

Who Helps Innovators and Entrepreneurs in York Region?

York Region is a great place to build and grow a business! Check out these facts, courtesy of the York Region Economic Development team at investinyork.ca:

- About 10% of the 49,000 businesses in York Region are in ICT (information, communications, telecommunications)
- 20 of the 90 gaming companies in the GTA are in York Region, with a combined 100+ million downloads
- 16 Fortune-100 corporations are headquartered in York Region
- The average size of companies in York Region is 15 employees

Not surprisingly, York Region has many resources to help entrepreneurs start and grow their businesses. Some organizations specifically support startups businesses; others focus on advanced businesses; and some foster peer-to-peer connections. Regardless of which stage your business is at, York Region offers something to help you along. This document summarizes some key organizations that support entrepreneurs in York Region, organized by problem statement:

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A few points to add:

- This document was written by an entrepreneur (who was once confused about where to go for support when he started his business) for other entrepreneurs. In other words, best efforts have been made to get the info accurate in order to save you some time, but it's up to you to research the details and determine what is relevant for you.
- This is a just a list of resources – not every organization will be a fit for you. Inclusion on this list does not mean endorsement (implicit or explicit).
- Many of these organizations are connected with each other in the York Region ecosystem – so by working with one organization, entrepreneurs are able to tap into the broader network.
- While a few of these organizations explicitly target certain groups (e.g., age, community, industry), the majority of the organizations in this document support all entrepreneurs and potential entrepreneurs. Don't be shy – reach out!

Obviously these organizations do far more than what is included below, but hopefully this summary will save you some time researching what is available to you.

BTW, some information about each organization is repeated from section to section, as many readers won't read sections that don't pertain to them (just in case the repeating content is distracting). Good luck!

"I want to play, create and prototype. Where can I find support and like-minded inventors and makers?"



An "inventor support group," the **Innovation Initiative Co-Operative** (inventorscircle.org) is a not-for-profit organization with the goals of assisting private individuals in developing their ideas, facilitating and advancing innovation in general, and boosting the Canadian economy through new, original products / services without competition. Their Newmarket chapter hosts monthly seminars.

NewMakeIt (newmakeit.com) is a state-of-the art technology hub, co-working space, and maker space. Featuring state-of-the-art tools such as 3D printers, laser cutters, and CNC tools, NewMakeIt provides York Region residents, entrepreneurs, innovators and artists with a collaborative, creative-learning space that fuels inspiration, provides guidance and enables the sharing of ideas.

Y Lab (ylab.ca) is York Region's first maker space and operates in the basement of Richmond Hill's historic David Dunlap Observatory. Led and supported by volunteers, Y Lab hosts events to bring together people who share a common interest in robotics, makers, technology innovation, Arduinos, ham radios, lightsabers, and other things Technology.

York Region's network of municipal-run libraries offers resources to support inventors and creators. For example:

- o 3D printers are available for public use in the Newmarket, Markham, Aurora, Georgina and Vaughan libraries.
- o The Markham Public Library (thecavemarkham.blogspot.ca) operates a maker space focused on creative audio / visual arts. Patrons can borrow or lend recording equipment of various types to help them create.

The libraries are:

- Aurora: aurorapl.ca
- East Gwillimbury: egpl.ca
- Georgina: georginalibrary.ca
- King: kinglibrary.ca
- Markham: markhampubliclibrary.ca
- Newmarket: newmarketpl.ca
- Richmond Hill: rhpl.richmondhill.on.ca/RHPL/
- Vaughan: vaughanpl.info/index.php
- Whitchurch-Stouffville: wsplibrary.ca



“Where can I find help in York Region to start my business?”

Canada

Canada Business Ontario (CBO, cbo-eco.ca) is part of the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario (FedDev Ontario) and a part of the Canada Business Network. Their goal is to help Ontario entrepreneurs gain access to government business information, in order to help entrepreneurs plan for, begin, expand or exit their business.



CanadaOne (canadaone.com/index.html) is dedicated to helping people start, run and grow successful businesses in Canada, from high-growth start-ups to home-based business owners. CanadaOne has built a library of over 900 just-in-time business articles since launching in March 1998, to help small businesses access the information they need, just as they need it. Popular topics on the site are thinking out of the box, HR, marketing, sales, and how small companies can benefit from emerging technologies.



Canadian Business & Enterprise Services (CBES, cbes.ca/) helps companies with incorporation, legal and administrative compliance. CBES assists, consults, trains and creates the proper compliance framework (e.g., policies, procedures, forms, employee handbook, and other documents) for businesses. CBES offers education, administrative and legal compliance support services.

Canada

The **Canadian Intellectual Property Office** (CIPO, ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cipointernet-internetopic.nsf/eng/Home) is a part of Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada. CIPO is a Special Operating Agency and is responsible for the administration and processing of the greater part of intellectual property (IP) in Canada. CIPO's support services include areas such as trademarks, patents, copyright, industrial designs, IP for businesses, IP agents, and integrated circuit topographies.



CreateIT Now (southlakeregional.org/Default.aspx?cid=1425&lang=1) is a launch pad for great ideas and a landing site tailor made for healthcare-focused innovators getting into North American markets. In addition to business advice, CreateIT Now offers subsidized working space and access to in-market clinical expertise and advice.



The **EIR (Entrepreneurs In Residence) Talks** speaker series (<http://eirtalks.ca/>) is hosted roughly once a month in libraries across York Region. The EIRs feature 3-4 entrepreneurs who share their journeys, motivations, challenges, and lessons from starting and running businesses. The purpose of EIR is to connect entrepreneurs and those thinking about entrepreneurship by exchanging these stories and experiences.



