

# ySpace



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# About Us

## Mentorship



## Education/ Workshops



## Access to Partner Resources



YSpace is York University's pan-university entrepreneurship hub within the Vice President's Research and Innovation Office. We **create positive change** by fostering a community of **innovators, entrepreneurs, and changemakers**. We cultivate and drive innovation and collaboration for entrepreneurs, students, government representatives, and industry leaders.

YSpace is York University's pan-university entrepreneurship hub. We **create positive change** by fostering a community of **innovators, entrepreneurs, and changemakers**. We cultivate and drive innovation and collaboration for entrepreneurs, students, government representatives, and industry leaders.

As the ecosystem develops, YSpace is positioned as a community leader, as well as a leading catalyst for business transformation. Our goal is to become a centralized resource hub that will help entrepreneurs find the mentorship, network, and support system needed to aid in their success. Our goal is to become a centralized resource hub that will help entrepreneurs find the mentorship, network, and support system to aid in their success.

We support a diverse group of entrepreneurs and startups from ideation to growth through **14 different programs**, to build a unique entrepreneurial community. All of these programs are delivered through:

**ySpace**  
ELLA

YSpace ELLA is Ontario's first accelerator focused on supporting women-led product and service-based businesses.

**ySpace**  
Digital

YSpace Digital is an online community that offers a variety of virtual supports and programming for students, faculty and ventures.

**ySpace**  
Markham

YSpace Markham is a physical incubator located in York Region that supports growth-ready ventures.

# Our Impact in 2021-2022

128

New Ventures  
Supported

\$27.4 M

Funding  
Raised by  
Ventures

\$85.5 M

Revenue  
Generated by  
Ventures

283

Jobs  
Created by  
Ventures

294

Events &  
Workshops  
Hosted

394

Experiential  
Learning  
Opportunities  
Created

## Startup Success Stories

### Technology Venture



### Lactiga

Lactiga is an award-winning, venture-backed biotherapeutics company developing novel biologics to treat and prevent infections with a focus on Primary Immunodeficiency Diseases. They are unlocking the full therapeutic value of human milk to create the next generation of anti-infectives.

#### Results since joining

Jointly received a USD \$2 million dollar NIH Emergency Award to advance its COVID-19 therapeutics programs. Closed its USD \$1M seed round to advance LCTG-001 and LCTG-002.

### EATABLE

EATABLE creates premium gourmet popcorn infused with wine, spirits and cocktails - Refined snacking experiences for curious palates. EATABLE's artisanal gourmet popcorn is hand-crafted in small batches, with non-GMO corn kernels, and locally sourced, natural ingredients.

#### Results since joining YSpace

Surpassed \$1 million in revenues and achieved 3x growth in 2021. Rolled out national campaigns with Barefoot Wine and La Marca Champagne and collaborated with Piper Hiedsieck for the Oscars.

### Food & Beverage Venture



### Woman-Led Venture



### Shy Wolf Candles

Shy Wolf Candles creates soy candles inspired by tarot, stardust and rock-n-roll. With diverse fragrance blends, their candles were made for both quiet, sacred moments alone and cozy gatherings.

#### Results since joining

In 2021, they hired 3 full-time staff, doubled their sales from 2020 and became stocked in a total of 400+ stores, while expanding into Europe and China. They are on track to do well over \$1 million in sales in 2022.

# Our Impact in 2020-2021 Continued



“Through the National Ecosystem Fund, the **Black Creek Community Health Centre and York University’s YSpace** will be able to expand its initiatives and provide critical support, services and resources to Black Entrepreneurs and businesses in North York.”

— **The Honourable Mélanie Joly**, Federal Minister of Foreign Affairs

## Technology Venture



## TAKU Retail

TAKU Retail is the fastest, most flexible retail operations platform for high-traffic merchants. The brainchild of 3 founders with decades of experience in the retail industry, TAKU’s headless architecture makes it ideal for the type of plug and play integration necessary to serve today’s omnichannel shoppers.

### Results since joining

100% bootstrapped, TAKU was acquired in May 2022 by one of the largest global players in private equity who are supporting its growth and operations in Canada.

## It’s Souper

It’s Souper is an Afro-fusion soup & sauce line that was launched to fill a void in the Canadian Retail space for African inspired recipes “Made by Us for All”. Their mission is to create delicious tasting recipes made with high-quality ingredients and exotic flavors that meet the demands of today’s diverse world – thereby inspiring a newfound love for food.

### Results since joining

Launched two brand new sauces – expanding their product line to provide more shelf stable options of African products as a category innovator. They also onboarded with one of Canada’s largest distributors to go National this Fall.

