



25 YEARS PREPARED US FOR THIS

Annual Report
2020 - 2021

MISSION

As a not-for-profit organization, YES enriches the community by providing English-language support services to help Quebecers find employment and start and grow businesses.

YES Employment + Entrepreneurship has been broadening access to opportunities for Quebec's English-speaking community for over 25 years now. As we reflect on the organization's 25th anniversary in the midst of the pandemic, we are reminded of the vital importance of our career and business support services.

Quebec's English-speaking population is brimming with talent. With guidance and practical support from YES, more people succeed in getting their next foot on the ladder, enriching the province with their varied skill sets and innovative ideas.

From the dot-com bubble of the early 2000s to the financial crisis of 2008, we have certainly had practice navigating our clients through a range of milestones and setbacks. Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, Quebec's English-speaking community knows that YES will be there to celebrate countless wins and weather through unpredictable times together.

2020-21 was a year when we cracked open our toolbox and pivoted in response to COVID-19. The experience that we have under our belt from the last 25 years served us well and we were ready to adapt to the new reality. We continue to be passionate about helping our clients see their potential and achieve their diverse goals.



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

DORIS JUERGENS

This past year, YES has proven how agile and nimble it is as an organization. Faced with COVID-19, everyone stepped up to the plate and pivoted in response. With many of our services already available online, the staff and volunteers' prescient efforts were both timely and relevant.

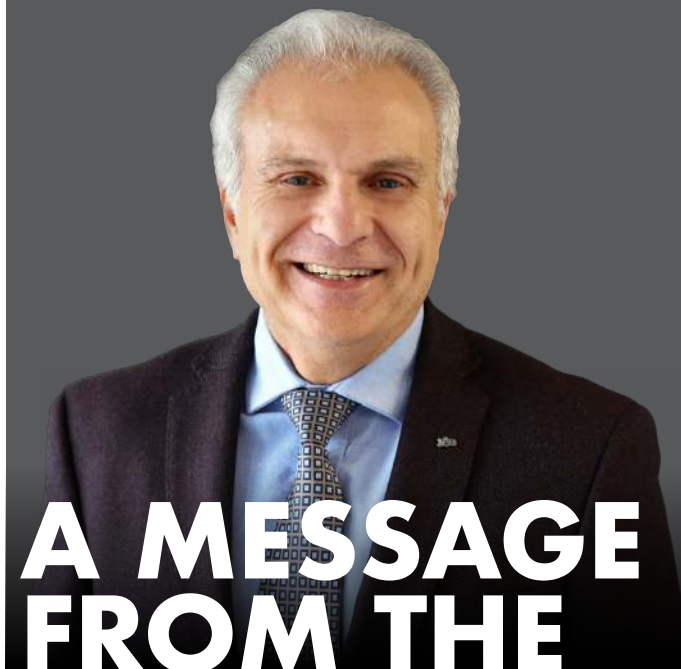
2020-21 marked the organization's 25th anniversary, a strong indicator that YES remains an integral part of the fabric of Quebec's employment and entrepreneurship ecosystem. The anniversary was celebrated with a stakeholder cocktail held via Zoom where we had the pleasure to be joined by some of the founding members of YES as well as past staff members and those who have contributed to YES's story over the years. It was great to reconnect and reflect upon how the organization has evolved.

We now serve a much broader population than we did when the organization was founded. To reflect this expansion, we underwent a brand refresh this year. We are now known as "YES Employment + Entrepreneurship", proudly unveiling a new look and a new website to match.

On the fundraising side, we have been encouraged by the support from the community and our government funders. While organizing our annual "Tune In To YES" event wasn't possible this year, we did hold a virtual auction. Thanks to the generosity of the community, attendees bought tickets or placed bids on experiences such as art classes, cooking lessons and discussions with guest speakers such as politico John Parisella and Montreal Impact goalie Evan Bush, all held online. We are so grateful to everyone who contributed, and we are looking forward to thanking everyone in person at the next earliest opportunity.

I would like to express a huge thank you to every single individual who has contributed to making YES what it is today, from its staff who are always on, to volunteers, fellow board members and longstanding supporters. From near and far, your support makes it possible for us to continue to help people start their career or start and grow their business.

If we can get through COVID-19, I do believe we can get through anything. I am sure that YES Employment + Entrepreneurship is here to stay and that we will continue to offer our services to those who need it.



A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

AKI TCHITACOV

25 years ago, YES was born in response to the employment crisis within Quebec's English-speaking community. The uncertainty and challenges brought about by the 1995 referendum led to a mass exodus of English-speaking talent from the province and business leaders rallied to provide a solution.

Since its founding, YES Employment + Entrepreneurship has cultivated deep roots in the community. We certainly didn't expect to be marking our 25th anniversary in the midst of a new crisis but we are so proud that our respected stakeholders, staff, and volunteers continue to pull together as they always have.

We continue to deliver on our mission to help English-speaking Quebecers to chart careers and build fulfilling lives in the province. In 2020-21, we witnessed a significant milestone in our lives; a signature point in all of our careers and an opportunity to make a difference.

