

Seneca launches HELIX RISE with \$300,000 donation from Scotiabank

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Toronto, Sept.23, 2021 – Seneca is providing more support for business-minded women and individuals from equity-seeking communities to help them reach their entrepreneurial goals through a new initiative called HELIX RISE.

HELIX RISE represents the next phase of growth for HELIX, Seneca’s on-campus innovation and entrepreneurship incubator. It has been made possible thanks to a \$300,000 donation from Scotiabank, one of HELIX’s longstanding partners and will provide more timely and targeted support for women and individuals from equity-seeking groups, including targeted mentoring, peer groups and workshops.

“Women make up only 28 per cent of all entrepreneurs in Canada, and we want to provide additional key supports and knowledge to help them develop their dreams,” said Chris Dudley, Director Entrepreneurship, [Seneca Innovation](#). “By helping women and equity-seeking groups, we will create more inclusive and resilient communities.”

HELIX RISE is inspired by ScotiaRISE, Scotiabank’s 10-year, \$500-million commitment to foster economic inclusion and resiliency among disadvantaged groups.

“We are proud to contribute to the next phase of Seneca’s HELIX program,” said Sandra Odendahl, Vice-President of Social Impact & Sustainability, Scotiabank. “HELIX is an important initiative dedicated to helping entrepreneurs get the support they need to bring their visions to life. Through ScotiaRISE, we are committed to helping increase access to opportunities that lead to greater participation in the economy.”

HELIX RISE will contribute to the [Seneca Au Large](#) mandate to build the equitable and more virtual Seneca. It will develop and bolster existing core programming – in-person and online – with a goal of increasing the number of female HELIXers to at least 50 per cent in four years. Currently, women account for 35 per cent of HELIX’s overall participants.

It will also increase the participation of marginalized HELIXers to at least 60 per cent and the number of HELIX coaches, mentors and facilitators who identify as women or from marginalized groups to at least 50 per cent.

According to a [2020 Ontario Chamber of Commerce report](#), closing the gender gap in

entrepreneurship could add up to \$81 billion to Canada's gross domestic product.

"We know that simply creating additional programming is not enough," Mr. Dudley said. "Every class, workshop, event, coach, mentor, speaker and facilitator must reflect and welcome our whole community."

About Seneca

Seneca is taking on the great challenges of our time – rebuilding the economy, equity and sustainability – while navigating through the pandemic safely. We're delivering great polytechnic education that combines rigorous academics with practical training. From health care to technology, business to creative arts, community services to arts and sciences, we help students get ready to make their mark in the world. We're #SenecaProud of our expert faculty, excellent staff and outstanding facilities. We have deep connections with industry and offer thousands of co-op and work placements to get our graduates job-ready. Full-time or part-time, in-person or online, students choose the option that suits them. Learn more: senecacollege.ca

For more information, please contact:

Caroline Grech, Associate Director, External Relations and Public Affairs

media.relations@senecacollege.ca

416.491.5050 ext. 77948

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