31% for the City of Montreal (VSMS, 2013). The percentage of the population that is 65 years and older is 28%, which is lower than the rate in the VSMPE borough (34%) and lower than the city average (32%). In Saint-Michel, single-parent families accounted for 40.4% of households, which is higher than the rate in the VSMPE borough (25%) and the city average of 22%. In 2011, the rate of immigrants increased to 49.4%, representing a percentage that is significantly higher than that of the borough (44%) and the city (33.0%).

Regarding the socioeconomic characteristics of the population, the unemployment rate in St. Michel (2011) is 15.5%, compared with the average rate of 9.7% for the City of Montreal and 12% for the VSMPE borough. The unemployment rate among 15-to-24 year old youth is 15.8%, compared with 13.7% for the VSMPE borough and 13.2% for the city of Montreal. In Saint-Michel, government transfer payments account for 24.6% of household incomes, compared with 12.2% for the City of Montreal. In Saint-Michel, the average household income is \$42,952, slightly lower than the VSMPE average of \$44,278 and considerably lower than the Montreal average of \$57,716.

We examined data on housing as well. The percentage of Saint-Michel families who rent is 71.5%. This rate is slightly lower than the borough average yet higher than the city average of 64.2%. As for the level of education, the percentage of the population aged 15 and over with no high school degree is 34.5%, which is higher than the borough average of 28.1% and considerably higher than that of the City of Montreal (20.0%). According to the 2011 census, the immigrant population accounts for 49.4% of residents in Saint-Michel, compared to 33.0% for

the City. Moreover, 54.1% of the population has a native language other than French or English, compared to 31.7% of the City (Table 2).

According to a survey published in 2012 by *Vivre St. Michel en Santé (VSMS)*, “Some 84.7% of respondents consider Saint-Michel to be their neighbourhood, even if many dream of another neighbourhood. Despite this attachment to the neighbourhood, nearly half of the respondents (45.6%) report that if they had the choice, they would move to another neighbourhood.” (VSMS, Portrait of Saint-Michel, April 2013, p. 16)

**Figure 1. Location of the Saint-Michel neighbourhood in Montreal**



Source: Adapted map. Website of Ville de Montréal.

**Table 2. Socioeconomic indicators of the Saint-Michel neighbourhood in 2011**

Socioeconomic indicators	Territories		
	Saint-Michel	VSMPE (borough)	Ville de Montréal
Population aged 20 years or under	25.0%	22.1%	20.0%
Households of 3 people or more	52.0%	32.0%	31.0%
Population of 65 years and older	28.0%	34.0%	32.0%
Single-parent families	40.4%	25.0%	32.9%
Unemployment rate	15.5%	12.0%	9.7%
Unemployment rate among 15-to-24 year-olds	15,8%	13.7%	13.2%
Tenants	71.5%	73.9%	64.2%

Immigrants	49.4%	44.0%	33.0%
Visible minorities	41.0%	42.0%	26.0%
Low-income families	34.6%	nd	24.6%
People aged 15 years and over without a high school degree	34.5%	28.1%	20.0%
Average household income	\$42,952	\$44,278	\$57,716

*Source: Statistics Canada. Census data 2011. VSMS. VSMS Strategic Planning, Portrait of the Saint-Michel neighbourhood 2013. CSSS of St. Léonard and Saint-Michel. <http://csss-stleonardstmichel.qc.ca>. City of Montreal, Profiles of electoral districts of the borough of Villeray–Saint-Michel–Parc-Extension.*

Nearly 65 different cultural communities are present in the neighbourhood. The population in Saint-Michel is younger than that of Montreal, especially among members of the Haitian community.

#### **1.4 La Tohu, a social integration enterprise**

The Cité des arts du cirque, which became La Tohu in 2003, is a non-profit organization that was established in November 1999 under the initiative of En Piste (the national association of circus arts), the École nationale de cirque and Cirque du Soleil. The decision of the Cirque du Soleil to establish its facilities in Saint-Michel was instrumental for the existence of La Tohu. La Tohu took up the challenge of using the visibility and power of attraction of circus arts to raise awareness of environmental issues and economic development based on the inclusion of marginalized communities. By choosing to use culture as a lever for sustainable development, La Tohu distinguished itself as an innovative urban revitalization initiative (La Tohu, 2009).

La Tohu was born from a big dream; a shared passion of the actors from the circus milieu—the Cirque du Soleil, the National Circus School, En Piste—to assert the leadership of Montreal as an international capital of circus arts and to constitute one of the largest distribution, training, creation and production hubs of the circus arts in the world. But by choosing to set up shop here [Saint-Michel neighbourhood], La Tohu chose to embrace a far greater challenge: sustainable development through culture.

<http://montrealmetropoleculturelle.org>

This is why La Tohu decided to add two other components to its CIRCUS mission, namely the concern for the environment (EARTH) and for the lives of people (HUMAN).

To achieve its objectives, La Tohu adopted a three-pronged mission:

- Circus: Making Montreal an international capital of circus arts.



- Earth: Actively participate in the revitalization of one of the largest landfill sites located in an urban area in North America.
- Human: Contribute to the development of the Saint-Michel neighbourhood in Montreal, one of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable in Canada.

Stéphane Lavoie, Director General as well as Director of Programming at La Tohu says: “Our missions are the circus, the earth and human beings; the three of them intersect; they cannot be separated. Every so often when things start to slide, we take care to nip these in the bud and to focus on the integration of the three components and the search for balance.” (Interview 2014)

The implementation of the project on a landfill for residential waste within one of the poorest neighbourhoods in Canada called for the other two components to be added to the mission of la Tohu. In this way, the three interdependent missions are embedded in an urban revitalization project centered on the role of culture. (Meliani, T., 2005)

The presence of La Tohu in the territory of Saint-Michel is the result of agreements between residents of the community and la Tohu. In fact, the *Michelois* were initially somewhat suspicious as to the benefits they would gain from the presence of La Tohu on their territory, arguing that the resources that would be allocated to la Tohu constituted funds needed to solve more pressing problems in the neighbourhood (Trudelle et al., 2011). This impasse resulted in the integration of the *Michelois* in the project design. Today, la Tohu is rooted in the territory and is clearly at the heart of the identity of the local community by participating in its economic and social development. La Tohu thus contributes to the social cohesion of the area and to the development of a territorial identity.

The year 1999 saw for the creation of a large-scale project in Montreal: the concentration in one place of a critical mass of infrastructures for the creation, training, production and dissemination of circus arts, laying the foundation to make Quebec’s major city into an international capital of circus arts. The Cité des arts du cirque, renamed La Tohu in 2003, is designed to ensure the realization of this endeavour in the heart of the Saint-Michel neighbourhood. The Cité is home to the international headquarters of Cirque du Soleil (CdS) and its artists’ residence, the National Circus School (NCS), the offices of En Piste and the public pavilion of La Tohu. (Trudelle et al., 2011)

## **1.5 The financing of La Tohu**

Since the beginning of its activities, la Tohu has benefitted from funding from three levels of government to realize its various special projects. Overall, financial support from the government remains essential to support the development of its activities, which stand to benefit the entire circus arts sector.

Since its inception in 2004, la Tohu has had to finance its budget with government grants and sponsorship funding. In recent years, the portion of its own revenue has nearly doubled thanks

to the continual increase in the attendance of activities. La Tohu strives to keep the portion of funding coming from the government at less than 50% of the budget. In 2011, government subsidies totaled \$4,074,710, comprising 47% of revenues; operating revenue accounted for 32%; and the rest (21%) came from contributions from sponsorship agreements and partnerships (La Tohu, Activity Report 2010–2011).

The economic environment of recent years has resulted in a significant decrease in revenues from sponsors: SSQ Financial Group, a main partner since 2004, put an end to the sponsorship agreement in 2010. Nevertheless, counteracting the relative decline in sponsorship revenues, new subsidies from the Minister of Culture and Communications have helped to boost the overall sales figure. In response to this situation, la Tohu has established a strategy to increase its own revenues in the long term and has implemented an action plan that includes a review of its governance. The objective is to increase the percentage of own-source revenues to more than 50% of the total revenue by 2012–2013. Supported by MAMROT in this effort toward self-reliance, La Tohu is confident of its capacity to maintain a balanced budget (La Tohu, Activity Report 2011–2012).

## **1.6 Portrait of socio-professional integration programs**

La Tohu has developed a work integration program whose main objective is to foster sustainable employment integration through the nurturing of attitudes and behaviours adapted to the labour market and educational success.