On top of our usual work, we proactively pushed further with the creation of e-learning courses and brand new initiatives and workshops. During this year's Speaker Series event, we partnered with DESTA Black Youth Network to help facilitate access to entrepreneurship for an underserved minority population. On the artist side, the success of events like What the Pop! and the annual Artists Conference are a credit to our resiliency and the generosity of everyone who pulled together to make them possible.

In response to the pandemic, we waived the fee for the majority of our workshops and we provided our clients with COVID response tools. These included helping our entrepreneurship clients to predict and mitigate risk and providing guides to COVID relief programs and benefits.

In response to changing language legislation within the province, we are also now offering more intense second-language French workshops and working tirelessly to offer the best possible support so that everyone who has made Quebec their home can thrive here.

2020 also saw the first ever ELLEvate pre-accelerator program for women. The fact that women have been under-supported and under-encouraged in entrepreneurship spaces has been a big weakness for our economy for far too long. We wanted to take action to help remedy this through ELLEvate and its pre-accelerator program, each iteration of which culminates in a pitch competition awarding cash grants. Sincere thanks to the Government of Canada for funding this project as well as our corporate partners and sponsors, including the City of Montréal and SAP, for their tremendous support.

YES continues to be a pillar in the community. We help provide a voice for the community we serve by participating in government consultations, building advocacy organizations like the Provincial Employment Roundtable (PERT), and offering valued services to wide swaths of our community from new arrivals to at-risk youth. In doing so, we continue to be a respected voice for English speakers, engaging with governments and working to ensure that Quebec remains an attractive destination for global talent.

YES Board & Advisory Council

+ BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Past President, YES

John Aylen

John Aylen
Communications

President, YES

Doris Juergens

NATIONAL Public Relations

Vice President, YES

Elisabeth Laett

Xaphan Group

Treasurer, YES

Gavin Correa, CPA, CA, CFP

LCA CPA LLP

Secretary, YES

Larry Markowitz

NATIONAL Public Relations

Josef Azam

Design Shopp

Samantha Bateman

Integria Consulting

Cindy Fagen

SAP Labs Canada Inc.

Cherine Zananiri

Talent and Career Strategist

Geoff Wagner

Nogol Madani

Glee Factor

Hilary Radley

Hilary Radley Design Inc.

Paul Dery-Goldberg

Spiegel Sohmer
Avocats/Lawyers

Pino Di Ioia

BeaverTails Pastry /
Moozoo Juices Gelateria

+ ADVISORY COUNCIL

Andy Nulman

Bill Brownstein

Charles B. Crawford

Guy Laframboise

Herschel Segal

Lionel Blanshay

Peter R. Johnson

Peter McAuslan

Philip O'Brien

Rob Braide

Robert Walsh

Scott Conrod

Timothy Leyne

YES Committees

+ ADVANCING WOMEN IN STEM THROUGH SYSTEMIC CHANGE COMMITTEE

Elisabeth Laett (Chair)

Alyson McPhee

Cassie Rheaume

Cindy Fagen

Cynthia Grahame

Georgiana Laudi

Liesl Barrell

Marie Jasmin

Mary-Anne Carignan

Nancy Cleman

Sophie Aladas

Valérie Gobeil

Vanessa Cherenfant

Veronica Polisi

+ ARTISTS CONFERENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Hilary Radley (Co-Chair)

Elizabeth Ulin (Co-Chair)

Emily Enhorning

Holly Greco

Linda Rutenberg

Lori Schubert

+ ENTREPRENEURSHIP ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Pino Di Ioia (Co-Chair)

Chris Emergui (Co-Chair)

Anthony Broccolini

Cherine Zananiri

Cindy Fagen

Elisabeth Laett

Mary-Anne Carignan

+ FUNDRAISING EVENT PLANNING COMMITTEE

Desiree Ruiz (Chair)

Evan Bush (Honorary Chair)

Bonnie Robinson

Carl Brabander

Geoff Wagner

Giovanna Buscemi

Nogol Madani

Samantha Bateman

Steve Johnston

+ HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Roslyn Slawner (Chair)

Cherine Zananiri

Geoff Wagner

+ MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Doris Juergens (Chair)

Jordan LeBel

Josef Azam

Larry Markowitz

+ NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

John Aylen (Chair)

Harold Simpkins

Harvey Elman

Jordan LeBel

Luciano D'Iorio

Tom Kouri

+ YES STAFF

Aki Tchitacov

Annalise Iten

Catherine Brisindi

Catherine Marcotte

Caroline Gauthier

Christina Kuldip

Christine Nguli

Coby Ingham

Daniel Légaré

David Walsh-Pickering

Derek MacNeil
Elizabeth Araujo
Ellen Englert
Erjona Mulellari
Farshad Rouhani
Fernanda Amaro
George Karkour
Gonzalo Coloma
Herissa Chan
Jessica Knapp
Kasia Tomasinska
Kathy Slotsve
Liliane Rushemeza
Lisa Tomlinson
Mariana Stabilité
Mario Clarke
Megan D'Ermo
Miguel Cubillos
Robert Therriault
Ruchy Khurana
Sara Meyer
Sayeeda Alibhai
Sherry Hollinger
Teneille Arnott
Tina An
Umit Oktamis
Yoana Turnin

Thank you to all of the donors, speakers and volunteers who made our 2019-2020 year a success. We couldn't have done it without you!

