

News Release
For immediate release

Through a \$2.5 million donation from Desjardins Group

Université de Sherbrooke launches 2 projects: Desjardins accelerator for entrepreneurial practices and Desjardins chair in responsible finance

Sherbrooke, February 1, 2016 – In the next decade, 100,000 businesses in Quebec will need new owners. To face this challenge, Université de Sherbrooke and Desjardins are teaming up to create the program Desjardins accelerator for entrepreneurial practices —a first in Quebec—which will aim to seek out and support promising entrepreneurs.

Students in training will work in an exceptional environment to prepare for the entrepreneurial world. From business start-ups to personalized coaching, from student entrepreneurship support initiatives to opportunities to take part in existing projects in various fields (e.g., engineering, medicine and science), everything will be in place to ensure proper succession planning—something that Quebec needs.

“Our major campaign *Promising Futures, Shared Passions* stands out for the impact and scope of its key projects,” says campaign chair Normand Legault. “Today’s announcement regarding projects with direct and positive impacts shows that Université de Sherbrooke is willing to anticipate tomorrow’s challenges and address the issues that are critical to our community’s economic development.”

“Desjardins has been supporting entrepreneurship and succession planning for many years,” says Monique F. Leroux, Chair of the Board, President and CEO of Desjardins Group. “Our donation to Université de Sherbrooke reflects this commitment and allows us to go even further in implementing support measures for the next generation of entrepreneurs. Université de Sherbrooke shares our organization’s values and is driven by the same entrepreneurial culture for increasing Quebec’s collective wealth.”

Training tomorrow’s entrepreneurs is a pressing need. “At Université de Sherbrooke, an entire entrepreneurial network is currently being implemented to develop our students’ entrepreneurial skills,” says Luce Samoisette, a professor and President of Université de Sherbrooke. “I’d like to say a big thank you to Desjardins for its major contribution and its renewed trust in our institution, which will help strengthen our network.”

The Desjardins chair in responsible finance

Committed to addressing Quebec’s challenges, Université de Sherbrooke and Desjardins Group are also creating the position of Desjardins chair in responsible finance. “The Desjardins chair in responsible finance will be tasked with developing expertise related to the social and environmental impact of financial decisions, and helping us deal with the issues of responsible management,” explains François Coderre, Dean of the Faculty of Administration.

The donation amount will be used to offer financial support to graduate research students, grant recruitment scholarships, support activities for the Simulation Objectif Wall Street (the only stock market competition in Quebec that integrates concepts of responsible finance), and launch innovative responsible finance projects that highlight the expertise of both Université de Sherbrooke collaborators and Desjardins Group professionals.

Université de Sherbrooke's major campaign: Bold and innovative

Université de Sherbrooke is running its sixth major fundraising campaign with the theme *Promising Futures, Shared Passions*. This historic campaign promotes major projects, each of which has its own financial goal. The project will contribute to the development of every aspect of society. Based on a relational approach, the campaign relies on the support of stakeholders who encourage their network to lend a hand with a project that's important to them.

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