

SPRE ACCELERATOR 2022-2023 PROGRAM SUMMARY



ABOUT INFRASTRUCTURE INSTITUTE

We are a training, advisory and interdisciplinary research hub at the University of Toronto's School of Cities. Our vision is to build local and global expertise in infrastructure planning, decision-making, and delivery.

The Infrastructure Institute will transform the status quo of infrastructure delivery, refine public-private partnerships and propose innovations in project financing and funding tools.



ABOUT THE ACCELERATOR

The Accelerator Program is a free, public program to support and speed up pre-development

processes for mission-driven organizations who wish to invest in their own spaces. This intensive 6-month program seeks to go beyond building capacity within an organization, focusing on working with groups to start drafting the project details that they need to pitch projects to partners, funders, investors, and government agencies.

24 hours of curriculum delivery

7 Guest speakers

- Jamie Shipley, CMHC
- Bo Pelech, Rotman
- Zahra Ebrahim, Monumental
- Kofi Hope, Monumental
- Alex Dow, United Way
- Nicole Pal, SHS Consulting
- John Fox, Robbins Appleby LLP

4 Expert consultants

- Planning, Nigel Carvalho
- Design, Sarah Chan
- Architecture, Phat Le
- Bo Pelech, Rotman



9 Mentors

- Alex Mather, Markee Developments
- Andi van Koeverden, The Mount Community Centre
- Arshmanie Ramkissoon, YWCA
- Chris White, Parcel Economics
- Mukhtar Latif, Pomegranate Housing
- Mwarigha, Woodgreen
- Rev. Jim Keenan, St. Luke's United Church
- Stephen Job, TenBlock
- Sunna Zubair, New Commons Development

9 organizations from across Southern Ontario

- Hesperus Village (Vaughan)
- Somali Cultural & Community Centre (Toronto)
- Christie Refugee Welcome Centre (Toronto)
- Blue Door (York Region)
- Andrew Fleck Children's Services (Ottawa)
- SE Health (Kingston)
- Home Suite Hope (Halton Hills)
- Rhema Foundation Canada (Toronto)
- Women's Habitat of Etobicoke (Toronto)

1 Final Pitch Night



PROGRAM BREAKDOWN

A unique component of the program, identified by participants as a major benefit, is the mixing of a variety of projects at different stages of development in one cohort. A range of services were offered to all organizations, and each was able to work with our Resident Planner, Architect & Designer on the development of their projects, depending on the unique needs of each group.

- 5 organizations developed a pro forma
- 6 organizations developed a massing study
- 5 achieved a Planning milestone through the program
- All organizations were able to identify new project partners through the program
- All organizations reported that “The accelerator program helped address the challenges our organization faced in starting our SPRE development.”
- All organizations reported that they are “confident in their next steps” in the development of their projects.

Organizations noted overall growth and development of each element of their projects from the beginning of the program to the end:

- Drafting a pro forma
- Understanding the cost implications of a project
- Identifying funding sources
- Developing a massing study and/or preliminary design
- Gaining support from a Board of Directors
- Achieving a Planning milestone
- Identifying potential partners



PROJECT SUMMARIES

All 9 organizations participating in this program developed unique projects which incorporate a diversity of uses into each site:

Childcare: 1

Aging-in-Place Focus: 2

Affordable Housing: 7

Community & Centre: 2

Transitional Housing & Shelters: 3

Supportive Housing & Single Parents: 1



PITCH NIGHT

Each organization participating in the Accelerator Program prepared a 5-minute final pitch on their projects to a room full of enthusiastic and supportive leaders from the SPRE sector. The main objectives of the evening were to showcase the incredible work of the 9 organizations and provide them with the opportunity to describe what's needed for them to move forward with their projects, appealing to a room full of potential partners. Guests in attendance included professionals from:

- 5 Financial institutions**
- 9 Development & consulting firms**
- 6 Nonprofit partners**
- 3 Government agencies**





TESTIMONIALS

“The SPRE Accelerator offers non-development professionals the space to learn, the tools to build, and the capacity to workshop opportunities with the experts in the room to help you get to your destination of building affordable housing.

It takes your big dreams and ideas and helps you synthesize the different elements, knowledge gaps, and milestones required - in order to make your dream development a reality.”

Home Suite Hope

“The Accelerator program made it possible for non-profit organizations like ours, to have access to information about housing development processes that we would otherwise have to pay for. This program has certainly supported us to gain a better understanding of our capacity to engage in housing development.”

Women’s Habitat of Etobicoke

“The Accelerator program is a must for any non-profit starting a SPRE project. The team has a wealth of knowledge to share. Projects are able to support and learn from one another. The guest speakers bring very practical and relevant information of development, planning, and financing.”

Blue Door



NEXT STEPS

So what's next?

For the organizations...

All nine organizations are moving forward with their projects – seeking board approval, city council support, and generous donors to support their important work and to help them move forward from pre-development to construction.

For the program...

After a successful first run, the Accelerator program is now moving forward into its second year, with new partners, a stronger ecosystem of collaborators and incredible feedback from the first cohort that will inform the next iteration.

For the sector...

It's evident from the success of this program that more support is needed for the nonprofit organizations leading Social Purpose Real Estate projects, by way of network-building, funding, the support of local government, and new partnerships.





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