<https://yesmontreal.ca/about-us/funders-sponsors/>



25 YEARS OF SUCCESS

THE YES TIMELINE

+ 1995

Founded as an employment resource service for young people as a result of a provincial task force concerned with the outflow of young English-speakers leaving Quebec to find work elsewhere

+ 1996

Launch of the entrepreneurship program

+ 2000

Launch of the artist program

**+ 2001
2002**

Launch of the mentorship program and the Quebec English-language Employment Service Roundtable

**+ 2004
2005**

The first edition of Business Skills for Creative Souls: The Montreal Artists' Handbook is published

**+ 2007
2008**

Moved to 666 Sherbrooke Street West and held first fundraising event: "Tune In To YES"

2010 +

Inaugural Art Expo is held with close to 1,000 people in attendance

2010 + 2011

Expanded services to English-speaking communities in Quebec's regions

2012 + 2013

Start of women-focused programming: Women in Technology

+ 2015

Introduction of STEM Mentorship program, supporting women in STEM careers; premiered Community Talks documentary, bringing together unemployed youth, government, educational institutions and media

2016 + 2017

Developed JobPrepper tool and the Voices of the Human Library mentorship initiative

+ 2018 2019

Establishment of two new employment programs specifically for at-risk youth and newcomers to Quebec.

Launch of the first series of artist pop-ups, What the Pop!, one of YES' most popular annual events (2018)

ELLEvate Women Entrepreneurs Program is introduced to help increase women's participation in entrepreneurship in Quebec (2019)

2021 +

YES marks its 25th anniversary, refreshing the brand and becoming YES Employment + Entrepreneurship. We continue to enrich and strengthen the community, advocating for the inclusion of English-speaking talent across Quebec

2020 - 2021 ORGANIZATION-WIDE IMPACT





EMPLOYMENT

DEALING WITH UNCERTAINTY TOGETHER

It goes without saying that the past year has been a year of adjustment. This was especially true for job seekers looking for help at YES. With many people being laid off, we knew that our clients would need extra support. We needed to be agile and flexible, but above all else, we needed to carry hope.

We turned on a dime to adjust to an online environment for facilitating, counselling, and offering up-to-date information as the situation evolved. Our Employment team particularly felt the additional pressures of childcare and homeschooling since many of them are also wearing the hat of mothers along with fulfilling their individual roles at YES. Every member of the team put in stellar work to provide additional support to our clients while keeping their own family safe. Chapeau!

It is well-known that struggling to find work can have a negative impact on mental wellbeing. During the global pandemic, this effect has been amplified. We've had to help our clients reimagine their futures by providing opportunities to join support groups and resiliency workshops to help them through these difficult times.

The urgent need for support in the area of mental health is ongoing. Particularly when working with minority youth communities who are often at greater risk of unemployment, we need to provide ways to narrow the gap. Alongside tailoring workshops and researching what works and what doesn't, we need to influence positive change to ensure that these talented young people are not left behind.

2020 - 2021 EMPLOYMENT IMPACT

**1,119
CLIENTS
SERVED**

**1,857
COUNSELLING
SESSIONS**

**4,791
SERVICES
ACCESSED**

**2,933
WORKSHOP
ATTENDANCE**

78% SUCCEEDED IN GETTING A JOB OR RETURNING TO SCHOOL

YOUTH ON THE RISE

80%

of the program's participants
successfully completed the
skills-building training

100%

were placed in or found work
experiences

60%

succeeded in finding and
keeping employment after
the subsidy period

20%

are returning to school

Youth On The Rise consists of 8 weeks of paid online training followed by a 3-month paid work placement in the community. Many of the work placements offered as part of the program this year were essential worker placements and non-profits that were disproportionately affected by COVID-19.

The lack of resources faced by at-risk youth were especially heightened as a result of the pandemic. Mental and physical health obstacles, a shortage of quiet space for the training, alongside the social and cultural upheaval of the past year all contributed to the barriers faced.

While it was hard for many of the work placements to extend the positions at the end of the program, we are so proud of what our 2020 cohort achieved. Work-integrated learning is the future and there is a way forward. Everyone has value to bring to the table. Our cohort's ability to overcome adversity and adapt to change will stand them in good stead for a bright future.



MEET NICHOLAS WOLFE AN EMPLOYMENT SUCCESS STORY

YES

Congratulations on your job search success, Nicholas! You recently pivoted from the restaurant industry to the world of finance. Tell us about your job search experience and how you landed a contract with Morgan Stanley, a multinational investment bank and financial services company.

