

The Hub Nova Scotians Need

With all this budget hullabaloo and austerity rigmarole a lot of us are wondering, where are we headed – if not Toronto? There's no doubt that wasteful spending and propping up failing industries will suck us dry but slash and burn will leave us barren. Like everything else, we need to find our way through the murky middle. To do so, we need a vision. We need a plan that capitalizes on our competitive advantages. And we need leaders who can unify and compel.

So what makes us special? Yes, we've got ocean; some strong tides, wind, and a bit of sun; some talented creative, technical, and entrepreneurial folks; and (medicinal) pot. But above all else, I believe our advantage is being a pretty darn great place to live. A place where we know our neighbours and sometimes their parents, grand-parents, and great grand-parents. A place where we can pick up the phone and get some advice from leaders we barely know. A place where we are welcomed, supported, and proud to call home. Our advantage is we're connected and we care.

If so, the closing of the Hub Halifax is a huge blow. It is more than an affordable workspace, it is a community in the truest sense. And community is absolutely integral for starting and developing a business: to connect with talented people; meet customers and clients; get advice from those who've been through it; or just know there are people who have your back.

Technology incubators and accelerators are filling this role for a particular kind of business. The businesses that are built to scale and sell. The benefits of these can be great, no doubt; but it is local, sustainably growing business that is and will continue to be our backbone. The Hub has been fundamental in the growth and continued success of many of these types of businesses.

We live in a pretty great place, albeit better when not under six feet of snow. It sure isn't easy to make it but it's worth the fight to stay. Our focus as the people who love this place and need to make it successful has to be on bringing people in, getting them connected, and making them want to stay. The Hub has been doing this for our city and province with little fanfare and gain for some time now.

The physical space is closing for now but I'm confident the spirit will carry-on. I know I will certainly do my part to pay it forward.

Thanks Tracy and Jo!