The **Enterprise Promotion and Innovation Centre** (humanendeavour.org/epic/), a project of Human Endeavour, supports marginalized community members willing to become entrepreneurs, enter the work force, become an active part of society and participate in economic activities. EPIC also supports a number of independent community owned and operated enterprises.



Futurpreneur Canada (futurpreneur.ca) offers mentoring and loan financing for entrepreneurs 18-39 years old, with loan financing of up to \$45000.



The **Green Connections Network** (green-connections.com) is a group of small business owners, social enterprises, non-profits and community based organizations that want to make a difference by promoting environmentally and socially sustainable practices. GCN offers monthly meetings, educational opportunities, and mentoring.



Ideal Labs (idealincubator.ca) provides entrepreneurs and early stage startups with business development resources and seed funding to create businesses. The Ideal Labs team helps guide entrepreneurs through the startup journey, while connecting them with an extensive network of private and public sector partners and mentors.



Partnering with the Welcome Centre (welcomecentre.ca), **Job Skills** offers programs that help Canadians start up businesses (jobskills.org/pathways). In addition, Welcome Centre offers a variety of settlement, accreditation and employment services for new Canadians.



La Passerelle-I.D.É. (passerelle-ide.com) is a Francophone not-for-profit organization based in Toronto. Founded over 20 years ago, La Passerelle-I.D.É. works to address systemic barriers facing Francophone newcomers. One of their programs is Plateforme Affaires Ontario (PAO), which aims to support new Canadian Francophone entrepreneurs to launch and grow their businesses.

À La Passerelle-I.D.É., nous reconnaissons les obstacles et défis des immigrants francophones dans leurs efforts d'intégration et nous croyons qu'un Canada fort repose sur la diversité, l'inclusion et l'engagement civique. Notre mission est de promouvoir les talents francophones d'ici et d'ailleurs pour favoriser leur développement personnel et professionnel.

Markham's Community Innovation Hub



Want to run a restaurant to hire at-risk youth? Want to teach women to sew their own clothes to save money? Want to organize a low-cost home repair company for seniors? Or is your idea more global - a way to feed the hungry in third-world countries, or bring low-cost dental care to those same places?

An inclusive project of the United Church of Canada, **Markham's Community Innovation Hub** (markhamcommunityinnovationhub.blogspot.ca) supports social entrepreneurs with business coaching and mentoring, workshops, co-working space, networking and showcases.

Ontario Centres of Excellence (oce-ontario.org) drives the commercialization of cutting-edge research across strategic market sectors to build the economy of tomorrow and foster a culture of entrepreneurship through programs that help young entrepreneurs develop business skills and launch new companies. OCE's program suite (including grants) covers three key areas:

- Industry-Academic R&D Collaboration
- Commercialization
- Entrepreneurship

Other key OCE initiatives are the IBM High Performance Computing Initiative and Colleges Ontario Network for Industry Innovation (CONII).

Seneca Seneca HELIX

Seneca College offers a breadth of programs and courses to help entrepreneurs. Seneca's on-campus incubator HELIX (Health Entrepreneurship and Lifestyle Innovation Xchange, senecacollege.ca/research/HELIX/) provides mentorship, workshops, experiential opportunities, technology and incubator space to assist entrepreneurs from ideation to launch. HELIX is open to students and community youth (18-29). HELIX has a niche focus in healthy living, healthy lifestyle sector.



The **Small Business Enterprise Centres** (SBECs) provide a wealth of business advisory services and training programs, targeted at helping small businesses start, grow and succeed. The SBECs offer one-on-one appointments and educational seminars on topics such as: start-up regulations, business planning, marketing research and strategy, understanding business financing and taxes and more.

- o Markham (msbc.markham.ca)
- o Richmond Hill (BusinessRichmondHill.ca)
- o Vaughan (vaughan.ca/VBEC)
- o York Region (yorksmallbusiness.ca)



The South Lake Community Futures Development Corporation

(southlakecfdc.org) is a not-for-profit community-based organization providing a variety of small business and community economic development services within East Gwillimbury, Georgina and Brock. South Lake CFDC operates under a contract with the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario to provide Community Futures programming to these communities. The SLCFDC is a national, rural community, economic development initiative.

CFDCs provide business loans and other business financing to small and medium sized enterprises; provide business counseling and education services and offer access to business resources and assistance with starting a new business; and work with local businesses, non-profits, municipalities and first nations as well as provincial, regional or county governments on a wide variety of community economic capacity development planning and projects.



Startup Weekend (startupweekend.org) is a weekend-long, hands-on experience where aspiring entrepreneurs develop startup ideas from concept to pitch. Along the way, concepts are validated for viability, feasibility and profitability. On average, half of Startup Weekend's attendees have technical or design backgrounds, the other half have business backgrounds.

Beginning with open mic pitches on Friday, attendees bring their best ideas and inspire others to join their team. Over Saturday and Sunday, teams focus on customer development, validating their ideas, practicing LEAN Startup Methodologies and building a minimal viable product. On Sunday afternoon, teams present their startup pitch to a panel of judges.

In York Region, Startup Weekends have been held at Seneca College (Markham campus) and York University.