Nicholas

Thank you! When I came to YES, I had recently finished a degree in computer science at McGill but I was struggling to find a job. I had a vague idea of what I wanted to do as a coder but I needed help. I had a lot of work experience in the restaurant industry, but nothing relevant to the tech field. As soon as I met Annalise, my employment counsellor at YES, I was encouraged by her warmth. I always looked forward to our Zoom sessions because they always lifted my spirits. I really needed that because job hunting can be quite demoralizing. Annalise worked with me to refine my cover letters and CV - particularly things like using the specific language from the job board ad in my application.

YES

Aside from employment counselling, what else did you find at YES that pushed you forward in your career development?

Nicholas

Alongside the seminars that I took and the focus group that I participated in, I also got matched with mentors from the tech industry. This made all the difference. I was connected with not one but two mentors: Javad and Roberta. It was useful to get two different perspectives on my career possibilities and it allowed me to pinpoint what I wanted to do in my field. For example, stability mattered to me. Javad encouraged me to pursue certifications and to take the ScrumMaster test, something that I wouldn't have done on my own. He actually sent me the link to a recruiter's job offer that led to my current role at Morgan Stanley, where I work as a consultant repairing code in Java.

YES

Would you recommend YES to other job hunters?

Nicholas

I definitely would. My degree program lacked job search support (or at least I didn't find it). I think that's the case for many new graduates. YES not only has the resources and tools to help people develop job search skills, they humanize the process. I think every single person who graduates would benefit from a call with YES.



THE ENGLISH- SPEAKING COMMUNITY TRUSTED US TO LEAN IN, AND WE DID

When uncertainty crops up in the economy, you may think that new entrepreneurial ventures (with their associated risks) would take a dip as a result.

In Quebec's English-speaking population, we have actually seen the opposite. There has been a strong move toward self-employment and the creation of small businesses. We have noticed a particular uptick in underrepresented minority groups exploring entrepreneurship as an option. The program's popularity

more than doubled this year. Our community knew we would show up to help, and we did.

Within hours of the government announcing new measures, our volunteers and staff were primed and ready to continue providing workshops and coaching sessions via Zoom. We were able to ensure the delivery of tailored services and specialized workshops to our clients in Quebec's regions. In partnership with the City of Montreal, we launched brand-new COVID programming, including clinics to help our entrepreneurship clients predict and mitigate pandemic-related risks. We also provided guidance on accessing the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) and other government-backed support funding.

In our workshops, we focused on design thinking, pivoting toward e-commerce, and developing digital skills for business. These were among the essential skills that existing and prospective Quebec-based business owners were lacking this year.

We are so grateful to all our volunteers, partners, and supporters for their adaptability and courage over the past year. We especially felt the support from the corporate world this year. Thank you so much for leaning in alongside us.

2020 - 2021 ENTREPRENEURSHIP IMPACT

2,888
CLIENTS
SERVED

+22%
YOY

7,565
COACHING
SESSIONS

+31%
YOY

13,182
SERVICES
ACCESSED

+51%
YOY

5,064
WORKSHOP
ATTENDANCE

+87%
YOY

+21% REGIONAL
CLIENTS SERVED

DESPITE
AN ALMOST
COMPLETE
BAN ON
TRAVEL



Women Entrepreneurs' 2020 Pre-Accelerator

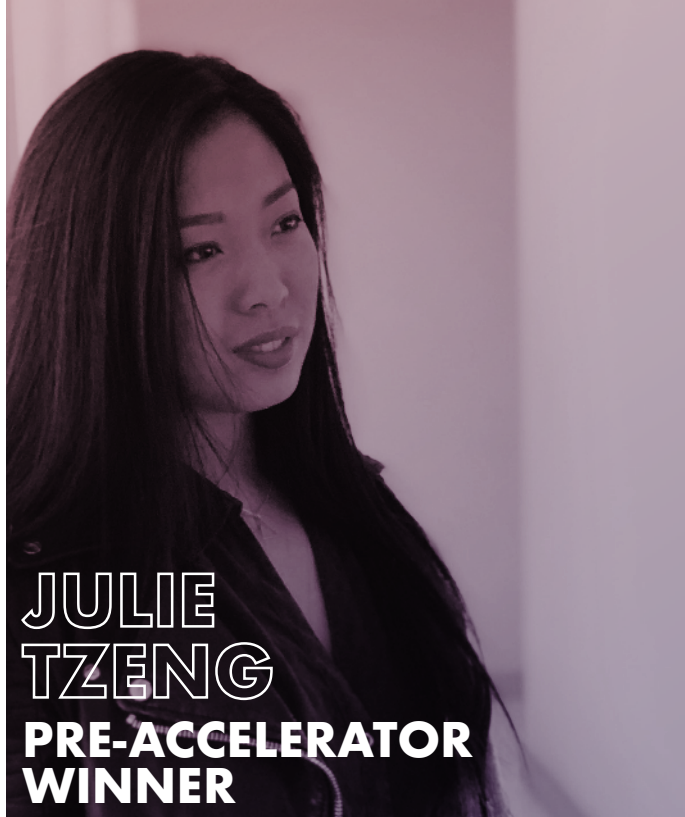
Did you know that ONLY 16% of Canadian businesses are owned or led by women? We aim to change that. 2020 saw YES's first pre-accelerator cohort enter the process that would transform their business goals into a reality. Each year, we look for 10 high-potential women-led startups from all sectors. Any woman with a feasible idea or product who thinks she has what it takes to grow her business can apply.

