Building *innovative* companies with a *purpose*

**New York City Retail Startup Tour**

**McGILL DOBSON CENTRE FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

En collaboration avec **Québec**
“The Dobson Centre is thrilled to support the growth of our most promising startups by opening up doors to a wider startup ecosystem.”

Marie Josée Lamothe
Academic Director of McGill
Dobson Centre For Entrepreneurship

In collaboration with the Ministère de l'Économie et de l'Innovation du Québec, the McGill Dobson Centre for Entrepreneurship is pleased to announce the launch of the first virtual Dobson New York City Retail Startup Tour.

This online start-up tour aims to introduce and connect a select group of Dobson entrepreneurs to a dynamic startup ecosystem composed of Finance Executives, Retail Giants and Tech Executives from across the globe.

The programming, which runs in September to November of 2020 will include personalized coaching and mentoring for the selected teams as well as the opportunity to attend flagship tech and retail industry events based in New York City - recently moved to online events. This will grant them invaluable exposure to meet with key players and pitch their innovative business solutions to potential clients and investors, with the hope of encouraging international investment, partnership opportunities and strong business growth.
NYC Retail Startup Tour
Program At A Glance

September 2020
One-on-one coaching and mentoring

McGill Dobson Centre for Entrepreneurship will work with selected participants to help prepare and further refine pitch and business plans for upcoming events.

October 20-22, 2020
ShopTalk Retail Week

Teams will engage in one-on-one meetings with potential clients, partners and investors at North America’s largest retail event.

https://shoptalk.com/

October 27-28, 2020
Virtual Dobson Day

A private virtual event, co-hosted by the Quebec Ministry of Economy and Innovation. Teams will pitch to and network with an audience of invited VC investors, government dignitaries and industry experts from the New York City area.

Register

November 17-19, 2020
Exhibit booth at TechDay Online

Teams will host exhibit booths and engage in discussions with participating conferees from investors, to partners and potential customers.

https://techdayhq.com/online

We welcome potential investors and partners who would like to meet with our startups prior to the NYC events. Please contact Kika Armata, program manager at kika.armata@mcgill.ca for more details.
Customer Feedback for the Modern Retailer: Chatter uses AI-driven, conversational surveys to increase online and in-store conversion by 1.4%. Our conversation engine interprets responses in real-time to deliver actionable insights when they matter.

**Team**

Simon Foster, Founder & CEO, Queen’s University and London School of Economics

Wesley Nelson, CTO, University of Waterloo

Allen Turner, Head of Insights, Ryerson College

Website: [www.chatterresearch.com](http://www.chatterresearch.com)
Contact: [simon@chatterresearch.com](mailto:simon@chatterresearch.com)
FitDrive

The FitDrive app helps fitness trainers save time, increase retention and grow their business by making it easy to program workouts, track progress and keep in touch with clients when training remotely.

**Team**

Edgar Brown, CEO, Desautels Faculty of Management  
Milena Fagandini, CPO, Universidad Católica de Córdoba, Business Administration  
Carter Sprigings, CTO, McGill

Website: [https://www.myfitdrive.com/](https://www.myfitdrive.com/)  
Contact: edgar@myfitdrive.com
Geek It

Geek-it! is the marketplace for the geek culture. At Geek-it!, users can buy and recommend geek products such as anime food T-shirts, Star Wars masks and Avengers toys. We also provide tools for geek retailers to facilitate inventory management on Geek-it! Marketplace.

Team
Shao Hang He, President & CEO, McGill Faculty of Science
Tom Sun, COO & CMO, Université de Montréal

Website: https://geekitcon.com/
Contact: shaohang.he@geekitcon.com
Hydrolux

Hydrolux is a green hydrogen production company distributing to warehouses looking to transition towards fuel cell powered forklifts that will save them money, increase productivity and have a smaller impact on the planet.

