

Startup Canada Women Entrepreneurship Fund Overview

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Note: The Startup Canada Women Entrepreneurship Fund Overview is subject to change without prior notice.

Last updated: September 13, 2015

About the Fund

Startup Canada and Dell Canada have partnered to present Startup Canada Women Entrepreneurship Fund, which invests in high-impact, grassroots initiatives across Canada that will advance women entrepreneurship through education, investment, mentorship and access to growth opportunity.

The 'Majority of Female-Owned Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises' study by Industry Canada indicates just 15.5 per cent of SMEs were majority owned by females in 2011, most with fewer than 20 employees and an approximate six per cent lower rate of growth than other companies. The Startup Canada Women Entrepreneurship Fund aims to change that.

Entrepreneurship has proved to be a catalyst for economic growth in many countries. Equally as important is the critical role that women play in the growth of an economy. This Fund will allow Startup Canada and Dell to join efforts and enable entrepreneurial leaders across Canada to mobilize and create an entrepreneurial environment that encourages and empowers women to be successful entrepreneurs.

Objectives

The objectives of the Startup Canada Women Entrepreneurship Fund are to:

1. Invest in community-driven initiatives that foster an environment and culture which encourages women entrepreneurs in Canada;
2. Develop and harness the potential for women entrepreneurs in Canada through education, mentorship and support; and,
3. Drive awareness of the importance of women in entrepreneurship to increase engagement, investment and growth opportunities for women-led companies.

Requirements

- Projects must directly support women entrepreneurs and women-led companies to impact the environment and / or culture for entrepreneurship locally.
- Enhance entrepreneur connectivity to at least one of the following:
 - Support: Training, Mentorship or Infrastructure
 - Growth: Customers, Finance, Major Industry Anchors, Talent

- Markets: Local, National or Global Markets
- Provide an impact statement to explain the issues the project seeks to address.
- Projects must be a new initiative that could not happen without the seed funding.
- Projects must be delivered within the dates specified within the criteria
- Agree to complete an impact assessment and project completion report at the conclusion of their project, including evidence of the program through participant evaluation, photos and leveraging #StartupWomen.
- Agree to use the Startup Canada Women Entrepreneurship Fund logo and boilerplate in the marketing and communications of the program.

Important Deadlines & Dates

October 7, 2015	Application and video submission deadline.
October 12, 2015	Peer and Partner Adjudication deadline.
October 13 - November 19, 2015	Announcement of recipients.
December 15, 2015	Cheques issued to recipients and recipient agreements signed.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Where do funds come from?

The Startup Canada Women Entrepreneurship Fund is solely sponsored by Dell Canada and administered by Startup Canada.

Q: Who can apply?

The applicant can be any Canadian-based entrepreneur, group or organization.

Q: Who should the project target?

The project must directly support women entrepreneurs and women-led companies in Canada.

Q: What can grants be used for?

Grant funds will be awarded to groups and organizations to increase the level of entrepreneurship activities that support women. Project examples may include a women's entrepreneurship conference and/or speaker series, mentorship program, a workshop series, and trade missions.

Grants should not be used for hiring staff or creating employment opportunities for the individual or the organization administering project.

Q: Who will adjudicate the applications?

Projects will be adjudicated by a diverse group of entrepreneurial leaders, and men and women advocates for women entrepreneurship.

Q: What is the maximum funding available for a project?

Grants are available up to \$3,000.

Q: What are the key timelines?

For Autumn 2015, intake of applications will begin September 2015, with a deadline of October 7, 2015. Adjudication will take place in October 2015, and fund recipients will be contacted and announced between October 13 and November 19, during Startup Canada's National Tour.

Q: What is the frequency of the funding allocations?

The program will run its pilot in Autumn 2015 with the intention that applications will open in Autumn annually.

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