The women selected for the Pre-Accelerator receive intensive support and training over a 3-month period that culminates in a pitch competition with cash prizes

to help fuel the future of the most promising women-led startups in Quebec.

The Pre-Accelerator is part of a larger program (ELLEvate Women Entrepreneurs) that aims to increase access to entrepreneurship for women in Quebec. The program focuses on workshops and events, mentorship, coaching and networking, and includes special initiatives such as a new E-Learning platform and training opportunities.

Cindy Fagen, Managing Director of SAP Labs Canada and supporter of ELLEvate: "You can't build great solutions unless you bring diverse thinking around the table".



JULIE TZENG PRE-ACCELERATOR WINNER

We spoke to Julie Tzeng, who was the winner of the largest ELLEvate grant (\$10k) for her pitch at the end of the 2020 pre-accelerator. Julie was one of 10 women selected to participate, and since the pre-accelerator demo day she has also secured additional funding for her sustainable footwear brand, Arshae.

YES

Congratulations on your success in the pre-accelerator, Julie! What did participating as part of the 2020 cohort mean to you?

Julie

The ELLEvate pre-accelerator helped me find my entrepreneurial family. I'm originally from the USA and as an expat moving here without the local know-how and without speaking much French, it was really tough. Once I found YES, I was able to build a community and start building out a team to help me move Arshae from the idea phase into a business with actionable goals. I am actually still in regular contact with the cohort from the pre-accelerator. We still check in with each other and I know that those women are people I can reach out to. I also still hear from my business coaches and it's amazing to know that I have that extra support now.

YES

What did the pre-accelerator consist of and was it what you were expecting?

Julie

It was an amazing experience - very intensive, with about 8-12 hours of workshops and coaching sessions per week over a 3-month period. While I had been planning my business roadmap with my coaches from YES before ELLEvate, the pre-accelerator program allowed me to build a much more detailed business plan. I developed financial projection skills and I worked on practically every area of my business development. The ELLEvate pre-accelerator is founder-centric, which I loved. There was a lot of one-on-one guidance.

YES

Tell us more about Arshae: what stage are you at now?

Julie

Arshae is a footwear company powered by 3D printing with the goal of simplifying the manufacturing process, moving toward a zero waste model. We seek to reduce the amount of resources used in shoe manufacturing and put the maximum amount of pre-worn materials back into the production process. Right now, my team and I are working on research and development and building brand recognition. I am still bootstrapping the business and building more traction to get additional funding. Thanks to the pre-accelerator, I have developed my pitch and reached a point where I feel a lot more confident. Soon, we'll be moving onto the minimum viable product (MVP) testing and we're aiming to launch a first collection within a year or so. YES has been a huge part of my journey as a founder and I am so happy that I took the step to apply for the pre-accelerator. I would definitely encourage other women entrepreneurs to do the same!



CULTIVATING CONNECTION & COMMUNITY

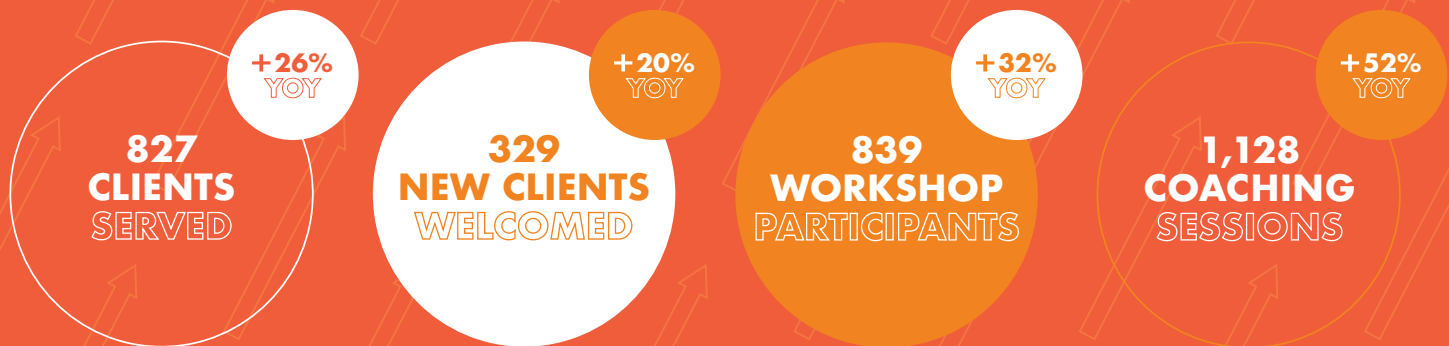
SUPPORTING QUEBEC'S EMERGING ARTISTS

Quebec's creative professionals are hungry for business support. Especially this past year, when the demand for workshops and coaching in the artist program was greater than ever.