Team
Friedrich Dehem-Lemelin, CEO, ÉTS, Mechanical Engineering
Julien Brunet, CTO, McGill Faculty of Engineering
Nicolas Dion, CFO, Concordia John Molson School of Business

Website: https://hydrolux.ca/
Contact: info@hydrolux.ca
Interius Farms offers clients price and business stability through locally grown produce. By growing in co-located, controlled environments, Interius can provide clients with the freshest produce while mitigating pricing and supply chain risks through long-term, price stabilized contracts.

**Team**

Tristan Zeman, President, Desautels Faculty of Management  
Jonathan Lawson, Vice President, Desautels Faculty of Management

Website: [www.interiusfarms.com](http://www.interiusfarms.com)  
Contact: interiusfarms@gmail.com
At MoveMate, we solve the pains of businesses and consumers through our administration of an on-demand transportation solution that makes moving, purchasing and delivering items hassle-free. By connecting our customers and our partner firms with a Mate that has the tools, the manpower, and the vehicle adapted to their needs, we take care of packing and transporting peoples’ possessions to their new residence, as well as transporting and delivering any large item purchased online or at retailers.

**Team**

**Lucas Francioli, CEO,** Desautels Faculty of Management  
**William Preudhomme, Head of Operations & Sales,** Concordia Faculty of Arts & Science  
**Jegannath Ramanathan, Head of Product & User Acquisition,** Desautels Faculty of Management

**Website:** https://movemate.ca/  
**Contact:** lucas@movemate.io
Novagrow

Empowering people to grow nutrient-rich greens at home so they can reconnect with their own food and live healthier lives. Novagrow makes this possible by designing affordable and easy-to-use indoor gardens allowing the user to grow effortlessly more than 20 types of microgreens all year round.

Team
Simon Dufour, Co-founder, Desautels Faculty of Management
Mathieu Laviolette, Co-founder, École de technologie supérieure (ÉTS)
Alexandre Laliberté, Co-founder, École de technologie supérieure (ÉTS)

Website: https://novagrow.io/
Contact: s.dufour.p@novagrow.io
Off The Grid offer a spinning bike that turns energy into electricity. The generated electricity is reinjected in real-time in the grid of the building reducing monthly electric bills for the gym, while a web application allows users to compete with others to reduce their ecological footprint, increasing motivation and training frequency.

**Team**
Charles Couture-Lebrun, CEO, HEC Montréal  
Sébastien Brunelle-Jestin, CTO, Desautels Faculty of Management

Website: [https://getoffthegrid.ca/](https://getoffthegrid.ca/)  
Contact: [info@getoffthegrid.ca](mailto:info@getoffthegrid.ca)
RailVision Analytics specializes in artificial intelligence and software for the rail industry. Our projects are focused on reducing fuel consumption, preventing locomotive failure and improving the safety of rail operations.

**Team**
Dev Jain, Founder & Lead Innovator, McGill Faculty of Engineering

Website: [https://railvision.ca](https://railvision.ca)
Contact: [contact@railvision.ca](mailto:contact@railvision.ca)
SEED AI

We solve problems and generate value from data. We offer services across the whole data value chain and we build and maintain custom AI solutions and products. We have also built a unique and proven methodology to help organizations in their transformation towards AI.

Team
Johan Saba, Co-founder & Managing Director, Desautels Faculty of Management
Jean-Baptiste Débordès, Co-founder, Université de Montreal Faculty of Sciences, HEC

Website: www.seedai.ca
Contact: j.saba@seedai.ca
Shuttle Control

ShuttleControl is a Software-as-a-Service designed to revolutionize the way courtesy shuttle services are offered around the world. We offer an all-in-one solution to increase customer satisfaction and make shuttle operations easy.

