

IMPACT REPORT 2020  
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LEAGUE *of* INNOVATORS

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# It's been a year!

The past year has been defined by a global pandemic, unpredictable change, social unrest, and our collective realization of our roles in colonialism. The deep social, personal, and organizational impacts of the pandemic only amplified all these converging pieces of our lives while at the same time it enabled us to see the true value of our voices, our visions, and our potential.

The effects of the times reverberated deeply on youth who saw mounting unemployment and underemployment rates, bleak career outlooks, and rising mental health issues. These were only amplified for BIPOC youth and underrepresented regions across Canada. In 2020, the team at League of Innovators recognized the mounting pressure on youth and youth entrepreneurs and dove into creating more opportunities for alternative youth education and deeply curated support systems. We doubled our youth engagement through the launch of our new learning platform Innovators Academy to provide alternative education for youth seeking to explore innovation and entrepreneurship, we piloted and grew our Foundations Idea Incubator to deliver early-stage programming, created the Boost residency to support youth-led scale-ups, and formed our Youth Alumni Council to drive vital conversations for youth entrepreneurs.

What defined 2020 for us? Its the unique abilities, passion, drive, resilience, and community nature of youth. Despite all the challenges, the lonely realities of a pandemic world, the struggles of trying to build something new, youth rose above it all by creating organizations, startups, solutions, while supporting each other to rise to new possibilities. 'At the League of Innovators, we meet and work with a diverse group of young people from across Canada who are building solutions to the challenges and issues that they hold dear to their hearts — continuously dedicated to creating change on their own terms. And even in these uncertain times, which for many have devastated their startup opportunities, they have found ways to pivot, to learn, to drive forward, and again create change' - Ryan Holmes Chair of the Board League of Innovators.

As Ryan said, we see it every day and all over this country the powerful impact of youth engagement and creativity on every economy, community, business and organization. This is the largest generation that has ever walked on the earth - let's not keep them on the sidelines. We believe that they will be a critical force for post-pandemic innovation and rebuilding an economy we all want to live in.

In 2021 and beyond we are committed to providing safe spaces and supports for youth all across Canada to gain entrepreneurial experience, futureproof skills, and the valuable tools to contribute positively to building innovative solutions and enterprises to the challenges and issues we all face. Our work is driven by supporting the growth of our youth innovators and entrepreneurs as they build rocket ships and invaluable solutions while representing and anchoring their needs, interests, and voices in many national conversations. We look forward to continuing to do this work with the generous and vital support of our Board of Directors, Advisors, National Partners, Program Partners, and the many volunteers that enable are work and make it a unique experience for a growing youth community.

Joanna Buczkowska-McCumber (ED) & LOI Team



02 OUR IMPACT

04 OUR PROGRAMS

16 OUR ECOSYSTEM

18 FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

20 OUR FUTURE

20 GET INVOLVED

# What is League of Innovators?

We are a national Canadian charity that empowers youth to be their own bosses. We offer accessible programs and education for entrepreneurs aged 15 to 30, from discovery through acceleration. Our goal? Amplify the impact of future innovators, and changemakers—and shorten their path to success. We find new ways to deliver game-changing tools and experiences to youth—regardless of their background, gender, race, geography or socioeconomic situation. Our Vision is to mobilize the next generation of entrepreneurs to build tomorrow's businesses today with a social purpose and an entrepreneurial mindset.

Entrepreneurship is a hard journey at the best of times, but youth experience additional challenges such as lack of access to networks, knowledge, and capital. We create national experiences, connecting youth to the skills, resources, and people they need to succeed. Our founders have gone on to become Peter Thiel Fellows, Forbes Top 30 Under 30, and Fast Company Most Innovative Companies of the Year, while making big waves in their industries and their communities. Most of all paving the way for the next generation to realize their own potential.

## our mission

To **empower** youth and youth-led businesses.

To **develop** entrepreneurial acumen at scale and across regions.

