



COUNTY OF SIMCOE Mentorship Guide



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The business community in Simcoe County is diverse, growing and supported by a host of resources. The following document guides existing and aspiring entrepreneurs to various organizations and resources that offer business mentorship programs and services across Simcoe County. There are a variety of options available to access mentoring for different stages of business life cycles, delivered in various ways to meet the needs of a dynamic business community.

There are numerous other supports available. Contact edo@simcoe.ca for more information.

Small Business Enterprise Centres

Small Business Enterprise Centres (SBECs) offer entrepreneurs all the tools they need to start and grow their businesses. They are staffed with dedicated consultants who help small business owners determine what they need to do before, during and after launching their business. They also offer programs to support start-ups that include mentorship components.

[South Georgian Bay Small Business Centre](#) - Serving Clearview, Collingwood, Wasaga Beach and Town of the Blue Mountains (Grey County)

[Small Business Centre Barrie, Simcoe County and Orillia](#) - Serving all other areas of the County, including Barrie and Orillia.

Starter Company Plus

The local Small Business Enterprise Centres provide a mentorship and training program called Starter Company Plus.

This program provides hands-on business coaching and training, as well as mentoring from local business leaders. Participants of the program are able to apply for up to \$5,000 in grant funding to support their new or expanding venture

Business Stage: Start, Expansion, New purchase of an existing business

Intakes: Annually

Application Period: Varies

Program Dates: Varies

Industry: Any

Locations Served: Adjala- Tosorontio, Bradford West Gwillimbury, Essa, Innisfil, New Tecumseth, Collingwood, Clearview, Springwater, Wasaga Beach, Midland, Penetanguishene, Tay, Tiny, Severn, Oro-Medonte, Ramara, Barrie, Orillia

Summer Company

Are you looking for a summer job? Have you always wanted to test the water with entrepreneurship but unsure of where to start, scared, or nervous? Summer Company might be a great fit for you! Summer Company will provide accepted students mentoring, business training and up to \$3,000 in funding to start and run their business for the summer. The Small Business Enterprise Centre will assist you in the development of your business plan and throughout your business operations during the whole summer.

Business Stage: Development, Start

Intakes: Annually

Application Period: Varies

Program Dates: Varies

Industry: Any

Locations Served: Adjala- Tosorontio, Bradford West Gwillimbury, Essa, Innisfil, New Tecumseth, Collingwood, Clearview, Springwater, Wasaga Beach, Midland, Penetanguishene, Tay, Tiny, Severn, Oro-Medonte, Ramara, Barrie, Orillia

Virtual Services Advisory Program

The Virtual Services Advisory Program offers an opportunity to meet with industry experts in the fields of Human Resources, Accounting, Law or Business Consulting – compliments of the South Georgian Bay Small Business Enterprise Centre. We know how challenging it has been for businesses and if you've felt the impacts of Covid-19 and could use a bit of extra 1:1 support and advice, this program is an email click away.

Business Stage: Any Stage

Intake: Continuous

Application Period: Continuous

Program Dates: Continuous

Industry: Any

Locations Serviced: Clearview, Collingwood, Wasaga Beach and Town of the Blue Mountains (Grey County)

*Offered through the South Georgian Bay Small Business Enterprise Centre

Digital Service Squad

This program helps businesses build an online presence and promote and sell successfully online. The main role of a Digital Service Squad team member is to assess a business's online presence and provide recommendations on how to enhance your digital capabilities. This program can be paired with the Digital Transformation Grant.

Business Stage: Any Stage

Intakes: Continuous

Application Period: Continuous

Program Dates: Continuous

Industry: Any

Locations Serviced: Adjala- Tosorontio, Bradford West Gwillimbury, Essa, Innisfil, New Tecumseth, Collingwood, Clearview, Springwater, Wasaga Beach, Midland, Penetanguishene, Tay, Tiny, Severn, Oro-Medonte, Ramara, Barrie, Orillia, Town of the Blue Mountains and Meaford (Grey County)

Digital Transformation Grant Program

The Digital Transformation Grant Program provides online training and a one time \$2,500 grant for eligible businesses to implement their Digital Transformation Plans.

