Is the Transition Accessible?

Addressing Barriers to Disability-Inclusive Climate Action

Tuesday December 1

2:30–4:30 pm

210 Tory Building

Dr. Sébastien Jodoin

Dr. Sébastien Jodoin is the Associate Dean (Research) and an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Law of McGill University, where he holds the Canada Research Chair (tier 2) in Human Rights, Health, and the Environment. Drawing on his lived experience with multiple sclerosis, he directs the Disability-Inclusive Climate Action Research Programme, a pioneering initiative to generate, co-produce, and translate knowledge at the intersections of disability and climate justice. He has won numerous awards and honours, including McGill University's Outstanding Emerging Researcher Award (2023) and McGill University's Changemaker Prize (2023), given to scholars whose dedication to sharing their expertise with the media and the public has significantly impacted society.

Although people with disabilities are among the most affected by climate impacts and inaccessible urban environments, policies to reduce carbon emissions and enhance climate resilience all too often fail to include them. This talk presents key findings from two studies: one examining how transport decarbonization affects people with disabilities in Montréal, Canada, and another studying the lived experience of climate impacts for people with disabilities in Kerala, India. Across these very different contexts, a common pattern emerges: policies designed to cut emissions or reduce risk frequently reinforce physical, social, economic, and institutional barriers.

Using a social-relational model of disability, the talk shows how ableism intersects with poverty, inadequate housing, and limited access to care to shape vulnerability, foregrounding the agency and expertise of disability communities, whose creative adaptation strategies and mutual aid strengthen resilience for all.

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