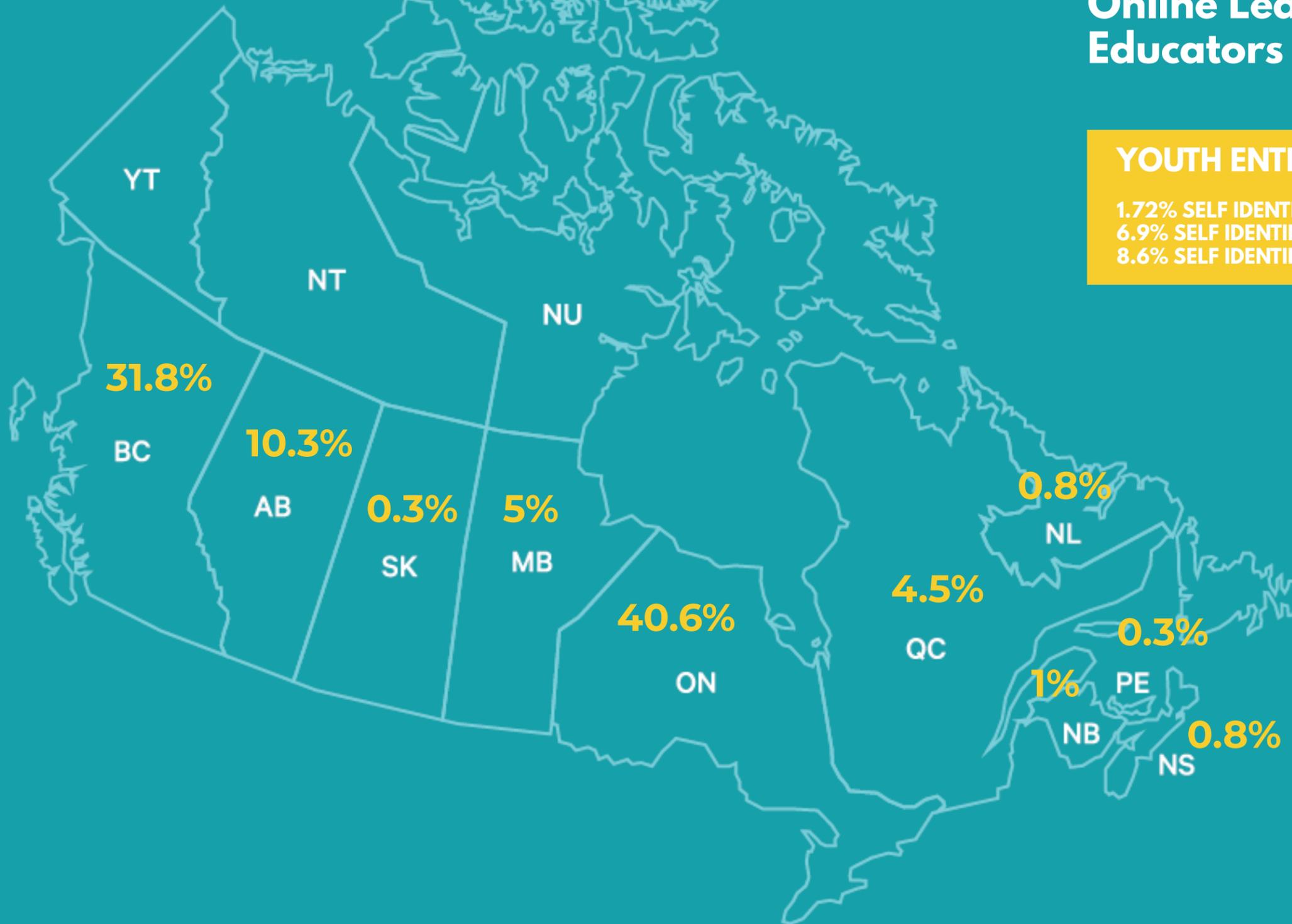
To **champion** the dynamic contribution and forward thinking of young entrepreneurs.

To **build** future proof skills through an entrepreneurial mindset and a social purpose.

It boils down to this: we build skills and confidence in young people.

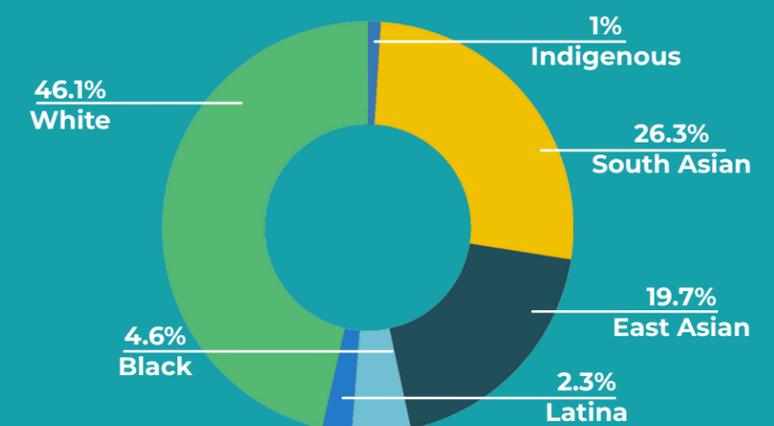
# Youth by Youth Startup by Startup

Youth Engaged **9,553**  
 Founders Supported **376**  
 Startups **176**  
 Collectively Raised **\$32.5 M**  
 Enterprise Value **\$712 M**  
 Online Learners **1800**  
 Educators **70**



## YOUTH ENTREPRENEUR COMMUNITY:

1.72% SELF IDENTIFY AS **LGBTQIA2S+**  
 6.9% SELF IDENTIFY AS AN **INTERNATIONAL STUDENT**  
 8.6% SELF IDENTIFY AS AN **IMMIGRANT**

