



*Press Release  
For immediate release*

**The Cooperation Council of Ontario and Desjardins are announcing the creation of Espace Desjardins, a new francophone business ecosystem in the heart of Toronto.**

**Toronto, April 1, 2021** - The **Cooperation Council of Ontario** and **Desjardins** are proud to announce the establishment of **Espace Desjardins** in Toronto, a French-speaking business ecosystem in the heart of the city. This unique space will offer entrepreneurs and businesses in the Canadian and international Francophonie a dynamic and inclusive space, promoting entrepreneurial growth, exchanges and the creation of synergies towards innovation.

Specifically, Espace Desjardins Toronto will offer:

1. Physical spaces allowing the rental of modular private or shared offices;
2. Opportunities to forge creative partnerships through systematic networking activities;
3. Entrepreneurial training programs ranging from pre-incubation to incubation and acceleration.

By the end of 2022, we hope to welcome **210 visiting entrepreneurs**, to host **200 activities and events** (conferences, training, networking, etc.) and to organize various programs related to business development.

Julien Geremie, General Manager of the CCO: "Espace Desjardins will play a key role in the development, advancement and growth of Francophone entrepreneurship in Ontario. In line with the very nature of our world-class provincial capital, it will be a veritable francophone hub of creativity and innovation. We call on all interested companies to join in the adventure: make Ontario and Toronto the center of your business interests in North America. "

The creation of Espace Desjardins was made possible thanks to a significant financial contribution from the Fonds du Grand Mouvement de Desjardins, totaling \$ 100,000. More than thirty socio-economic partners are also mobilized around the project.

**About the Cooperation Council of Ontario**

The Cooperation Council of Ontario (OCC) uses cooperation as a development model for Francophone and bilingual communities in Ontario. It ensures the development and growth of cooperatives and social enterprises, it strengthens collaboration within communities, it produces high-level research, it manages organizations with high potential and it connects collective enterprises in Ontario and of the world.

**About Desjardins Ontario Credit Union**

Desjardins Ontario Credit Union serves 130,000 active members mainly in the private, commercial, real estate and agricultural sectors and has 51 branches. It has a business volume of more than \$17.1 billion and assets of more than \$8.5 billion. This strong, high-performing organization, with rich and diverse expertise, has 650 employees, making them a major employer in Ontario. It is governed by a board of directors consisting of 17 elected directors and 2 young intern directors. This new credit union ranks 2nd among Ontario caisses populaires and credit unions according to assets and business volume.

**Information**

Marc Girouard

Communications director

Cooperation Council of Ontario

613 745-8619, ext 108

[marc.girouard@cco.coop](mailto:marc.girouard@cco.coop)