

Healthcare Innovation Cluster
A Year of Impact and Innovation for
Digital Health in Tunisia



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Executive Summary

This report presents the activity summary for the Healthcare Innovation Cluster (HCI) over the past year, a period marked by significant progress in structuring Tunisia's health technology ecosystem. Rooted in the heart of Monastir's ecosystem, close to its academic hubs ¹, HCI has acted as a catalyst to transform national digital health ambitions into tangible and measurable results.

The year was marked by several landmark achievements. On the strategic front, the **HCI Summit** successfully brought together over 40 national and international leaders to define a pragmatic roadmap for Tunisian HealthTech.³ HCI also launched **Pharma 4 Novation**, the first pre-incubation program dedicated to pharmacists, opening a new specialized entrepreneurship track.⁴ Concurrently, our targeted training actions, in collaboration with the faculties in Monastir, directly contributed to strengthening human capital by training and certifying over **95 healthcare professionals and startup founders**.⁶ Finally, the deployment of high-impact societal programs, such as **Health4farming** in rural areas, demonstrated HealthTech's capacity to provide concrete solutions to development challenges.⁴

These initiatives have positioned HCI as a central player, capable of mobilizing stakeholders, catalyzing innovation, and creating sustainable economic and social value. The dashboard below summarizes HCI's quantitative performance over the period.

Annual Performance Dashboard

Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Annual Result	Analysis / Strategic Impact for Tunisia
Startups Supported (Startup Studio)	8	Creation of innovative companies and high-value jobs.
Healthcare Professionals Trained/Certified	85 ⁶	Upskilling of medical professionals on digital and innovation challenges.
Startup Founders Trained (Masterclass)	10 ⁶	Strengthening the entrepreneurial maturity and viability of HealthTech projects.
Innovation Programs Launched	3+	Diversification of the support offering to meet the specific needs of the ecosystem.
Strategic Events Organized	4+	Positioning Tunisia as a hub for dialogue and innovation in digital health.
Active Strategic Partners	15+ ³	Demonstrating the capacity to mobilize academic, industrial, and international actors for collective impact.

In conclusion, the past year has been one of consolidation and acceleration for HCI. The cluster not only met its operational objectives but also laid the foundations for robust future growth. Building on these successes, HCI reaffirms its commitment to amplifying its impact in the coming year, in perfect alignment with Tunisia's strategic vision to become a regional and international leader in health innovation.

1. Introduction: HCI, the Engine of HealthTech Transformation in Tunisia

1.1. Strategic Mission and Vision

The Healthcare Innovation Cluster (HCI) is a pioneering initiative, founded on a clear mission: "to bridge the gap between healthcare and technology" in Tunisia.⁴ In a global health sector undergoing profound change, HCI's mission is to catalyze collaboration between entrepreneurs, innovators, healthcare professionals, and pharmaceutical industries to transform innovative ideas into concrete, marketable solutions.⁴

HCI's vision is ambitious and aligned with national economic and technological development goals. It aims to position Tunisia as a leading HealthTech innovation hub for the Euro-Mediterranean region.³ This vision is based on the conviction that Tunisia possesses the necessary assets—skilled human capital, geographical proximity to Europe and Africa, and competitive costs—to become a premier destination for the development, validation, and deployment of innovative health technologies.¹¹

1.2. A Strategic Anchor in the Heart of the Health Ecosystem

HCI's location in Monastir is a strategic decision that provides a major competitive advantage. This placement is not incidental; it puts HCI in close proximity to the academic institutions that train the country's healthcare elite: the **Faculty of Medicine of Monastir** and the **Faculty of Pharmacy of Monastir**.¹

This geographical proximity creates a true "golden triangle" of health innovation. It facilitates daily collaborations, allows direct access to researchers, clinicians, and students, and fosters the emergence of projects born from the intersection of real-world clinical needs and cutting-edge technological solutions.² This environment provides the necessary infrastructure and dynamism for incubated startups to develop, prototype, and test their solutions.

