

DATE: November 3, 2022

TO: Hon. Mayor and Members of Council
cc. SLT-E

FROM: Raphael Costa, Director, Economic Development
cc. Nick Spensieri, City Manager
cc. Michael Genova, Chief, Communications and Economic Development
cc. Julie Flesch, Senior Advisor, Strategic Economic Initiatives
cc. Office of Communications and Economic Development

RE: WebSummit – Day 4

The City of Vaughan through Economic Development is taking part in the 2022 WebSummit Conference to help advance an international economic development program for the 2022-2026 Term of Council and elevate the local innovation, health innovation, and creative industries clusters.

Staff are providing daily updates on activities.

Key Messages

- Staff met with one investment-ready company
- Six economic development agencies engaged Vaughan staff to explore future collaboration
- November 4 includes meetings with one investment-ready company and two local economic development agencies
- The plan for WebSummit participation was [approved by Council in September 2022](#)

On November 3, staff met with one investment-ready international companies.

For November 3, in partnership with Toronto Global, staff met one pre-qualified international companies with an interest in expanding to Canada.

Pleez is a restaurant data analytics startup with more than \$2,000,000 in series a venture capital financing. *Pleez* uses API plug-ins for major delivery apps to provide a data analytics dashboard to local restaurants. These restaurants use the insights derived from the information to improve business operations.

Next steps include:

- Toronto Global will lead the follow-up and explore a future visit by the company to Vaughan

- Vaughan can support a future visit by providing connections to potential partner organizations who represent and support large numbers of independent businesses like, the Kleinburg Business Improvement Area (KBIA) and DigitalMainStreet

Staff explored collaboration with six economic development agencies and support assets.

1. Lisbon City Council Department of Culture

The City of Lisbon's Department of Culture is responsible for the provision of grants to the cultural sector, promotion and communications, libraries, archives, and public art. The department has 519 staff members and an annual budget of €23M and manages a municipal services corporation which is responsible for the direct management of 22 cultural venues and multiple cultural events.

Lessons learned:

- Staff gained an understanding of potential models for identifying, collaborating with and funding local cultural organizations to enhance the cultural vitality of communities
- Public art and cultural activations are important and effective tools for promoting vibrancy and cohesiveness within communities and neighbourhoods
- To engage communities with cultural assets and activations, cultural amenities must reflect the diversity of the community, be integrated within the neighbourhoods expected to engage with them, and reflect the needs and interests of the citizens themselves

Next steps:

- Staff will invite Lisbon's Director of Culture to attend and deliver a presentation to the forthcoming Creative Industries Advisory Group and the Economic Prosperity Task Force
- Staff will integrate learnings from the City of Lisbon into ongoing strategy development for cultural arts centre development

2. Amsterdam in Business

Amsterdam in Business is the official foreign investment agency of the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area. Amsterdam in Business assists foreign companies by establishing operations in Amsterdam. They are positioned as a gateway to the European economy.

Lessons learned:

- Amsterdam has strong clusters in financial technology, health, the creative industries, and supply-chain and logistics

Next Steps

- Staff will connect with the Dutch trade office in Toronto to equip our Economic Development Officers with key information on the Netherlands
- Staff will explore partner program opportunities with Amsterdam in Business

3. Portuguese Health Cluster

Health Cluster Portugal (HCP) is a private, non-profit association that brings together more than 200 members, including R&D institutions, universities, hospitals, organizations from civil society and companies in the areas of pharmaceuticals, biotechnology, medical technologies, and healthcare services. HCP and its members turn knowledge into new products and services that contribute to the improvement of human health and wellbeing and raise the profile of Portugal as a destination for health innovation.

