

A black and white map of the D3 Innovation Hub area, showing a dense network of streets and buildings, with a large, irregularly shaped area highlighted in white.

10

YEARS

1000

STARTUPS

ANNUAL_REPORT_2023



As we celebrate 10 years of growth, we look forward to continue to support change makers from idea to impact, helping startups scale globally to create economic, social, and environmental benefits for all.

**_THE MOST
COMPREHENSIVE
PORTFOLIO IN QUÉBEC**

→ Change is a chain reaction, the product of cultural transformation and collaborative disruption. D3 is the place where great ideas encounter the right people, at the right time. With a wide-ranging portfolio, an international network, and multidisciplinary expertise, we are the most comprehensive innovation hub in Quebec.





10 YEARS 1000 STARTUPS

+ 1000 Startups supported since 2014

+ \$160M Sales & funds raised since 2014

+ 454 Average startups active jobs / year

+ 20K Community members

+ 3200 Coaching and mentoring
hours offered in 2023

+ 116 Experts in residence in 2023

+ 80 Global network partners

55% of founders in 2023 were immigrants

40% of MentorConnect founders
are women or non-binary



D3 HUB'S EVOLUTION

_A DECADE OF EMPOWERING CHANGE MAKERS

→ D3 was founded on the idea that **innovation can give anyone the ability to create a positive impact.** Through entrepreneurship, we help people solve local and global challenges to build a more fair and sustainable society. Over the last decade, Concordia University's D3 Innovation Hub has evolved from one startup program into a comprehensive offering.

Through the transformational power of entrepreneurship, we support change makers move from **idea to impact.** Innovation is never about one person changing the world; it's multifaceted, human, and cultural. That's why our community isn't just made up of startups in acceleration; we welcome everyone who wants to take part in the culture of change – whether as inspiring leaders, research pioneers, drivers of social change, investors, mentors, engaged students, or creators of the next 'big thing.'

Amidst the rapid technological advancements and evolving business paradigms in 2023, we equip our community with new skills and frameworks for design thinking, foresight practice, and responsible governance.

Thank you for being an integral part of D3 Innovation Hub's journey. Together, our efforts extend far beyond entrepreneurship: **We drive empowerment, innovation, and positive change.** We look forward to tackling the challenges and opportunities that the future holds, remaining dedicated to making a lasting impact.

Xavier HENRI-HERVÉ

*Executive Director of D3 Innovation Hub
– Concordia Innovation Fellow*



**_SUPPORTING
ENTREPRENEURSHIP IS MORE
IMPORTANT THAN EVER**



→ A [2023 RBC study](#) shows a strong entrepreneurial drive in Quebec, exceeding the national average: **80% of Quebec respondents see business ownership as crucial for professional growth**, compared to the national average of 65%. Despite this, there is a significant gap between intention and action – the transition to entrepreneurship and building a new venture is low, with only 1 out of 1000 individuals taking the leap. [BDC findings](#) reveal a declining trend in Canadian entrepreneurship, with the current rate less than half of what it was twenty years ago.

Entrepreneurs are the backbone of Canada’s economy, driving innovation, net new job creation, and growth and transformation. Helping entrepreneurs start, manage, and grow their business is more important than ever. Through our comprehensive

programs and targeted support, D3 Innovation Hub nurtures and activates individuals along their entrepreneurial journey.

It takes an ecosystem to raise successful startups. The D3 Innovation Hub thrives on a collaborative culture supported by strategic partnerships and government initiatives like [Hypercroissance Québec](#) and the [Research and Innovation Investment Strategy](#). In 2023, these initiatives allocated CA\$110 million (\$81 million) for a new international entrepreneurship hub, [AX-C](#), of which we are proud founding members.

**IT TAKES AN ECOSYSTEM
TO RAISE SUCCESSFUL
STARTUPS**





_RECOGNITION AT HOME AND ABROAD

→ In 2023, D3 Innovation Hub received both international acclaim and strong recognition at home. We were recognized as one of the top 5 incubators in Quebec by [The Ministère de l'Économie, de l'Innovation et de l'Énergie \(MEIE\)](#). Additionally, our Managing Director and Concordia Innovation Fellow, Xavier-Henri Hervé, won the Male Entrepreneur of the Year in the Americas at the [Triple E Awards](#) – a global recognition of efforts towards the quest for entrepreneurship and engagement in higher education.