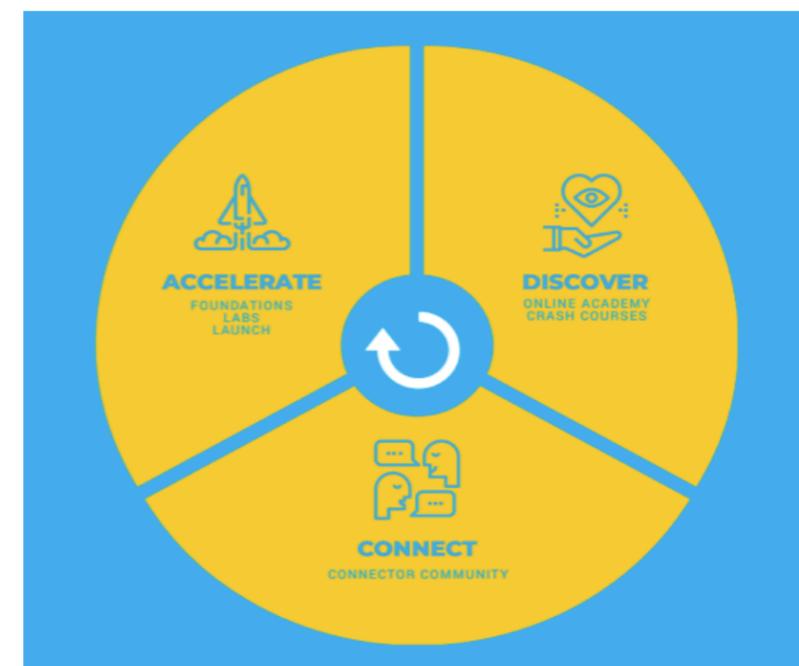


# Our Programs

**Democratizing entrepreneurship for many, rather than accelerating a few.**

**THIS IS WHAT WE'RE DOING**  
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We asked ourselves how can we break down the barriers for youth, youth entrepreneurs and youth voices in the future, and today? We believe it is through democratizing entrepreneurship for many rather than a select few. Our work revolves around 3 facets that work in tandem together: Discovery, Connection and Acceleration to provide youth the most comprehensive experience with attaining an entrepreneurial mindset, innovative futureproof skills and the tools to build their careers on their own terms while creating big change in the world. Our blended learning model - online and offline - that is cost-free, ensures accessibility, equity, and growth regardless of gender, ethnicity, racial profile, region or socio economic situation. 2020 was certainly a challenge for us and many youth we supported but they rose above adversity and showed a resilience that will drive them to be the leaders this world needs.



**“LOI is the family that got me started as an entrepreneur, and supports me at every possible step along my journey.”**

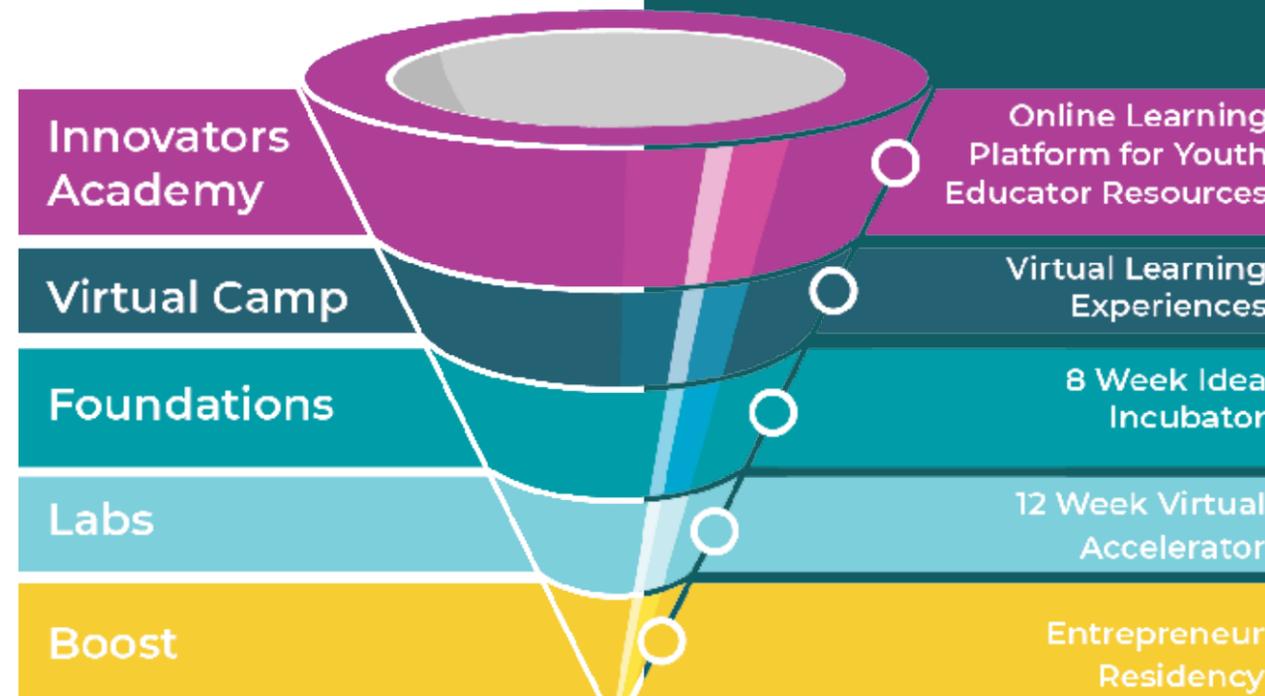


**Youssef Gentry**  
 Tag Teach Foundations Batch 2  
 Labs Batch 5

Youssef joined LOI Foundations with some ideas of how to improve student teacher feedback and communication in the school environment. After completing Foundations in Spring Youssef was accepted into LABS Batch 5 to continue to develop his MVP and officially launch Tag Teach. While he was busy building his startup, like many young entrepreneurs, he was also attending Western University in London Ontario. Through the content, people, and resources that LOI has connected him with, he has learned and grown as an entrepreneur, and more importantly, he now belongs to a family spread across Canada that he can fall back on for encouragement when he stumbles or comes across roadblocks but also a community he can celebrate with as he grows and hits his milestones.

