2024-2025 Accelerator Program Application Guide

Use the information in this guide as a reference to prepare your responses for the upcoming program application.

Accelerator Program Description

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. The Accelerator is designed for groups developing social purpose real estate projects, with a confirmed site or partnerships in place, and in search of support through the pre-development phase of a project.

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. All participants that complete the program have the opportunity to pitch their projects to investors and potential project partners from the Accelerator's ecosystem of collaborators.

Details

The Accelerator is a 6-month program consisting of:

- Programming from January 15-June 18, 2025
- 2-hour, bi-weekly online sessions
- Regular mentor check-ins
- Support from the Institute's in-house consultants (architect, planner, designer, pro forma support)
- Read our FAQ here

Eligibility

The Accelerator application process is open to all groups that are:

- Able to commit to the full 6-month program;
- A registered charity or non-profit organization;
- Are based in Ontario;
- Demonstrate that they have an interest in developing a social purpose development;

- Have confirmed either a site or project partners for a project (i.e. already own a site to build on or have confirmed units in a building owned by another organization or developer).
- Able to confirm 2-4 participants from the organization for the duration of the program (participants can alternate attendance of bi-weekly sessions)
- Able to demonstrate support from the organization's Board of Directors. Commitment from at least one staff/volunteer, and one Board member to participate in this program will be considered an asset in the application review process;
- Though not mandatory, groups are encouraged to complete the Infrastructure Institute's SPRE 101 Training Modules and Organizational Readiness Program to prepare for participation in the Accelerator.

How to apply

Applications for this program will be accepted starting on **August 12, 2024** through an online form that will be posted on the Accelerator Program website. Sign up for the Infrastructure Institute's newsletter to be notified of when applications are being accepted. **All applicants will be notified of the status of their application after the deadline in November 2024.**

Applications will be reviewed and considered based on the viability of the project and fit with the other projects selected for the upcoming cohort.

Application Questions

Contact Info

1. Organization Name
2. Primary contact name
3. Primary contact email
4. Organization's website
5. Type of organization:
   a. Registered nonprofit
   b. Registered charity
6. Other
7. Organization's mission

8. City
9. Province

Project site

Having access to a site is not a requirement for this program, however, please indicate what your current access is to give our team a better sense of your project's needs. For organizations without a site, we will prioritize those already working in partnership with other sector partners to develop the concept and work towards site acquisition (i.e. a nonprofit working in partnership with a developer or larger nonprofit on a mixed-use development).

10. **Project site:** Does your organization have a confirmed project site?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. Other
11. If yes, what is your relationship with this site?
    a. Existing ownership
    b. Long-term lease
    c. Currently in the process of purchasing
    d. Accessing through a partnership with a developer or landowner
    e. Other
12. Has your organization confirmed partnerships with private, public or nonprofit sector partners for this project? Please describe the nature of this/these partnership(s).

Project Details

Please provide more information about your organization's project and any previous experience with similar developments.

13. **Experience:** Does your organization have experience developing Social Purpose Real Estate projects? If yes, please describe your experience. You can also include links to project pages or articles.
14. **Concept:** Please describe the project concept that your organization would like to develop through the Accelerator program.

15. **Track record:** Does your organization have a track record of operating spaces similar to this? If not, how do you plan on incorporating the expertise of those with this knowledge? (i.e. if your project will include a community kitchen, but this is not your area of focus, who will be partnering or advising on this component?)

16. **Project Site:** Does your organization have a confirmed project site? If so, what is the address? If not, please describe your ideal location and any work that you have already started to secure a site.

17. **Units:** Approximately how many residential units will be included in this project?

18. **Community Connection:** Is this project a response to existing growth or demand? Have you completed a needs assessment for this project or consulted with the communities involved?

19. **Collaborators:** If applicable, please list any additional collaborators for this project:

20. **Funding:** Has your organization secured any funding or resources for this project?

Program goals & commitment

The Accelerator program is free for all participants accepted into the program, however, a commitment to engage in the full program is required. Please tell us more about what your organization is hoping to accomplish through the program.

21. **Participants:** The Accelerator program will require a commitment of approximately 3 hours a week, for 6 months. Who from your team will be able to commit to participating in the program should the application be approved? Organizations with 2-4 participants (ideally one board member and one staff) will be prioritized.

22. **Program objectives:** What is your organization hoping to accomplish through the Accelerator Program?

23. **Mentorship:** All Accelerator program participants will be matched with a mentor for the duration of the program. What skillsets and experience would be helpful for your organization to gain access to through a mentor at this time? (i.e. development processes, funding & financing, partnership development, governance, etc...)

24. **Program commitment:** The next cohort of the Accelerator program will take place from January 15-June 18, 2025. This program will include mandatory bi-weekly zoom sessions, and meetings with mentors on a monthly basis. Will your team be in a position to commit to the entirety of this program?
    a. Yes
    b. No

    c. Other

Attachments

Please submit the following attachments if available at this time. The Letter of Commitment is the only mandatory attachment. We understand that not all of the additional attachments may be available to every organization at this time, but please provide what you are able to as this tells us more about the phase of development that your project is in. You are also welcome to email these attachments to infrastructure@utoronto.ca, subject line "Accelerator program application".

25. **Letter of commitment:** To be written by the organization's board of directors. This letter will commit the team members identified to participate in the Accelerator program.

26. If available, any of the following to confirm the status of the site: plans, drawings, leases, meeting notes, MOUs, Agreements.

27. If you are unable to submit any of these attachments at this time, please let us know if any might be available in the coming months.