But the story is not about us, it's about the **people**, the protagonists: they are entrepreneurs, researchers, students, stakeholders, society, earth. If innovation were a garden, we would be the gardeners. We're convinced that impact-driven people thrive when they're part of an inspiring and creative ecosystem. We're not the force that creates the movement, but the nurturers of a soil where change can flourish. And this begins with the values we share: **inclusion, boldness, empathy, passion, and multidisciplinary collaboration.**

IF INNOVATION WERE
A GARDEN, WE WOULD
BE THE GARDENERS

EMPOWERING PEOPLE TO SOLVE LOCAL AND GLOBAL CHALLENGES

_OUR VISION

→ Drive an entrepreneurial community committed to global impact through innovation and collaboration.

_OUR MISSION

→ Inspire and empower change makers to shape a better tomorrow.

Our role is to cultivate creative disruption and equip our community with the knowledge, network, and skills to accelerate towards a positive impact. For that, D3 hub offers space & legitimacy to allow every impact maker to meet their potential.



INNOVATION IS MULTIDISCIPLINARY, AND SO IS OUR SERVICE OFFERING

Whether building a successful business, developing disruptive technologies, inspiring future generations, or exploring the secrets of the universe, **our comprehensive portfolio empowers people** to move forward with firm steps. We help individuals **change the world** or simply **overcome the obstacles along the way of change** to succeed in their journey.

DISTRICT 3

→ [District 3](#) Accelerator nurtures and develops multidisciplinary startup teams in bio, healthcare, and high tech that harness emerging technologies to create businesses with a global impact. Since its founding in 2014, District 3 has supported over 1,000+ startups, generating \$45.5M \$CA in sales and raising \$145M \$CA in funding. In 2023, District 3 showcased its most promising startups on the world stage at events like the [Web Summit](#) in Lisbon, [Synbio Conference](#) in San Francisco, [Vivatech](#) in Paris, and [Health Vegas](#) in collaboration with [Centech](#), [CTS](#), and [MaRS Discovery District](#).

MENTOR CONNECT

→ [MentorConnect](#) drives the transition from startup teams and cofounders to successful leaders of SMEs. As the gold-standard team mentoring program in Montréal, MentorConnect is part of a global network with 80+ [MIT VMS licensed organizations](#). Through a deliberate effort, MentorConnect has worked to expand its support of women founders – in 2023, 40% of startups were led by women founders versus a [low national average of 18%](#).

BALSAM

→ [Balsam](#) Impact Incubator supports individuals, startups, and communities dedicated to tackling social, and environmental issues via entrepreneurship. Through innovative programs including Systems Mapping and Ideation as well as initiatives that target underrepresented groups like the neurodiverse community, Balsam is reshaping the landscape for future change makers. In 2023, Balsam designed over 6 events engaging the neurodiverse community in collaboration with key organizations including [Auticon](#), [Completely Inclusif](#), [Alzheimer Society Montreal](#). Through collaborations with [Un & Un Font Mille](#), [Numana](#), [Mangrove](#), [Forces fraîches](#), and [La Maison d'Innovation Sociale \(MIS\)](#), Balsam launched 13 projects involving both youth and seniors interested in solving the critical challenges of aging.

V1 STUDIO

→ [V1 Studio](#) provides a bridge between academia and entrepreneurship, offering researchers programs to help transform their research into tangible solutions, driving impact inside and outside of academia. In 2023, V1 Studio expanded its reach by collaborating with 10 universities across Quebec. The [Quebec Scientific Entrepreneurship \(QCSE\)](#)

program nearly doubled in participant numbers in 2023, coinciding with the launch of two essential programs – [REN](#) and [Lab2Market Validate](#) – alongside the introduction of a new videocast series, [Zones Grises](#).

AVANCEBIO

→ [Avancebio](#) supports Quebec's ambition to become a leader in the global Bioeconomy by bringing together researchers, industry players, and policy-makers to address national and global needs through bio-based manufacturing around lab-grown food, new materials, waste valorization, and zero carbon emission. Avancebio signed residency mandates for bio-based products with [UN Biodiversity and Agriculture](#) and Agri-Food Canada ([AAFC](#)), and forged a strategic partnership with the National Center for Electrochemistry and Environmental Technologies ([CNETE](#)) and Centre d'études des procédés chimiques du Québec ([CEPROCQ](#)) aimed to develop the skills and expertise necessary for advancing the industrialization of biotechnology in Canada.