Startup York Region (startup.york.ca) is a non-profit, volunteer and entrepreneur-led peer-to-peer network of business owners and "intrapreneurs". Practicing a strict no-sales rule, Startup York Region is focused on building and sustaining an environment for entrepreneurs to share information and best practices with one another. Startup York Region hosts 2-3 events each month to bring the community together: EIR (Entrepreneurs In Residence, EIRTalks.ca) and Startup Drinks. All events are free to attend – participants just cover what they consume.



ventureLAB (venturelab.ca) is the non-profit Regional Innovation Centre that supports York Region, Simcoe County and Muskoka District. ventureLAB helps technology, health and other entrepreneurs bring their innovations to market, by offering a unique combination of mentoring, partnering, and connecting tailored to the unique needs of each business. ventureLAB offers the BUILD training program, 1:1 advisory services, clinics, conferences, investor meetings, and other special events:

- For newer businesses, the Begin course (part of BUILD) helps entrepreneurs develop business plans and articulate value propositions.
- For social entrepreneurs, ventureLAB offers CommunityBUILD programs tailored to social enterprises.



The **Wellness Group and Coaching Academy** (thewellnessgroup.ca) is a full-service incubator, accelerator and business hub for wellness practitioners, trainers, coaches, entrepreneurs, and professional corporations. Members of the incubator can access help from coaches and mentors, seed capital providers, and experts in social media, web development, SEO analytics, financial, legal, IT, and more to get your business started, growing and even to take your offering global. On-demand hot desks, event space, training and meeting rooms and professional offices are also available.



The **Women's Centre of York Region** (wcyr.ca/get-support/) offers a range of support and services for women to make positive changes in their lives, including the Enterprising Careers (career exploration) and Microlending for Women (entrepreneurship) programs.



The **York Entrepreneurship Development Institute** (yedinstitute.org) works with ventures across all stages of business. In addition to its free 12-week training program for startups (for-profit and not-for-profit), YEDI provides funding opportunities, space and mentorship for growing companies and not-for-profit organizations. YEDI also has opened a Business Acceleration Campus, an 80,000 square-foot facility complete with commercial, industrial, office, educational, TV studio and theatrical co-working and collaboration spaces.



The **York Region Arts Council** serves to advance, promote, represent and connect the art community and tourism industry across the region so as to enrich local quality of life, and to build awareness of, support for, involvement in and appreciation of, arts and culture in York Region. One program, the Artrepreneur Business Accelerator (yorkregionartscouncil.com/artrepreneur-incubator-program), helps creative minds in visual arts, dance, theatre, film, music, jewelry, fashion, augmented reality and game design, build a business.



York Region's network of municipal-run libraries offers training and other resources to support small businesses and entrepreneurs. For example:

- o Several libraries have partnered up with Startup York Region to offer the monthly EIR (Entrepreneurs In Residence) speaker series where entrepreneurs share their experiences with community members who may be thinking about starting their own business: eirtalks.ca
- o The Newmarket Library's business resources are at newmarketpl.ca/research/business-resources
- o The Richmond Hill Library offers a comprehensive list of resources to help entrepreneurs: rhpl.richmondhill.on.ca/SmallBusiness

The libraries' business resources can be accessed from:

- Aurora: aurorapl.ca
- East Gwillimbury: egpl.ca
- Georgina: georginalibrary.ca
- King: kinglibrary.ca
- Markham: markhampubliclibrary.ca
- Newmarket: newmarketpl.ca
- Richmond Hill: rhpl.richmondhill.on.ca/RHPL/
- Vaughan: vaughanpl.info/index.php
- Whitchurch-Stouffville: wsplibrary.ca

York University (yorku.ca) offers a breadth of programs and courses to help entrepreneurs. York's on-campus incubator LaunchYU (launchyu.ca) supports entrepreneurs across campus and in the community, and provides accelerator space at the Markham Convergence Centre to early-stage York-related companies.

"I need space."

Markham's Community Innovation Hub

Want to run a restaurant to hire at-risk youth? Want to teach women to sew their own clothes to save money? Want to organize a low-cost home repair company for seniors? Or is your idea more global - a way to feed the hungry in third-world countries, or bring low-cost dental care to those same places?

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Skytek Office Solutions (skytek.ca) provides scalable and flexible innovative office suite, meeting room, business consulting, and virtual office solutions for businesses, whether their market is local, national or global.



The **Vaughan International Commercialization Centre** (VICC, vaughan.ca/business/VICC) hosts a co-working space, the Bridge@Lebovic, that is aimed at providing businesses at the stage of commercializing a new, innovative product or service with a place to “soft land.” The Bridge@Lebovic also provides businesses with an opportunity to test their new technology in real-life settings and join an established business ecosystem.



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The **Village Hive** (thevillagehive.ca), located in Markham Village, is a co-working space for entrepreneurs, freelancers and people with workplace flexibility. The Village Hive offers a bright space with “hot desks” where members can:

- Set up and work for the day with wifi, coffee / tea, printer and a meeting room
- Attend business strategy workshops
- Hold workshops during the day, evenings and weekends
- Attend networking lunches
- Promote business and wellness events



The **Wellness Group and Coaching Academy** (thewellnessgroup.ca) is a full-service incubator, accelerator and business hub for wellness practitioners, trainers, coaches, entrepreneurs, and professional corporations. Members of the incubator can access help from coaches and mentors, seed capital providers, and experts in social media, web development, SEO analytics, financial, legal, IT, and more to get your business started, growing and even to take your offering global. On-demand hot desks, event space, training and meeting rooms and professional offices are also available.

“I need funding.”



The **Business Development Bank of Canada** (bdc.ca/) is a financial institution owned by the Government of Canada, and offers funding and services that complement what private-sector financial institutions provide to entrepreneurs.

