FIRST NATIONS
EXECUTIVE EDUCATION

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PRIDE AND SUCCESS: FIRST NATIONS EXECUTIVE EDUCATION CELEBRATES ITS 2ND ANNIVERSARY

- More than 250 Indigenous and non-Indigenous guests from the academic, the business, and the political world were present.
- A hundred attestations and certificates were awarded to participants in FNEE programs.
- FNEE delivered a very positive assessment of its first two years and unveiled promising prospects for 2024.

Tiohtià:ke (Montréal), November 20, 2023 – On November 16 and 17, 2023, First Nations Executive Education (FNEE) celebrated its second anniversary with a wide-ranging two-day program of events that began with a musical performance by Innu artist Shauit (winner of the 2023 Félix award for the best album of the year in an Indigenous language). The celebration culminated in a formal ceremony during which more than a hundred attestations and certificates were awarded to participants in FNEE programs.

An opportunity to extend the FNEE experience

The event, which was held at HEC Montréal's new Hélène Desmarais Building in downtown Montréal, gave the opportunity to past and present cohorts from the various FNEE programs to take part in numerous activities: conferences, workshops, discussion panels, and networking, all of which provided them with possibilities for developing their network and for deepening their knowledge. This capacity to mobilize and bring people together is one of the most important reasons for the success of FNEE, which has trained 448 persons, including 341 members of First Nations communities, since it was first launched.

> **Manon Jeannotte, director and co-initiator of FNEE, commented with pride**, "This anniversary gives us the chance to highlight the extremely positive results obtained so far. I'd like to express my warm thanks to the participants in the programs and to everyone who contributes directly or indirectly to the success and to the outreach of FNEE. Together, we will be able to ensure the development of FNEE and to help accelerate First Nations empowerment."

A commitment to reconciliation

Launched just two years ago, FNEE has already positioned itself as an essential reference for Indigenous elected officials as well as for Indigenous administrators, entrepreneurs, managers, and economic leaders. Co-constructed in accordance with the values of mutual aid, sharing, and collaboration, the 6 programs are delivered by 46 First Nations instructors who work in tandem with HEC Montréal professors, with guidance from 8 elderly persons.

As a complement to this offer, FNEE proposes programs to meet the needs of First Nations organizations and communities. In addition, there are also awareness training sessions in the program "Keys for Developing Relationships with Indigenous Communities," which is intended for non-Indigenous decision makers.

> **Ken Rock, director of entrepreneurial initiatives and co-initiator of FNEE, had this to say:** "FNEE responds to the growing need to create a circular and sustainable economic circuit, facilitating promising socioeconomic development for the future of First Nations. In that regard, this anniversary celebration, like all FNEE activities, provides a concrete illustration of our commitment to reconciliation. We invite all organizations to collaborate in this cause and to become FNEE partners."

A promising horizon for 2024

Encouraging economic reconciliation is at the heart of the FNEE's sixth program, announced last September at the First Nations and Quebec Regional Economic Circle in Uashat. Developed in partnership with the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Economic Development Commission, the program aims to promote the creation of large-scale economic projects by Indigenous and non-Indigenous partners. The first cohort will begin in the winter of 2024.

> **Serge Lafrance, director of Executive Education HEC Montréal, attested to his pride in FNEE with these words:** "It is an honour to contribute to the rapid development of FNEE, which has transformed a vision into a reality in two years. The teaching approach based on co-constructive collaboration between First Nations instructors and HEC Montréal faculty members was an ambitious gamble that is now on the way to success. In particular, I would like to congratulate the participants in the programs and the teaching staff, and to pay tribute to the essential support from all the First Nations and non-Indigenous partners, without whom FNEE would not exist."

In addition to the FNEE cohorts, the event brought together several elected officials as well as dignitaries, partners, and First Nations youth, including spokespersons from the Quebec-Labrador First Nations Youth Network and from Puamun Meshkenu.

> "With its novel approach, FNEE has proved to be a powerful engine of First Nations self-determination, while making a significant contribution to economic reconciliation at the same time," **concludes Ghislain Picard, chief of the Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador**. "At this second anniversary of its existence, we proudly celebrate FNEE, which has already had a positive impact on our communities, allowing us to look towards the future with optimism."

ABOUT FIRST NATIONS EXECUTIVE EDUCATION

Launched on November 25, 2021, FNEE is the culmination of the vision of two McGill–HEC Montréal EMBA alumni, Manon Jeannotte (Mi'gma) and Ken Rock (Innu). Co-created with Executive Education HEC Montréal, FNEE offers university -level short programs in First Nations communities, in Montreal and online. This one-of-a-kind school brings together HEC Montréal faculty and First Nations trainers.

ABOUT EXECUTIVE EDUCATION HEC MONTRÉAL

For the past 70 years, Executive Education HEC Montréal has been training top business leaders who, by contributing to the success of their own organizations, drive lasting economic growth for society as a whole. Celebrated for its outstanding contributions to executive learning, its programs have been rated #1 in Quebec and #2 in Canada by the *Financial Times* Executive Education Rankings 2023. Its portfolio of over 100 short programs — offered in class, online, or in the workplace — caters to the needs of 9,000 learners every year.

Committed to excellence and innovation in professional development, Executive Education HEC Montréal forges connections with world-renowned experts to deliver the best, most up-to-date business knowledge through a team of seasoned academics and practitioners. Its mission remains to cultivate leaders who are not only prosperous in their endeavours but also positively influential in our global society.

INFORMATION AND INTERVIEW REQUESTS

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