Business Stage: Existing

Intakes: Varies

Application Period: Continuous

Program Dates: 2-6 weeks after application

Industry: Any

Locations Serviced: All of Ontario

ShopHERE

The ShopHERE program provides small businesses and artists with a quick, easy and no-cost way to begin selling online. The program provides one-on-one support with building and launching an online store

Business Stage: Any Stage

Intakes: Continuous

Application Period: Continuous

Program Dates: Immediate

Industry: Any

Locations Serviced: All of Ontario

Community Futures Development Corporations

Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDCs), a Government of Canada initiative, offer a wide variety of programs and services supporting community economic development and small business growth including mentorship.

Simcoe County is home to four CFDCs, each serving different areas:

- [Nottawasaga Futures](#)
- [Orillia & Area Community Development Corporation](#)
- [North Simcoe Community Futures Development Corporation](#)
- [Community Futures South Georgian Bay](#)

BizLink

BizLink, delivered by CFDCs, connects business buyers & sellers in Simcoe County to help entrepreneurs confidently move forward in the transition process. As part of the buying and selling process, this program provides mentorship and guidance.

Business Stage: Maturity, New purchase of an existing business

Intakes: Continuous

Application Period: Continuous

Program Dates: Continuous

Industry: Any

Locations Serviced: Adjala- Tosorontio, Bradford West Gwillimbury, Essa, Innisfil, New Tecumseth, Collingwood, Clearview, Springwater, Wasaga Beach, Midland, Penetanguishene, Tay, Tiny, Severn, Oro-Medonte, Ramara, Barrie, Orillia

Power Up Program

The Power Up Business Coaching and Mentoring Program offered by Community Futures South Georgian Bay is a mentorship program for small business entrepreneurs. The program connects entrepreneurs with experienced mentors to help them grow their business, tackle challenges and address opportunities. Participants find that mentoring helps them expand their networks, stay current, learn about new trends, hone leadership skills, and connect in the community.

Business Stage: Growth, Expansion, Maturity

Intakes: Continuous

Application Period: Continuous

Program Dates: Continuous

Industry: Any except Tourism

Locations Served: Collingwood, Clearview, Wasaga Beach

*Offered through Community Futures South Georgian Bay

Business Coaching and Consulting Program

Nottawasaga Futures, in partnership with the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury, Town of Innisfil, and the Town of New Tecumseth, provides business services, including one-on-one counselling at no charge to assist entrepreneurs in creating a new business or existing businesses looking for guidance in marketing, purchases, exporting, business plans, financial projections, succession plans and sources of financing and programs. Their professional staff is experienced and knowledgeable about the local market and understands the challenges faced by businesses.

Business Stage: Any Stage

Intakes: Continuous

Application Period: Continuous

Program Dates: Continuous

Industry: Any

Locations Served: Adjala- Tosorontio, Bradford West Gwillimbury, Essa, Innisfil, New Tecumseth

*Offered through Nottawasaga Community Futures

T3 Accelerator Coaching Program

Tourism businesses in Simcoe County can access mentorship support through the T3 Accelerator Program. Launched by RTO7 and the Community Futures South Georgian Bay, the program provides mentorship and coaching to established businesses to develop their business and to succeed.

A business is eligible if it has been operating for at least one year and is located in Simcoe County. Mentors can provide advice on strategy and operations, product and experience development, and marketing, as well as provide tools to think outside the box, or how take steps to operate at a larger scale.

Business Stage: Growth, Expansion, Maturity

Intakes: Continuous

Application Period: Continuous

Program Dates: Continuous

Industry: Tourism

Locations Served: Adjala- Tosorontio, Bradford West Gwillimbury, Essa, Innisfil, New Tecumseth, Collingwood, Clearview, Springwater, Wasaga Beach, Midland, Penetanguishene, Tay, Tiny, Severn, Oro-Medonte, Ramara, Barrie, Orillia

Simcoe County Business Ecosystem

Tourism “Spark” Mentorships & Grants Program

The Tourism “Spark” Program will match selected candidates with a tourism mentor and provide a source of financial support to help take your new tourism idea to the next level of development. The program’s goal is to inspire residents, entrepreneurs, small businesses and non-profit organizations based in Simcoe County to come forward with creative ideas that will generate new tourism opportunities, offerings, experiences and partnerships in the region.

