



## Innovation Factory Statement about LiONS LAIR

As some of you may know, this is Innovation Factory's tenth anniversary, but this year has quickly changed in a direction that we didn't expect. We want to update you on what the situation of COVID-19 has meant for Innovation Factory and the 10th annual LiONS LAIR competition.

First and foremost, our priority remains to continue serving our clients and greater Hamilton area ecosystem. COVID-19 has brought some changes to the way we all do things, but the "how" we help is only slightly different, with our meetings and training sessions moving to a virtual format. Innovation Factory is also actively sharing resources we know will be valuable at this time.

- Visit our COVID-19 Info Centre
- Visit our event calendar for training
- Contact your client service manager anytime, or email [info@innovationfactory.ca](mailto:info@innovationfactory.ca)

### The New Normal

We too, are navigating this "new normal", so of course a few things have to change. Last month, we quickly pivoted to deliver the seventh annual Synapse Life Science Pitch Competition virtually. With more than 300 people tuning in, we were grateful to still be able to celebrate our life science innovators, awarding \$100,000 in prizes, and share a positive highlight for the life science community during this difficult time.

### LiONS LAIR Competition

Today we are officially opening applications for our tenth annual LiONS LAIR competition which provides business and pitch training for a cohort of entrepreneurs, who are deemed to be a viable opportunity with innovative technologies, products and services. For the past nine years, this competition has culminated in a gala normally attended by more than 500 people. I know what you must be thinking, "cancelled" right? Well, not exactly!

This year the pitch competition will take place virtually and we promise some really exciting changes, so make sure you stay tuned! Oh, and we are excited to finally reveal our new LiONS LAIR logo.

And in lieu of the big LiONS LAIR gala as well as the Big DiF, our annual open house and client showcase, we will instead hold one big and AWESOME event!!

## Save the Date for our “10 Years of Innovation Gala” in January 2021!

What you can expect at the Innovation Gala:

- Celebrate the 2020 cohorts and winners from the Synapse Life Science and LiONS LAIR competitions
- Experience the virtual highlights
- Mark 10 years of innovation and our central role in the Hamilton Innovation Ecosystem
- Bring our ecosystem together when we hope we are all safe to do so.

We know these times are challenging and that our clients are going to need our help to navigate and move forward. We are here for you and as always, we want to help you start, grow and succeed!

Sincerely,

The Innovation Factory Team

## 2020 LiONS LAIR Facts

### Why we are doing this?

- 1) We understand the uncertainty of our current state in Canada and the world, and how important social distance is at the moment. But for Innovation Factory, supporting entrepreneurs with coaching and training is at our core.

**We are going to continue to provide training to our LiONS LAIR cohort (virtually) during this summer. There will be a 2020 Lions Lair cohort of companies. We can't wait to (e)meet you!!**

- 2) So it's not going to be the “gala-like” experience that would normally take place in September.

**Finalists will virtually compete, head-to-head for some great prizes thanks to the support from the amazing partners in our ecosystem. THEN, we have a plan to hold Innovation Factory's 10 Years of Innovation Gala in January 2021 where we can share a ton of innovation highlights!**

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- 3) We know our partners want to participate and be involved with us in meaningful ways so that is top of mind for us.

**We are putting together one heck of a spin on the competition aspect of LiONS LAIR. Stay tuned for our announcements as we roll out our new plans. EVERYONE will be able to call some shots and make their picks (HINT!!).**

- 4) To the companies and entrepreneurs who have been itching to apply for LiONS LAIR this year – it is on and it will be different. We guarantee it's going to be interesting and one-of-a-kind, and what a better way to do it but for our 10th Annual LiONS LAIR competition!