Overall, the program is designed to:

- Provide participants with coaching to allow them to achieve their goals and attain greater financial, professional and social autonomy.
- Support the development of the employability of young people belonging to various cultural communities by improving their socioeconomic conditions. The program also aims to raise awareness among all staff, visitors and partners of La Tohu on the importance of integrating the members of cultural communities.
- Promoting intercultural rapprochement and openness to diversity. (Website: La Tohu)

The program was designed to promote local hiring and to facilitate the opening of gateways to la Tohu's various activities, among them the project *Falla*, the la Tohu Customer Service, and special projects such as C-Vert<sup>1</sup> and Valorisation Jeunesse, a program integrating youth into five different work placements at la Tohu. In addition, a mentoring program accompanies the youth

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<sup>1</sup> An initiative of the Claudine and Stephen Bronfman Family Foundation, C-Vert is an urban ecology project dedicated to promoting environmental and community involvement. It targets young people aged 14 to 16 years and incorporates elements of nature immersion and education, practical workshops on the environment and ecology, as well as participation in community initiatives in the neighbourhoods where the participants live.

participating in the mentioned programs. Applicants who are refused are referred to specialized agencies in order to support their efforts to improve their employability. In this study, we focus on the first two programs—*Falla* and Customer Service—which integrate the largest number of employees.

The main objective of offering these programs to the community is to revitalize the neighbourhood, to allow residents to identify with la Tohu and come to work here, to encourage young people to become engaged, and to ensure that the money stays in the neighbourhood. We offer them training and help them get on with their schooling. (Stéphane Lavoie. Interview 2014)

### ***1.6.1 Falla: working toward the social inclusion of youth at risk***

*Falla* is a flagship project meeting the HUMAN objective of the integrated mission of la Tohu. A recurring socio-professional integration program, *Falla* is offered every year for a period of approximately 16 weeks, 35 hours week. Participants receive training to perform a variety of tasks and take part in workshops to improve their employability (La Tohu. Work integration program. Pamphlet).

The *falleros*, all youth from the Saint-Michel neighbourhood who do not attend school, accompanied by a team of professionals, artists, community groups and citizen volunteers called *compagnons*, work hard to construct a collaborative artistic structure. Surrounded by the artistic director and a team of patternmakers, painters, workshop managers and assistants (some of whom also began as a *fallero*), they learn the basic techniques of woodworking, sculpting and moulding while also taking part in a one-of-a-kind experience of collective creation. The adventure of *Falla* offers a good opportunity for these young people to meet, learn and work in teams. From the assistant to the workshop manager, the goal of the project is to give these young people the opportunity to pursue their own socio-professional path, acquire leadership skills and develop a sense of responsibility. “Seeing culture as a unique means of sustainable development, la Tohu takes concrete action to increase citizen participation, build intergenerational relationships, encourage local talent and recognize the creative contribution of cultural communities” (La Tohu, Activity Report 2011–2012).

To enable the development of their skills, participants attended various meetings and workshops throughout the project, some of which were focused on the community and others on working with the materials. In this way, participants were able to develop a lot of self-confidence as well as a better understanding of themselves. They overcame many fears and were amazed to discover new talents within themselves. Participants benefited from workshops on conflict management given by the coordinator, a first aid course, a “small budget” workshop given by ACEF du Nord, and a workshop given by a CLSC nurse on the medical resources of the neighbourhood and on healthy lifestyles. A workshop on the safe handling of tools was given by the workshop manager, and throughout

the project, participants were guided to develop planning and organizational tools.  
(La Tohu. 2007 Report)

The young falleros commit to embark on a professional path guided by a professional from la Tohu’s training division and a workshop manager. Their positions were made possible through the Skills Link program of Human Resources and Social Development Canada, representing the first time an integration project through culture was supported in Quebec. *Falla* allows la Tohu to intervene in issues pertaining to socio-urban challenges; employment, especially the employability of young people aged 15 to 30 years; and to the community life and social integration of clients at risk (La Tohu, 2004).

The *Falla* project is held for four months, between April and August, and ends with a festive ceremony that also serves as a rallying point to bolster the spirit of the project. The developers of *Falla* were inspired by carnival traditions from Europe and believe strongly in the importance of fire in the lives of people, regardless of their cultural background. More specifically, the project is inspired by the tradition of the *fallas* of Valencia, Spain. Thus, since 2004, young people from the Saint-Michel neighbourhood engage annually with the community to build a gigantic structure.

According to data from the annual reports of la Tohu, since the creation of *Falla* in 2004, 94 young people between ages 16 and 35 from the Saint-Michel neighbourhood participated in this cultural activity. The average number of participants (*falleros*) each year has been 10.6. The largest participation occurred in 2010 and 2011, with 14 *falleros* per year; and the lowest occurred in 2013, with 8 *falleros*. In 2006, there was no edition of *Falla* (Table 3).

Upon embarking on the project, the young people express their expectations of their participation in *Falla*. Generally, these expectations revolve around acquiring the skills to return to school or find a stable job. Since its creation, 64 *falleros*<sup>2</sup> have been able to achieve their goal, and 23 have taken steps to either return to school or to find employment. We are unable to report about the remaining 9 *falleros* due to a lack of available data (Table 4). We know that, overall, the *Falla* project has had significant immediate impacts on the participants. However, with this research we also sought to identify to what extent this impact continues to persist or grow. Our analysis of the interviews conducted in this research provide a deeper and more realistic understanding of the nine editions of the project.

**Table 3. Expectations and status of the youth at the end of their participation in Falla. 2004–2013 \***

	2004	2005	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2004–2013
<b>Number of falleros</b>	10	9	10	9	13	10	12	11	10	<b>94</b>
Returned to studies or work	8	0	6	6	12	7	10	6	7	<b>62</b>

<sup>2</sup> A follow-up is done one month after the young falleros have completed the program.

In the process of returning to school or of finding work	2	9	4	3	1	3	2	5	3	32
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Source: La Tohu, Annual Activity Reports 2005 to 2013. \*Falla did not take place in 2006.

*Falla* is the result of a major mobilization effort of the individual members of a community. According to officials of la Tohu, “*Falla* is defined not only by the dazzling final result offered to the spectators, but above all by the gargantuan mobilization effort on the part of the citizens that is essential for its success. The support of the youth, the volunteers, community organizations and citizens of the community are what give it its meaning. The aspects related to human development are inseparable from *Falla*” (La Tohu, 2009).

*Falla* is a popular festival, open to the public, mobilizing collaboration between ten community organizations. Nearly 800 citizens each year contribute to the success of the festival (La Tohu, 2009). Between the years 2004 and 2010, the cumulative participation of citizens in the festival activities amounted to 7,750 people per year, on average, except for 2009, when weather conditions were such that the turnout was reduced by one half (3,500). Since 2011, La Tohu expanded the duration of *Falla* festivities to three days, which explains the remarkable increase of 10,000 participants for 2011 and of 11,000 for 2012. (Table 4).

**Table 4. Citizen mobilization activities of Falla. 2004–2012 \***

Type of participation	2004	2005	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Youth in socio-professional integration	10	9	10	9	13	10	12	11	10
Volunteers			370		250		257	276	280
Involved community organizations			15			6	8	13	8
Participants in the festivities			7,000		3,500	6,500	10,000	11,000	8,500

Source: TOHU. Final reports of activities 2004, 2005 and from 2008 to 2012. There was no edition of *Falla* in the year 2006. *Falla* Report 2013.

*Falla* is an event that brings together different generations and cultures within the Saint-Michel borough.

In 2010, “Through this project, 10 young falleros, all in a reintegration process, learned sculpture techniques and were introduced to the artistic process (techniques of woodworking, paper, molding, painting, etc.). A dozen community organizations engaged in the preparation of the event. Some 200 children from the neighbourhood day camps participated in workshops to create small masks,

to be worn during the parade that preceded the fire show, which was animated by musicians of the neighbourhood. Moreover, 150 members of community organizations created, under the guidance of local artist Ralph Maingrette, large masks intended to be integrated into the *Falla* structure. Furthermore, nearly 30 *compagnons*, namely neighbourhood citizens ages 12 to 80 years, offered 1,500 volunteer hours in support of the *falleros* and the realization of the structure. Finally, a total of 7,000 people gathered around a big méchoui (festive lamb dinner) to witness the *Falla* fire show. (La Tohu. Final Activity Report 2007–2008, p. 28)

*Falla* is designed to represent the citizen concerns of the community in which it takes place. At each edition, the theme is different and is established in consultation with the residents of the neighbourhood. An artistic director draws a sketch and the construction team meticulously reproduces the details and colours of the model, which is then built to reach more than 11 meters in height. For example, the *Falla* 2007 edition dealt with problems related to the environment and global warming. In 2010, the project theme was *Les dix travaux d’Alice*, and in 2011, the theme referred to la Tohu’s circus mission with its *Originem* component. In 2012, the theme *Cent ans ensemble*, underlined the hundred-year anniversary of the Saint-Michel neighbourhood. The last edition, in 2013, evoked the history of the creation of the world as seen by the First Nation’s Huron-Wendat people, namely the legend of Aataentsic.