## Food & Beverage Venture



## Woman-Led Venture



## Optimum Professional Corp

Optimum Professional Corp. is a Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA) firm that provides social enterprises (SE), for-profit and non-profit support for accounting, finance and social impact enabling the leaders to make sound strategic business decisions.

### Results since joining

Optimum increased its revenue by 150% in 2021. They received a Starter Company Plus Grant and were recognized as the social enterprise community leader for Startup Canada’s national network.

# YSpace Programs

## Idea Consultations

Free one-on-one consultation services to connect students and community entrepreneurs with the YSpace team and help them understand how the entrepreneurial ecosystem can help their idea come to life.

## Founder Fundamentals

Developed in partnership with the City of Markham, Founder Fundamentals is a 12-week educational workshop series focused on entrepreneurship and helping students and the community gain the basics skills and understanding necessary for starting a business.

## ELLA Express

A two-week bootcamp-style accelerator program to support early-stage women-led ventures in turning their part-time, side-hustle businesses into their full-time entrepreneurship career.

## Venture Catalyst

Venture Catalyst is a six-week program designed to support early-stage technology ventures to develop, test, validate and refine their ideas to build a full proof-of-concept.

## Business Bounce Back

Business Bounce Back is a three-month program supporting hospitality and tourism businesses that are recovering from the pandemic in the community in the Towns of Georgina and East.

## Virtual Memberships

The Virtual Memberships is designed to support both technology and CPG founders in developing business infrastructure and scaling their innovative ventures into mass markets.

## ELLA Ascend

A five-month accelerator program focused on providing women entrepreneurs with access to a community of other women founders, mentors, and supporters to help them gain clarity on their business strategy and direction for growth.

## ELLA Altitude

A four-month accelerator program that provides women-led product or service-based businesses with individualized help from mentors and experts to grow their businesses exponentially.

## Black Entrepreneurship Alliance

Black Entrepreneurship Alliance is a series of programs supporting Black entrepreneurs and young professionals through workshops, mini-MBA courses, and mentorship.

## Technology Accelerator

The Accelerator is a four-month accelerator program focused on supporting pre-revenue technologies develop and execute their go-to-market strategies.

## Food & Beverage Accelerator

YSpace created Ontario's first Food & Beverage Accelerator in 2019 to help scale high growth consumer packaged goods ventures in the food and beverage space.



# Program Highlight: Black Entrepreneurship Alliance (BEA)

In partnership with the **Black Creek Community Health Centre (BCCHC)**, **York University's TD-Community Engagement Centre**, and the **Schulich Executive Education Centre (SEEC)**, we received a **\$2.99 million** in investment from the federal government's Black Entrepreneurship Program (BEP) to support Black entrepreneurs and businesses to launch the Black Entrepreneurship Alliance initiative.

The Black Entrepreneurship Alliance (BEA) comprises a curated collection of incubator and accelerator programs to support 350 Black entrepreneurs over the next three years. Utilizing York University's YSpace and its entrepreneurial education framework, BEA programs are informed and tailored to the Black Founder's experience to increase access to hands-on education, mentorship, and networking opportunities.

## Product Feasibility Bootcamp

BEA Product Feasibility Bootcamp is a 10-week program designed to support early-stage food ventures with a food or beverage product going from ideation to full feasibility study. The program has successfully graduated two back-to-back cohorts of 11 Black founders. Currently, alumni ventures are participating in farmers' markets for the purpose of market validation and networking opportunities.

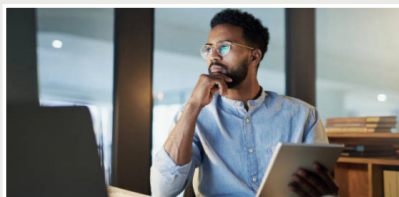


### Business Leadership Certificate



A two-month program designed for Black entrepreneurs and professionals looking to quickly develop their business acumen and leadership skills from top professors.

### Venture Catalyst Bootcamp



Venture Catalyst is a 6-week Bootcamp designed to support early-stage Black founders to develop, test, validate and refine their ideas to validate their proof-of-concept.

### Black Business Essentials Series



A five-part workshop series where local Black entrepreneurs receive practical business fundamental training from a network of industry experts.

## In Partnership With



# Program Highlight: ELLA Women Accelerator

York University received a total of **\$2.15 million** in grant funding under the Federal Government Women's Entrepreneurship Strategy Ecosystem Fund to establish the YSpace ELLA Accelerator and community. We just celebrated our second anniversary in providing tailored programs to support women entrepreneurs in accelerating the growth of their product- and service-based businesses. We do this by giving them access to a community of women founders and experts, mentorship, peer circles, hands-on workshops and other resources. YSpace ELLA programs are created and hosted by women, for women, and have a highly intersectional reach, welcoming women of all backgrounds, identities and abilities.

