

Unprecedented mobilization of all fashion industry players

**The leaders of Québec's fashion industry gathered
for the mmode Metropolitan Cluster forum**

Montréal, May 28, 2015 – The leaders of the fashion industry are gathered today in Montréal to present the mmode cluster's strategic action plan, designed to develop broader and better structured ways of acting collectively. The event also offers the opportunity to unveil the brand image of this new cluster that will enable Montréal to assert its prominence on the global stage. Several leading figures of the fashion world, including company executives are taking part in this event.

The international influence of fashion has grown exponentially and the competition is now global. Relevant strategies have to be adopted by local industries to ensure its sustainability. That is what the players in the industry will do, as they launch and implement four priority projects:

- Brand image
- Workforce
- Integration of new technologies and support for investment
- Market development

"We are uniting all sectors of the industry so that we can create a platform for discussion and collaboration. Our competition is no longer local but global. We are uniting our forces to stimulate growth and enhance our ability to compete," explains Mr François Roberge, President of Boutique La Vie en Rose and honorary president of mmode.

This is the crowning event of a process instigated in 2008 by stakeholders of the fashion industry that revealed the need to support common actions and adopt a brand identity specific to Québec.

"In Montréal, the metropolitan cluster strategy has resulted from a partnership between the Montréal Metropolitan Community, the government of Québec, the government of Canada and,

of course, the private sector. This ninth industrial cluster will support our fashion industry entrepreneurs and generate greater prosperity for the whole Montréal metropolitan region,” declared Mr Pierre Desrochers, Chair of the Executive Committee of the City of Montréal and member of the Council of the Montréal Metropolitan Community.

The fashion industry, source of economic activity and jobs in Québec, especially Montréal

With more than 30,000 jobs, Québec accounts for more than 45% of all employment in the Canadian fashion industry. The Montréal region is home to 70% of the firms in the Québec fashion industry, and the city ranks third in North American in terms of clothing manufacture.

Market evolution to meet global competition has led to the emergence of new business strategies, and a large number of firms have successfully adapted to the new reality. After all, Québec has 4 “world no. 1 companies” in the fashion industry (ALDO, Gildan, Logistik Unicorp and Peerless), well-known designers like Marie Saint Pierre and Philippe Dubuc, as well as new companies that have crossed borders over the Internet, like Essence, Beyond the Rack and Frank & Oak.

“Québec fashion has a well-deserved international reputation. I am convinced that the “mmode” cluster will become a pillar for even greater improvement in the growth and competitiveness of this key industry for our economy. Our government is proud of having assisted in the culmination of the long-term efforts by leaders of this industry,” noted Minister of the Economy, Innovation and Exports, Mr Jacques Daoust.

“In the context of global competition, improving the competitiveness of the Quebec fashion industry is essential. Establishing an industrial cluster, a model that has already proven itself in a number of flagship sectors of Montréal’s economy, will undoubtedly be beneficial for the industry in dealing with existing issues,” added Minister of Transport and Minister responsible for the Montréal region, Mr Robert Poëti.

Financial contributions

The Québec government has contributed financially to the start-up phase of the fashion cluster. The Economy, Innovation and Exports department has granted \$50,000 as part of its program to support the development of strategic sectors and areas of excellence, from the segment for structuring activities and projects. The Secretariat for the metropolitan region has granted \$50,000 from FIRM, the metropolitan initiative and expansion fund. There is also a grant of \$100,000 from the Montréal Metropolitan Community.

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