

# GlobalStart Voucher Pilot Program Guidelines

## How it Works

Across the Province there are 30 Campus-Linked Accelerators and On-Campus Entrepreneurship Activities (CLA/OCEA) involving 42 academic institutions. Together with the Regional Innovation Centres (RIC), these organizations provide resources, business advice and mentorship, connections to potential customers, partners, and investors, as well as entrepreneurship education. The startup companies, who are incubated at, and actively engaged with the CLA/OCEA and RIC, leverage these resources and networks to help them assess and identify first target market, product-market fit, business model development, as well as peer-to-peer support. Through these activities, these organizations not only help create economic impact to Ontario's economy, but foster entrepreneurship as a career option.

Many of the startups emerging from the CLAs/OCEAs, and RICs are looking to global markets very early, and for several their first entry market will not be Canada. These "born global" startups need help to overcome common barriers to doing business abroad, such as accessing business networks, and understanding differences in the local culture and political system.

Globally, there exist campus-linked incubators/accelerators, similar to Ontario's CLAs, OCEAs and RICs, who share a common goal of helping young entrepreneurs create successful new businesses. OCE is developing relationships with campus-linked incubators/accelerators from around the world who are interested in helping Ontario-based youth-led startups gain access to global markets. These global partners can provide access to services similar to what they would receive from their CLA, OCEA or RIC, open doors to potential customers, partners or investors, and help Ontario startups acclimatize to the local business and cultural environment.

## Program Objectives

The GlobalStart Voucher Pilot Program aims to help Ontario-based youth-led startups:

- Immerse themselves in a selected global market through a 3-6 month placement with a host incubator/accelerator;
- Develop the strong business relationships that are only possible through sustained face-to-face interaction;
- Gain first-hand knowledge of the opportunity within that market; and
- Achieve tangible business goals in the selected global market, such as:
  - Sales,
  - Investment, and
  - strategic partnerships.

## How Funding Works

Youth-led startups may receive up to \$15,000 in OCE cash with a 1:1 match from the startup. CLAs/OCEAs and RICs will be asked to advance a ranked list of nominees for this program. The nominations will be evaluated and OCE will invite the successful nominees to submit an application for funding. Startups (to be called nominees from this point forward) that demonstrate that they have a

reasonable chance of achieving sales, investment, or a strategic partnership as a result of receiving the Voucher are the focus of this awards program. Fifteen (15) nominees will be selected for placement with a global incubator/accelerator for between 3 and 6 months.

## Eligibility Criteria

### Nominee(s) Startups Eligibility:

- Incorporated Ontario-based startup companies, less than 3 years old, that are founded by young entrepreneurs from the age of 18 to 29.
- Nominee(s) will be the person(s) travelling on the Voucher and must be 18-29 years old
- No more than two representatives from the nominated startup will be supported under the GlobalStart Voucher Pilot Program. If there are two representatives being supported by this program, they will both be listed as applicants and must satisfy the above eligibility requirements. Application budget and proposed activities should justify the travel cost.
- Nominee(s) must hold equity and a key position in the company that is appropriate to conduct the proposed activities
- The nominee must be a Canadian citizen or a permanent resident of Canada
- Companies must be based at and actively engaged with an OCE supported Campus-Linked Accelerator (CLA) or On-Campus Entrepreneurship Activities (OCEA), or Regional Innovation Centre (RIC) for at least 4 months.
- Before an application can be initiated, startup must be nominated by a [Campus-Linked Accelerator \(CLA\)](#), [On-Campus Entrepreneurship Activities \(OCEA\)](#) or a [Regional Innovation Centre \(RIC\)](#). Nomination template can be downloaded [here](#).
- \*1:1 matching cash contributions must come from a non-provincial governmental source (***\*Preference will be given to applications where the source of matching contributions is a third party investor or from customer sales***)
- When applying for a GlobalStart Voucher, the startup must be pre-recurring revenue (less than \$250,000 total) and pre-significant non-government investment. "Significant investment" is defined as an outside investment of over \$250,000
- Program is intended for youth-led startup company who are at the "Customer Validation" or "Customer Creation" stage, based on the Lean Startup Model.
- Companies that are past recipients of SmartStart Seed Fund or Market Readiness Customer Creation awards are eligible to apply to this Program. OCE and company's matching cash allocated to SmartStart SeedFund or Market Readiness Customer Creation projects are not eligible as matching cash to this Program.
- Companies who are applying, have active project, or have completed projects for the Market Readiness Company Building program are not eligible.
- Nominee(s) must enter into a contribution agreement with OCE, a document outlining the Terms and Conditions of the placement, and be subject to project and metrics reporting at least annually
- Nominee(s) must be in good financial and reporting standing with OCE

- Only 1 GlobalStart Voucher award will be awarded for the lifetime of the company.

