



Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency

Working with young entrepreneurs

The entrepreneurial attitudes of young Atlantic Canadians represent a tremendous opportunity for the region's economy. Studies indicate that one in five would like to start their own business. Among young people already in business, more than 80% intend to increase their sales and expand their markets.

The reason this situation is so important to Atlantic Canada comes down to the critical role entrepreneurs play in job creation. Small- and medium-sized businesses – the types of business that these young people aspire to start and grow, generate more than 70% of all new jobs in the region.

Ensuring that more young Atlantic Canadians have access to the tools and programs they need to succeed in business is what the Young Entrepreneur Development Initiative (YEDI) is all about.

What is YEDI?

YEDI is an ACOA initiative designed to expand and enhance the entrepreneurship training, information and support services available to Atlantic Canadians aged 15 to 29.

How does it work?

Investments will be made in three key areas:

Aspiring Entrepreneurs

This element of YEDI will provide enhanced opportunities for young people considering entrepreneurship to further explore the option and “learn the ropes”. For example: entrepreneurship courses and workshops, business planning competitions, and improved web access to information and resources.

Existing Entrepreneurs

Getting into business is one thing, but surviving and growing your business brings new challenges. This element will enhance the availability of business skills training and support for young people already in business. For example: business skills workshops, mentoring programs, advisory and support services and learning conferences that bring young entrepreneurs together.

Community Entrepreneurship Development

The purpose of this element is to encourage community-level involvement in the planning and implementation of programs targeting the development of young entrepreneurs. This could include, for example, working with local economic development partners and community resources to enhance support for young entrepreneurs.

Who can apply?

Not-for-profit and non-commercial organizations such as business and economic development associations, educational institutions or municipalities.

Funding and Eligibility

ACOA assistance is non-repayable and limited to the percentage of eligible costs necessary for the project to proceed.

Interested in learning more about YEDI?

Contact the ACOA office nearest you:

ACOA New Brunswick: 1-800-561-4030
ACOA Prince Edward Island and Tourism: 1-800-871-2596
ACOA Newfoundland and Labrador: 1-800-668-1010
ACOA Nova Scotia: 1-800-565-1228
ACOA Head Office: 1-800-561-7862
Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation: 1-800-705-3926

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