



Press Release
For immediate release
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Campus Montréal major fundraising campaign **Exceptional \$4.5 million support from Desjardins**

Montreal, December 10, 2013 – Desjardins Group has boosted its support for Campus Montréal, the joint fundraising campaign by HEC Montréal, Polytechnique Montréal and Université de Montréal, to \$4.5 million. As part of the Campus Montréal campaign, Desjardins today made a sizeable gift of \$3.5 million to HEC Montréal. This generous donation comes on top of another \$1 million that Desjardins has already contributed to Polytechnique Montréal.

The gift to HEC Montréal will allow the School to carry out ongoing research and study projects on the co-operative model. Hélène Desmarais, Chairperson of the Board of HEC Montréal, welcomed this exceptional support, noting how “This new partnership with Desjardins will contribute to our mission of training the next generation of managers and entrepreneurs by allowing us to better understand the co-operative approach to business development.”

An evolving, highly fruitful relationship

HEC Montréal Director Michel Patry is also delighted with this support. He notes that HEC Montréal and Desjardins Group already have a long history of collaboration, and that he felt it was time to put the relationship on a more formal footing. “The co-operative model has been attracting growing interest around the world since 2008, since co-operative businesses more easily weathered the crisis. We want to better understand this phenomenon and train the next generation of managers so that they are even better equipped to contribute to our society’s development.” In the coming months, HEC Montréal and Desjardins Group will be announcing some specific projects resulting from this partnership.

Desjardins Group, Canada’s leading co-operative financial group, has hundreds of HEC Montréal graduates in its ranks. For Chair of the Board, President and Chief Executive Officer Monique F. Leroux, this partnership with HEC Montréal will benefit everyone. “Quebec has about 3,000 co-operatives in all sectors of the economy. For these businesses, as for any business, management excellence is a key to success. And management excellence is exactly what HEC Montréal represents. By working together we will contribute to the growth and recognition of co-operatives.”

Fundamental support for Polytechnique Montréal

The announcement of this remarkable donation to HEC Montréal was also an opportunity to salute the significant impact of the partnership between Desjardins and Polytechnique Montréal since 2007. “The contribution by the Desjardins Group has supported technological advances and the development of scientific knowledge in the area of sustainable development. We have created admission scholarships for deserving students, set up a 6-credit integrative project in sustainable development for students from all the Polytechnique’s engineering programs and from the Université de Montréal’s Faculty of Architecture, and created Place Alphonse-Desjardins, which has become a highly popular meeting place for our

students. Excellence, education and student life – that is the impact of philanthropy on our institutions,” explains Christophe Guy, CEO of Polytechnique Montréal.

“This generous donation by Desjardins shows the growing interest on the part of the business community, which sees the immense strategic importance of a world-class university complex for Montréal. This notion of active citizenship, of shared responsibility, bodes very well for Quebec’s future,” says Guy Breton, Rector of the Université de Montréal.

About Campus Montréal

Campus Montréal is the umbrella organization bringing together HEC Montréal, Polytechnique Montréal and Université de Montréal for a joint fundraising campaign. These three institutions make up the biggest Francophone university complex in the world, and the leading centre of university research in Canada. The institutions that make up Campus Montréal are in the top one per cent of the world's best universities. John Parisella is Executive Director of the Campus Montréal major fundraising campaign, with Louise Arbour, Hélène Desmarais, Geoffrey Molson, Michael Sabia and Thierry Vandal serving as co-chairs. With a goal of \$500 million, this is the most ambitious fundraising campaign ever launched by French-language university institutions. To date, the Campus Montréal major campaign has raised over \$200 million. www.campus-montreal.ca

About Desjardins Group

[Desjardins Group](#) is the fifth largest cooperative financial group in the world with assets of \$210 billion. To meet the diverse needs of its members and clients, Desjardins offers a full range of products and services through its extensive distribution network, online platforms and subsidiaries across Canada. The group has one of the highest capital ratios and [credit ratings](#) in the industry, and outranks all American banks as the fourth safest and strongest bank in North America according to *Global Finance* magazine and *Bloomberg News* respectively. In keeping with their cooperative nature, Desjardins Caisses’ surplus earnings are reinvested into the communities they serve.

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