## Our Accelerators

### ELLA Express



The ELLA Express program is a two-week bootcamp that helps women founders learn the fundamentals and make smart decisions from the start.

### ELLA Ascend



The ELLA Ascend program is a five-month program aimed at helping women with product or service-based ventures build a solid foundation for growth.

### ELLA Altitude



The ELLA Altitude program is a four-month program designed to help women-led product or service-based ventures in the growth stage to achieve rapid, exponential growth.

## Impact Since 2020

128

Women  
Supported

\$16 M

Venture  
Generated  
Revenue

\$7.6 M

Funding Raised  
By Ventures

121

Jobs Created  
By Ventures

79%

Participants Were  
Accepted into An  
Accelerator  
Program For The  
First Time

77%

Participants  
Identify In More  
Than One Un-  
derrepresented

## Media Recognition

For the third year in a row, York University was recognized for its contributions to gender equity as exemplified through programs like ELLA.

[Learn More](#)

ELLA spoke at the APEC Incubator Capacity Building Symposium hosted by Beijing International Exchange Association as the only representatives from Canada.

[Learn More](#)



# Program Highlight: Experience Ventures

York University has partnered with the Hunter Hub for Entrepreneurial Thinking at the University of Calgary and eight other academic institutions across Canada to launch Experience Ventures.

Experience Ventures created paid entrepreneurial thinking placements for college and university students with innovative companies in Canada. The program enabled students to make an impact alongside real-world innovators through entrepreneurial thinking placements. We offered five types of entrepreneurial thinking placements including Hack-a-thons, Challenges, Projects Based, Student in Residence, and Interdisciplinary.

## Our Academic Partners



## Our Impact

301

Entrepreneurial  
Placements

70%

Identify as a Visible  
Minority

40%

Identify as a  
Women

31%

Identify In More Than  
One Underrepresented  
Group

This past year, YSpace built strong relationships internally with various key stakeholders to collaborate on the delivery of these placements. Our partners included the Cross Campus Capstone Classroom (C4) for the Challenges, Projects Based, Student in Residence, and Interdisciplinary placements. We also partnered with the Entrepreneurial Development Association, Schulich's Together 2022 Hackathon, and Lassonde's UNhack, yuHacks, Lassonde Games Hackathon to disburse the rest of the hackathon placements.

## In Partnership With



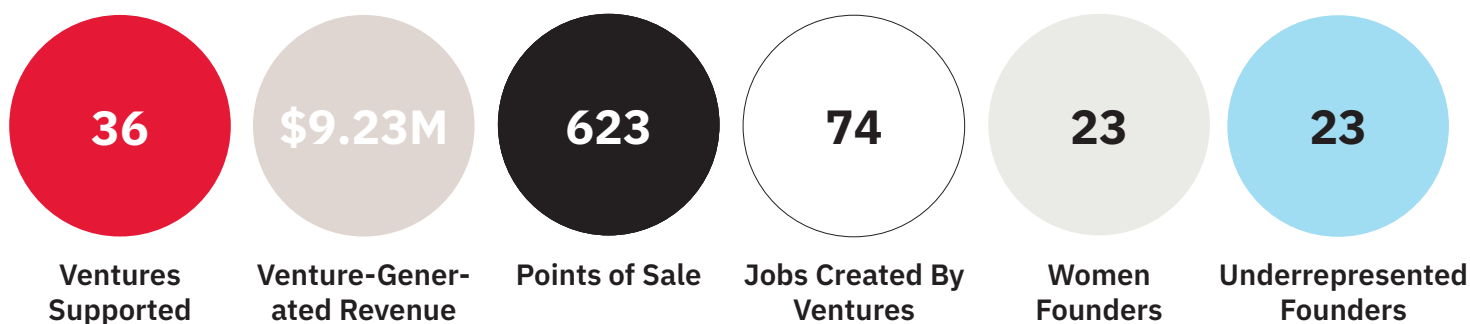
Capstone | C4



# Program Highlight: Food & Beverage Accelerator

YSpace launched **Ontario's first Food & Beverage Accelerator program** to help scale consumer packaged goods (CPG) companies into mass retail and beyond. In partnership with The Regional Municipality of York and the Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative, the program has grown into a Regional initiative that **supports 12 new ventures annually**. The program provides founders with the tools, skills, and network they need to scale and thrive. In this five-month accelerator, entrepreneurs gain access to customized workshops, one-on-one expert mentorship and peer-to-peer circles.