**Team**
Edward W. Maxedon, President, Concordia University  
Cedrick Ward, Customer Success, Concordia University  
Jean-Marc Turk, Business Development Manager, McGill Faculty of Arts  
Hamza Baig, Account Executive, Desautels Faculty of Management  
Matthew Houston, Account Executive, McGill Faculty of Arts

Website: [https://shuttlecontrol.com/](https://shuttlecontrol.com/)  
Contact: [jeanmarc@shuttlecontrol.com](mailto:jeanmarc@shuttlecontrol.com)
TRAQC is an easily integrated solution for non-destructive and in-line quality control of printed electronics, reducing the production cost by up to 80% and the production time by up to 90%.

**Team**

**Benjamin Dringoli, CTO & Co-founder**, McGill Faculty of Science  
**Mariia Zhuldybina, CEO & Co-founder**, ÉTS  
**Joel Edouard Nbeck, Co-founder**, ÉTS

Website: [www.traqc.ca](http://www.traqc.ca)  
Contact: [info@traqc.ca](mailto:info@traqc.ca)
We give bodegas in Latin America a frictionless, AI-powered app that automates orders, optimizes inventory using AI and saves them time, increases revenue and allows them to compete with larger chains.

**Team**

Julio Castañeda, Co-founder, Desautels Faculty of Management  
Daniel Franco, CEO & Co-founder, Desautels Faculty of Management

Website: www.turbodega.com/  
Contact: julio@turbodega.com
Our tech-enabled urban farms cultivate local, pesticide-free strawberries all year long to provide consumers with a healthier, higher quality, and more sustainable product.

**Team**

Ophelia Sarakinis, CEO, McGill Faculty of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences  
Pierre Chicoine, Head of Sales & Business Development  
Phillip Rosenbaum, CTO & Chief Scientific Officer, McGill Faculty of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Faculty of Medicine

Website: [www.verte.ca](http://www.verte.ca)  
Contact: info@verte.ca
Virtual Dobson Day  

Program In Detail

**Tuesday, October 27 from 10 AM-3:15 PM**

Hydrolux - Interius Farms – Vertité - Off The Grid – RailVision - Seed AI –
TRAQC – Turbodega - Chatter

**Wednesday, October 28 from 10 AM – 1:30 PM**

Novagrow – FitDrive – MoveMate - Geek-It - Shuttle Control

**Wednesday, October 28 from 1:30-2:30 PM Networking breakouts**

A private virtual event, co-hosted by the Quebec Ministry of Economy and Innovation (MEI). Dobson teams will pitch to and network with an audience of invited McGill Alumni, VC investors, government dignitaries and industry experts from the New York City area.

**Judges:** (in alphabetical order)

**Tim Ceci – Founder Tim Ceci Retail Consulting**

A senior retail executive with extensive business leadership experience with: Saks Fifth Avenue, Banana Republic, Gap International, Pier 1, Nike, Barneys New York, Celine/LVMH and Nordstrom NYC. In addition to direct retail roles, heads an independent consulting practice Tim Ceci Retail Consulting (with clients including National Geographic, NBA, Discovery). He also taught several Retail Management for several semesters as Adjunct Professor at LIM College.

During the last 30 years Tim has effectively led omni-channel/retail cultures maximize revenue, profitability and developed growth in a diverse range of businesses (fashion, luxury, home, travel, non-profit), markets (US, Europe), formats (multi-store, flagship, freestanding, concession, warehouse events) in both full and off price arenas. Tim is well known for his drive, integrity, ability to adapt, teambuilding and well respected in the industry.

He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Business Administration & Marketing from Hofstra University and resides in New York City. Is an avid NYC Marathon runner, volunteers for New York City Parks, Beaconforchange.org South Africa and serves as board member for the Brooklyn Fashion Incubator New York and shopclothe.org Los Angeles.

[Click here to register](#)
Gregory Larkin – Partner, Boundless Tech and best-selling author of *This Might Get Me Fired*

Greg Larkin began his product-building life twelve years ago after nearly getting fired from an investment research start-up for predicting that the booming housing market would collapse. (He wasn't, and it did). Since then, Greg has built more than thirty digital products, generating millions in revenue for companies like Google, PWC, Nestle, and Bloomberg, as well as start-ups. In 2015, Greg launched his own consultancy, Bowery315, as part of his mission to help more good products enter the world. He lives in Brooklyn with his wife and their two kids.