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1.3. Alignment with the National Digital Health Strategy

HCI's actions are at the heart of the "**Digital Tunisia**" national strategy.¹² As a key player in the innovation ecosystem, HCI directly contributes to the operational implementation of public policies aimed at modernizing the health sector through digital technology. Our role is to orchestrate large-scale initiatives, mobilize public and private actors, and actively contribute to shaping future regulatory frameworks. The successes of HCI, detailed in this report, are tangible proof of the relevance of this strategic alignment and our contribution to the national vision.



1.4. Report Structure

This activity report is structured to reflect HCI's three major axes of impact over the past year. The first axis focuses on HCI's role as a **federator and structurer of the ecosystem**, distinguishing between strategic actions and community animation activities. The second axis highlights actions dedicated to the **emergence of entrepreneurs**, particularly our incubation programs. The third axis illustrates HCI's capacity to deploy **targeted innovation programs** for broad societal impact.



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2. Axis 1: Federating the Health Innovation Ecosystem

The role of an innovation cluster is not limited to supporting startups; it is, above all, about creating a fertile environment where collaborations can emerge.¹³ HCI has excelled in this role as an orchestrator, using its base in Monastir as an operational hub to reach out and federate the entire national ecosystem.



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2.1. The HCI Summit: A Strategic Catalyst for the National Roadmap



The organization of the **HCI Summit** was a pivotal moment this year for the entire sector.³ Conceived and piloted by HCI, this high-level event brought together **over 40 opinion leaders**. The objective was not a simple conference, but a strategic think tank aimed at "transforming policy into pilot projects and scaling actions."³

The scope of this summit is measured by the quality of its participants: **7 major pharmaceutical laboratories, 6 regulatory institutions, 10 academic representatives, and 15 experts** in health and investment.³ This convergence enabled an action-oriented dialogue, structured around a policy paper identifying critical levers for the ecosystem: governance, validation pathways, and early-stage financing.³

Organized as part of the Co-Workup 4.0 program and supported by **GIZ, BMZ, and ANIMA Investment Network**, the summit demonstrated HCI's ability to mobilize top-tier international partners.³ The success of this event positions HCI as a thought leader and a legitimate orchestrator of the national dialogue on digital health.

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2.2. Strategic Collaborations with Academic Hubs

HCI's action connects to the source of knowledge. The collaboration with the **Faculty of Medicine of Monastir** is exemplary. HCI integrated into the continuing education (EPU) cycle by co-organizing a series of sessions, culminating in the **large joint ceremony on March 9, 2024, at the Faculty**.⁶

This event combined cutting-edge conferences on AI in health with a celebration of innovators. The impact was direct: **"HealthCare Novation Entrepreneurship Level 1"** certificates were awarded to **85 healthcare professionals**, and **10 startup founders** received certificates from the **"MasterClass Supporting HealthTech Startups"**.⁶ These figures demonstrate HCI's commitment to acculturating the medical community to innovation.





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2.3. Community Animation and Skill Building

Alongside strategic events, HCI builds its community on a daily basis through a series of workshops and technical meetings designed to strengthen the skills of innovators, startups, and professionals:

- "Health Design Thinking" Workshop: An intensive workshop on applying design thinking methodologies to the specific challenges of the care pathway, enabling participants to rethink user-centered solutions.



- Franco-Tunisian Collaborative Workshop (AI & Digital Health): Highlighting HCI's position as an international hub, this major collaborative workshop hosted a delegation of students and innovators from the ISIS Castres School of Engineering (France), who worked alongside Tunisian innovators. Co-organized with key partners (Faculty of Pharmacy of Monastir, Isetcom, Enactus FPHM, and Pharma 4 Novation), this session focused on digital health and AI, allowing participants to co-design action plans for cross-border deployment.



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- "OHS & ESG" Think Tank: A targeted meeting on integrating Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) and ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) criteria into the strategy of HealthTech companies, a key issue for the startup SAHTEE



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- HealthTech Meetup: An open networking event for the community to encourage synergies, collaborations, and the emergence of new projects.