## Since 2019



## Our 2021 Cohort



## In Partnership With



# Program Highlight: Technology Accelerator

The Accelerator is a four-month virtual program designed to support entrepreneurs as they **launch and scale** their ventures through bootcamps, workshops, one-on-one mentorship, and access to exclusive partnerships and resources. As the accelerator joins the suite of programs with YSpace, we have revised the program to focus on helping **pre-revenue technology startups** execute their go-to-market strategies, acquire customers, and assist with private fundraising. The program features ample opportunities for hands-on experience, accountability sessions, customized mentorship, and dedicated growth hours with key partners in the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

## Since 2018

104

Ventures  
Supported

\$71.7 M

Revenue Generated  
by Ventures

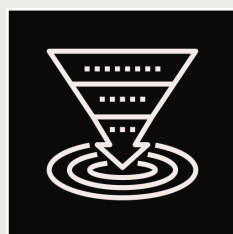
\$34.5 M

Funding Raised by  
Ventures

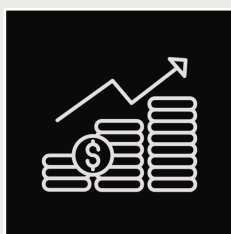
376

Jobs Created By  
Ventures

### 4-Month Accelerator



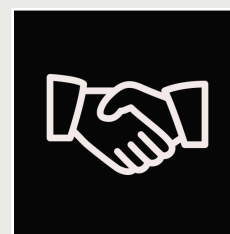
Creating the  
Sales Structure



Developing  
Investment Strategy

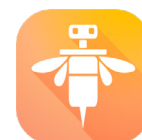


Optimizing the  
Sales Process



Identifying the Lead  
& Closing the Round

## Our 2021 Cohort





# Program Highlight: YSpace Northern York Region

## Business Bounce Back

In partnership with the Town of Georgina and the Town of East Gwillimbury, we have launched the Business Bounce Back program. This new three-month program is designed to support businesses and individuals within the hospitality and tourism sector who require the entrepreneurial and digital skills needed to pivot their existing business or create a new venture. The program will provide founders with the tools, skills, and connections they need to scale and thrive in the industry.

### In Partnership With



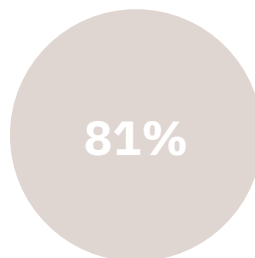
GEORGINA



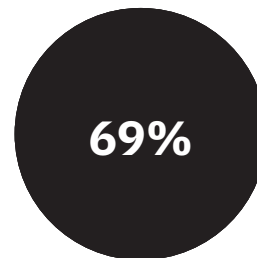
## Our Impact



Participants  
Supported



Underrepresented  
Communities



Identify as a  
Women

## Accelerate Newmarket

In partnership with the Schulich Executive Education Centre, Treefrog and the Newmarket Chamber of Commerce, we have launched the Accelerate Newmarket program. This program supports 100 tech based entrepreneurs throughout York Region through business training, mentorship, and peer circles.

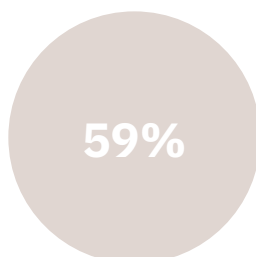
### In Partnership With



## Our Impact



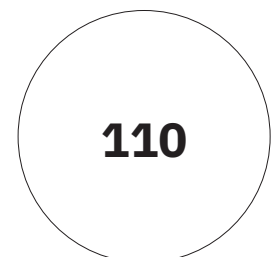
Ventures  
Supported



Underrepresented  
Communities



Funding Raised



Workshops  
Hosted

# Program Highlight: YSpace Hubs



YSpace Markham continues to provide **growth stage support to innovative ventures** with a high growth potential. The incubator is sector agnostic and primarily focused on helping **market-ready ventures** to build traction and become ready for scale.

The incubator operates as a **life-cycle program** for ventures, providing a stable infrastructure and support system to advance high growth companies into their full potential. Ventures engaged with YSpace Markham have access to **dedicated office space**, curated mentorship and resources with a holistic focus on building sales, raising capital, and leadership enablement.

## International Soft-Landing Hub

YSpace Markham has also established itself as a **soft-landing hub for international ventures** in partnership with the Korean Trade-Investment Promotion Agency (KOTRA). We have completed a successful pilot and AIMMO, a Korean based Scale-Up venture, who are looking to grow their innovative ventures in Canada has chosen YSpace as its Canadian head office.