Business Stage: Development, Start

Intakes: Varies

Application Period: April 6, 2022 to May 12, 2022

Program Dates: Varies

Industry: Tourism

Locations Served: Adjala- Tosorontio, Bradford West Gwillimbury, Essa, Innisfil, New Tecumseth, Collingwood, Clearview, Springwater, Wasaga Beach, Midland, Penetanguishene, Tay, Tiny, Severn, Oro-Medonte, Ramara, Barrie, Orillia

Henry Bernick Entrepreneurship Centre- Mentorship Program

The Henry Bernick Entrepreneurship Centre Mentorship Program has a roster of mentors with a variety of backgrounds including eCommerce, SEO, Marketing, Content Strategy, Media and PR, Sales, Story Telling, Financials, Patents, Food Entrepreneurship, Fractional CFO, IP and Copyright, diversity and inclusivity, culturally competent communication integration, alongside a number of highly successful generalists. The HBEC also offers intensive business training programs such as Further Faster, which include mentorship. This program is open to all businesses in Simcoe County.

Business Stage: Any Stage

Intakes: Continuous

Application Period: Continuous

Program Dates: Continuous

Industry: Any

Locations Serviced: Adjala- Tosorontio, Bradford West Gwillimbury, Essa, Innisfil, New Tecumseth, Collingwood, Clearview, Springwater, Wasaga Beach, Midland, Penetanguishene, Tay, Tiny, Severn, Oro-Medonte, Ramara, Barrie, Orillia

Sandbox Centre - Experts In Residence & Advisory Network Programs

Experts in Residence is a curation of on-demand and live streaming information sessions that provide a free all access opportunity for the business community to share and receive expert feedback in order to support their business moving forward with greater clarity. Businesses can gain insight into burning questions and challenges across a wide range of expertise from top notch perspectives like business law, digital marketing, accounting, communications and more. The Advisory Network is a tool that allows for the business community to easily make professional or personal connections with the Sandbox member community across all areas of business. Advisors listed are ready to offer support in growing your business or career journey.

Business Stage: Any Stage

Intakes: Continuous

Application Period: Continuous

Program Dates: Continuous

Industry: Any

Locations Serviced: Adjala- Tosorontio, Bradford West Gwillimbury, Essa, Innisfil, New Tecumseth, Collingwood, Clearview, Springwater, Wasaga Beach, Midland, Penetanguishene, Tay, Tiny, Severn, Oro-Medonte, Ramara, Barrie, Orillia

GB Accelerator

The GB Accelerator program is an intensive six month program fully customized to the needs of your team and business. Businesses have the opportunity to work with the senior leadership team (coaches, mentors and industry experts) who are dedicated and passionate about helping innovators in our community.

Business Stage: Growth, Expansion

Intakes: Continuous

Application Period: Continuous

Program Dates: Continuous

Industry: Technology and Innovation

Locations Serviced: Collingwood, Clearview, Wasaga Beach

DMZ Innisfil

DMZ Innisfil is a startup and small business accelerator program focused on providing entrepreneurs with the support and resources they need to navigate the challenges and opportunities that come with starting, building and growing a business. The program provides entrepreneurs with access to mentorship, office space and a vast network of support partners.

Business Stage: Any

StageIntakes: Continuous

Application Period: Continuous

Program Dates: Continuous

Industry: Any

Locations Serviced: Innisfil

Innisfil Business Mentor Programs

The Town of Innisfil has partnered with Nottawasaga Futures to create the Innisfil Business Mentor program. The program gives Innisfil businesses access to a team of local experts who provide one-to-one mentorship in key areas such as marketing, HR, e-commerce, accounting, bookkeeping, finance and more.

