

Participant Bio's

Ben Mortenson, BscOT, MSc, Ph.D., OT



Ben Mortenson is an associate professor in the Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy at the University of British Columbia and an Investigator with Canadian Institutes of Health Research. He is a principal investigator at the GF Strong Rehabilitation Research Program and International Collaboration on Repair Discoveries. He is an experienced mixed-methods researcher with over 75 peer-reviewed publications. His work is centered on four main populations: assistive technology users, informal and formal caregivers, individuals with spinal cord injury, and residents in long-term care. His research focuses on four overlapping areas: assistive technology, social participation, care-giving and outcome measurement.

Examples of his current research includes studies to a) evaluate the outcomes of scooter skills training, b) identify of barriers to participation among people who use different types of mobility devices, c) develop of novel technologies to help informal caregivers, and d) explore of the experiences of those ageing with spinal cord injury versus those who acquire one later in life. He is the PI for the Vancouver site of the dEMAND (Enabling Mobility and Participation among those with Disabilities) project.

Delphine Labbé, Ph.D.



Delphine Labbé is a postdoctoral fellow under the supervision of Dr. Bill Miller. She completed a Ph.D. in community psychology and is interested in understanding the impact of environmental factors on the social participation of people with disabilities. Her research focuses on community rehabilitation and the impact of activities on social participation and mobility.

Atiya Mahmood, Ph.D.



Atiya Mahmood, Ph.D. is an Associate Professor in the Department of Gerontology at Simon Fraser University. Her training is in Environmental Gerontology and her research focuses on health and built environments for older adults with specific interest in neighbourhood and housing environments, mobility and social participation of older adults and persons with disability. She has over two decades experience in qualitative and mixed methods research in the area of environment and behaviour studies, aging and built environment.

She has served as CO-I or CO-PI on national and international funded projects on urban design and walkability/mobility, housing and quality of life for diverse groups of older adults. Her recently funded research on mobility, environment and active living include an Alexander Von Humboldt Foundation Fellowship for Senior Researchers that resulted in the development and piloting of a User-Led Built Environmental Audit Tool: Stakeholders Walkability/Wheelability Audit of Neighbourhoods (SWAN).

Her ongoing projects are: Enabling Mobility and Participation Among those with Disabilities (dEMAND, funded through SSHRC-as part of the Canadian Disability Participation Project). In this project, the SWAN tool is being used by assistive device users to collect data on micro-scale urban design features (such as sidewalk design, curb cuts, slopes, etc.) in selected sections of the Cities of Vancouver, North Vancouver and New Westminster to determine the barriers and facilitators to mobility/accessibility in their neighbourhoods.

Brad McCannell



Brad's expertise in the area of disability comes from both personal experience and practical knowledge. In 1992, he formed Canadian Barrier Free Design Inc. to fill the gap between the building code requirements and the real needs of people with disabilities.

As a leader in the field of accessibility for the past 25 years, Brad has extensive experience in

the application of universal design across the built environment, providing accessibility consultations for buildings and organizations including Rogers Arena, Richmond Olympic Oval, Vancouver International Airport, University of British Columbia, and various Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Justin Hall



Justin Hall is the Pedestrian and Streetscape Planner for the City of North Vancouver and the city staff representative to the North Shore Advisory Committee on Disability Issues. Currently, he is working with researchers from the DEMAND project to develop guidelines to improve accessibility around temporary obstructions caused by construction or repairs within the pedestrian network. Outside of the office, Justin enjoys venturing as far as possible into BC's wilderness, while still making it back to his desk by 8:30 Monday morning.