Safia Morsly-Fikai - Head of Information & Communications Technology, Consulate General of Canada in New York

Safia Morsly-Fikai serves as a Trade Commissioner and head of the ICT section at the Consulate General of Canada in New York. She helps Canadian companies and startups in a variety of tech sectors expand their business in the US and more specifically in NY, Connecticut, New Jersey and Pensylvania. Prior to that, Safia was an entrepreneur and the co-founder of an online wellness platform that helped women around the world focus on their health and improve their daily habits. She is also coach and an author. Earlier in her carrier, Safia was the spokesperson and public relations senior officer for the Permanent Mission of Canada to the United Nations where she actively worked on Canada’s bid for a seat on the Security Council. She also occupied a number of policy related positions in the Canadian department of industry. Safia has a Bachelor’s Degree and a Master’s Degree in Economics from the University of Montreal. She is married and has two children.

Lora Tisi – President RW&Co

Lora Tisi has over 30 years experience, as a “C” Level International Retail Leader. Lora has led several winning teams focusing on strategic business growth and brand initiatives including revenue creation, profit growth, merchant leadership, Brand management, talent development, inspiration and best practice, design, merchandise planning, real estate portfolio development, store design & construction.

Most recently, Lora was President of the RW&CO Brand for Reitmans Canada Limited, with 18 Consecutive quarters of sales and margin growth. Menswear results were particularly strong, with Product and Brand building partnership Strategy collaborating with NHL Superstars, such as PK Subban, Erik Karlsson, Morgan Reilly and Mark Schieffele, resulting in significant sales and market share increases across both genders.

Click here to register
Prior to RW&CO, Lora consulted across department and specialty stores in Europe, USA and Canada, with retail expertise in Canadian entry, Omni-channel Culture Creation, Sales and Brand Building.

In 2000, Lora became President of American Eagle Outfitters and launched the brand across Canada, building a cross functional growth platform for Global Expansion. The mandate was to acquire Canadian real estate and apply it to the AEO Brand. The team was extremely successful with the brand launch, opening 46 stores, coast to coast in 108 days, exceeding first year profit targets, and becoming the "Brand of Choice" for Canadian teens.

Prior to American Eagle, Lora spent 17 years growing from Management Trainee to President, building the four banner, two country, 900 store chain, The Northern Group. By leveraging the marquis brand, Northern Reflections, the Northern team built total sales to C$1Billion. Unquestionably, the US stores result is a proud achievement, as this success eclipsed any other Canadian apparel entry into the US for sales, growth and profit.

Lora holds several Venator Retail Awards - Global Merchant of the Year 1997, President’s Group Achievement Award, 1996, Woolworth Chairman’s Award, 1995, President’s Group Achievement Award 1995, President’s Achievement Award, 1998, Outstanding Merchant Abilities 1999

Yolanda M. Wardowski – Managing Director, Avalon Net Worth

With over 15 years of advisory, execution and investing experience, Yolanda has been directly involved in the origination and execution of several billion dollars worth of domestic and cross-border financing and strategic M&A transactions across the Consumer and Technology sectors. Sector expertise in Branded Consumer Products, Retail/Apparel, Luxury, Personal Care, Food/Beverage and in Technology, Consumer/Mobile, and DNVB sectors. Her career began at J.P. Morgan in the M&A/Corporate Finance group focusing exclusively on domestic and cross-border transactions in the Consumer Products and Retail sectors. She was also one of four M&A professionals selected to join J.P. Morgan's internal M&A group, where she advised Corporate Office and the Board of Directors on potential M&A and investments in foreign banks. As well, she has also held senior positions at Ernst & Young Capital Advisors and 94th Street Capital developing and executing financing strategies for portfolio companies.

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