In 2020, we built upon the digital infrastructure and partnerships that we already had in place pre-pandemic to serve clients in the outlying regions of Quebec. We adapted these digital tools to make our services accessible to everyone during COVID. This enabled us not only to sustain our wide variety of business support services for artists, but also to grow the scope of our services.



2020 - 2021 ARTIST SERVICES IMPACT



BUSINESS SKILLS FOR CREATIVE SOULS

Without exhibitions or events to showcase their work due to the pandemic, many of our artists found themselves feeling isolated from their community. For this reason, it was important for us to find a way of fostering connection and interactive discussions between attendees at this year's artist conference. Thanks to the virtual conference software, Remo, we were able to facilitate greater interpersonal connections. With our guests moving around virtual tables, participants had the opportunity to reconnect with fellow Quebec-based creative entrepreneurs.

Hosted by one of CBC's best loved Arts & Culture journalists, Nantali Indongo, the event went down

a storm! Award-winning Canadian actress, Agam Darshi, gave an inspiring keynote address, touching on topics from working in an unusual year to increasing diversity and inclusion in film.



Attendees had the opportunity to book one-on-one consultations with representatives from the Arts Councils of Montreal, Quebec, and Canada, who were all present at the event.

Needless to say, this event provided the level of authentic human connection that we had been waiting for and opened up business growth opportunities for Quebec artists in the process.



It wouldn't be summer without our famous pop-up arts festival, What The Pop! Our annual pop-up experience provides artists with the chance to exhibit and sell their work for free. The event also has the dual purpose of being a training incubator.

Amidst a rainbow sea of masks, 55 emerging artists from across the province were selected to come out and showcase their creative practices at outdoor booths across two sites in Montreal: at the St. Jax venue downtown and at the Riverside venue in St-Henri. Our artists usually showcase their work at three different locations; only this year, one of those locations was a virtual gallery space!

With the help of our donors YES is able to boost services for emerging artists and shape the future of Quebec's economy. Thank you so much to everyone involved in bringing What The Pop! 2020 to life.



MEET DAIAN TANG

**A FASHION DESIGNER
WHO'S BEEN TURNING
THINGS AROUND FOR
HERSELF AND FOR OTHERS**

YES

While most of us have been making banana bread in our PJs, you've been busy launching and growing not one but two creative businesses! Tell us more.

Daian

It really has been an incredible year. Like many people, I lost my job as a designer near the beginning of the pandemic and this was a big turning point for me and my family. Alongside my husband, who is a fashion marketer originally from the Ivory Coast, we decided to go all in. We knew about YES before making our companies a full-time venture so we knew where to turn for the resources needed to make our ventures a success.

YES

Tell us more about the nature of your businesses and how they began.

Daian

Well, my husband and I actually now run two fashion design businesses: we design jewelry through our business Chokitem and in December 2020, we launched our clothing brand, Aller Retour. Chokitem was our first venture and it all began with a trip to Kenya a couple of years ago. During the trip, my daughter and I discovered that there were thousands of supremely talented women creating handmade jewelry from recycled metals. I really wanted to collaborate and co-create some pieces with them. I took the idea home to my husband in Canada but at first, with our full-time jobs, we couldn't figure out how to find the time or the resources to make the collaboration possible. During my trip, I'd had a couple of pieces made by an incredibly talented artisan named Juliana and we remained in touch. With hard work and



perseverance, we began formalising our collaboration and Chokitem was born: a jewelry brand built on the principles of sustainability and community building. We finally launched our web store in September 2019 and the brand has really taken off. Without the full-time day jobs, we have been able to put our hearts and souls into it. Our pieces have appeared on TV (in The Good Doctor) and we recently appeared in an 8-page spread in the French magazine, Malvie.

YES

It sounds like you're going from strength to strength.

Daian

We are! We've been very fortunate to have been mentored by some incredible people. Thanks to taking part in the What The Pop! event, being on a podcast with Gonzalo from YES, and the support of coaches, especially Tina An, the ride has been a lot smoother. Through YES, I took part in the Business Bootcamp and built up the business plans from there. I also took part in marketing strategy workshops, which were very helpful. We have been shown so much kindness from within the Canadian BIPOC community especially, having received a lot of support from Free Label in Vancouver. All of this really helped us to beat the fear and push through the struggles we have faced. We had been looking for partners who would share our vision, and we have found that in our Kenyan collaborators as well as in our supporters here in Canada. Our brands are getting noticed and it's happened much sooner than we expected. People within the BIPOC community are often up against high barriers in the workplace and in society as a whole. We have made it our mission to channel our life experiences into our art, lifting up other budding creators in the process.



FIND OUT WHY CHRIS EMERGUI SUPPORTS YES

YES

As a longstanding member of our community, you've seen YES through a number of changes over the years - what do you feel is special about YES?