The creative process of the *Fallas* is based on the sharing of ideas and knowledge. The contemporary art object, the result of a social, relational and creative work between the members of a community, becomes a symbol of cohesion and togetherness. (La Tohu. Activity Report 2003–2004)

For the leaders of la Tohu, the synergistic power of *Falla* lies in its unique concept of developing a collective work; of combining street arts, music and visual arts; of integrating and training the young people from the neighbourhood; and of getting citizens involved in a major cultural and social carnival festival (La Tohu, 2009). As a symbolic gesture, *Falla* is extremely inspiring for the people of the Saint-Michel neighbourhood who hail from 62 different cultural communities. According to Stéphane Lavoie, director of la Tohu, “Many of them have left their country, leaving everything behind. They had to start from scratch. It is from this angle that we try to reach them through this artistic project” (*La Presse*, August 9, Arts 8, 2014).

### **The financing of Falla**

Table 5 shows the evolution of the funding for *Falla* since 2004. The different levels of government contributed to 73.4% of the financing, amounting to \$1,627,218. The majority of this funding comes from the federal government, with Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRDC) and Canadian Heritage accounting for 56.4% of the annual budgets, on average, except for 2011 when their contribution had dropped to 22.4%. The contribution of the City of Montreal to finance *Falla* has been stable since its inception, representing 13.8% of contributions on average. In 2009, the City of Montreal added funding through the *Ville – culture* agreements and the *Les Arts et la Ville* funds. The contribution of the Government of Quebec amounts to 3.2%;

in particular, it contributed a sum of \$15,000 in 2004 and the majority of the remainder (\$56,917) in the years 2007 and 2010.

Since the creation of *Falla*, private sector contributions (Gazmont, Van Houtte, Desjardins, Omer DeSerres) have risen to 10.8%. The Cirque du Soleil contributed 5.6%, mostly in the years 2007 and 2012, and la Tohu 5.9% (Table 5).

One-time funding also came from a community actor, Vivre Saint-Michel en Santé (VSMS), with a contribution of \$36,341 in 2007.

**Table 5. Financing of Falla, 2004–2013**

Donors	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total	%
Government of Canada (1)	125,735	88,044	N/A	109,473	174,630	228,934	239,934	22,802	147,051	112,191	1,248,794	56.4
Government of Quebec (2)	15,000	0	N/A	15,017	19,450	19,450	3,000	0	0	0	71,917	3.2
Ville de Montréal (3)	28,000	8,000	N/A	28,380	19,000	4,000	14,000	34,000	77,654	93,473	306,507	13.8
Sponsors (4)	15,000	20,400	N/A	0	0	43,000	3,000	7,850	82,950	67,750	239,950	10.8
Revenues Tent	0	10,000	N/A							0	10,000	0.5
Cirque du Soleil	0	0	N/A	35,936	20,000	0	26,000	20,000	22,697	0	124,633	5.6
VSMS	0	0	N/A	36,341	0	0	0	0	0	0	36,341	1.6
Other (5)	0	0	N/A	0	0	0	0	17,185	0	30,005	47,190	2.2
La Tohu	23,769	0	N/A	45,109	857	15,000	32,086		0	13,787	130,608	5.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>207,504</b>	<b>126,444</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>270,256</b>	<b>233,937</b>	<b>310,384</b>	<b>318,020</b>	<b>101,837</b>	<b>330,352</b>	<b>317,206</b>	<b>2,215,940</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Budget Falla. 2004–2013.

1. Government of Canada. HRDC — *Connexion Compétences*. DCAP — Canadian Heritage
2. Government of Quebec. MICC. Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles. MICC
3. Ville de Montréal. Borough (VSMPE). Ville de Montréal (*Ville culture* agreements and *Les Arts et la Ville* funds)
4. Sponsors. Gazmont. Van Houtte, Desjardins, DeSerres

5. Autres Horizon aîné, the Canadian Center for Architecture, (and for one time only, the Quebec Federation of Labour and the Office franco-québécois pour la jeunesse).

As demonstrated, *Falla* is very dependent on the contribution of external resources. Since 2004, la Tohu mobilized help from partners from different levels of government and from community and private actors to finance the project. In 2014, the federal government decided to no longer fund the *Falla* project through the Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRDC) program, which put the continuation of *Falla* at risk, since this federal support represented more than half of its funding. For the 2014 edition of *Falla*, la Tohu was forced to contribute \$72,000 from its own resources and to find a partner, namely PITREM,<sup>3</sup> who brought in \$65,000. La Tohu was forced to reduce the program duration from 16 to 12 weeks, and to 10 weeks for the youth training component. It was also forced to reduce the number of participants to seven, representing the lowest number since its inception.

### ***1.6.2 The Customer Service program***

The second major program designed to promote the employability of youth in Saint-Michel is that of la Tohu's Customer Service section. The program provides training and mentoring for neighbourhood youth and, subsequent to the training, paid positions as maintenance or security staff, where the youth perform tasks related to parking and room management and to running the kiosk, bistro and ticket counter at la Tohu.

La Tohu adopted a very unique employment policy: the customer service of La Tohu has "Saint-Michel" written all over it. Indeed, everyone you run into in these spaces during events, be it in the parking area, the bistro, the coatroom or the big hall, have one thing in common: they are residents of the neighbourhood. A total of 64 part-time employees comprise the customer service team of la Tohu—an 83% increase since March 31, 2005. (Tohu Report 2007–2008)

The la Tohu managers' report that the management of a theatre like la Tohu requires qualified staff to welcome the visitors and to operate the ticket sales, food counters or the coatroom. Since la Tohu was created, it has had a dedicated commitment toward the residents of the neighbourhood when recruiting personnel.

Employees of la Tohu's Customer Service benefit from a mentoring program that guides them in their professional development. In collaboration with a specialized staff, the employees establish an action plan that they then follow and adapt throughout their assignment at La Tohu. Customized training together with on-the-job assistance allows the employees to acquire substantial professional experience.

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<sup>3</sup> PITREM (Programme d'information sur le travail et la recherche d'emploi de Montréal) is a community organization promoting the social, professional and economic integration of young people and adults 35 aged and under with needs related to the labour market.



The mentoring program allows for the transmission of knowledge and the presentation of role models to young people in order to increase their motivation and involvement at the academic and professional levels.

The project aims to initiate a dialogue between the youth of Customer Service and professionals. Through this exposure, youth have been able to explore a career that might interest them and to talk about it with professionals working in the field. In addition, the exposure creates room for reflection and for making discoveries and serves as a positive impulse in the search for a future career. Still in the pilot stage this year, we intend to expand the mentoring project in the coming years, in response to a need expressed by youth from Customer Service. (La Tohu Report 2008–2009)

For the financing of the mentoring program, la Tohu has received financial support from the Minister of Immigration and Cultural Communities, Quebec under the Défi Montréal program. La Tohu also received support from Employment Quebec through the wage subsidy program. Both of these programs offer financial assistance for the hiring of new human resources, which helped to continue the support of youth at Customer Service.

It is in this context that la Tohu was able to begin deploying its mentoring program in addition to developing tools such as a comprehensive guide for the mentors and those participating in the program. La Tohu has also been able to take stock of the years of operation of the program. This review has served primarily to develop tools to allow la Tohu to approach neighbourhood businesses in order to raise their awareness of the benefits of local hiring and to the advantages of implementing training as part of a human resources policy in a demographic context such as the Saint-Michel neighbourhood. (La Tohu. 2009–2010 Report)

La Tohu also benefited from the financial support of the City of Montreal and the Ministry of Immigration and Cultural Communities through its Valorisation Jeunesse program.

This program has helped local youth obtain a summer job in order to assist them reach their full potential. La Tohu has allowed them to work in the gardens or in customer service. This year, the commitment to the future of the community by providing training opportunities permitted five young people to be integrated into a summer job that prioritizes close mentoring and support. (La Tohu. 2009–2010 Report)

The mentorship program offered to Customer Service employees is presently under evaluation and may be subject to adjustments. Based on the evaluation report of this program, la Tohu managers will then take the necessary measures to continue to be able to provide employees with the support and guidance necessary for their personal and professional development.

## **1.7 Governance, partnership and dialogue at la Tohu**

The integration programs at la Tohu are embedded in a collaborative network. Many partnerships have been established with different actors who come from local and extra-local areas. This networking takes place in collaboration with actors from the community: Vivre Saint-Michel en Santé (VSMS); seniors of four low-income housing projects from Saint-Michel; Maison d'Haïti; Kouzin'; the Saint-Michel library; Coalition jeunesse de Parc-Extension; Petite Maison par la Grand'Porte; other institutions involved on a less regular basis; and residents. This complex relationship allows la Tohu to support its mission and, in the particular case of *Falla*, to support its commitment to human development.