With York Region locations in Markham, Newmarket and Vaughan, BDC offers:

- Venture capital and growth & transition capital
- Financing including loans
- Advisory and consulting services
- Support tools and articles



The **Canadian Government** offers the Concierge Service (concierge.portal.gc.ca, 1-855-53-GUIDE) to help entrepreneurs navigate through the many programs and financing opportunities at the Federal and Provincial levels.

The government also offers a database of grant, loan and financing information: canadabusiness.ca/eng/program/search/sgc-35/. MentorWorks compiled a summary of these grants and loans at mentorworks.ca/what-we-offer/government-funding/#funding.



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Keiretsu Forum Central Canada (keiretsuforum.com/global-chapters/vaughan/) has forged a partnership with the City of Vaughan and will be working closely with the VICC (Vaughan International Commercialization Center). Companies engaging with Keiretsu Forum Central Canada will have the unique opportunity to present in front of active angel investors via a two-day road show. Qualifying companies have the ability to syndicate globally for capital as well as for new distribution partners and new clients.



National Research Council-Industrial Research Assistance Program (NRC-IRAP, nrc-cnrc.gc.ca/eng/irap/index.html) is the Government of Canada's premier innovation assistance program for small and medium-sized enterprises. IRAP offers advisory services, funding opportunities, networking connections and youth employment programs to help its clients.



Ontario Centres of
Excellence
Where Next Happens

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Starter Company (ontario.ca/page/start-company-young-adults) offers grant funding of up to \$5000 for entrepreneurs between 18-29 who are no longer in school nor working full-time elsewhere. The SBECs administer this program.



Summer Company (ontario.ca/summercompany) offers grant funding of up to \$3000 for student entrepreneurs 15-29 who are currently in school and returning to school in the fall. The SBECs administer this program.



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The **York Angel Investors** (yorkangels.com) are a group of accredited investors based in York Region, who bring a broad range of professional experience. Their portfolio of companies benefit from member expertise in healthcare, IT, telecom, mobile apps, enterprise and SaaS software, retail and pharmaceutical. Also offering mentoring to investment companies, YAI investments often represent the bridge between the self-financed or seed stage and the venture capital and / or private equity level of funding.



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“I need help to grow my business.”



Active Career
Advancement Project
Progression Dynamique
de la Carrière

The **Active Career Advancement Project** (ACAP, acapcanada.ca) is an initiative of S.U.C.C.E.S.S. (successbc.ca) provides free HR services to companies who are looking to create or improve their HR practices in order to promote inclusiveness and diversity in the workplace. The program is free for all employers because it is funded by the Government of Canada.

Some of the services available to employers include, but are not limited to:

- Diversifying Recruiting Practices (finding free options for recruiting immigrants and other candidates)
- Job Description Best Practices (either creating or improving current job descriptions to be more clear and inclusive)
- Fundamentals of Behavioural Based Interviewing
- Various Training Programs (ex: Soft Skills Training for Immigrant Employees; Conflict Management, etc.)
- Performance Management Review Guides
- Retention Strategies
- Cross Cultural Competency Training

All services are modified to the employer's needs.



Canada



The **Association of Chinese Canadian Entrepreneurs** (ACCE, acce.ca) is a not-for-profit organization focused on helping Chinese Canadian entrepreneurs to start and build their businesses. ACCE provides several services to its members, including:

- Networking opportunities
- Seminars, workshops, and conferences
- Other programs about specific business topics
- Facilitating communication between government and new businesses
- Assisting entrepreneurs to explore and develop trade potential in the Asia-Pacific Region for Canadian goods and services

The **Build in Canada Innovation Program**, or BCIP (buyandsell.gc.ca/initiatives-and-programs/build-in-canada-innovation-program-bcip) was created to help companies bridge the pre-commercialization gap by procuring and testing late-stage innovative goods and services within the federal government before taking them to market by:

- Awarding contracts to entrepreneurs with pre-commercial innovations through an open, transparent, competitive and fair procurement process
- Testing and providing feedback to these entrepreneurs on the performance of their goods or services
- Providing innovators with the opportunity to enter the marketplace with a successful application of their new goods and services
- Providing information on how to do business with the Government of Canada

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The Province of Ontario's **Business Advisory Services** (onebusiness.ca) focuses on helping high-growth firms focused on exporting, product development and staffing, grow their businesses in Canada and internationally.

The **Business Women's Network of York Region** (bwnyr.com) is an organization for business women to connect through networking. The network offers a forum for members to share challenges and successes, how to help others through mentorship programs, as well as serve one another in York Region. The focus is on collaborating, connecting, exchange ideas, work together for mutual success and growth both professionally as well as personally.



The **Business Women's Networking Association** (bwna.ca) is made up of businesswomen and entrepreneurs in York Region. The BWNA is a networking forum that offers support and information on issues unique to women in business. Membership is open to women who are self employed and/or small business owners. Members will not compete directly with one another within the membership group.



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The **Canadian Association of Marketing Professionals** (canadianmarketer.ca), or CAMP's specific focus is to provide opportunity and collaboration for all Canadian marketers. A not-for-profit organization, their focus is to keep the individual marketer relevant, by helping them stay current with an ever-changing business landscape within a trusted community. CAMP produces a variety of events, including workshops, talks, networking sessions, and awards.



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Canada



The **Chambers and Boards** offer a variety of programs and events to help businesses network, learn new business skills and manage their costs (e.g., special member benefits). The chambers and boards also typically have a Young Professionals group that focus on offering events and programs unique to younger professionals and entrepreneurs.