Chris

I'm always happy to see YES doing well. The organization does such important work for the community: advocating for groups that don't always get a lot of help elsewhere. The English-speaking community needs YES. English-speaking Quebecers often feel the need to leave the province for Ontario or the States. YES's services help encourage these Quebecers to stay in the province and make their mark right here. Additionally, when you come from another country or another province, you need to grow your network and you need those crucial resources when you first arrive. YES does a great job of helping people get started and get to where they want to be. Nobody succeeds all on their own. Right at the beginning of my career, I didn't know anyone, and finding my network really helped me.

YES

What factors lead to success in entrepreneurship?

Chris

You need to be passionate about the work you are about to do. It is brutal at first but if you embrace the challenges, there is a light at the end of the tunnel. Once you find that focus, you can give your business the push that it needs, execute your vision and grow from there. Now, I cannot imagine doing anything else.

YES

What tends to hold entrepreneurs back from success in business?

Chris

Quite often, people are simply afraid to try. Right at the beginning of my career, I actually partnered with a fellow budding entrepreneur. Launching alongside somebody else took some of that fear away. I also see a lot of new entrepreneurs get ahead of themselves: they often feel impatient at the beginning and find that their motivation runs out. Cash flow management is also essential if you want to succeed as an entrepreneur.

YES

Over the past year, you've been involved in selecting candidates for the ELLEvate pre-accelerator. Can you tell us more about how you see the start-up community in Montreal?

Chris

It's been great to see how it has grown over the past decade. We have actually seen more innovative business proposals and investment offers being pitched here in Montreal than we have seen in Toronto over the past year and there have been a lot of big wins. More people are investing in women entrepreneurs, which was long overdue, but we still have more work to do. That is why programs like ELLEvate are so important. Montreal-based companies, such as the e-commerce company Lightspeed, are expanding on a global scale. I'm proud of the collaborative community we have here and I am looking forward to seeing more YES clients succeed, whether they are small businesses or become a massive entity like Lightspeed.

CONGRATULATIONS to the 2020 winner of the Iris Unger Recognition Award CHRISTOPHER MA

This year's award recipient, **Christopher Ma**, truly embodies the values of the award. Christopher founded the School of Music Montreal (SoMM) back in 2014. Christopher was inspired by the experience he had studying at the Sarah McLachlan School of Music and he wanted to make his own contribution. He noticed that many children from disadvantaged backgrounds were finding it difficult to access musical education, so he stepped up to change that.

With his team at SoMM, Christopher made safe and supportive spaces available for children to kickstart their



musical development. With the help of dedicated mentors, children can develop more than just musical skills. They can build their confidence and explore new talents.

Christopher emphasizes that “the program isn’t about finding music virtuosos – it’s about fostering bonds between kids and mentors in a safe space, through music”. The Sarah McLachlan School of Music encouraged more than 8,000 Facebook followers to contribute to the SoMM’s GoFundMe campaign to raise money for such a deserving Montreal organization.

PARTNER STORY DEBBIE HYNES FROM THE CBC

Debbie and her colleagues from the CBC have been enthusiastic supporters of Montreal’s start-up community for many years. Facilitating workshops, hosting panels, and amplifying events, CBC provides YES with its valuable expertise and we are so delighted to have them as partners.

YES

Many entrepreneurs focus their efforts on pitching to investors. They often struggle to adapt their stories for the media. As CBC’s Regional Manager of Communications, Marketing & Brand, you’ve been helping our clients with their brand storytelling.

Debbie

Emerging entrepreneurs sometimes need a nudge to put themselves back in their story. Ultimately, that’s the hook. I provide media literacy workshops and training so they can communicate effectively with journalists, understand the mechanics of how to formulate a pitch and what to highlight in interviews.

YES

Last year, you worked closely with women in our ELLEvate pre-accelerator program, helping them with their pitches. What do you think the 2020 cohort got out of the experience?

Debbie

Most of the time, entrepreneurs are solo and trying to mount their ventures on their own without a PR or media team behind them. I was happy to coach the participants and help them build storytelling skills to use when pitching to potential partners or media outlets at any stage of their business.

YES

CBC has brought so much to YES over the years. In your eyes, what’s special about the partnership?

Debbie

Both YES and CBC speak directly to young English-speaking Quebecers. Anything that CBC can do to help foster a sense of belonging in the community is a step in the right direction. Since we have been heavily involved in promoting entrepreneurship in the community, the partnership with YES has always felt like a logical fit for CBC.





VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT MARY-ANNE CARIGNAN

Mary-Anne is the President of Purkinje Inc., a Canadian company headquartered in Quebec that provides IT software solutions for the healthcare industry. With an MBA and over thirty years of experience as a business leader, Mary-Anne is committed to helping other professionals thrive. She sits on the board of several healthcare institutions in Montreal and we are so fortunate that Mary-Anne has chosen to share her expertise with YES. We spoke to her about why she supports the ELLEvate program and why, as a leader, she chooses to put people and their well-being first.