Since its inception, the Board of Directors of La Tohu was composed primarily of members from the circus milieu. However, more recently la Tohu has introduced changes in the composition of its Board of directors by appointing five new members from the business and academic communities so as to expand its reach and positioning within Montreal society.

## **2. ANALYSIS OF RESULTS**

This section summarizes the results of 18 interviews held with participants in the work integration programs. The questions, which were posed to the different categories of respondents targeted for the study and customized accordingly, were formulated so as to find out whether this type of program creates opportunities for young people seeking entry into the labour market or an incentive for continuing their education. We wanted to know whether the youth who work or who have worked at la Tohu are better equipped to find stable employment, return to school or have a better self-esteem and quality of life after their participation in the program. We also wanted to assess their working conditions and evaluate their experience.

In our study, particular attention was paid to the managers of la Tohu in order to identify how they work with the young people. We were interested in their assessment of their own work experience. How have they managed to meet the challenges of working with young people who have no work experience and who often came from precarious situations, be it at home or at school? Did they have the tools and support necessary to supervise the work of the youth? What constraints, if any, did they encounter in performing their functions? How do they see themselves in the organization? Did they have the infrastructure and materials needed to ensure the training? How did they evaluate their own work experience at la Tohu?

We divided the analysis of the results of the interviews into three parts: 1) a summary of the responses of the young *falleros*; 2) a summary of the response of the employees of Customer Service; and 3) a summary of the responses of the managers of both work integration programs.

## 2.1 Summary of the responses gathered in the interviews with the participants of the *Falla* project

Of the total of 21 falleros taking part in the 2012 and 2013 editions, we interviewed five participants individually, representing 23.8% of falleros. On average, the interviews were of a duration of one hour. The interviews the necessary information allowing us to validate the central hypothesis of the project.

### Portrait of the *falleros*

The motivations that brought the respondents to participate in the *Falla* project are very diverse. According to two of the five interviewees, their goal was to get their emotional lives in order, to regain their self-confidence, increase their self-esteem or work towards a life plan. For three of the five, the purpose was to get work experience and eventually find a more stable job and build a network of contacts.

Most respondents (80%) were not previously familiar with la Tohu. They learned about the program through several channels: two *falleros* saw the postings for the position on the bulletin boards of community centres or on the Internet by chance; a third *fallero* learned about it through a former *fallero*, and the remaining two *falleros* by having participated in activities from previous editions of *Falla*. The majority of interviewed *falleros*, three out of five, were 19 years old. The other two were between 26 and 31 years old. The majority of *falleros* (4) were second-generation immigrants; only one belonged to the category of new arrivals. Three of them had lived in the Saint-Michel neighbourhood for 16 years, and the remaining two had lived in the neighbourhood for no longer than seven years.

As for the working conditions, participation in the *Falla* program involved a full time presence for the duration of four months. The youth received a salary that was equivalent to the money earned from a minimum wage job of 35 hours per week.

### Results of the participation of the youth in *Falla*

All respondents said they had achieved their objectives during their participation in *Falla*. Two respondents reported that they now work part time at la Tohu Customer Service; one of them does so while continuing with her studies and the other is taking steps to go back to school. A third former *fallero* is working elsewhere and is likewise taking steps to return to school. A fourth former *fallero* is in a full-time job training program (funded in equal parts by Employment Québec and the employer) in a woodworking business. The last *fallero* found a full-time job in commerce working evenings while pursuing his studies during the daytime. Those with part-time jobs reported that this type of employment was very suitable as it allowed them to continue their studies.

### What the falleros learned from their participation in *Falla*

When asked about what they learned after the four-month period of participating in *Falla*, the *falleros* agreed that, overall, the project provided them with good coping skills and that they were proud to have participated in an experience such as *Falla*. They identified the new skills and competencies they had acquired, such as basic woodworking and carpentry; working with paper, paint and moulding; the safe handling of tools; as well as conflict management; budget planning (especially for small budgets); first aid techniques; job search skills; oral and written communication skills; organizational and planning tools; and knowledge of labour standards. They also spoke of the time allocated to working on strengthening core values, such as cooperation, solidarity, participation, respect for work, openness to diversity, the meaning of friendship and tolerance toward others.

All *falleros* emphasized that they experienced personal changes with regard to self-confidence, healthy lifestyle habits, responsibility, discipline, motivation, better self-knowledge, independence and pride (Table 6).

**Table 6. Skills and competencies acquired by the youth during their participation in Falla**

Skills	Values	Personal changes
Application of craft skills: working with wood, paper, moulding, painting and carpentry	Social awareness	Self-confidence
Safe handling of working tools	Intercultural approach	Healthy lifestyles
Conflict management	Cooperation	Discipline
Budget planning (for small budgets)	Solidarity	Motivation
First aid techniques	Participation	Better self-knowledge
Job search skills	Respect for work	Autonomy
Oral and written communication	Openness to diversity	Team spirit
	Sense of friendship	Pride
	Tolerance	
	Responsibility	

Source: Interviews 2014

#### The experience of *Falla* and subsequent new jobs offered by la Tohu

All respondents stated that having participated in *Falla* helped them to become better oriented toward working at a job or combining studies with work. The *falleros* noted that the project allowed them to develop their communication skills, and that this was, in fact, what enabled them to obtain their current position. According to the participants, *Falla* is a key that opens many doors. According to them, the project was able to break down racial barriers. The *falleros* were convinced that it was specifically their participation in the *Falla* program that allowed them to become accepted by their current employer. They believe that this experience is highly valued and that the attitudes developed through the program are a great asset to employers. Other participants emphasized that they were proud to have been recognized during the project for

having exceptional skills, and that these skills were what allowed them to be hired within la Tohu. For others, the participation in *Falla* facilitated their ability to find a second job elsewhere.

When asked about the impact of their participation in *Falla* on their professional lives, participants reported that *Falla* was a springboard that led to new opportunities. They stated that having this experience in their CV helps a lot, since the reputation of la Tohu and *Falla* is very positive and facilitates their job search. They claim that having participated in “a *Falla*” was a great asset. Others even said that they now have very good chances of finding work in community organizations in the borough, thanks to the recognition of the social commitment of la Tohu.

## **2.2. Summary of the statements gathered in the interviews with employees from Customer Service**

The Customer Service of La Tohu employs an average of 70 employees on call. We interviewed five employees, between ages 21 and 35 years. Four of the five live in the Saint-Michel neighbourhood, and the fifth lives in the VSMPE borough. The majority of respondents are first- or second generation immigrants, and most have lived in the area for 20 years. Three of our respondents reported not having known of la Tohu before being hired. They applied to la Tohu upon hearing about it from other employees. Another employee was attracted by his interest in the environment and the fifth was referred by someone from the outside. The interview participants had previously worked in small stores, department stores or in telemarketing. Within Customer Service, they worked as ushers or performed tasks related to room surveillance, parking, security and ticketing. Two of the interviewees had been promoted to the position of group supervisor.

Regarding working conditions, the majority of employees held part-time positions, with the occasional periods of full-time work to meet seasonal needs. They reported that part-time work allows them to continue their education, which is very important to them. They are paid the equivalent of a minimum wage salary with gradual wage increases, even though there had not been any significant raises in recent years. The interviewees said that they were able to get by with this salary, albeit frugally, and that they sometimes received help from their parents. A fourth respondent reported that he is still on social assistance, and only one interviewee had a full-time position, at the ticket office.

The interviewed employees of Customer Service consider that their experience at la Tohu served as a springboard when looking for work elsewhere. They are convinced that la Tohu will open their doors and that their experience will enable them to integrate more easily into the labour market. Overall, they felt that La Tohu brought added value to their work experience and their CVs. Employees who had left La Tohu benefitted from excellent references from the organization. La Tohu likewise served as a springboard for those looking to embark on a career in the arts.

When asked if they would like to have a permanent job at La Tohu, four out of five respondents said yes, even knowing that the personnel policy of la Tohu is such that they would like to see Customer Service employees eventually move on to another, more stable employment.

When Customer Service employees were asked to describe their experience at la Tohu, they reported the following:

- a) La Tohu is a family.
- b) An enriching learning experience.
- c) Openness toward others and the possibility to better understand them and even become friends.
- d) A very friendly working environment.
- e) An experience that connects with another world.
- f) Fun.
- g) Friendly atmosphere; the many shows.
- h) A lot of autonomy at work; each day is different from the next.
- i) Has made a positive change in their life.
- j) Development of a sense of responsibility, respect for schedules and discipline.