ALAN SHEPARD RESIDENCY

→ [Alan Shepard Summer Residency](#) equips Concordia University undergraduates and graduates from all faculties with innovative frameworks for design thinking and entrepreneurship skills over a 12-week period. In 2023, students gained real world experience working as part of a multidisciplinary team on different mandates coming from local and international institutions including the [UN Secretariat of Convention on Biological Diversity](#), [Insertech](#), [New Harvest](#), SDC Montreal Centre-ville, artists centre Eastern Bloc, OBNL Share the Warmth, D3 biotech startup Opalia, and artist Merlin Heintzman-Hope's Club Répare Centre Sud. Over 25% of the students have continued their engagement in the entrepreneurial ecosystem post program.



IMPACT GOES BEYOND STATISTICS



_IT'S ABOUT TRANSFORMING LIVES AND BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY.

→ Thinking about impact provides our community members with a strategic framework to address sustainability challenges, capitalize on business opportunities, and contribute to a more sustainable and equitable future. The impact of most of our startups meet several [UN sustainable development goals](#) while leading to new jobs and opportunities and economic growth of diverse industries.

Our journey towards impactful innovation begins by recognizing that [we are all interconnected](#), and that [every individual has a unique perspective to offer](#).

_OUR MAIN DRIVERS

SOCIAL IMPACT

→ Advancing the health and well-being of individuals and communities.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

→ Championing companies and partners committed to combating climate change and sustainability.



STARTUPS

IMPACT

STORIES OF 2023



**_SOCIAL
IMPACT**



**DEVELOPPING ACCESSIBLE AND
INCLUSIVE TACTILE TECHNOLOGY**

Haply Robotics

→ With a new \$4.8M CAD seed round, Haply Robotics is developing user-friendly tactile technology for medicine, education, art, design, and entertainment. The company’s vision is a world where global medical specialists can enhance their physical skills with online learning material from leading institutions.

**MAKING HEALTHCARE ACCESSIBLE IN RURAL
AND REMOTE COMMUNITIES**

Rocket Doctor

→ Rocket Doctor is a digital health platform making healthcare accessible in rural and remote communities. It surpassed 300 000 virtual patient visits in 2023. Focused on improving health equity, Rocket Doctor ensures every patient, regardless of background, can fully share their medical story.

**INCLUSIVE AND DIVERSE SOLUTIONS TO EMPOWER
HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS AND PATIENTS**

Precare

→ Precare is a digital platform offering personalized solutions to improve patient education. It provides inclusive and diverse solutions to empower both healthcare professionals and patients through educational content, digital solutions, and data analytics.

**IMPROVING PEDIATRIC PATIENT CARE AND CLINICAL
EFFICIENCY IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS**

Nura Medical

→ Nura Medical’s patented system, NURA’s IV Assistant™, facilitates medication preparation, ensuring children receive the right dosage every time. Nura Medical is preparing to have its system approved by regulatory authorities in Canada and the United States, and is conducting a seed round of financing in anticipation of launching its product, with the first sales expected by the end of 2023.

**SOLUTIONS TO REVOLUTIONIZE OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH
AND SAFETY PRACTICES**

Biolift

→ The Biolift team is dedicated to transforming occupational health and safety practices, aiming to create a world where manual jobs no longer jeopardize workers’ physical well-being. The Biolift exoskeleton, a portable and comfortable structure, reduces the muscular effort needed for tasks on the floor or in a bent posture. Supporting up to 20Kg with each bend, the Biolift exoskeleton makes work easier.

REDUCING EDUCATIONAL INEQUALITIES

CanApply

→ CanApply is an AI-powered international student recruitment platform that promotes quality education for all. The tech company simplifies the university application process and ensures a stress-free experience for students. CanApply actively supports international students in their pursuit of a better education in Canada.