## LOI Difference

In addition to supporting the personal development of young people, our programming and education contributes to tangible economic success. League of Innovators helps bolster Canada as a hub for innovation and growth with our unique approach:



- 1. Alternative entrepreneurial curriculum created specifically for youth ages 15–30.**
- 2. Connection to a national network—in person, through regional chapters and online.**
- 3. Free, equitable access regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, location or socioeconomic situation.**
- 4. Prioritizing drive, curiosity and passion over academic standing or institutional affiliation.**

**We meet youth where they are—at every stage of the entrepreneurial journey, from beginning to end.**

# DISCOVERY PROGRAMS

# DISCOVERY PROGRAMS

## Innovators Academy, Camps, Crash Courses and Alumni Speakers Bureau

The future potential and realities of youth is one the biggest social issues today - how do we set up youth for success now and into the future? Youth engagement and success affects every economy, community, business and organization. Old ways are no longer working - we need a new approach.

We believe that every youth in Canada and beyond - if armed with an entrepreneurial mindset and futureproof skills - could tackle any problems at hand. This is why we have dedicated so much of our work not just on acceleration of youth led start ups but also on exposing all young people to the potential of entrepreneurship, innovation, and social entrepreneurship. We believe that entrepreneurship experiences and acumen are critical for the future - skills such as complex problem solving, emotional intelligence, critical thinking, leadership, creativity, and self management (all competencies deemed critical by the World Economic Forum).

This is why we have created our Innovators Academy online platform, camps and workshops, and our Alumni Speakers Bureau.

**3523 academy users**

**386 workbook downloads**

**70 educators**

**102 community events**

**54 crash courses**

**2 virtual camps with 900+ participants**

\*All program stats are from a rolling tally from October 2017 to December 2020\*

**“Participating in the LOI Summer Camp and Innovation Challenge gave myself and our team confidence, access to an invaluable network and we are now in the Foundations Program where we continue to learn from the LOI community and team! Especially during a time as isolating as the pandemic it has been so great to feel supported by a community like LOI!”**

Samantha and her team’s idea called Sunshine Connected, connects seniors to young volunteers to decrease social isolation. Samantha and her team submitted the idea for LOI’s Innovation Challenge after attending the summer camp, made it to the Finals and placed first with a \$1000 award and mentorship from the LOI team! Sunshine Connected is now in the Foundations program working on validating their problem and solution.