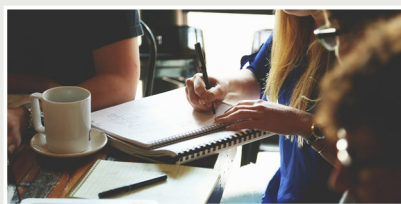


### Summer Company



We partnered with the Markham Small Business Centre to supported **10 ventures lead by secondary and post-secondary youth**. Program participant, Trophy Wives was featured in [The Star](#) for their ethical apparel business.

### Founder Fundamentals



In partnership with the City of Markham, this 12-week educational series is helping entrepreneurs gain the necessary knowledge for starting a business. In this past year, we supported **266 unique attendees with 62% comprising of small business owners**.

### YRDSB Co-op Placements



YSpace has facilitated **122 placements since 2018** through the YRDSB Co-op program. The program gives grades 10 to 12 students the opportunity to gain valuable experience working for a startup at a leading incubator over the course of a term.

# 2022-2023 Growth Plan

Over the past four years, entrepreneurship at YSpace has grown significantly with the success of YSpace and ELLA, our women accelerator program. This past year, we saw many new and exciting partnerships develop such as **Experience Ventures, Business Bounce Back, Accelerate Newmarket** and our newest project with the Black Creek Community Health Centre to launch the **Black Entrepreneurship Alliance**.

As an entrepreneurship hub and a support system for founders with varied backgrounds, it is crucial for us to **strengthen diversity and inclusion**, one of our core pillars. In the past year, a lot of our efforts have focused on acknowledging and addressing the systemic barriers upheld in our society and throughout the entrepreneurship ecosystem and this is reflected in our new programs. As the community and YSpace programming grows, we are committed as a team to continue developing our platform to enable and empower our community.

As entrepreneurship continues to grow at York University, YSpace has positioned itself as a premiere hub for startups across various verticals with unique programming to service startups outside of the traditional technology streams. We are excited about the growth of YSpace in 2022 – 2023 as we focus on furthering our development of **entrepreneurial support in the Northern Six of York Region** and **opening our second physical YSpace location**. In addition to that, we will continue to focus on building equity, diversity and inclusion into all aspects of our programs and operations.

## New Programs Coming in 2022- 2023

### Opening YSpace Georgina in Sutton, Ontario



After successfully delivering the Business Bounce Back program in partnership with the Town of Georgina and the Town of East Gwillimbury to support 70 participants, we are excited to announce that the three partners have come together to build upon the success of that program to launch a new series of resources for entrepreneurs in Northern York Region. As a part of that growth, YSpace will be opening its second physical hub in Sutton to provide a physical location for entrepreneurs to work and gather for collaborative opportunities. This new facility will come with dedicated programming such as a brand new educational series called Business Foundations along with two new programs coming later this year.



## 2022-2023 Growth Plan Continued

## Supporting Entrepreneurs in East Gwillimbury

After successfully delivering the Business Bounce Back program in partnership with the Town of Georgina, the Town of East Gwillimbury, and General Assembly, YSpace is excited to continue our partnership with East Gwillimbury to create four new programs that will further support entrepreneurs and business owners in Northern York Region. One of our first programs will be Business Foundations, a nine week educational workshop series providing business 101 topics such as accounting, business plan creation, and operational excellence.



## Supporting Experiential Learning Opportunities at York University



After successfully delivering 2025 Entrepreneurial Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) experiences in partnership with 9 other academic institutions through Experience Ventures, YSpace is excited to continue our partnership with the University of Calgary's Hunter Hub to continue our efforts in creating new entrepreneurial placement opportunities for students for the next two years. The network of academic institutions will deliver 2025 placements per year and YSpace will be facilitating a minimum of 159 placements in 2022 – 2023.

## Supporting Entrepreneurs in Newmarket

After successfully delivering the Accelerate Newmarket in partnership with the Newmarket Chamber of Commerce, Treefrog Accelerator, and the Schulich School of Business at York University, YSpace is excited to continue our partnership and support 200 entrepreneurs throughout York Region with expertise mentorship and unique access to our programs and resources.





## Thank You To Our Sponsors & Partners

Houser Henry  
& Syron LLP



kotra  
Korea Trade-Investment  
Promotion Agency



Bereskin  
& Parr



Richmond Hill  
**SBEC**  
Small Business Enterprise Centre



# ySpace

## Connect With Us

# ySpace



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# ySpace ELLA



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