Lessons learned:

- Public sector procurement processes often hinder the commercialization of innovative health solutions. Portugal has a hybrid healthcare system in which 60% of hospitals are public and 40% are private. Innovations emerging from the HCP are more likely to be adopted by the private hospitals.
- Consortiums of health innovation stakeholders, including companies, research institutions, and healthcare providers, are valuable tools for catalyzing innovation and building capacity within the sector

4. Hub Criativo do Beato

Hub Criativo do Beato (HCB) is an innovation centre for creative and technological companies which is emerging in a complex of decommissioned factories. The project is a joint venture between the Municipality of Lisbon, the Portuguese State, Startup Lisboa. When the development is completed, the HCB will be one of the largest entrepreneurship hubs in Europe, with about 50 thousand square meters distributed over 18 buildings, estimated to create 3 thousand new jobs among the companies that will occupy the space.

Lessons learned:

- Cultural hubs not only catalyze economic activity in the creative industries, they are also critical assets for attracting talent by creating a sense of place and vibrancy in areas that might otherwise become office communities
- Creative and cultural hubs should be designed not only to facilitate business and entrepreneurship activity but should also serve the local community by offering opportunities to experience art, music, food and culture

Next steps:

- Staff will invite Lisbon's Director of Culture to attend and deliver a presentation to the forthcoming Creative Industries Advisory Group and the Economic Prosperity Task Force
- Staff will integrate learnings from the City of Lisbon into ongoing strategy development for cultural arts centre development

5. City of Lisbon's Department of Economy and Innovation

The City of Lisbon's Department of Economy and Innovation manages and delivers several municipal innovation initiatives, including Smart Open Lisboa and Lisbon's Living Lab.

Smart Open Lisboa is an open innovation program for startups to pilot innovative solutions to address municipal challenges in the city of Lisbon. Areas of focus include the low-carbon economy, energy management, mobility, and renewable energy generation. The program has produced solutions that leverage technologies like big data and analytics, machine learning and artificial intelligence, alternative fuels and energy production, blockchain and robotics.

Lisbon's Living Lab is a permanent living laboratory for the development of innovative solutions that contribute to more sustainable, resilient, inclusive, people-centered cities with a better quality of life. The lab provides a forum for large-scale experimentation and demonstration, for developing, prototyping, validation and testing new technologies, new services and innovative ways of life.

Lessons learned:

- Smart Open Lisbon uses a methodology similar to the one used by staff in developing and running our IEDC Gold-Award Winning Activate!Vaughan Program
- Lisbon's Living Lab is a municipal sandbox program that allows startups to access municipal infrastructure and data to develop solutions to challenges. Staff continue to explore similar models through the Transportation Innovation Program and with partners like York University's YSpace

Next Steps

- The Director will provide staff with further information on the City's programs

6. [Champalimaud Centre for the Unknown](#)

The Champalimaud Research Centre for the Unknown is a state-of-the-art medical, scientific, and technological research centre. The Centre employs a unique model in which both clinical care and medical research are centred around client care. The clinic is focused on oncological care.

Lessons learned:

- Research and medical device innovation is advanced and supported by internal hardware and software teams. This has led to a number of patented technologies in medical verticals like client care and research verticals like equipment customization
- Institutional support offices drive collaboration and organizational development. These include:
 - A Communications and Events Team
 - A Grants and Funding Team
- The research centre and clinic were founded with an endowment and offsets costs through endowment investment, grants, service fees, and corporate support

Next Steps

- Staff will invite the Senior Advisor to the Board of Directors responsible for external relations to present the Centre's model at a future Vaughan Healthcare Centre Precinct (VHCP) Task Force and a future Economic Prosperity Task Force

Look Ahead: on November 4, staff have one meeting booked with an investment-ready business and two meetings booked with international economic development agencies and stakeholders.

In partnership with Toronto Global, staff are meeting one pre-qualified international company with an interest in expanding to Canada.

- To explore the latest in vertical farming and advance Vaughan's food and housing industry, staff are meeting Planet Farms, an Italian vertical farming company

To support further international economic relations and development, staff are meeting two international economic development agencies:

- The Mouraria Creative Hub for entrepreneurs
- The Cultural Centre of Belem

Corporate and Strategic Communications will provide social media content as appropriate.

For more information, please contact Raphael Costa at Raphael.Costa@vaughan.ca or Julie Flesch at Julie.Flesch@vaughan.ca.