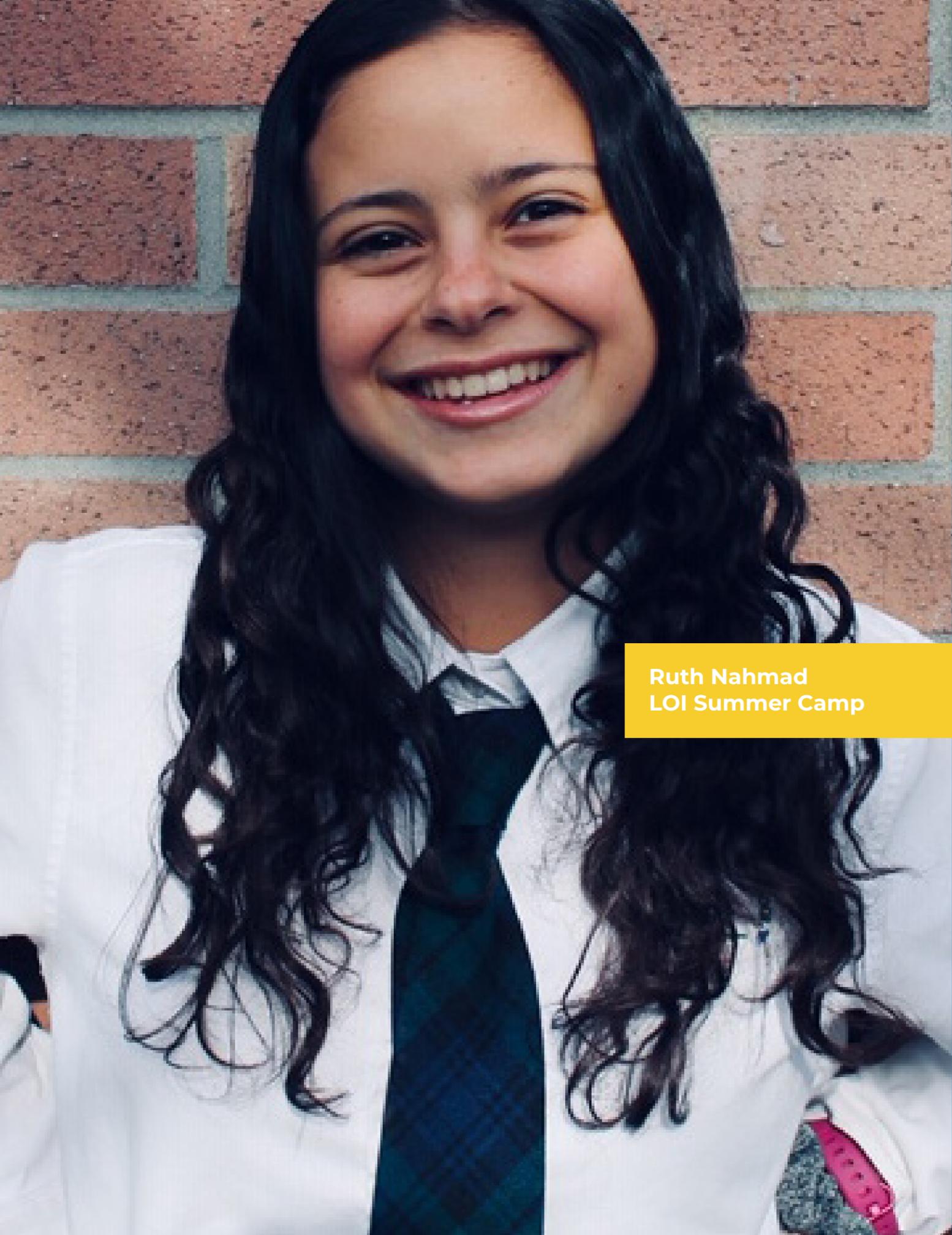
**Samantha Gardner**  
LOI Summer Camp

## Innovators Academy

Launched in the midst of the pandemic in May 2020, The Innovators Academy is an online platform for youth to learn everything they need to about entrepreneurship, innovation and social entrepreneurship through a set of 12 online modules and resources they need to embark on their entrepreneurial learning journey. With content and resources on topics related to entrepreneurship, innovation, changemaking and personal development. The platform is designed for curious youth for self-directed learning. The Innovators Academy also functions as an Educational Resource to bring entrepreneurship into every classroom. The educators portion of the academy includes modules, curriculum, videos, walkthroughs and workbooks to be used by educators in classroom environments. To date the educators academy functions as a pilot to engage and test in class curriculum across various classroom environments.

## Crash Courses & Camps

The Innovators Academy platform is complimented by one-day or one-week experiential workshops and learning opportunities to dive into entrepreneurship, innovation and changemaking in live or virtual environments. With the transition to virtual learning due to COVID-19 and the launch of the Innovators Academy, LOI hosted a week-long virtual summer camp in July called Idea to Impact focused on helping young people take tangible steps to become a changemaker and was followed up by a Canada wide Innovation Challenge featuring some of Canada’s youngest innovators and entrepreneurs.



**Ruth Nahmad**  
LOI Summer Camp

**“Before joining the LOI summer camp, I was just a passionate girl with bright ideas to change the world small steps at a time, but like LOI mentioned, entrepreneurs are more than people with ideas, they have to continue taking action. Those next steps really frightened me as I was overwhelmed by my age and how small my voice is, but after joining LOI, it completely met all my expectations and I was blown away by the speakers and the amount of support. There isn’t enough to describe how inspired I am, and I can’t wait for more learning and growth and to make a difference!”**

### **Alumni Speakers Bureau**

The Speakers Bureau at LOI is our effort to amplify youth stories and voices, and bring them into the classroom for all youth to hear. There is nothing more relatable to youth, than a story told by someone just years ahead of them. Our Bureau in 2020 featured 24 young entrepreneurs from our Labs and Boost programs who engaged across 32 events including our Innovators Academy Camp, workshops, and external events - exposing more than 1600 youth to the youth entrepreneurial experience and provided invaluable inspiration to the potential in believing in yourself.

### **Innovation Challenge**

We piloted our first ever innovation challenge in the Summer of 2020 following our summer camp. 50 youth across Canada submitted their innovation ideas for a chance at mentorship, business resources, and cash to help kickstart their projects. 7 ideas moved to the finals for a pitch-off event with judges from our partners including RBC, Shaw and SAP!