- o Aurora Chamber of Commerce (aurorachamber.on.ca)
- o Markham Board of Trade (markhamboard.com)
- o Newmarket Chamber of Commerce (newmarketchamber.ca)
- o Richmond Hill Board of Trade (rhcoc.com)
- o Vaughan Chamber of Commerce (vaughanchamber.ca)

Concierge Service is a program offered by the Federal government (concierge.innovation.gc.ca/en/home, 1-855-53-GUIDE) to help growing companies navigate through the programs offered at the Federal level.

CreateIT Now (southlakeregional.org/Default.aspx?cid=1425&lang=1) is a launch pad for great ideas and a landing site tailor made for healthcare-focused innovators getting into North American markets. In addition to business advice, CreateIT Now offers subsidized working space and access to in-market clinical expertise and advice.

The **Fireside Conference** (firesideconf.com) is a business conference, complete with speakers, workshops and networking - and their sponsors include the DMZ and TechTO. But instead of holding this in a hotel or convention centre, this conference is hosted on a campground (with cabins).

Fireside Conference provides startups, entrepreneurs, teams, VCs, and Angels with an intimate and informal weekend getaway to foster team bonding and help develop new ideas. And while the campsite is not located in York Region, it is open to York Region participants (and honestly, it was too cool to not include).

The **Green Connections Network** (green-connections.com) is a group of small business owners, social enterprises, non-profits and community based organizations that want to make a difference by promoting environmentally and socially sustainable practices. GCN offers monthly meetings, educational opportunities, and mentoring.

Keiretsu Forum Central Canada (keiretsuforum.com/global-chapters/vaughan/) has forged a partnership with the City of Vaughan and will be working closely with the VICC (Vaughan International Commercialization Center). Companies engaging with Keiretsu Forum Central Canada will have the unique opportunity to present in front of active angel investors via a two-day road show. Qualifying companies have the ability to syndicate globally for capital as well as for new distribution partners and new clients.



La Passerelle-I.D.É. (passerelle-ide.com) is a Francophone not-for-profit organization based in Toronto. Founded over 20 years ago, La Passerelle-I.D.É. works to address systemic barriers facing Francophone newcomers. One of their programs is Plateforme Affaires Ontario (PAO), which aims to support new Canadian Francophone entrepreneurs to launch and grow their businesses.

À La Passerelle-I.D.É., nous reconnaissons les obstacles et défis des immigrants francophones dans leurs efforts d'intégration et nous croyons qu'un Canada fort repose sur la diversité, l'inclusion et l'engagement civique. Notre mission est de promouvoir les talents francophones d'ici et d'ailleurs pour favoriser leur développement personnel et professionnel.



Presented by the Town of Richmond Hill, ventureLAB, and the Regional Municipality of York, **MedEdge** (businessrichmondhill.ca/mededge/) is a catalyst for advancing life science ideas, connections and innovation into commercial success in York Region and the GTA's life sciences sector. The 2016 theme was "Disruptive Innovations in Health Care", and speakers shared how they use disruptive innovations to overcome challenges and how partnering with other organizations have helped them to achieve success. The next MedEdge is on June 14, 2016.



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OnRichmondHill.com hosts a weekly Connecting the Community "cross-sector collaboration" meeting that is open to the public, and there is no charge to attend. In this forum, small business owners from around Richmond Hill and the rest of York Region share information about each other's activities and businesses, including special events, seminars, workshops, fundraisers, and special causes. More information can be found at onrichmondhill.com.



Ontario Centres of Excellence (oce-ontario.org) drives the commercialization of cutting-edge research across strategic market sectors to build the economy of tomorrow and foster a culture of entrepreneurship through programs that help young entrepreneurs develop business skills and launch new companies. OCE's program suite (including grants) covers three key areas:

- Industry-Academic R&D Collaboration
- Commercialization
- Entrepreneurship

Other key OCE initiatives are the IBM High Performance Computing Initiative and Colleges Ontario Network for Industry Innovation (CONII).



Seneca

Seneca HELIX



Richmond Hill
SBEC
Small Business Enterprise Centre



ysbec
YORK SMALL BUSINESS
ENTERPRISE CENTRE



The **Richmond Hill & Markham Chinese Business Association** (rhmcba.ca) is a non-profit organization serving Richmond Hill and Markham. Encouraging communication between Chinese businesses, industry professionals, and political bodies, the RHMCA offers networking, leadership training and seminars to its members. The Youth Chapter also arranges volunteer job placements with local businesses.

Seneca College offers a breadth of programs and courses to help entrepreneurs. Seneca's on-campus incubator HELIX (Health Entrepreneurship and Lifestyle Innovation Xchange, senecacollege.ca/research/HELIX/) provides mentorship, workshops, experiential opportunities, technology and incubator space to assist entrepreneurs from ideation to launch. HELIX is open to students and community youth (18-29). HELIX has a niche focus in healthy living, healthy lifestyle sector.

The **Small Business Enterprise Centres** (SBECs) provide a wealth of business advisory services and training programs, targeted at helping small businesses start, grow and succeed. The SBECs offer one-on-one appointments and educational seminars on topics such as: start-up regulations, business planning, marketing research and strategy, understanding business financing and taxes and more.

- o Markham (msbc.markham.ca)
- o Richmond Hill (BusinessRichmondHill.ca)
- o Vaughan (vaughan.ca/VBEC)
- o York Region (yorksmallbusiness.ca)

The **South Lake Community Futures Development Corporation** (southlakecfdc.org) is a not-for-profit community-based organization providing a variety of small business and community economic development services within East Gwillimbury, Georgina and Brock. South Lake CFDC operates under a contract with the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario to provide Community Futures programming to these communities. The SLCFDC is a national, rural community, economic development initiative.

