



KONNECT

Educating, Empowering and Amplifying
Female Entrepreneurs

BY



Dunin-Deshpande
QUEEN'S INNOVATION CENTRE

MISSION

Our mission is to give YOU the network, resources, and accountability to develop both personally and professionally to succeed in whatever career path you chose.

VISION

Konnect strives to empower more women to step out of their comfort zone, break down barriers and explore the world of entrepreneurship, all while providing the platform and support to do so successfully. We envision Konnect to facilitate a close knit community of women who not only celebrate each other after the highs, but are there to motivate after the lows. Konnect aims to be a safe space to address the unique challenges that affect women throughout their careers by having open conversations about hard-to-breach topics, provide access to role models and create a community of women to lean on.

WHAT IS KONNECT?

Konnect is a 6-month (Oct 2021 - Mar 2022) program that provides a network, support system, and personal and professional development opportunities to amplify your success for self-identifying women who are interested in or are already starting businesses in Kingston. Konnect is run by the Dunin-Deshpande Queen's Innovation Centre (DDQIC) and funded through the WE CAN (Women Entrepreneurship Can) Project at Queen's University through the federal Women's Entrepreneurship Strategy (WES) Ecosystem Fund, which helps to address gaps and build capacity in the entrepreneurship ecosystem for women. The program will consist of biweekly sessions (see "Session Styles") covering a wide variety of topics presented by experts in their fields, specifically targeted to help you reach your career goals in entrepreneurship and beyond. Due to COVID-19, this program will be running virtually (via Zoom) for the foreseeable future, with the hopes to transition to a hybrid model in Winter 2022.

<p style="text-align: center;">Konnect Workshops</p> <p>Personal (Fall) and Professional (Winter) Development Workshops facilitated by leaders in their respective fields.</p> <p>Workshops will run for ~ 2 hours biweekly in the evening on a date chosen by the cohort.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Konnect Huddles</p> <p>Self- Reflection Sessions dispersed within the speaker-led workshops where you will be separated into "huddles" which are smaller groups to encourage engagement and connection between the cohort.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Konnect Community</p> <p>Virtual Platform (via Slack) to share resources, ask for help and stay connected in between sessions.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Coffee Connections</p> <p>Opportunities to connect over "virtual coffee" with successful female entrepreneurs in the WE CAN network based upon aligned interests and expertise.</p>

WHO CAN APPLY?

Open minded female identifying entrepreneurs who have either started their own venture, want to start their own businesses, or are interested in learning about entrepreneurship and personal/professional development. This can include undergraduate students, graduate students and community members within the Queen's and/or Kingston network.

HOW DO I APPLY?

Applications will open September 9, 2021 at 12:01 am and end September 24, 2021 at 11:59 PM.

The application package can be found linked on the DDQIC Konnect website once the period has begun. We ask all interested candidates to spend time answering these questions as they will influence both the style of the speakers and trajectory of the program.

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO BE IN THE KONNECT COHORT?

We strongly encourage cohort members to:

- Attend all workshops, as each session builds on one another and commitment is crucial to developing our community. Participants who attend 75%+ sessions will receive a certificate of completion.
- Arrive at each session with an open-mind ready to learn, listen and discuss as participants will only get as much from this program as they put in.
- Consistently engage on our virtual community platforms (ex. slack).
- Attend at least two "virtual coffee chats" through Coffee Konnections

How will the Konnect program be offered (virtual, in-person etc.)?

Following provincial and University guidelines, the Konnect program will be held virtually via Zoom for the remainder of 2021. If protocols allow, we hope to integrate in-person, informal gatherings later this year, but all core content (workshops, panel discussions etc.) will be virtual. We hope to be able to transition to a hybrid model in 2022, but will reassess throughout the semester. Therefore, all Konnect participants should reside in Kingston and the surrounding areas in order to have access to possible in-person events. If you have questions or are unsure where you will be located, please contact the Program Coordinator and we will do our best to accommodate.

STILL UNSURE ABOUT KONNECT?

If you are still on the fence about applying to Konnect, check out testimonials from some of our previous cohorts!

“Would you recommend Konnect to a friend or colleague?”

“Yes, I would 100% recommend Konnect to any of my friends (in fact I have talked their ears off about all the sessions already)! Being an indecisive person, who loves the people in the innovation space but has no clue exactly what I want to do with my life (no specific roadmap or 5 year plan) it’s super helpful to have a purpose every week to meet and learn from the stories and experiences of new people. Not only did I take away knowledge from Konnect, but I also gained mentors, and a supportive network of ambitious and open-minded people. When I have questions about my career, I always look to my fellow Konnect alumni.”

– Danielle Baxter | Directory of Experience @ BinoBooks, QICSI 2020, BSc 2019

"I am always encouraging my female entrepreneur colleagues to join Konnect. It is so empowering to have an entire support system of other female entrepreneurs helping you out and cheering you on."

– Kara Lawrie | Co-Founder @ Diveri | , QICSI 2020, BSc 2020

SESSION STYLES

We believe that the ability for a person to manifest success in their professional endeavours starts with the individual. Building up mental, emotional, and intellectual strength will translate into success in their professional and company endeavours. Konnect will target not only your professional development, but also personal in order to allow the most well-rounded you to flourish.

Check out some of our amazing workshops from last year:



Values and Purpose Driven Branding by Claire Lamont

Founder and CEO of smak.

In this workshop, Claire led the cohort through a values exercise to remind us, or help determine for the first time, what principles we want to lead us both personally and professionally. We run this workshop at the beginning of the program to help the cohort align their values with their business or business idea.



The Entrepreneurial Mindset by Shari Hughson

Past Director of the Masters of Management, Innovation & Entrepreneurship @ Queen's University, COO Wayfound Mental Health Group

In this session, the cohort heard from Shari on her entrepreneurial journey and the lessons she's learned along the way: Confidence, resilience, courage, and the importance of having a strong group to lean on while building your career.



Taking Risks and Navigating a Male-Dominated Industry by Jacie deHoop

Co-Founder @ The Gist, Forbes 30 Under 30

In this session, Jacie shared the story behind co-founding The Gist, a female-founded and led sports media company that's leveling the playing field. Cohort members had the opportunity to have a candid conversation about all aspects of entrepreneurship and learn from a company that is truly disrupting the status quo!

Sessions in Development for 2021/2022 (final workshop list TBD):

1. Balancing your energy: How to perform in all areas of life
2. Conflict resolution and breaking into tough conversations
3. Road to CEO: Finding your leadership style
4. Motivation/mentorship panel with female leaders
5. Understanding the entrepreneurial ecosystem (funding, incubators, accelerators and more!)
6. How to have an open conversation about race and bias
7. And many more....(please provide ideas in your applications!)

Cohort members also have access to a number of resources and programs within the Dunin-Deshpande Queen's Innovation Centre:

- QyourVenture: <https://www.queensu.ca/innovationcentre/programs/qyourventure-program>
- Queen's Innovation Centre Summer Initiative (QICSI):
<https://www.queensu.ca/innovationcentre/programs/qic-summer-initiative-program>
- The Foundry: <https://www.queensu.ca/innovationcentre/programs/foundry>
- The Hive: <https://www.queensu.ca/innovationcentre/programs/hive>

HAVE FURTHER QUESTIONS OR WANT TO KNOW IF KONNECT IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

Please reach out to:

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