YES

As one of our ELLEvate role models, you are now entering your second year as an advisor and judge in our pre-accelerator program. What drew you to the ELLEvate initiative?

Mary-Anne

It's exciting when I get to engage with new entrepreneurs as they are planting the seeds of their businesses; I just know that something is going to grow and I enjoy being a part of that. These fresh new entrepreneurs have hope in their eyes and in their voices. It's their ardent belief that really draws me. That belief has to be cherished and cultivated.

YES

In addition to your work on ELLEvate, you've also been a YES mentor. How did that come about?

Mary-Anne

About four or five years ago, YES reached out to ask me whether I'd like to become a mentor to some women in STEM. It started out as a 2-month commitment but I could tell that one particular mentee needed longer, so for us, it ended up being an almost 10-month mentorship with a minimum of one face-to-face meeting per month. When my mentee first arrived, her confidence was at rock-bottom. After working on her confidence together and helping her with her time management, it was possible to get her to a place where she felt comfortable and valued at work. With that new-found self-belief, she began holding her head high and was able to move forward with her goals. For me, that has been one of the most rewarding experiences at YES.

YES

Over the past year with COVID, it's been hard for business leaders to both push forward with their work and find balance. This has been especially true for women with families. How do you think that people can be supported as they strive to make progress while balancing other life pressures?

Mary-Anne

We need to find a way to allow parents to be truthful to their jobs and to be truthful to themselves. When you are offered some flexibility in order to make your situation work, you're going to want to give back tenfold because you're going to feel valued. Everything comes back to the human being. People have been struggling with different things. Due to prolonged remote work and the resulting lack of reflective validations that our jobs give us on a daily basis, layers of our identities have been stripped away. As a result, people often need to shift around their responsibilities and work out how to allocate their precious time. By always putting the human at the centre, we can flourish both in our lives and in our work.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT SERVICES FOUNDATION

Statement of Operations

For the year ending March 31

| Revenues | 2021 | 2020 |
|----------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Grants | 2,332,556 | 2,197,074 |
| Donations and Fundraising Events | 174,290 | 217,082 |
| Workshops and Services | 79,797 | 65,957 |
| Conferences | 0 | 14,043 |
| Government Subsidies - Covid-19 | 149,309 | 13,814 |
| Interest | 3,248 | 8,103 |
| | 2,739,200 | 2,516,073 |

| Expenditures | 2021 | 2020 |
|---|------------------|------------------|
| Salaries and Fringe Benefits | 1,884,404 | 1,681,215 |
| Rent | 161,595 | 165,611 |
| Office Administration | 172,379 | 190,081 |
| Provincial Employment Roundtable (PERT) Project | 16,397 | 61,180 |
| Women Based Project | 157,560 | 27,254 |
| Regional Project | 14,401 | 42,116 |
| Research Project | 0 | 12,335 |
| Publicity and Promotion | 135,103 | 115,789 |
| Workshops, Events and Services | 27,871 | 31,125 |
| Conferences | 8,506 | 1,429 |
| Fundraising | 7,108 | 27,661 |
| Sales Tax - Non reimbursed | 53,197 | 49,350 |
| Amortization | 19,473 | 21,869 |
| Interest and Bank Charges | 6,148 | 4,418 |
| | 2,664,142 | 2,431,433 |

| | | |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|
| Excess of Revenue over Expenditures | \$75,058 | \$84,640 |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|

A copy of the audited financial statements is available upon request.

THANK YOU TO OUR 2020-21 FUNDERS AND PARTNERS

Our programs are made possible with the support of:

Canada 

Québec 

Montréal 



BROCCOLINI

CANDEREL



futurpreneur
canada



MONTREAL FINANCIAL

NATIONAL



PME
MTL

QC
GN
Quebec
Community
Groups
Network
www.qcgn.ca



Secrétariat aux relations
avec les Québécois
d'expression anglaise
Québec 



The Eric T. Webster Foundation - The John Dobson Foundation - The Peacock Family Foundation
The Zeller Family Foundation - The Hay Foundation - The Gallop Family Fund at the Foundation of
Greater Montreal - The Barwick Family Foundation - The Rossy Family Foundation - The Tauben
Family Foundation - The Macdonald Stewart Foundation - The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation

Special thanks to our media partners

BARONmag



CULT
#MTL



Laval
Families
MAGAZINE

MA|tv



ONWARD AND UPWARD

While we are not sure what the future has in store,
we can be sure that YES will continue to serve
thousands of clients each and every year.

We continue to grow our community and programming
and we continue to make a positive difference.
Whether our services and events take place in a hybrid
format, an in-person format, or a virtual format,
we will always be there to provide support to
Quebec's English-speaking community.

Thank you to everybody who contributes valuable
resources to help YES continue its important work.

Stay safe, everyone!



666 Sherbrooke St. W., suite 700
Montreal, QC H3A 1E7
Telephone: (514) 878-9788
Fax: (514) 878-9950
Email: info@yesmontreal.ca
yesmontreal.ca