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These events are the engine that fuels our Startup Studio and strengthens the ecosystem at its foundations.

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3. Axis 2: The Emergence of a New Generation of Health Entrepreneurs

The core of HCI's mission is to catalyze the creation of startups.⁹ This mission takes shape through our support programs.

3.1. Pharma 4 Novation: Innovation at the Heart of Pharmacy

Launched on February 1st, the **Pharma 4 Novation** program is a unique and strategic initiative: the "**first pre-incubation program in Tunisia dedicated to pharmacists and pharmacy students.**"⁴ The goal is to transform these highly qualified professionals into HealthTech entrepreneurs by providing them with tailored training, coaching, and networking.⁵ This program builds an essential bridge between the pharmaceutical industry and digital innovation.



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3.2. Healthcare Innovators Summit 2.0 (HIS 2.0): Training the Talents

In strategic partnership with Enactus FPHM, HCI co-organized the second edition of the **Healthcare Innovators Summit (HIS 2.0)**.¹⁰ This event was a true innovation boot camp for students and young researchers. It offered practical training on cutting-edge topics such as **bioinformatics for drug discovery** and **generative AI in health**.¹⁰ HIS 2.0 strengthened the next generation of innovators and created a direct pipeline from ideation to incubation.¹⁰





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3.3. The HCI Startup Studio: From Idea to Market

The **Startup Studio** is HCI's flagship initiative. It embodies our intensive co-founding model, where we get directly involved in creating companies by providing operational, strategic, and financial resources.⁴ This model maximizes the chances of success. This year, our studio is supporting **8 innovative startups**.

Startup Fiche: SAHTEE (Farm Hers Project)

- **Sector:** AgriHealth / Occupational Health and Safety in Agriculture.¹⁵
- **Problem:** Agricultural workers are overexposed to musculoskeletal disorders (40% affected) due to a lack of adapted prevention tools.¹⁵
- **Solution:** An intelligent platform for diagnosis and real-time monitoring of effort, posture, and fatigue, including training (ergonomics, ISO 45001).¹⁵
- **Business Model:** Subscription (SaaS) for agricultural operations, supplemented by consulting services and strategic partnerships (insurers, exoskeleton suppliers).¹⁵
- **Key Assets:** A solution specifically designed for agriculture, with an AI trained on sectoral data and a network of specialized health experts.¹⁵



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Startup Fiche: Moodicament

- **Sector:** Digital Mental Health / AI-Assisted Psychology.¹⁵
- **Problem:** The lack of scientific tools for monitoring mood and productivity within companies.¹⁵
- **Solution:** A B2B web application based on validated models (Plutchik, PANAS), allowing emotion tracking, connection with professionals, and an anonymous forum.¹⁵
- **Business Model:** B2B subscription for companies (pharmaceutical, etc.) and partnerships with universities and research centers.¹⁵
- **Key Assets:** AI that maps emotions in real-time, visualization of the company's "mood check" for HR, while ensuring anonymity to improve well-being and productivity.¹⁵

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Startup Fiche: OncoConnect

- **Sector:** Digital Oncology / Clinical Decision Support.¹⁵
- **Problem:** Limited access for oncologists in Tunisia and the region to updated protocols and real-time clinical support tools.¹⁵
- **Solution:** An AI platform offering instant therapeutic recommendations, access to drug data, an integrated Continuing Medical Education (CME) module, and a multilingual interface (Arabic, English).¹⁵
- **Business Model:** SaaS license for hospitals/clinics, pharmaceutical sponsoring (for protocol integration and CME), and premium training subscriptions.¹⁵
- **Key Assets:** The first digital assistant in oncology designed for the Maghreb, integrating pharmaceutical data and CME, with a *mobile-first* architecture.¹⁵