CFDCs provide business loans and other business financing to small and medium sized enterprises; provide business counseling and education services and offer access to business resources and assistance with starting a new business; and work with local businesses, non-profits, municipalities and first nations as well as provincial, regional or county governments on a wide variety of community economic capacity development planning and projects.



TECCANADA



Startup York Region (startupyork.ca) is a non-profit, volunteer and entrepreneur-led peer-to-peer network of business owners and "intrapreneurs". Practicing a strict no-sales rule, Startup York Region is focused on building and sustaining an environment for entrepreneurs to share information and best practices with one another. Startup York Region hosts 2-3 events each month to bring the community together: EIR (Entrepreneurs In Residence, EIRTalks.ca) and Startup Drinks.

TEC Canada (tec-canada.com) is a national resource for executives and entrepreneur leaders, and works with over 1,200 Canadian business owners. TEC provides its members with confidential moderated peer groups, 1:1 executive coaching, thought leadership resources, and access to a global network of leaders.

TechConnex (techconnex.ca) is the only member-directed industry association in the GTA entirely focused on the growth of small and mid-size tech businesses and their people through the sharing of best practices, business insights and bright ideas. For its members, TechConnex offers:

- Networking
- Peer Groups
- Learning Labs
- Speaker events

Funded by Employment Ontario, the **Thornhill Employment Hub** (thornhillhub.com) provides several services to businesses looking to hire:

- A dedicated team of job developers and employment advisors to recruit candidates
- A pool of qualified and motivated job ready candidates in one location
- Job fairs hosted onsite
- Advertising of job postings to an audience of diverse clients and employment service providers within York Region
- Information on and access to a variety of employment and training programs available to employers through Employment Ontario



The City of Vaughan is piloting a suite of programs and seminars as part of the **Vaughan International Commercialization Centre** (vaughan.ca/business/VICC). Through the VICC, companies looking to expand can access commercialization support for new or existing technology through programming that includes:

- In-market temporary working space and representation
- Testing sites in real-life settings
- Connection to a network of service providers who can facilitate entry into new markets internationally and locally

Membership in the VICC is free, and membership gives businesses access to these 3 programs:

- Soft Landing: assisted market entry for growing businesses.
- Test City: opportunities to test, demonstrate, and prove technologies.
- Matchmaking: value-driven business connections.

The VICC's co-working space, the Bridge@Lebovic, is aimed at providing businesses at the stage of commercializing a new, innovative product or service with a place to "soft land." The Bridge@Lebovic also provides businesses with an opportunity to test their new technology in real-life settings and join an established business ecosystem.



ventureLAB (venturelab.ca) is the non-profit Regional Innovation Centre that supports York Region, Simcoe County and Muskoka District. ventureLAB helps technology, health and other creative entrepreneurs bring their innovations to market, by offering an unique combination of mentoring, partnering, and connecting tailored to the unique needs of each startup business. ventureLAB offers the BUILD training program, 1:1 advisory services, clinics, conferences, and other special events.



The **Wellness Group and Coaching Academy** (thewellnessgroup.ca) is a full-service incubator, accelerator and business hub for wellness practitioners, trainers, coaches, entrepreneurs, and professional corporations. Members of the incubator can access help from coaches and mentors, seed capital providers, and experts in social media, web development, SEO analytics, financial, legal, IT, and more to get your business started, growing and even to take your offering global. On-demand hot desks, event space, training and meeting rooms and professional offices are also available.



The **Women In Business In Vaughan** (womeninbusinessinvaughan.com) offers training and networking opportunities for women entrepreneurs and professionals. Services include:

- Online community for advice and support
- Access to one central, online location to learn about support, resource, and networking opportunities in Vaughan
- Events calendar
- Post and find local employment opportunities

**The YMCA**

(ymcagta.org/employment-and-immigrant-services/career-planning-and-development-services/services-for-organizations) offers several services for businesses who are recruiting:

- Workshops for professional development and team building
- Pre-Employment Selection Testing to evaluate candidate suitability for a position
- Career development for employees and succession planning services

**The York Region Mompreneurs**

(themompreneur.com/regional-chapters/york-region-mompreneurs) is the local chapter of the Mompreneur Showcase Group, which supports, educates, and empowers moms in business. Across their network, Mompreneur facilitates:

- Connecting members to other women and businesses across Canada
- Providing affordable ways for female entrepreneurs to promote their businesses
- Advocating for female entrepreneurs and women in business both locally and nationally
- Creating an online presence for female entrepreneurs in one centralized location



York University (yorku.ca) offers a breadth of programs and courses to help entrepreneurs. **Innovation York** (innovation.yorku.ca) is York University's wing that helps businesses with expansion.

For companies who want to solve technical or business problems, explore research questions, find new intellectual assets, or develop products and services, collaborating with York University offers access to superb researchers and research facilities, as well as access to government matching grant programs to assist with funding these research projects.



These collaborations enable an industry partner to:

- Access world-class research
- Address unsolved research / development problems
- Advance their research agenda and enhance product roadmap development activities and schedules
- Access world-class laboratories filled with leading edge equipment
- Access government matching grants to reduce costs of research projects
- Assess potential trainees as they provide research assistance and work on corporate challenges. This can be highly beneficial in moving research projects forward and in assessing new talent for your company

**The Young Canadian Chinese Professionals and Entrepreneurs Association**

(YCCPEA, yccpea.org) is a not-for-profit organization that helps young Chinese-Canadian entrepreneurs and professionals. YCCPEA hosts various events for networking and education.

