Building innovative companies with a purpose

McGill’s Digital Accelerator
Program at a Glance

Accelerating digital savviness

McGill’s Dobson Center for Entrepreneurship, in partnership with the Information System Area at Desautels, is offering digital services to McGill affiliated startups and SMBs in need of a digital transformation.

The current social and economic context has required that many business models that solely relied on physical engagement, now need to also expand to digital platforms to remain competitive. Small businesses however may not have the skill set and resources to do so.

The objective of McGill’s Digital Accelerator program is to accelerate the transformation to Digital with an integrated approach to problem solving, new business models and digital strategy. Our Digital Accelerator is an advisory program which involves multidisciplinary teams of students with backgrounds in Information Systems, Business Analytics and Management supported by technical and business mentors.
Program Overview

**Target Start:** Summer 2020  
**Duration:** Aligned with Fall, Winter and Summer University sessions

**Key Advisory Themes**

The program aims to help startups and SMBs affiliated with McGill by offering a **no-cost** service. Each project is to be done by students under the supervision of a Professor and/or Business Mentor. The focus is on solving an IT problem or providing one new online capability.

Example of projects are:
- Create or modify a website
- Create or modify a digital storefront
- Enable remote operations for staff or customers
- Perform data analytics analysis
- Help with data base design and management

**Format**

- **WEEKLY WORKSHOPS and MENTORSHIP:** A series of targeted workshops focused on expediting digital transformation, led by McGill IS Professors, students and industry professionals.

- **ONE-ON-ONE MENTORSHIP AND COACHING:** Startups address challenges specific to their digital model with pre-selected IS students, supervised by Desautels Professors. An opportunity to receive personalized support and apply the workshop concepts and learnings case by case.

- **ACTION LEARNING:** IS students work with their respective startups/SMBs on achieving milestones related to their digital needs. This process is a crucial component of the program and will ultimately lead to the development of a viable digital concept.
Startup Application Process

**Program Requirements:**
- In order to be eligible to apply to McGill’s Digital Accelerator, at least one founder of the team must have a **McGill affiliation**, any of the following:
  - enrolled in an undergraduate or graduate program at McGill
  - Faculty, staff or postdoctoral position at McGill
  - McGill Alumni
- Industry agnostic: We welcome applications from both early-stage and advanced startups within any industry which seek digital guidance.

**Application Form:**
- Fill out the application form as found [here](#).
Student Matching Process

Student Profile Requirements:

- Current Desautels Faculty of Management undergraduate students (U2 and above) pursuing a Major or Concentration in Information Systems and/or Business Analytics
- Possess a passion for entrepreneurship and a zeal to learn
- Excellent time management skills
- Strong interpersonal, organizational and communication skills
- Previous IT consulting or startup experience (asset but not necessary)

Application:

- If interested, please contact Prof. Geneviève Bassellier at genevieve.bassellier@mcgill.ca.

Matching Process:

- Once selected, startups and IS student mentors will be matched based on industry interest, skill set and type of support needed.
Dobson Center’s Student Executive Team (SET)

McGill’s Digital Accelerator Program will be among the initiatives led by Dobson Center’s Student Executive Team (SET). The Centre’s mission is to inspire, teach and develop early entrepreneurs while also introducing them to the local, national and global startup ecosystems.

Experiential Learning
• Students work individually or in teams alongside innovative startups over the summer solving significant digitalization-related challenges
• Development of relevant skills, knowledge, conceptual insights and real-world experience outside the academic classroom

Exposure to Entrepreneurship
• Direct interaction with current McGill-stemmed entrepreneurs
• A collaborative network of like-minded students interested in digital innovation
• Understanding how to build and launch a venture in today’s digital landscape

Mentorship and Innovation Leadership
• Access to industry mentorship and Faculty coaching
• Hands-on IT consulting experience and training for the job market