### **2.3. Findings emerging from the responses gathered in the interviews with managers from *Falla* and Customer Service**

We interviewed seven managers; three were supervisors of the Customer Service program and four had worked on the *Falla* project. Most managers were between 30 and 40 years old. All managers interviewed live outside the Saint-Michel neighbourhood. Six of seven managers are immigrants. In the *Falla* project, one manager is of Quebec origin. Regarding the level of education, most managers in the *Falla* program have a university degree (3 of 4), while in Customer Service, none do. Most managers have worked an average of three years at la Tohu, with the exception of one, who has worked at Customer Service since the creation of la Tohu, just over 10 years ago.

The managers have different areas of specialization: community, museums, event management, cabinetmaking, carpentry, set design, creative designers, arts education, communication and marketing.

As for their training for the functions they perform, the majority of our respondents said that they did not have any formal management training, having instead acquired their management skills through support from their immediate supervisors, from reading on their own, and from daily practice through trial and error. However, they recognize that they would benefit from taking courses in several areas, such as: human resources, organizational theory, staff

relationships and, for those in contact with the youth, competencies for managing challenging psychosocial problems.

Table 7 provides an overview of the managers of *Falla* and Customer Service.

**Table 7. Overview of the managers of Falla and Customer Service**

Managers	Age	Location of residence	Origin	Education	Time at la Tohu	Professional background	Training at la Tohu
<b>Falla</b>	Between 30 and 40 years	Outside of Saint-Michel	3 out of 4 have an immigrant background ; 1 is of Quebec origin	3 employees out of 4 have a university degree	3.5 years on average	Community Museums Events Woodworking Carpentry Set design Artistic design Arts education Communication Marketing	On-the-job training. Reading of documents. Daily work (learning by doing).
<b>Customer Service</b>	Between 30 and 35 years	Outside of Saint-Michel	All 3 have immigrant origins	University studies not completed	Two managers have been at the job for 2 years, and another since the creation of la Tohu.	Liberal arts. Educational psychology. Food services management. Events	On-the-job support. Daily work.

Source: Interviews 2014

### **2.3.1 The most important constraints faced by the managers of Falla and Customer Service in accomplishing their mission**

For the managers of *Falla*, the most recurrent constraints mentioned in the interviews regarding the *Falla* project relate to the dependence on donors for the financing of the project. For each edition, there is uncertainty about the resources available to develop the project, which affects the programming and sometimes even puts its realization at risk. On the one hand, the managers report the following:

- a) “Lack of funding could become an impediment to the performance of our tasks.”
- b) “Due to the loss of funding for Falla, the project is not advancing or growing; the project is thus demoted and stagnates.”

- c) “La Tohu is an NPO that is very dependent on donor funds for the *Falla* program, which creates instability.”

On the other hand, the managers report that they need better infrastructures for running and managing *Falla*. A new, more secure and functional building to achieve their tasks would solve the problem of safety in the workshops (especially in the tents) and prevent the loss of materials and work tools.

Managers also talked about the challenges of having to manage the more difficult socio-emotional problems of some of the youth, and of how they see themselves as being insufficiently equipped for this task. As has already been mentioned above, managers report lacking the adequate training to deal with such challenges.

All *Falla* managers agree on the necessity of explaining to the youth that, beyond the physical effort and concentration required for building a large sculpture made of wood and paper following a plan, the overriding goal is to learn how to take care of oneself, to acquire discipline and to go to work every day. They also educate the young people about the importance of punctuality, which, according to the managers, can be a difficult task. Some employees are more fragile than others, and are sometimes in a critical emotional state that requires an understanding and awareness of their problems. Essentially, it is due to these circumstances that the managers report that the typical functions they perform exceed their roles and responsibilities.

Managers are sometimes called upon to discuss difficult personal situations with these young people, leaving them feeling ill at ease and without the necessary competence to provide adequate answers or guidance. Nor do these young people necessarily feel that they are turning to the right source. As such, managers report that they are often subjected to criticism. However, they understand that this particular situation is part of the learning process of the youth and that they must nevertheless support them and look after their wellbeing on a continual basis. Essentially, the managers see the final outcome of the project as their reward, and the realization and fulfillment of all project objectives.

The constraints reported by the Customer Service managers (i.e., for the reception, ticket office and bistro) are different in that they are more related to the fact they have to work on an event basis and that this creates instability with regard to scheduling and retaining employees. They also report that the mobility of people has consequences for the integration of staff. At times it is even necessary that the managers become directly involved in the activities in order provide quality service. Sometimes, they have to work with students, in other words, people whose work-related competencies have yet to be developed, which means that the managers have to invest additional time in training that staff. The goal is to improve their competencies to reach the level of a trained employee.

All Customer Service managers said they have to get to know their employees in order to be able to help them; and that they must show them that there is a structure and requirements to meet. They also reported having to take special care to establish a dialogue with the youngest segment



of the participants, for whom this project usually constitutes their first job. The managers must therefore insist a lot on discipline. According to the respondents, this consumes a lot of time and energy. Some managers find it difficult to find the right balance and be fair with everybody. In this regard, they report that sometimes flexibility and tolerance present difficult challenges to overcome. Despite this, the respondents affirm that they are doing their best to advance and to succeed in their mission.

Most respondents said they had received some training in counselling or psychology or that they had former experience working with immigrants, community work and education with young people. This now helps them to better understand the people they are in charge of and thus to fulfill their mission.

The managers of Customer Service reported that working at la Tohu requires:

- a) Consideration of the problems that employees experience;
- b) Talking to people, not just telling them what to do;
- c) Being attentive, being accessible, developing the human side, and taking care of the staff;
- d) Having the patience to understand their problems and continuing to see them as employees;
- e) Understanding that this is not the employees' main job and that they may be tired given that they study on the side;
- f) Understanding that they are faced with situations they did not have in other organizations;
- g) Being accessible and creating a good working atmosphere.

### ***2.3.2 The assessment of managers of their experience at la Tohu***

Although the managers discussed the constraints and challenges encountered in supervising the youth, they also expressed the pleasure they derive from working at la Tohu. For example, they noted their appreciation of the philosophy underlying projects such as *Falla*. They recognize a sense of belonging to the organization and the pleasure and gratification of working in a festive atmosphere. Working with troubled youth and teaching them new skills was a greatly motivating task, despite the significant challenges mentioned above. For them, la Tohu is "a laboratory of experiences."

In response to the question posed to the *Falla* managers about their work experience at la Tohu, the most commonly shared were the following:

- a) "It's probably the only job that could really interest me."
- b) "What excites me most about my job is the circus."
- c) "I'm happy, I like challenges, I like difficulties and problem solving."

- d) "My experience grows every year; there's no repetition; no two days are the same."
- e) "I'm able to work on the human side of things in my profession."
- f) "This is a place where I can create."
- g) "I've undergone changes here. I've changed my approach. I find that I'm more attentive to the problems of young people."
- h) "In terms of my own career, this is the richest and most complex work I've done so far."
- i) "My job allowed me to make my social contribution. The project allowed me to get involved socially."
- j) "I learned to work with the set design in relation to the social question."
- k) "I had the opportunity to learn how to make less demands and take more action."
- l) "I'm lucky, I think I got the job of my life."
- m) "There was not one day that was like the next."
- n) "La Tohu allowed me to work on three things at once: the circus, the environment and the community."

The managers who are employed on a temporary basis expressed preferring a full-time position at la Tohu, which would also allow them to let go of other temporary positions and to focus fully on la Tohu. The other managers claimed being content as full-time employees and reported feeling good about the organization at present. However, they would like to see themselves in another project over the medium term, meaning within a time horizon of five to eight years.

The managers of Customer Service at la Tohu reported that there was a creative component to most of their tasks. They also said that they have to work cooperatively in order to develop and find support for their ideas, and that they were quite content to be operating in this kind of collaborative working environment.

When asked if they saw themselves as future employees of la Tohu, they said that they would like to become their own bosses in the future and to run their own company: the opportunities to stay and move up within La Tohu were seen as too difficult. They feel good at la Tohu, but do not see themselves in the organization in the future.

## **2.4 Is la Tohu a non-hierarchical organization?**

To try to better understand the la Tohu management model and the Falla project, the opinions of the respondents comprised valuable testimony. The responses to the question of whether la Tohu is a non-hierarchical organization were mixed.

For some *Falla* managers, la Tohu, as an organization, follows a rather traditional model with a well-defined hierarchy. For others, the organization has a dynamic created by individuals.