“I want to enter international markets.”



Ontario Network of Entrepreneurs



Ontario Centres of
Excellence

Where Next Happens

The Province of Ontario's **Business Advisory Services** (onebusiness.ca) focuses on helping high-growth firms focused on exporting, product development and staffing, grow their businesses in Canada and internationally.

The mission of the **Centre for Global Enterprise (CGE) at the Schulich School of Business** (schulich.yorku.ca/centre-for-global-enterprise/) is to help Canadian businesses reach their full potential through engagement with international markets. A particular focus is supporting Canadian small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) with global potential.

The Toolbox, available on the CGE website, is a network of contacts, resources and information designed to encourage and support businesses in successfully engaging with markets and opportunities outside of Canada.

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The OCE's GlobalStart Voucher Program is a nomination-based voucher program that supports youth-led start-ups engaged with campus accelerators (e.g., Seneca College HELIX, York University LaunchYU) and Regional Innovation Centres (e.g., ventureLAB) across Ontario that are targeting emerging markets outside of North America. Find out more at <http://www.oce-ontario.org/programs/entrepreneurship-programs/globalstart-voucher-program>.



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"I'd like to give back to the community. Where can I go to be a mentor?"



The **EIR (Entrepreneurs In Residence) Talks** speaker series (<http://eirtalks.ca/>) is hosted roughly once a month in libraries across York Region. The EIRs feature 3-4 entrepreneurs who share their journeys, motivations, challenges, and lessons from starting and running businesses. The purpose of EIR is to connect entrepreneurs and those thinking about entrepreneurship by exchanging these stories and experiences.



FIRST Canada (firstroboticscanada.org/main/) is a registered and volunteer-run charity. “The varsity sport for the mind,” FIRST offers 3 programs to provide hands-on opportunities for students in primary and secondary schools to learn about STEM concepts:

- FIRST Robotics (FRC): high school
- FIRST Lego League (FLL): ages 9 to 14
- Junior FIRST Lego League: ages 6 to 9

The FRC and FLL competitions are intense, but value team work and collaboration as much as robot design and project innovation. Under strict rules, limited resources, and time limits, teams of students are challenged to raise funds, design a team brand, hone teamwork skills, and build and program robots to perform prescribed tasks against a field of competitors.

Qualifying tournaments are typically held in Q4 of each year.



Futurpreneur Canada (futurpreneur.ca) offers mentoring and loan financing for entrepreneurs 18-39 years old, with loan financing of up to \$45000. Inquire if there are volunteer mentoring opportunities.



NewMakelt (newmakeit.com) is a state-of-the art technology hub, co-working space, and maker space. Featuring state-of-the-art tools such as 3D printers, laser cutters, and CNC tools, NewMakelt provides York Region residents, entrepreneurs, innovators and artists with a collaborative, creative-learning space that fuels inspiration, provides guidance and enables the sharing of ideas.



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Y Lab (ylab.ca) is York Region's first maker space and operates in the basement of Richmond Hill's historic David Dunlap Observatory. Led and supported by volunteers, Y Lab hosts events to bring together people who share a common interest in robotics, makers, technology innovation, Ardiunos, ham radios, lightsabers, and other things Technology. Inquire if there are volunteer mentoring opportunities.



The **York Entrepreneurship Development Institute** (yedinstitute.org) works with ventures across all stages of business. In addition to its free 12-week training program for startups (for-profit and not-for-profit), YEDI provides funding opportunities, space and mentorship for growing companies and not-for-profit organizations. YEDI also has opened a Business Acceleration Campus, which is an 80,000 square-foot facility complete with commercial, industrial, office, educational, TV studio and theatrical co-working and collaboration spaces. Inquire if there are volunteer mentoring opportunities.



York University (yorku.ca) offers a breadth of programs and courses to help entrepreneurs. York's on-campus incubator LaunchYU (launchyu.ca) supports entrepreneurs across campus and in the community, and provides accelerator space at the Markham Convergence Centre to early-stage York-related companies. Inquire if there are volunteer mentoring opportunities.

“What’s available for innovators who are in high school or younger? Think about the children!”



Headquartered in Markham, **Across U-hub** (acrossuhub.com) is a charitable community organization serving the Greater Toronto Area. Across U-hub offers programs, events and space to help youth aged 16 and above. Their working space, Across Corner of Entrepreneurs (ACE), offers an open co-working space, mentoring, and seminars for its members.



Registered as non-for-profit in Canada, **DECA Ontario** (2016.deca.ca) is one of 60 international delegations of DECA Inc. The parent organization is registered as a not-for-profit student organization with more than 215,000 members in the USA, Canada, China, Germany, Guam, Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Spain. Through conferences and competitions, DECA instills professionalism and prepares youth to respond to authentic business cases and market demands. DECA Ontario offers workshops, competitions and training to help its high-school members develop critical business skills.

The entrepreneurial stream of DECA, GRIT (which stands for Gumption Risk Intuition Tenacity), helps young entrepreneurs learn from connecting with local startup and established entrepreneurs.



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The **FLL Ontario Innovation Celebration** (firstroboticscanada.org/main/ontario-innovation-celebration) is jointly hosted by FIRST Robotics Canada and ventureLAB. The event brings 18 of the most innovative solutions in the FIRST LEGO League competitions together in one location to pitch their ideas to a panel of judges. The judges select the two most innovative solutions to represent Ontario in the Global Innovation Award competition, the winner of which receives \$20,000 to make their innovation a reality.