**_ENVIRONMENTAL
IMPACT**



**AT THE INTERSECTION OF FOOD, TECHNOLOGY,
AND SUSTAINABILITY**

Opalia

Opalia operates at the intersection of food, technology, and sustainability, addressing the challenge of rising global demand for dairy. As the first Canadian company to develop a process for making whole milk with mammary cells, Opalia made the [Cleantech Group 2023](#) Cleantech #50toWatch list. Recognized in the [2022 FoodTech 500](#) list by Forward Fooding, Opalia is committed to addressing the climate crisis and delivering solutions for a #netzero future.

THE NEXT GENERATION OF DAIRY

Harvest Moon

Using precision fermentation to produce recombinant bovine milk proteins, Harvest Moon leads the way in the ‘next generation of dairy.’ These proteins, crucial for the taste, functionality, and sensory attributes of conventional dairy, are integrated into high-functioning plant-based ingredients. With the [global dairy market projected to grow by 60% by 2050](#), Harvest Moon’s innovative food production methods become crucial complements to existing systems.

**REVOLUTIONIZING FERTILIZATION WITH PRECISION
AND CIRCULAR ECONOMY**

Circular Agtech

As a waste management company, Circular Agtech upcycles organic waste into liquid fertilizers, offering a sustainable solution for organic crop production and farming. The company ensures local farmers have access to nutrients from organic waste, mitigating supply disruptions and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

**MAKING INDIVIDUALS’ LIVES EASIER BY ENSURING
SAFE DISTRIBUTION**

Expedibox

In 2023, Expedibox delivered over 1 million packages through its smart parcel lockers. With a nationwide presence extending from West to East Canada, nearly 400 smart lockers across the country process an average of 3,500 packages daily. Expedibox makes the lives of thousands of individuals easier by ensuring the safe distribution of more than a million packages.

**EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES BY MAKING SUSTAIN-
ABLE, SHARED TRANSPORTATION MORE EFFECTIVE**

Blaise Transit

Blaise Transit provides best-in-class on-demand transit software and solutions that enable communities to save money, save time, and reinvest in their riders. Having secured a three-year contract with the [Nova Scotia Community Transportation Network](#), Blaise Transit will deploy its technology up to 23 communities across the province.



WORKING WITH CHANGE MAKERS AT CONCORDIA

D3 Innovation Hub collaborates with Concordia change makers, providing targeted consultation and facilitation in strategy, insights, and foresight practices to help execute on its promise as a next-generation university.

We plug into selected projects and teams on 3 axes:

- STRATEGY & INSIGHTS
- ANIMATION & FACILITATION
- STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

COLLABORATORS		PROJECTS	ACTIVITY
Fine Arts	● ● ●	SOFA ArtVolt Strategy & Insights	ArtVolt Strategy & Insights
Genome Foundry	● ●	Business Development Plan	Sales & marketing strategy, engagement of referral partners
Student Success Center SSC	●	Foresight	Workshops
African Initiative	● ● ●	Entrepreneurship in Africa	Afrise program design, stakeholder engagement
Office of the Provost	● ●	Foresight	Animation
NGCI	● ● ●	Deep retrofit	Strategy and stakeholder engagement
NGCI	● ●	Space Redesign	Reimagining Community Gathering
Office of Research	● ●	Research & Innovation	Insight Mapping
Office of the Provost	●	Demystifying Teamwork	Workshop facilitation
Office of the Provost	● ●	Concordia Innovators	Design and animation of workshops
Concordia Faculty & Staff	● ●	Signal Swap Club	Sensibilization and implementation
Faculty of Fine Arts	● ●	Art Volt	Insight Mapping



PARTNERING WITH KEY PLAYERS IN QUEBEC AND ABROAD

D3 Innovation Hub brings together ventures, experts, researchers, investors, policymakers, and public partners to drive global change.

We continuously expand the depth and expertise of our coaches, mentors, and advisors, who are key success factors in the performance and self-confidence of our community.

We are proud and grateful for the steadfast commitment of our donors and the Canadian Government.

→ Your ongoing support and engagement drive us forward. Together, we will create a lasting impact in the years ahead.

GOVERNMENT

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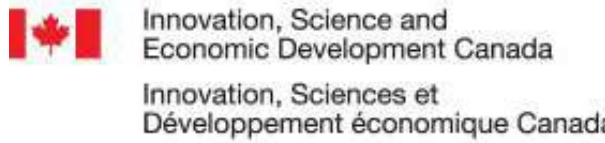
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THANK YOU

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