Nevertheless, for most managers, the organization works in bothways: a vertical hierarchy alongside relatively horizontal working relationships, creating a hybridization of relations and positions. The model seeks to be very cooperative within a hierarchical structure. In this way, it is a cooperative, co-creative model with two orientations generating a work atmosphere characterized by a great deal of latitude and flexibility. The managers find that the hierarchy is itself very broad and includes very horizontal relationships.

For other *Falla* managers, the hierarchy at la Tohu is one that is not perceived, in other words, it allows them to work with a considerable degree of autonomy. According to these managers, the organization sets parameters and, given the nature of the job, managers themselves need to develop vision of how best to work with the young people. However, as far as the organization is concerned, they only ask of managers to respect the mandates, giving them their full trust and considerable freedom to create. The managers find this atmosphere of freedom and flexibility necessary to be able to work in an organization such as la Tohu. They report that at one point that atmosphere was somewhat at risk, yet that the organization is continually undertaking self-evaluations to improve the daily management of the work. The managers work a lot with the administrators in this regard. Thus, overall, La Tohu is an example of a collaborative and adaptive management. That said, the work areas of the managers of Customer Service and the administration are physically separated and their respective responsibilities at times reduce their opportunities for exchange.

## **2.5 Is la Tohu an exemplary school?**

The managers qualify la Tohu as an exemplary school that is moreover unique in Montreal given its mission. Yet, they also report having to tackle significant challenges on a daily basis, and that this can destabilize them. These somewhat contradictory findings may explain why respondents also report considering la Tohu to be a space of “creative instability,” in particular with regard to not only fulfilling its three missions (the circus, the earth, the human being) but also to managing the organization throughout that process. The Customer Service managers view la Tohu as an excellent school of adaptation and are stimulated by the challenges. They also report that “la Tohu is an exemplary school provided the people are committed to assuming a place in the organization.”

## **3. YOUTH WORK INTEGRATION PROGRAMS AND SOCIAL RETURN ON INVESTMENT**

One of the goals of this research, as presented in the introduction, was to examine the social return of the funding invested in employment and social integration programs for youth. The aim was, in particular, to identify the social impact of revitalization programs in a territory like the Saint-Michel neighbourhood. It must be emphasized, first, that the measurement of the performance of a social enterprise such as la Tohu is not easy in that most measurement methods focus primarily on the financial aspects or performance (Mertens and Marée, 2012).

Based on the views expressed by the respondents of the study, we developed a table (Table 8) that identifies the employment and social impacts of inclusion programs for young people for each field of application. We included the individuals directly affected by the programs and considered the impacts on society as a whole, on the managers of the organization, and on the neighbourhood and the city.

With Table 8, we seek to distinguish the results of employment inclusion programs from the social impacts of those programs, knowing that these intersect and that sometimes such a distinction is hard to make.

**Table 8. The social impact of work integration programs for youth.  
Falla and Customer Service**

<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>Results</b>	<b>Social impact</b>
<b>Participants</b>	Job entry The return of youth to school Young people exploring new areas Young people gained self-confidence	Better professional training Improved work integration capabilities Improved physical and emotional well-being Increased self-confidence Social and financial autonomy
<b>Managers</b>	Pride in work Job satisfaction Recognition Professional accomplishment Increased expertise in the social inclusion of youth Social awareness	Better professional training Increased skills The integration of people at risk of exclusion Improved productivity Professional progress of the managers Greater awareness of and sensitivity to the problems of young people at risk of exclusion The joy of meeting the young people and seeing how they advance in terms of pursuing educational or work-related goals
<b>The organization</b>	Job creation The recognition of the social milieu Notoriety Increased visibility Identification with the mission The positioning of La Tohu as a cultural and socioeconomic actor in the neighbourhood and the City of Montreal Proud to have been successful Local hiring	Improvement of the social image of the organization Empowerment and leadership Culture as socioeconomic lever Achieve its "human" objectives
<b>The neighbourhood</b>	Neighbourhood revitalization Citizen mobilization Citizen participation Strengthening of the identity of the neighbourhood Young people brought out of their isolation Community mobilization Integration of a fairly diverse social fabric Changing the image of the	Creation and consolidation of a local network of actors Social integration of these communities in the territory Improving intercultural relations More social cohesion

	neighbourhood The visibility of Saint-Michel Partnership and cooperation among the various players in the area Contribution to social cohesion of the neighbourhood	
<b>The City</b>	Increase of the cultural offerings Contribution to the recognition of Montreal as a cultural city Integration of new arrivals Visibility of the borough (VSMPE) Knowledge of the City of Montreal	Enhanced quality of life, well-being and security Recognition of another way to face socioeconomic challenges
<b>The society</b>	Reduce the social problems of the City Increase of the employability of people from disadvantaged social groups and marginalized communities Reduction of youth unemployment rates Help for people in need	Enhanced quality of life, well-being and security Fiscal impact Reduced dependence on social assistance Decreased demand for social services Decrease in employment insurance benefits

Source: Interviews 2014

The interviews with our respondents allowed us to identify the impact of work integration programs on both the individual and on society in general.

According to the social return indicators that we identified, we can report that there was a direct and positive impact on youth employment and their return to school, alongside their increased professional skills and self-confidence.

For the managers of *Falla*, there has been an increase of their expertise in developing street arts and in working with young people in difficulty, and an increase in the changes within themselves with regard to being sensitive to the problems of others.

Regarding la Tohu as an organization, we see that the success of *Falla* and Customer Service strengthened its positioning in society as an institution capable of accomplishing a cultural, environmental and human mission in the community. It is also a good example of the appropriation of know-how in the field of urban revitalization through the lever of culture.

Regarding the impact on the neighbourhood, la Tohu has helped to strengthen the sense of belonging, identity, integration and understanding of different communities living in the territory, and, above all, it has helped to build a more positive social image of the *Michelois*. As for the social impacts on the city and society, la Tohu and *Falla* essentially represent cultural options for all Montrealers while also bringing more visibility to the VSMPE borough.

### **3.1 SROI applied to *Falla* 2013. Estimation of the economic and social impact**

To complete our vision of the social value created by this type of program, we adapted the SROI methodology to measure the social return of the investment for the *Falla* project. It must be emphasized, first, that measuring the performance of this type of project is not easy. To achieve this, we combined the qualitative indicators emerging from interviews as well as quantitative data.

We adapted the SROI methodology, developed in San Francisco in the 1990s, to measure the return on investment in social programs. Today, an interest in SROI is widespread in the world. (The goal is to identify broader indicators of the social return of employment integration programs for youth). Nevertheless, we stress the limits of such a methodology, given the difficulty of quantifying social impacts and, in addition, the need to “monetize” the contributions. Taking account of this bias, we adapted our more qualitative methodology in order to develop a more multidimensional perspective.

