

# Medal of the French language

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## Collections



Gold-plated medal for the Prix de la langue française awarded by Dupuis Frères department store to an employee. The reverse features a personalized inscription.

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**Accession  
Number**

**Marchand**

**Fabricant /  
Éditeur**

**Date**

## Materials

## Measurements

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### Historical context

In the first quarter of the 20th century, the Prix de la langue française Dupuis Frères was established within the eponymous store. The award promotes French-Canadian culture and the store's philanthropic and patriotic spirit to the public.

Founded in 1868, Montreal department store Dupuis Frères is a destination for French Canadians. Nationalist values remained an essential part of the store's philosophy until its closure in 1978.

Surrounded by English-speaking department stores such as Eaton's and Morgan's, the store expressed its patriotism in a number of ways. One of these is to pay special attention to the French language by rewarding deserving employees with an award, as represented by this medal.

The store soon took on the official nickname of "People's Store". The values of Dupuis Frères were well established among French Canadians. In the interwar period, when this medal originated, the store supported "l'achat chez nous", a movement initiated by nationalists who boycotted non-French businesses. Dupuis Frères also nurtured this patriotism through its proximity to fervent nationalists such as Canon Lionel Groux.

These patriotic values are also shared by staff members. Some employees are active members of the Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste, a nationalist organization. Also, in Le Duprex – a magazine dedicated to employees – some articles testify to employees' nationalist fervor. One

of them, for example, encourages his colleagues to work hard by stressing the importance of the French language and the Catholic faith, important elements of French-Canadian culture.

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Photo by Michel Pinault