# ACCELERATE PROGRAMS

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## Foundations, Labs, Boost

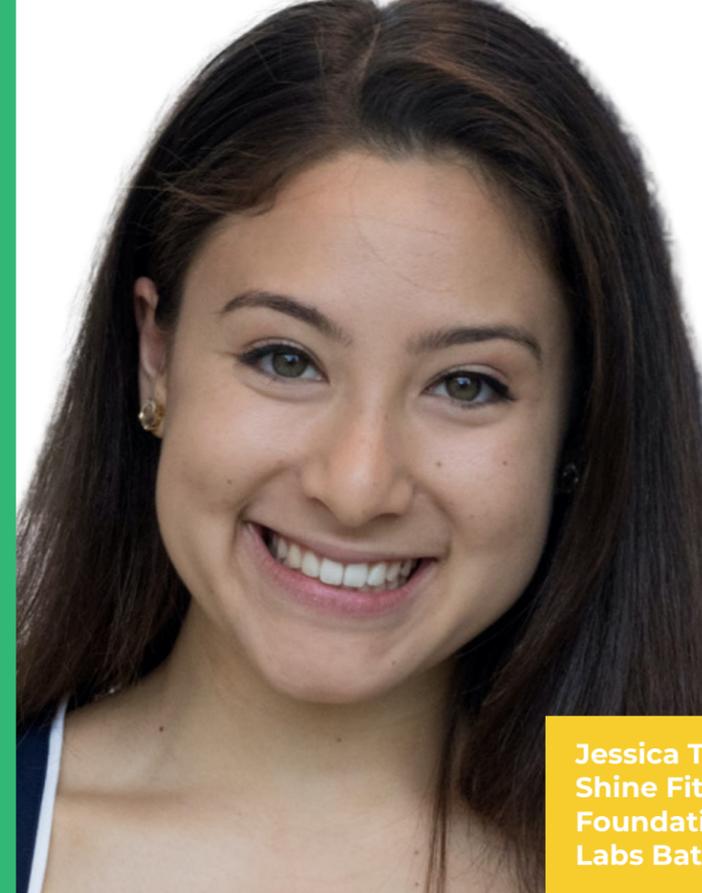
The entrepreneurial journey can be a lonely one, and finding yourself can be difficult. That is the power of community, knowing that you are not alone. Our acceleration programs above all else provide a space - virtual and otherwise that creates a sense of community, connection and life long support for youth searching to create impact. Our acceleration programs engage an immense amount of time, resources, and support from speakers, facilitators, subject matter experts, mentors, coaches and the team to ensure that our youth innovators, entrepreneurs, and changemakers have the foundations to grow. Our acceleration programs are always digital first to ensure we are able to provide accessible programming across every nook and cranny of Canada, leaving no youth behind. To say that 2020 was a challenging year for businesses and social enterprises would be an understatement yet what we saw in our youth community blew us away. What we saw was an immense motivation to create, be resilient, grow, but most of all create impact beyond oneself. We believe this is the future of youth. They are the changemakers we have been waiting for. In 2019 and 2020 we supported youth entrepreneurs truly from coast to coast from Victoria to Halifax and everywhere in between.

**Labs - 256 Founders**

**Boost - 12 Founders**

**Foundations - 120 Founders**   **Startups - 176 Supported**

\*All program stats are from a rolling tally from October 2017 to December 2020\*



Jessica Takimoto  
Shine Fitness  
Foundations Batch 2  
Labs Batch 5

**“Foundations helped me go from just a group fitness instructor teaching small classes to friends and family on the side to something bigger and a tangible full time pathway! It gave a foundation of entrepreneurship and a logical walk through of how to launch your idea in a safe space”**

### Foundations

We officially launched the foundations idea incubator in winter 2020 - as an 8-week virtual idea incubator program for youth under the age of 25 years from across Canada to build their entrepreneurial ideas into tangible minimum viable products (MVPs) ready for market. The Foundations Idea Incubator offers a structure and guidance on the steps involved in getting an idea off the ground! The program is delivered online through workshops, coaching sessions, and an interactive online course that teaches and gives access to essential content and tools needed in order to be successful as an entrepreneur. It is also the jumping off point for any entrepreneur seeking to get into an accelerator or other program to build their idea to growth stage.

### Labs

Labs is our flagship program - a virtual national and sector-agnostic accelerator that provides a framework for developing early-stage startups into scale up ventures for youth 25 years of age and under. LOI Labs brings learning opportunities to youth anywhere in Canada and connects entrepreneurs to an ecosystem of services through a unique coaching and mentorship model, and online curriculum Over a three-month period, participants work through 12 modules - from Launch to Scale-and gain the technical expertise to build products and services, and become more sustainable.

LOI Labs runs twice a year, with 25 to 30-35 ventures, and is accessible from anywhere. This allows youth to participate from rural and remote locations across the provinces and territories. The program connects participants with dedicated Entrepreneurs in Residence, Mentors, and one-on-one coaching—and expands regional support on the ground for youth founders in different regions.

“With every new stage in my business I face new challenges, I am constantly going outside of my comfort zone and as we start to expand having access to mentors, advisors and community support is important for our wellbeing - especially for our mental health as entrepreneurs. This is also why I am so grateful to be part of this community, I feel that I am being supported every step along the way of my venture building process.”

Since graduating from Labs, Yamila has gone on to win the Startup Canada Candian Export Challenge Pitch Competition, receive \$150,000 in grant funding and join fellow Labs Alumni, FLIK, as an FLIK Advising Leader.



**Yamila Franco**  
Co-Founder of Nyoka Design  
Labs Batch 3

“The mentorship and resources LOI offered was exactly the push I needed to help take my business to the next level. Without their support, I wouldn’t have been able to do my first ever pitch of my business- and win the competition!”

**Melody Lim**  
Founder of Mala the Brand  
Labs Batch 4

“LOI helped me get through pivoting my business in the middle of COVID to running two pilots with real estate firms eight weeks later.”

**Montgomery Ngan**  
Co-Founder of Ascend  
Labs Batch 4

“Ever since we entered the LOI family we have found continuous, essential support across aspects of our growth needs with incredible mentors, resources, collaborative opportunities, and exposure. LOI has been critical to our growth and without their team’s active involvement, resources, and passion for what they do, FLIK would never have grown to the over 4500+ members in our community today across 46+ countries globally.”

Since joining Labs, Michelle has won the YWCA 2020 Young Women of Distinction Award.