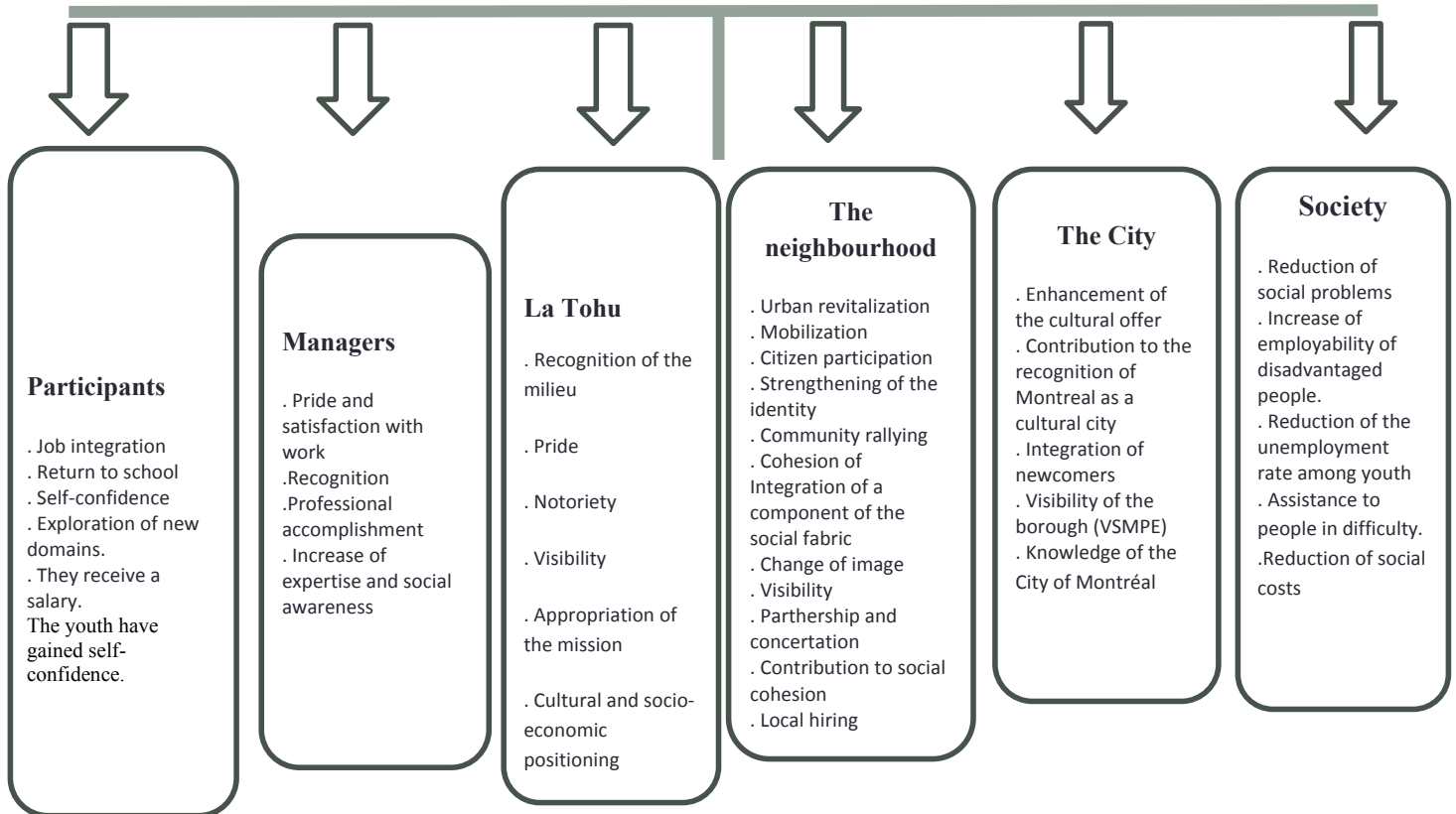
SROI is thus a method (non-exclusive and constantly evolving) intended for social purpose organizations that want to understand, measure and enhance their social impact, in addition to their financial results. Indeed, organizations that know and report on their social, economic and environmental impacts are hereby acquiring the means to become more sustainable than others. (IISS, 2011)

In order to apply SROI, we assume that all the 10 *falleros* engaged in the *Falla* project in 2013 were able to return to school and eventually find a better and more permanent employment.

To arrive at an estimate of social return on investment, we used and adapted an impact map used in the SROI methodology (Cahiers des l’IIES, 2011). Five steps were followed: Step 1: Identification of the stakeholders involved in the program (see Figure 2).

**FIGURE 2. IMPACT OF THE FALLA PROJECT**

**Impact of *Falla* on Specific Stakeholders**



Step 2: We did a compilation of the monetary contributions. In 2013, the funding for *Falla* allowed 10 *falleros* to train for a job or prepare to return to school. A total of \$112,012 was invested by the federal government, and the City of Montreal made a contribution of \$93,652 (Table 9). This contribution from the different levels of government was allocated to the budget items associated with the implementation of the *Falla* program (allowances for the *falleros* and salaries for three *Falla* managers), amounting to a total of \$205,664. The remaining funding was provided by la Tohu (\$13,768), sponsors (\$38,570) and other organizations, namely CCA and Horizon Ainées (\$59,004) (Table 9).

**Table 9. Financial contributions to Falla 2013**

Stakeholders	Investment of La Tohu	Investment of the partners
<b>La Tohu</b>	\$13,786	
<b>Government of Canada.</b> HRDC — Connexion Compétences. DCAP — Canadian Heritage.		\$112,012
<b>City of Montréal:</b> borough (VSMPE). Agreement Ville de Montréal (Ville culture and Les Arts et la Ville)		\$93,652
<b>Sponsors:</b> Gazmont, Van Houtte, Desjardins, DeSerres		\$38,570
<b>Other:</b> CCA, Horizon Aînées		\$59,001
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$317,206</b>

*Source: La Tohu. Budget Falla.*



SROI. MAP OF IMPACTS								
Name of organization	La Tohu							
Mission	HUMAN component: Contribute to the development of the Saint-Michel neighbourhood in Montreal							
Goal of the SROI analysis	Employment and social inclusion program for youth. Project Falla. (2013)							
Step 3						Step 4		
						Dead weight	Allocation	Net impact in \$
Stakeholders	Indicators	Quantity	Financial proxy	Value in \$	Source	%	%	%
Participants	No. of participants who receive a salary	10	Average income of families from the second quintile	32,700	Government of Quebec. Statistics on family incomes	5	5	294,300
	No. of participants who contribute to the tax base	10	Contribution of income tax	5,100	Government of Quebec and Government of Canada	5	5	45,900
Government	No. of participants who pay into the employment insurance fund	10	Contributions into employment insurance	768	Government of Canada. Contribution to employment insurance	5	5	6,912
	No. of managers who contribute to the tax base	3	Contribution to the tax base from revenue	6,747	Government of Quebec. Revenue from taxes	0	0	20,214
	No. of managers who pay into the employment insurance fund	3	Contribution to employment insurance	256	Government of Canada. Contribution to employment insurance	0	0	768
	Avoided costs for employment insurance (Government of Canada)	10	Contribution to employment insurance	12,474	Government of Canada	5	5	112,266
	Avoided costs for employment insurance (Government of Quebec)	10	Employment insurance payments in Quebec	7,320	Government of Quebec. Employment assistance	5	5	65,880
	Avoided costs for the justice system (Government of Canada)	6	Average cost per year per school drop-out to the justice system	9,960	Public Safety Canada. Government of Canada	10	10	47,808
	Avoided costs for the health system (Government of Quebec)	10	Average avoided healthcare costs per person per year of the second quintile of revenue	1,144	Expenditures in health by the Government of Quebec, 2013–2030	10	5	9,724
<b>Total</b>								<b>\$603,772</b>

**Table 10. Calculation of the SROI of the Falla project in 2013. Impact Map**

Sources: Websites of the Government of Canada. Section Employment insurance; Gouvernement du Québec. Revenu d'impôt. Gouvernement du Québec. Assistance-emploi. Ministère de la Sécurité publique du Canada. Ministère de la Sécurité publique du Québec. Gouvernement du Québec. Dépenses en santé du Gouvernement du Québec, 2013–2030.

**Step 3:** In this step, we have defined the measurable indicators to use and have detailed the monetary approximations that allow to quantify the financial value of the changes achieved (Table 10).

**Step 4:** To determine the impact achieved, we estimated the impacts that are not necessarily the results of the implementation of the *Falla* program by using two types of corrections (Table 10):

- (i) The “dead weight,” which is an estimate of the part of the result that would have been obtained if the activity had not taken place; and
- (ii) the “attribution,” which is an estimate of the part of the result owing to the contribution of other people or organizations. The dead weight and attribution are calculated in percentages (i.e., the proportion of the result that we cannot attribute to the organization) (Cahiers des l’IIES, 2011).

Table 10 shows the economic impact of the *Falla* project. As for the participants, the estimate is based on our assumption that the 10 participants who improved their professional skills by returning to school have found jobs that place them in the second quintile of family income, representing an annual salary of \$32,700. The income of all 10 participants amounted to \$294,300 after a deduction of 10% that takes account of the dead weight and the attribution.

We also estimated that the government recovers the money invested by way of the income tax contributions of the participants and the managers (\$66,114), representing a 10% correction, and that it also recovers money through employment insurance contributions of the participants and managers (\$7,680), namely \$378 for 33 weeks of social contributions per person.

The government recovers money invested through savings related to employment insurance payments (\$12,474 to 10 participants if they unemployed) for a total of \$124,740. With a 10% correction, this amount is 112,266 10%. Savings of \$73,200 associated with employment assistance services also accrue to government (\$7,320 for 10 participants). With a correction of 10%, the amount of savings is \$65,880.

We also estimated the avoided costs for the governments with regard to justice system and incarceration costs. For this calculation, we took as a reference the annual costs of the justice system for incarceration in 2011–2012 (\$9,960). According to statistics of the Quebec Ministry of Justice, two out of three youth who drop out of school are at risk of having legal problems if they are not supervised. In that sense, we assume that the government avoided paying justice system costs of at least six young high school dropouts, namely those who participated in the *Falla* program, representing savings of \$47,808 corrected at 20%.

We also estimated that governments avoid costs associated with health services, assuming that when participants move from the first quintile of family income into the second quintile they are also leaving the most vulnerable group with regard to health. Concretely, health costs per participant can be expected to drop by \$1,144, representing a total of \$11,440 and, with a correction of 15%, the amount avoided is \$9,724.

The estimated total of gains generated by the action of the *Falla* project, in terms of both participants' wages and the benefits to be drawn by the government, amounts to \$588,721.

