

HEC Montréal Adopts Strategic Plan and Sustainable Development Mission

A Case Study on the Guidelines for Integrating Social Purpose into Strategic Plans

HEC Montréal was one of six post-secondary institutions participating in a Re-Code sponsored pilot cohort testing a set of [Social Infrastructure Strategic Planning Guidelines for Presidents and their Planning Teams](#). This is a case study of the business school's approach to using the Guidelines to shift the mindset toward proactive sustainable development.

The Strategic Plan

HEC Montréal published its [2020 – 2023 Strategic Plan](#) “Inspire, Innovate, Make our Mark”, in May 2020.

Its new mission is:

“Building on our excellence in teaching and research, HEC Montréal is a French-language institution open to the world and solidly rooted in Quebec society, that trains management leaders who make a responsible contribution to the success of organizations and to sustainable social development.”

This sustainable development mission is built into its vision, values and priorities, one of which is to:

Promote and emphasize corporate social responsibility, sustainable development and ethics in everything we do

- *Ensure that our students develop the knowledge and skills they need to become responsible leaders*
- *Expand knowledge and transfer activities in the areas of corporate social responsibility, sustainable development and ethics*
- *Develop exemplary practices in the realms of corporate social responsibility, sustainable development and ethics throughout our organization*

This priority reveals a focus on embedding sustainable development into teaching, research, and organizational practices. These are not new approaches for the organization, but the priority embraces initiatives underway, while encouraging future initiatives to further bring this priority to life. Here is a video profiling one of their successful initiatives “Ideos Incubator”: [Video](#).

Applying the Guidelines

HEC Montréal had a strategic planning team of six people. Early in their process, the Secretary General (who was a member of the pilot cohort) shared the Guidelines with the planning team as a reference document. These Guidelines built upon and reinforced social impact developments underway for decades in the institution. They helped the team make the mental shift from implicitly to explicitly embracing social innovation and social impact across all the school's roles and assets. The Guidelines helped make people comfortable with the concepts and the terms as a precursor to embedding them in the strategic plan.

“The Strategic Plan went beyond naming what we were already doing – it elevated our sights toward a higher ambition to contribute to the sustainable development of society through everything we do, including and beyond teaching and research”

*Johanne Turbide
Secretary General
HEC Montreal*

Critical Success Factors to Embedding Social Impact in your Strategic Plan

- Make sure your Board has people who can speak to the importance of this approach. In HEC Montréal's case at least two Board members had experience with these concepts and expressed strong support.
- Ensure your planning team and colleagues are comfortable with the concepts and understand their significance to the institution.

Advice for Leaders in using the Strategic Planning Guidelines

- Read the Guidelines and think about the concepts
- Bring this philosophy into the strategic planning process