**Michelle Kwok**  
Co-Founder of Flik  
Labs Batch 3  
Alumni Council Member 2020



## Boost

Boost is our newest program - structured as a 12 month residency program for growth stage startups led by youth founders under 30. What we saw was again a gap in support for entrepreneurs who are sprinting to growth in need of a peer group of support and services that propel them to scale. Over 2020 we piloted the residency with 10 startups and will be running the first official residency in 2021 with 13 startups that are ready to amplify their growth. We really mean it - we are committed to supporting youth from beginning to end - and we are excited to add Boost into our family of programs. Our Boost youth founders have been recognized for their vision in Forbes 30 Under 30, TEDx, Inc.com 30 Under 30, Women of Influence, Peter Thiel Fellowship, the UN, Y Combinator and Entrepreneurs Organization.

“LOI taught us the foundation we needed to launch Taiv. To this day, the program continues to be an incredible resource in helping us scale.”

Since LOI, Taiv has raised a \$500k USD pre-seed round, graduated from the Y-Combinator accelerator, grown their team to 11 employees and got featured in TechCrunch. They recently raised another round of funding but have not yet announced the details.



**Noah Palansky**  
Co-Founder Taiv  
Labs Batch 3  
Boost 2020 & 2021

# OUR ECOSYSTEM OUR ECOSYSTEM

It takes a village to nurture a young person and their future potential. We are a lean digital first organization that brings a variety of support mechanisms and resources to the table for youth and their ideas grow. We believe that collaboration, meaningful engagements, and a long term focus will lead to impact that matters. We're grateful for everyone who makes League of Innovators possible including our national partners that have supported us since day one and all our program and community partners that make our work possible all across Canada. We want to also send a huge thank you to all our volunteer contributors - speakers, facilitators, investors in residence, entrepreneurs in residence, judges, and mentors - and acknowledge their invaluable contributions of time, resources, and wisdom that make our programs so impactful.

**THANK YOU.  
THANK YOU.**

## Board of Directors:

Ryan Holmes, Manny Padda, Swish Goswami, Cheesan Chew, Michele Romanow, Chad Bayne, John Ruffolo (Past)

## Team:

Joanna Buczkowska-McCumber, Manisha Narula, Annika Lui, Justin Massar, Joshua Zaporzan, Alana MacKenzie, Lynda Ofume, Kaylee Dilley

## Alumni Advisory Council:

Annie Lo, Chip McCrimmon, Connor Hastey-Palindat, Jeremy Becker, Kelcie Miller-Anderson, Marina Radovanovic, Michelle Kwok, Monty Ngan, Rhys Lawson, Ryan Kelly, Sal Sabila, Sophie Wyne

## Our National Partners:



## Our Program Partners:

Acceleprise  
Amazon AWS  
BDC  
CEO Masterclass  
Club Kwench  
College Pro  
DivDot  
eSSENTIAL Accessibility

FLIK  
Futurepreneur  
GetGranted  
Google for Startups  
Hubspot  
Lawyers in House  
Leanstack  
Microsoft

FWE  
NoW of Work  
OKR Financial  
Ownr  
Queen's University  
Rhino Ventures  
Rhum HR  
Social T.  
Platform Calgary

Spark to Substance  
Speakerbox  
Vanedge Capital  
Vigilantes  
Volition Advisors  
Webnames.ca  
WeWork Labs  
Zapier  
Northforge  
Trufan



**“It’s been an energising and inspiring pleasure to work with the entrepreneurs enrolled in LOI programs. Their bold creativity and ingenuity give me hope that the future of entrepreneurship (and business) in Canada continues to look bright.”**

**Truman Wong**

RBC Manager, Operations Process Strategy  
Mentor Labs 2020

# FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

## FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

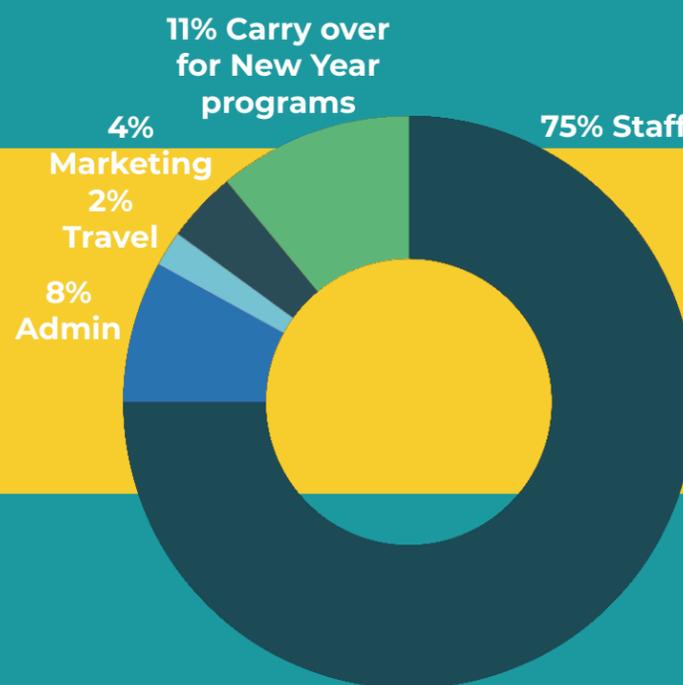
## FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

2020 was a hard year for many organizations, startups and charities, and League of Innovators was not immune. Despite our own realities and our small budget our team reached incredible depth and impact running our 5 programs at full capacity. Here is a snapshot into our financial realities. We operate under the League of Innovators umbrella with our Charity League of Innovators and our Association League of Innovators Association.

