



Saying 'Yes' to Youth Entrepreneurial Success

Many young Canadians say they want to be entrepreneurs before turning 30 but don't have access to mentors or the support to do so. All that's about to change with YES: Youth Entrepreneurial Success, our new philanthropic program in the Canada region.

According to research we conducted in July, after financial concerns, the biggest impediment to youth pursuing an entrepreneurial dream is not knowing how to start. For those facing challenging circumstances at home or in their community this can be particularly difficult. One of the most valuable resources MasterCard's YES program provides is access to knowledge and experience from many relevant disciplines. The young entrepreneurs will work with academics, educators, technology adopters and experienced entrepreneurs, learning how to address their own real-life obstacles and opportunities.

Our philanthropic commitment is to all Canadian youth. And we've brought some powerful partners with significant expertise in this space on board:

- **Next36:** The MasterCard Challenge will offer young tech entrepreneurs the opportunity to build businesses that address real world pain points helping to fast-track the development of Canada's most talented young innovators.
- **Ryerson University:** Creating opportunities for emerging women entrepreneurs at its Digital Media Zone (DMZ) by providing 360-degree support through financial aid and a uniquely designed series to strengthen their entrepreneurial skills and accelerate the growth and marketability of their companies.
- **Ladies Learning Code:** Across Canada, 723 girls aged eight to 13 participated in a first-of-its-kind National Girls Learning Code Day – an initiative providing free introductory coding workshops to promote digital literacy and inspire girls to leverage technology to the change the world.
- **University of Waterloo:** A free online computer coding course for all Canadians to learn the basics of computer programming will be offered by one of the country's leading universities.

Guiding our research is the YES Expert Panel, from the worlds of academia, media, business and innovation. We launched YES with the first formal meeting of our panel and the energy displayed by this group was refreshing. With the panel's input, MasterCard is poised to build a bridge across the gaps faced by young entrepreneurs by offering resources and programming to help youth get started on the right foot.

Our panel will also participate in quarterly YES Works Mentorship MeetUps. At these events we will connect youth who lack the necessary resources and support with successful peers and the MasterCard expert panel.

Said Betty DeVita, president, MasterCard Canada, at the launch event: "We will help young entrepreneurs who may not otherwise have access to resources, and enable them to build a better, stronger, more inclusive Canada in the process."