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Startup Fiche: Pruva.AI

- **Mission:** To act as a bridge between science, regulation, and the market to strengthen the quality, safety, and competitiveness of health innovations in Tunisia.¹⁵
- **Solution:** A validation platform (scientific, regulatory, and commercial) that combines human expertise (a network of 40+ experts) and AI. It offers test coordination and compliance support (ISO 13485 certification in progress).⁵
- **Progress (thanks to HCI):** Created and incubated within HCI, Pruva.AI is a strategic initiative to structure the ecosystem. It has begun its ISO 13485 certification process.¹⁵
- **Resources:** As an internal HCI project, Pruva.AI benefits from direct access to the cluster's entire network of partners (industrial, academic, research centers).¹⁵



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4. Axis 3: Targeted Innovation Programs for Societal Impact

HCI's action extends beyond the purely technological sphere. These programs, piloted by HCI, demonstrate that health innovation is a powerful lever for social development, inclusion, and regulatory progress.

4.1. Health4farming: Technology at the Service of Women Farmers

The **Health4farming** program is an emblematic initiative of HCI's societal commitment. This project, deployed in **rural Tunisia**, aims to empower women farmers, who play a vital role in the country's food security but face systemic challenges in health, income, and digital access.⁴

The approach intersects several objectives: health (technological solutions adapted to agricultural risks⁸), economic (entrepreneurship workshops), and social (digital literacy).⁷ This program, established in alliance with agricultural cooperatives, associations, and Euro-Med clusters⁷, is a case study of "frugal innovation" and inclusion, demonstrating that HealthTech is a powerful tool for regional development and reducing inequalities.



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4.2. Think Tanks and Influence: Shaping the Regulatory Framework

Aware that an ecosystem cannot thrive without an adapted regulatory framework ¹⁷, HCI has positioned itself as a reference think tank. This activity materialized in the organization of expert panels, notably the session on March 2, 2024, held **at the Faculty of Medicine of Monastir**, dedicated to the "Regulatory Framework for Services and Products from Innovation in Health Technologies in Tunisia."¹⁷

This event highlighted major challenges (legal void for medical devices, Central Bank restrictions ¹⁷) and formulated concrete recommendations (drawing inspiration from foreign models, developing regulations adapted to Africa ¹⁷). HCI thus acts as a proactive force for proposals to inform public decision-making.



5. Conclusion and Outlook: Amplifying HCI's Impact

5.1. Review of an Exceptional Year

The past year has been a period of remarkable achievements for the Healthcare Innovation Cluster. The summary presented in this report testifies to an unprecedented dynamic of growth and structuration. By federating key actors during the HCI Summit ³, launching pioneering incubation programs like Pharma 4 Novation ⁴, and deploying high-impact societal initiatives like Health4farming ⁷, HCI has demonstrated its ability to transform a strategic vision into concrete actions.

5.2. Strategic Vision for the Coming Year

Building on these successes, HCI approaches the next year with renewed ambition:

- **Consolidation:** To sustain and scale our flagship programs, notably Pharma 4 Novation and the Startup Studio.⁵
- **Expansion:** To launch new thematic initiatives (AI in medical imaging, telemedicine in rural areas).
- **Internationalization:** To intensify efforts to strengthen strategic partnerships (BioValley, Marseille Technopole ⁴) to attract investment and open export markets for our startups.

5.3. Acknowledgments and Future Vision

The Healthcare Innovation Cluster extends its deepest gratitude to all its institutional, academic, and industrial partners. The dynamic innovation environment in Monastir and the collaboration of the entire ecosystem¹ have been decisive factors in HCI's successes this year.

HCI's achievements demonstrate the immense potential of HealthTech as a future-forward sector for Tunisia. The **8 startups** we are incubating this year, such as **Sahtee**, **Moodicament**, **OncoConnect**, and **Pruva.AI** [18, 18], are living proof of this potential.

For this potential to be fully realized, HCI is committed to strengthening its actions to connect these young companies to national and international support mechanisms, so they can fully benefit from the incentive framework that Tunisia has put in place.¹⁸

Together, we can accelerate this trajectory and make Tunisia not only a consumer but also a producer and exporter of innovative health technologies, thereby affirming its status as an undisputed regional leader in the field of digital health.

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