



The Black Entrepreneurship Ecosystem-SEO Youth Entrepreneurship Program

Program Overview:

The BEE-SEO Youth Entrepreneurship Program is an annual initiative designed to empower Black youth (between the ages of 14 years to 30 years old) in South Eastern Ontario (from Trenton to Cornwall). It aims to provide the knowledge, experience, mentorship, and network needed to launch and sustain entrepreneurial ventures.

The only requirement to qualify is that participants must identify as Black or be Black. They must either have an existing business idea, potential business ideas, or be willing to develop and explore potential business ideas during the program.

The program runs in two phases:

- Self-Paced Bootcamp: 1st week of December - last week of February
- Live Virtual Bootcamp: 1st week of March - last week of May

Program Timeline & Structure:

1. Phase 1: Self-Paced Bootcamp (1st Week of December - Last Week of February)

Objective: Equip participants with fundamental entrepreneurial skills through a structured, self-paced online bootcamp, covering seven critical modules essential for business development and growth.

Course Modules:

- The Growth Mindset: Learn the mindset needed for entrepreneurial success, emphasizing resilience, adaptability, and continuous learning.
- Ideation: Techniques and strategies for transforming ideas into actionable business concepts.
- Business Model Canvas: Developing a targeted approach using the Business Model Canvas, focusing on defining the beachhead market for optimal impact.
- Beginning to Understand Your Customer: Conduct market analysis to understand the customer base and identify competitors through secondary data and research techniques.
- Understanding Costs & Financial Modeling: Introduction to financial modeling for first-time entrepreneurs, covering startup costs estimation and pricing strategies.
- Your Competition: Analyzing market influences using PESTLE and SWOT analyses to develop a competitive strategy.
- Pitching Ideas and Business Concepts: Techniques for building persuasive pitching skills to effectively present business ideas.



Requirements for Live Bootcamp Qualification:

- Submit a Lean Business Model Canvas for review.
- Pitch their business idea/startup to a panel of judges by the last week of February.

Deadlines:

- Program applications are open from the end of June to the end of October every year,
- Participants must complete all seven courses and submit their deliverables by the end of February,
- Participants must complete the live sessions and submit their deliverables by the end of May,

2. Phase 2: Live Bootcamp (1st Week of March - Last Week of May)

Objective: Guide participants in refining and developing their business ideas through live mentoring, coaching sessions, and practical application. This phase transforms concepts into viable businesses.

Live Bootcamp Format:

- Biweekly Sessions: 1.5-hour interactive mentoring sessions held virtually every two weeks.
- Sessions will feature:
 - Expert-led workshops on business planning, marketing, and scaling.
 - Peer collaboration for building a supportive network.
 - Personalized feedback from mentors and business coaches.

Requirements for Completion:

- Present a draft business plan by the end of April.
- Pitch refined business ideas to a panel of experts on the last Sunday of May.

3. Partners & Ecosystem Involvement:

The program will collaborate with key ecosystem partners for further support, including:

1. Kingston Economic Development Corporation
2. DDQIC (Dunin-Deshpande Queen's Innovation Centre)
3. Queen's Partnerships and Innovation
4. SLC Craig Innovation Center
5. Reaction Hub (RXN Hub)
6. Queen's Business Law Clinic

These partners will provide program participants with opportunities for ecosystem engagement, legal support, and mentorship beyond the bootcamp.



4. Program Launch and Announcements:

- Application Period: Open applications on October 15 and close by November 20.
- Program Announcement: Details about the program, selection criteria, and important dates will be announced on October 1, through BEE-SEO's social media platforms, newsletters, and partner networks.

5. Annual Program Milestones:

- October 1: Program announcement and start of the application period.
- November 20: Application deadline.
- November 25: Selection and notification of successful applicants, followed by enrollment into the virtual bootcamp.
- December 1: Official program kick-off and start of the self-paced bootcamp.
- February 28: Deadline for self-paced bootcamp completion.
- First Week of March: Launch of the Live Virtual Bootcamp.
- Last Sunday of March: Pitch competition for live bootcamp qualification.
- May 31: Final pitch competition and graduation event.

6. Annual Pitch Competition:

1. March Competition: Participants pitch their ideas to a panel to qualify for the live bootcamp. The focus is on presenting their business model and articulating how their venture adds value to the community and economy of Southeastern Ontario.
2. May Competition: Participants showcase their refined business plans and concepts. Winners will receive further mentorship, opportunities for funding, and access to partner programs for scaling their ventures.

7. Program Objective and Impact:

The primary objective of the BEE-SEO Youth Entrepreneurship Program is to build strong Black entrepreneurs capable of launching and scaling businesses that contribute to the economic growth of Southeastern Ontario. By nurturing entrepreneurial talent within the Black community, the program aims to:

- Develop a new generation of business owners who can contribute to the region's increasing tax base.
- Drive innovation and business diversity in local markets.
- Create job opportunities within the community, enhancing overall economic stability.

By equipping participants with practical skills, mentorship, and a strong network of partners, the program ensures that Black youth can turn their ideas into successful ventures, strengthening the local economy.