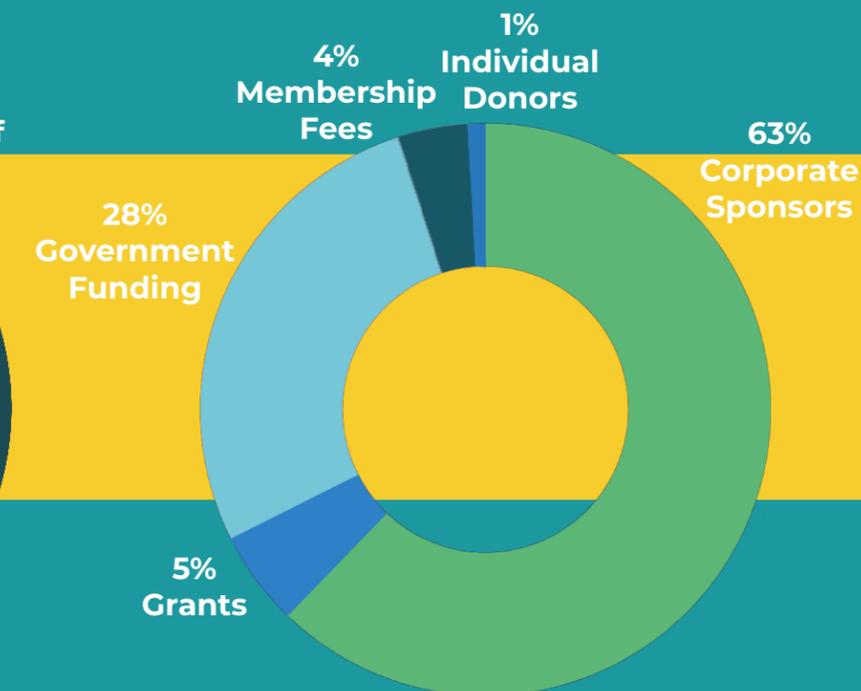
# LEAGUE OF INNOVATORS ASSOCIATION & CHARITY

	Charity	Association	Total
Revenue	\$281,223	\$123,871	\$405,094
Expenditures	\$255,286	\$105,067	\$360,353
Surplus (Deficit)	\$25,937	\$18,804	

## EXPENSES



## REVENUE SOURCES



League of Innovators Audited Financial Statements prepared by Perwarchuck Accountants

League of Innovators Association Financial Statements prepared by Dusanj Wirk Accountants

# OUR FUTURE OUR FUTURE

**Youth are the future of our economy, community development and prosperity.**

It's vital to support youth in their journey of entrepreneurship and innovation. By providing a deeply engaging and life-changing experience for young individuals, we support the creation of conscious, skilled and innovative business leaders across Canada. And the positive effects ripple—through their lives, the lives of their future employees and the Canadian economy.

## 2021 VISION

Our vision for the future is to ensure all young people have access to entrepreneurial training and the futureproof skills we believe are essential to succeeding in an uncertain world. We want to meaningfully engage youth across Canada, helping them adopt an entrepreneurial mindset through our spectrum of programs from discovery to acceleration. Through our programs we want to develop and grow a community of youth invigorated and inspired by entrepreneurship and innovation to create the world on their own terms. With that we want to see more young people stepping into the roles of social entrepreneur, innovator and entrepreneur, and starting values driven social enterprises, startups, and organizations - we will be there to support them.

We also believe that being a leader is not enough, we want to ensure that our next generations are conscientious values driven individuals who consider the triple bottom line as they seek to create change. Pieces like sustainability, diversity, equity and inclusion are essential to our work internal and external through our programs and our community. We are committed to not only creating a diverse startup ecosystem but one that thrives on ensuring our spaces physical and virtual are welcoming, inclusive and safe for all youth but in particular BIPOC youth.

## The Road Ahead

We're continuing to develop national and regional strategies, and we're committed to supporting youth from discovery to acceleration with a rich, dynamic entrepreneurial network.

**No Cliffs:** Developing supports for every stage of the entrepreneurial journey, so no one is left hanging.

**Growing Community:** Connecting youth to a grassroots network that drives their success.

**Nurturing Conscientious Leaders:** Instilling community values in youth and bringing a human-centered perspective to entrepreneurship.

**Tools to Change the Future:** Building resilience by giving youth tools that are relevant today, tomorrow and beyond.

**Co-creating the New System:** Learning from tomorrow's leaders to shape the programming they need.

# GET INVOLVED

**Empowering conscious, thoughtful leaders.**

**Some of the most powerful innovations are youth-driven—and you can start fuelling tomorrow's leaders today. For a thriving future, support the next generation.**

**Join Us!**

[www.theleagueofinnovators.com](http://www.theleagueofinnovators.com)