Summer Company (ontario.ca/summercompany) offers grant funding of up to \$3000 for student entrepreneurs 15-29 who are currently in school and returning to school in the fall.



The **Y2 Entrepreneur Conference for High-School Students** (y2labs.co) is a two-part event where teens between 12 and 18 years old learn how to bring a business idea from concept to customer validation to pitch presentation. Supported throughout the bootcamp by a dedicated coach and 3 workshops, teams articulate their value proposition, validate their product or service with potential customers, estimate financial performance, and present to a panel of judges. Participants can come to pitch an idea, or work with a team on someone else's idea.

“What are some of the larger entrepreneurial events I should look at?”



The **Fireside Conference** (firesideconf.com) is a business conference, complete with speakers, workshops and networking - and their sponsors include the DMZ and TechTO. But instead of holding this in a hotel or convention centre, this conference is hosted on a campground (with cabins).

Fireside Conference provides startups, entrepreneurs, teams, VCs, and Angels with an intimate and informal weekend getaway to foster team bonding and help develop new ideas. And while the campsite is not located in York Region, it is open to York Region participants (and honestly, it was too cool to not include).



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Startup Weekend (startupweekend.org) is a weekend-long, hands-on experience where aspiring entrepreneurs develop startup ideas from concept to pitch. Along the way, concepts are validated for viability, feasibility and profitability. On average, half of Startup Weekend's attendees have technical or design backgrounds, the other half have business backgrounds.

Beginning with open mic pitches on Friday, attendees bring their best ideas and inspire others to join their team. Over Saturday and Sunday, teams focus on customer development, validating their ideas, practicing LEAN Startup Methodologies and building a minimal viable product. On Sunday afternoon, teams present their startup pitch to a panel of judges.

In York Region, Startup Weekends have been held at Seneca College (Markham campus) and York University.



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“TL;DR. What’s the summary?”

	Make	Start	Space	Money	Grow	Go Global	Be A Mentor	Youth	Events
Across U-hub								x	
ACAP					x				
ACCE					x				
BDC <i>@bdc_ca</i>				x	x				
Business Women’s Network of York Region <i>@BusinessWomenYR</i>					x				
Business Women’s Networking Association					x				
CAMP <i>@campspeaks</i>					x				
Canada BCIP					x				
Canada Business Ontario (Canada Business Network)		x			x				
Canada Concierge Service				x	x				
CanadaOne <i>@canadaone</i>		x			x				
Canadian Business & Enterprise Services		x							
Canadian Intellectual Property Office		x			x				
CGE at Schulich <i>@SchulichCGE</i>						x			
Chambers and Boards <i>@AuroraChamberON</i> <i>@MarkhamBoard</i> <i>@NMKTChamber</i> <i>@RHChamber</i> <i>@VaughanChamber</i>					x				
CreateIT Now		x			x				
DECA Ontario								x	
EIR		x					x		
EPIC		x							
Fireside Conference <i>@firesideconf</i>					x				x
FIRST Canada								x	
FLL Ontario Innovation Celebration								x	
Futurpreneur Canada <i>@Futurpreneur</i>		x		x			x		
Green Connections Network		x			x				

Ideal Labs <i>@idealincubator</i>		x		x					
Innovation Initiative	x								
Job Skills <i>@JobSkillsOrg</i>		x							
Keiretsu Forum <i>@KeiretsuCanada</i>				x	x				
Markham's Community Innovation Hub		x	x						
MedEdge					x				x
NewMakelt <i>@NewMakeltSpace</i>	x						x		
NRC-IRAP <i>@NRC_CNRC</i>				x					
OCE <i>@OCEInnovation</i>		x		x	x	x			
OCE Discovery					x				x
OnRichmondHill.com					x				
Province of Ontario's BAS					x	x			
Richmond Hill & Markham Chinese Business Association					x				
SBECS <i>@cityofmarkham</i> <i>@RH_SBEC</i> <i>@City_of_Vaughan</i> <i>@YorkRegionGovt</i>		x			x		x		
Seneca College <i>@SenecaCollege</i>		x			x		x		
Skytek Office Solutions			x						
South Lake Community FDC		x		x	x				
Starter Company				x					
Startup Weekend York Region <i>@SWYorkRegion</i>		x							x
Startup York Region		x			x		x		
Summer Company				x				x	
TechConnex <i>@TechConnex</i>					x				
Thornhill Employment Hub					x				
ventureLAB <i>@ventureLABca</i>		x	x	x	x		x		
VICC			x		x	x			
Village Hive <i>@TheVillageHive</i>			x						
Wellness Group and Coaching Academy		x	x	x	x	x			
Women In Business In Vaughan					x				

Women's Centre of York Region		x							
Y Lab <i>@ylab_maker</i>	x						x		
Y2 <i>@y2labs</i>								x	x
YCCPEA					x				
YEDI <i>@YEDInstitute</i>		x		x			x		
YMCA					x				
York Angel Investors <i>@YorkAngels</i>				x					
York Region Arts Council <i>@YorkRegionArts</i>		x							
York Region Mompreneurs					x				
York Region's library network <i>@APLtweets</i> <i>@markhamlibrary</i> <i>@NewmarktLibrary</i> <i>@RHPLtweets</i>	x	x							
York University <i>@yorkuniversity</i> <i>@LaunchYU York</i>		x			x		x		