**Step 5:** For this step, we applied a base value coefficient to the results of the relationship between the investment value and the value of the impacts, to which we applied a discount rate of 2.8%, which is the reference rate for Treasury Bills and Canadian bonds over the last 10 years. (Table 11 and 12).

**Table 11. Step 5. Calculating the social return coefficient. The portion of the partners for each \$ invested in the Falla 2013 project**

Falla 2013	Investment in \$	Investment for each \$
<b>Government investment:</b> Government of Canada: HRDC — Connexion Compétences. DCAP — Canadian Heritage. City of Montréal: borough (VSMPE). Agreement : City of Montréal (Ville culture and Les Arts et la Ville)	205,640	0.65
<b>Sponsors:</b> Gazmont, Van Houtte, Desjardins, DeSerres	38,570	0.12
<b>Other:</b> CCA, Horizon Aînées	59,001	0.19
<b>La Tohu</b>	13,786	0.04
<b>Total Investment</b>	<b>317,206</b>	<b>1\$</b>

Source: *La Tohu. Budget Falla 2013. Own calculations.*

**Table 12. Step 5. Calculation of economic gains and avoided costs as a result of the 2013 edition of the Falla project**

Falla 2013		
Government benefits	In \$	\$
The system receives revenues from the income tax payments of the participating youth.	45,900	0.16
The system receives revenues from the contributions from the participating youth into the employment insurance fund.	6,912	0.02
The system receives revenues associated with the income tax payments from the managers.	20,214	0.02

The system receives revenues from the contributions from the managers into the employment insurance fund.	768	0.001
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>73,794</b>	<b>0.20</b>
<b>Avoided costs for the government</b>		
Reduced employment insurance payments	112,266	0.35
Reduced social assistance payments	65,880	0.20
Avoided costs for the justice and incarceration system	47,808	0.15
Avoided costs for the health system	9,724	0.03
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>235,678</b>	<b>0.73</b>
<b>Salary received for the participants</b>	<b>294,300</b>	<b>0.92</b>
Total of economic gains and avoided costs	603,772	-
<b>Total of economic gains and avoided costs (discount rate 2.8%)* and base value</b>	<b>586,866</b>	<b>1.85</b>

*Source: Our calculations*

During this last step, we identified that the 2013 edition of *Falla* represented an investment that contributed to both economic growth and to the social development of young people and families for the year 2014. This means that the investment from the government and private partners of \$317,206 (Table 11) generated an economic gain and avoided costs of \$603,772 (Table 12). When we apply the discount rate of 2.8% (value of Treasury Bills and 10-year Canadian Bonds), that sum amounts to \$586,866. Dividing this amount by the initial investment (SROI ratio) gives us \$1.85. This means that for every dollar invested in the *Falla* project in 2013 there was a return of \$1.85. It should be noted that this value is based on estimates. We also identified non-measurable qualitative indicators, which increase the social value of youth employment integration programs.

We remind readers of the essential role played by the many volunteers who contribute to *Falla* by contributing some 10,000 hours of work each year. If we had included this contribution by using an estimate of the salaries which those people would have earned as professionals (with a reduced percentage to reflect the wages in the community sector), the actual investment (\$175,000) would have been much greater.

We remained conservative in our estimate of the social return, which, undoubtedly, is much greater considering the impact that occurred among participants and at different territorial levels. Thus, although these returns are hard to quantify, if at all, our study demonstrates that the *Falla* project undeniably contributed to the development of self-confidence and pride among the participants; to professional achievement and enhanced social awareness among managers; to

mobilization and integration of people in the community; and to support for this project from la Tohu and the community of the Saint-Michel neighbourhood.



# CONCLUSION

The interviews with our respondents allowed us to identify the impact of work integration programs both at individual level and for society in general.

According to the social return indicators that we identified, we can report that there was a direct and positive impact on youth with regard to their efforts to find employment or return to school and also with regard to their developing professional skills and self-confidence.

For the managers of *Falla*, there was an increase in their expertise in the development of street arts and in working with young people in difficulty as well as an increased awareness part of the problems of others.

Regarding la Tohu as an organization, the success of *Falla* and Customer Service has affirmed its positioning in society as an institution capable of accomplishing a cultural, environmental and human mission in the community. It also represents the appropriation of know-how in the field of urban revitalization through the lever of culture.

Regarding the impact on the neighbourhood, La Tohu has helped to strengthen the sense of belonging, identity, integration and understanding of different communities living in the territory and has above all helped to build a more positive social representation of the *Michelois*. Compared with the social impact on the city and society, la Tohu and *Falla* represent cultural options for Montreal as a whole and bring more visibility to the VSMPE borough.

The results of the study have allowed us to validate the success of employment inclusion programs identified in the first part of this study. The achievements of the young participants in the employment integration and social inclusion programs were met.

The local hiring policy of la Tohu has created opportunities for young people seeking entry to the labour market or an incentive to continue their education in the Saint-Michel neighbourhood. The youth with this work experience are better equipped to find a stable job, to return to school and also tend to have better self-esteem and a better quality of life thereafter. The success of both of the employment integration programs for young people constitute the fulfillment of the human mission of la Tohu.

In developing this partnership study, La Tohu was also interested in obtaining the points of view of the managers who are mentoring the young people in the employment integration programs. Based on the responses from the managers, there are constraints related to the challenges of financing *Falla*, which is highly dependent on government funding. There are also constraints related to an infrastructure that is inadequate for the performance of the program activities as well as a lack of adequate skills to better manage the programs and the psychosocial problems of the youth.

The characteristics and particularities of an organization such as la Tohu pose challenges to managers that could destabilize their action. But, as a space for **creative instability**, associated with its mission that integrates the circus, the community and the environment, the managers are proud to be associated with la Tohu, even if this presents difficulties or challenges in fully understanding this mission in order to guide their daily work. Most respondents agree that la Tohu is an organization where it is possible to work creatively in a stimulating work environment.

In general, all categories of respondents expressed benefitting, or having benefitted, from a very good and professionally rewarding work experience at la Tohu, one that marked their lives positively. The majority of interviewees would have liked to stay on at la Tohu as full-time employees, which shows the degree of satisfaction of the participants with the organization.

This study has attempted to identify the SROI indicators for employment integration programs for youth. The impact is quite large. First, given the direct benefits to the young people involved in the programs; secondly, given the positive effects which the action has on society; third, given the managers, who engage in the programs, ready to tackle the challenges they have identified; and fourth, given the structuring and advantageous effects which the programs can bring to the urban revitalization of the Saint-Michel neighbourhood and to la Tohu as an organization.

Our calculation of the socioeconomic impact and social return on investment of the *Falla* project allowed us to see that the resources invested by the government in employment integration programs for young people, far from representing a tax burden for the various levels of government, on the contrary contribute to economic growth and to improving citizens' quality of life, and especially to the urban revival of disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Government support for this type of program is an investment in the future of Quebec society.



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Interviews in 2014 with la *Falla* participants, Customer Service representatives, and managers and administrators at La Tohu.



# ANNEXES

## **Interview questions**

Examples of questions discussed during the interview based on the questionnaire received by interviewees..

### **Those who have worked at La Tohu in the past**

When did you work at la Tohu? For how long?

Why did you apply for this job?

What did you do before working at la Tohu?

Specifically, what work did you do?

What did you learn?

Was there sufficient support to enable you to acquire the necessary skills for the job?

How would you rate your experience?

What do you do now?

Are you going to school or are you working?

If you work, how did your experience at la Tohu help you find your new job?

Would you have liked to have had a permanent job at la Tohu, if it had been available?

Do you consider your work at la Tohu as an exceptional experience? Why? Why not?

Are there aspects of the work that you did not value or appreciate?

### **Those who worked on a specific project such as Falla (only once during the year, in the summer)**

The same questions as above. The support given to the young people participating in Falla is exceptional. The interviewees had the opportunity to assess this support with regard to its efficiency or inefficiency.

### **Supervisor / Manager**

Those who engage directly with the young people on a daily basis.

How do you evaluate the experience?

What are the challenges in working with young people who have no work experience and who often come from precarious situations (family, school, etc.)?

Do you have the tools and support needed to oversee their work?

Are you in touch with former employees?

### **Administrative staff / manager, etc.**

Are you aware of the daily work of the young people hired by la Tohu?

What are the necessary infrastructures to support their training?

What are the challenges you see as “employer”?

Are you in touch with those who work directly with these employees?

Is there a follow-up after the youth leave la Tohu to assess your work and commitment?

Is la Tohu able to accomplish its mission through its efforts to work in direct collaboration with the young people it employs? Is it able to provide a springboard for reaching higher education goals or employment opportunities?