Host global incubator/accelerator:

- The host global incubator/accelerator must have the capacity to host the Ontario startup company. This means the host will provide the Ontario startup access to their resources and services (such as use of their facilities including, but not limited to, desk space, meeting room, equipment, prototyping facility), to participate in their programs and events (entrepreneurship training courses/workshops, networking events they host), and/or to tap into their network of advisors, mentors, potential leads to customers and partners.

## How to Apply

### Timelines and Decision-making Process

- OCEA/CLAs and RICs will be invited to provide a ranked list of nominees among their top youth-led startups who qualify for and would benefit from this program.
- Nominees advanced by OCEA/CLAs and RICs will be shortlisted by OCE and successful nominees will be invited to submit a full application.
- There will be one application per nominee that will support up to 2 members of the startup to travel. The application forms will be provided directly to shortlisted nominees.
- Nominees that move forward to the next steps will work with OCE Business Development Managers to arrange hosting from an appropriate global incubator/accelerator. Applicants may request an introduction to a host from OCE's list of global incubator/accelerator relationships, or self-select their own global incubator/accelerator. Once hosting is secured, it is the responsibility of the applicant to obtain a letter of support from the host incubator/accelerator. An example of the letter of support can be downloaded [here](#)

### Application Submission Deadlines:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>November 15, 2015</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CLAs/OCEAs and RICs submit their list of nominees to OCE, using form to be provided Oct. 15, 2015.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>November 30, 2015</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shortlist of nominees invited to submit an application.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>January 4, 2015</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application submission deadline.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>January 2016</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OCE evaluation of completed applications</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>February 2016</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicants notified of funding decision</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>March 2016</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful applicants complete funding agreements and prepare for global placement.</li> </ul>

## Selection Criteria

The following criteria will be used to evaluate applications:

- The application proposal plan must describe how they will achieve sales, investment and/or strategic partnership within the proposed timeframe.
- Strong evidence and/or rationale to support the appropriateness of the selected global market
- Engagement with and suitability of selected global host incubator/accelerator, including the extent to which the resources and programs available are relevant to support the milestones proposed to be achieved on the Voucher
- likelihood of the applicant to achieve the proposed milestones and conduct business in the selected global market

## Guidelines for Recipient(s)

- Global Voucher recipients(s) must be based at the global host incubator/accelerator over the duration of the Voucher (i.e. offered desk space at the host incubator/accelerator at the minimum)
- OCE has developed relationships with a number of campus-linked incubators/accelerators in key global markets, who are interested in hosting Ontario-based youth-led startups. Applicants may request an introduction to these global host incubator/accelerators.
- Recipient(s) are not required to select a global host incubator/accelerator from OCE's list of relationships
- If the recipient(s) wish to select a host incubator/accelerator that is not from OCE's list of relationships, prior approval must be granted by OCE before submitting the application. Please contact Laura Yu at [laura.yu@oce-ontario.org](mailto:laura.yu@oce-ontario.org) for more information.
- Visa and travel documents are the responsibility of applicant(s) to have them ready at time of award. Please ensure you have valid travel documents for the duration of the Voucher and a visa that will allow you to do business in the host country. OCE will hold the award for up to 3 months from the date of the award notification to allow the applicant time to obtain necessary documentations for the Voucher. OCE reserves the right to retract the award after this time expires.
- Prior to the global placement, applicants are advised to work with their CLA/OCEA or RIC and global host to prepare as much as possible. This may include global market landscape assessment, required product modifications, competitor analysis, introductions to potential customers/investors/partners, understanding of local business culture and political system, etc.
- OCE is not liable and takes no responsibility for any outcomes for the applicant(s) and their company as a result of the Voucher. Terms and Conditions for applying can be reviewed [here](#)
- Recipient(s) must notify OCE immediately if they wish to make any changes to their application after the Voucher starts. This includes withdrawing from the Voucher program and/or changing the host incubator/accelerator, or changing jurisdiction

### **Eligible activities under this program:**

- Travel and accommodation expenses from Ontario to host incubator/accelerator destination and return
- Programs and services offered by host incubator/accelerator, including access to space, advisory or mentorship services, educational or training programs for entrepreneurship development, etc.
- Networking events, relevant tradeshows and/or conferences that will generate customer and or partnership leads for the company
- Customer, investor and partnership development activities that can lead to potential customer acquisition and/or generation of revenue or investment

### **Flow of Funds**

- OCE will support 50% of the cost of a global placement to a maximum of \$15,000.
- Upon execution of the funding agreement, receipt of company's electronic fund transfer (EFT) information and copy of applicant(s) valid travel documents (passport and applicable visa), OCE will release a payment equal to the award amount minus a \$5,000 holdback. The holdback will be released upon completion of the final report and attestation on the use of funds by the applicant(s).  
Costs for accommodation and meal expenses must be calculated based on the per diem rate as outlined in the [Ontario Public Service Travel, Meals and Hospitality Directive](#), which can be reviewed [here](#).

For more information on the GlobalStart Voucher Pilot Program, please contact:

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For inquiries specifically related to eligibility, contracting and funding disbursements, please contact:

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