

HEC Montréal's new building opens:

Offering a wider variety of continuing education programs downtown and fostering collaboration among organizations and academics

Montréal, September 15, 2023 – HEC Montréal's Hélène Desmarais Building, which is in the heart of Montreal's business district, was inaugurated today in the presence of Mr. François Legault, Premier of Quebec, Ms. Pascale Déry, Minister of Higher Education, and nearly 300 dignitaries, partners and members of the business community.

Diploma or short-term programs

This new institutional base downtown, which is located on rue De La Gauchetière Ouest, at the Côte du Beaver Hall intersection, provides greater opportunities for employed individuals and executives. Its main focus is on continuing education in the form of diploma and short-term programs, since there is an increasing need for such kinds of training in Quebec.

The building welcomed its first cohorts on August 26 this year, and during the fall term of 2023, over 3,200 students will attend one of the 150 different courses being offered onsite. Around 225 staff members either work or have a base there.

The new place of learning hosts MBA and McGill – HEC Montréal EMBA programs, certificates, Specialized Graduate Diplomas and Short Graduate Programs. There are also short-term training courses by Executive Education HEC Montréal, which meet the needs of some 9,000 people per year and whose programs cover a wide range of current topics including emotional intelligence, digital intelligence, climate leadership, ethics, and change management. First Nations Executive Education has also been set up here.

This new building, which also addresses a serious shortage of space, has been designed to reflect a modern and unifying place thanks to its light-filled areas dedicated to networking and state-of-the-art facilities. It will enable employed individuals coming downtown to make the most of its services, in the sense that experiential, in-person pedagogy is essential for the acquisition of knowledge. Thus, it offers an enriched learning experience.

Fostering collaboration among academics and the business community

The building also houses branches of over ten research groups and centres for facilitating knowledge transfer to companies and organizations, as well as innovation and start-up incubators and accelerators, plus a state-of-the-art conference centre. Its strategic location, at the heart of the business ecosystem, will foster dialogue and collaboration among organizations and research teams whose expertise helps address social issues such as sustainable development, business ethics, digital transformation and artificial intelligence.

A place that fits seamlessly into the neighbourhood and community

The Hélène Desmarais Building is part of a process that respects and revitalizes the neighbourhood for the benefit of the surrounding community. Every effort has been made to harmonize the building and respect the integration site. Its architecture was designed in such a way as to maintain views onto St. Patrick's Basilica and highlight it.

From the moment the project began, HEC Montréal adopted a collaborative approach by involving the neighbourhood and the community in the design of its new building. The School will continue in this spirit to create a vibrant hub for dialogue in an inclusive and caring environment. The site offers everyone accessible spaces such as the library, common areas, cafeteria, and indoor garden. Rooms will also be made available to the business community for organizing special events.

A modern and sustainable building

The design of this timeless, eco-friendly building by Provencher Roy Associés Architectes Inc. aimed for respectful integration with the host environment. Its light and dynamic architecture—due in large part to its varying height dimensions and the materials used—and its contemporary style offer a modern and brightly lit learning environment with a surface area of over 24,000 m² and spread across eight levels.

Registered with the Canada Green Building Council, this building seeks to achieve LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Gold certification to improve occupant well-being, environmental performance and economic returns of the building.

The works of two Quebec artists have been installed in the building in keeping with the policy set out by Quebec's Ministère de la Culture et des Communications on the integration of art into architecture and environment. They are *Mappemonde*, an immense 2D bas-relief created by Nicolas Baier, and *Théâtralité contextuelle*, a monumental 3D sculpture designed by Ludovic Boney.

Over 1,000 donors from the School community

Une part importante de ce nouvel édifice, dont les travaux de construction ont été entamés à l'automne 2019, a été financée grâce aux dons de plus de 1000 membres de la communauté de HEC Montréal comme des personnes diplômées et des partenaires corporatifs. La Fondation HEC Montréal, par sa généreuse contribution, a atteint à ce jour 95 % de son objectif de financement de 39,3 millions de dollars. À cette source de financement s'ajoutent celle du gouvernement du Québec de 108,5 millions de dollars et celle de HEC Montréal qui a investi 87,4 millions de dollars. Le coût total du projet est de 235,2 millions de dollars.

Citations

"I am proud to participate in the inauguration of HEC Montréal's Hélène Desmarais Building. We are fortunate to have such a high-level French-language business school in Québec, which has allowed us to educate Quebecers as management professionals and businesspeople. Our young people are Québec's greatest asset and I am proud that our government has invested \$108.5M in this project to foster economic excellence in French and to train talented young management professionals." **François Legault, Premier of Québec**

"Higher education is crucial for fostering innovation, creating wealth, expanding knowledge and enabling Quebec to carve out a place for itself on the international stage. This new building embodies the very essence of HEC Montréal's culture of excellence and its mission to make a meaningful contribution to society. This is what has always motivated my involvement in the School." **Hélène Desmarais, Chair of the Board of Directors, HEC Montréal**

"Our return to downtown Montréal will increase accessibility to our continuing education programs. It will also lead to greater collaboration with the academic, social, cultural, creative, business and entrepreneurship communities. This building, along with the ones in the Côte-des-Neiges district, will help accomplish the School's missions of teaching, research and providing services to the community, with the purpose of implementing positive actions that are constantly attuned to the needs of modern society." **Federico Pasin, Director, HEC Montréal**

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"Our building is modern and functional and blends harmoniously and respectfully into its surroundings. The principles of sustainable development are etched into its walls and its soul. This is a symbol of pride for us, especially since its construction cost remained well within the budget." **Loretta Cianci, Director, Campus Development, HEC Montréal**

See the press kit: https://www.hec.ca/salle_de_presse/inauguration

- 30 -

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