

# Press Release

## Major Contribution of \$500,000 for Innovation and Entrepreneurship

September 12, 2022 – Toronto – Collège Boréal

Collège Boréal is pleased to announce a significant financial contribution from the Desjardins GoodSpark Fund toward the creation of a space for innovation, research, and incubation (EIRI: *Espace d'innovation, de recherche et d'incubation*) at the Collège's new Toronto campus in the Distillery District.

EIRI will provide French-speaking creators and entrepreneurs in Toronto with the support, expertise, and environment needed to succeed in their projects. Training, workshops, and support to learn the basics of accounting and human resources or the legal aspects of starting a business are among the services that will be available to the future generation of Francophone entrepreneurs.

### A Space for Everyone

Desjardins Group and Collège Boréal share common and complementary values. EIRI brings together many of these values, including excellence, accessibility to education, inclusion, and development. For this reason, all of EIRI's services will be free of charge, focusing on the needs of communities and students, and promoting a strong, dynamic and unifying entrepreneurial culture. Young entrepreneurs will receive particular attention, including support at various stages of project development, from design to grant seeking and coaching.

### Long-Standing Partners

The ties between Desjardins Group and Collège Boréal go back a long way. Over the years, Desjardins has contributed more than \$600,000 to various Boréal projects and initiatives, demonstrating its commitment to Ontario's Francophone community. Collège Boréal is proud to count many of its graduates among Desjardins teams across the province. This new commitment strengthens existing ties and will give new momentum to the Franco-Ontarian entrepreneurial community.

### Quotes

*"With this donation, Desjardins Group is making a new and clear commitment to the Francophone community in Ontario and reaffirming its confidence that Collège Boréal can train the entrepreneurs of tomorrow. We do not take this show of confidence lightly: our desire to contribute to the vitality of the Franco-Ontarian economy and communities across the province is at the heart of our day-to-day decisions. We look forward to launching this dynamic, unifying, and creative space for the next generation of entrepreneurs."*

- Daniel Giroux, President of Collège Boréal

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"Investing in innovative projects that support young aspiring entrepreneurs is part of our values at Desjardins. They are the key to building a strong and resilient economy and future. We are proud to be a part of Collège Boréal's Espace d'innovation, de recherche et d'incubation and to play a role in providing Francophone entrepreneurs with accessible expertise and guidance as they begin their business journey."

- Guy Cormier, President and CEO of Desjardins Group

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## Information

Martine Laberge  
Manager – Communications and Media Relations  
Cell: 705-557-0012  
[martine.laberge@collegeboreal.ca](mailto:martine.laberge@collegeboreal.ca)

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### **About the GoodSpark Fund**

In 2016, Desjardins created a \$250 million fund to invest in communities and support projects that will have the potential to shape our society by 2024. The Fund supports projects that meet community priorities, such as employment, economic vitality, education, and the environment. To date, the Fund has supported over 700 projects.

### **About Desjardins Group**

Desjardins Group is the largest cooperative financial group in North America and the fifth largest cooperative financial group in the world, with assets of \$404 billion. In 2022, it was named one of Canada's Top 100 Employers by Mediacorp. To meet the diverse needs of its members and clients, Desjardins offers a full range of products and services to individuals and businesses through its extensive distribution network, online platforms, and subsidiaries across Canada. Ranked among the world's strongest banks according to The Banker magazine, Desjardins has some of the highest capital ratios and credit ratings in the industry.

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### **About Collège Boréal**

Created in Sudbury in 1995, Collège Boréal is a French-language post-secondary education and training institution that works toward the development and growth of the various Ontario communities it serves.

Through its 37 sites including 7 campuses in 26 communities, Collège Boréal offers a high level of expertise in post-secondary education, basic training, apprenticeship, immigrant services, employment services, customized training and applied research.

### **Learn more**

To find out more about Collège Boréal's programs and services, please visit our website at [www.collegeboreal.ca](http://www.collegeboreal.ca) or follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).