Business Stage: Any Stage

Intakes: Continuous

Application Period: Continuous

Program Dates: Continuous

Industry: Any

Locations Serviced: Innisfil

LakeheadConnect

The LakeheadConnect is an online networking program powered by the Ten Thousand Coffees platform, matching alumni with students and recent grads, based on your career-specific interests and goals for inspiring conversation. You can schedule and set up a coffee chat in-person or online! Take an hour every 1-3 months to meet someone new from Lakehead, create an opportunity to learn, share and answer questions.

Business Stage: Development, Start, Growth, Expansion, Maturity

Intakes: Continuous

Application Period: Continuous

Program Dates: Continuous

Industry: Any

Locations Served: Adjala- Tosorontio, Bradford West Gwillimbury, Essa, Innisfil, New Tecumseth, Collingwood, Clearview, Springwater, Wasaga Beach, Midland, Penetanguishene, Tay, Tiny, Severn, Oro-Medonte, Ramara, Barrie, Orillia

VentureLAB

With a focus on hardware and enterprise software technologies, VentureLAB offers a coveted combination of business and technical expertise, connections to a global network of partners and mentors, access to their 50,000 square foot facility, and a \$7 million world-class lab to drive innovations from prototype to product.

Business Stage: Any Stage

Intakes: Continuous

Application Period: Continuous

Program Dates: Continuous

Industry: Technology

Locations Served: Adjala- Tosorontio, Bradford West Gwillimbury, Essa, Innisfil, New Tecumseth, Collingwood, Clearview, Springwater, Wasaga Beach, Midland, Penetanguishene, Tay, Tiny, Severn, Oro-Medonte, Ramara, Barrie, Orillia

Futurpreneur Canada

Futurpreneur Canada is a non-profit organization helping Canadians become business owners with loan financing, mentoring and business resources. This program matches entrepreneurs with an experienced mentor to help build confidence and tackle the toughest business challenges for up to two years. The program teaches key skills like business planning, marketing and cash flow management through our online and in-person business resources.

Business Stage: Development, Start, Buy

Ages: 18-39

Intakes: Continuous

Application Period: Continuous

Program Dates: Continuous

Industry: All

Locations Serviced: Adjala- Tosorontio, Bradford West Gwillimbury, Essa, Innisfil, New Tecumseth, Collingwood, Clearview, Springwater, Wasaga Beach, Midland, Penetanguishene, Tay, Tiny, Severn, Oro-Medonte, Ramara, Barrie, Orillia

Canadian Federal Government - Canadian Technology Accelerator

This program helps companies with an established product or service to export and expand in international markets. Canadian Technology Accelerators are located in major international tech hubs, and provide small tech companies with mentoring and workspace, as well as introductions to potential partners, investors, and customers.

Business Stage: Expansion, Maturity

Intakes: Annual

Application Period: Continuous

Program Dates: Continuous

Industry: Agriculture, Climate Tech, Cybersecurity, Digital, Digital Health, Health, Advanced Manufacturing, Robotics, Clean Tech, Sports Technology.

Locations Serviced: Adjala- Tosorontio, Bradford West Gwillimbury, Essa, Innisfil, New Tecumseth, Collingwood, Clearview, Springwater, Wasaga Beach, Midland, Penetanguishene, Tay, Tiny, Severn, Oro-Medonte, Ramara, Barrie, Orillia

Canada Digital Adoption Program (CDAP)

CDAP provides funding and support to businesses. It can help get your business online, give your e-commerce presence a boost or help digitalize your business's operations.

Business Stage: Any Stage

Intakes: Continuous

Application Period: Continuous

Program Dates: Continuous

Industry: Any

Locations Serviced: Adjala- Tosorontio, Bradford West Gwillimbury, Essa, Innisfil, New Tecumseth, Collingwood, Clearview, Springwater, Wasaga Beach, Midland, Penetanguishene, Tay, Tiny, Severn, Oro-Medonte, Ramara, Barrie, Orillia