



Yes

Employment
+ Entrepreneurship

**BUILDING FORWARD
ANNUAL REPORT 2022**

MISSION



Since 1995, YES Employment + Entrepreneurship has helped English-speakers across Quebec to realize their potential. YES is a registered charity with a mission to enrich the community by providing English-language support services and participating in community-building initiatives. We help Quebecers find employment and start and grow businesses.

IMPACT

- Clients Served: 2,726
- Services Delivered: 14,891
- Workshops: 639
- Workshop Attendance: 6,346
- Volunteers: 341

+9.4%

NEW CLIENTS

1,600 new clients came to YES for support in 2022

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



SAMANTHA BATEMAN
President

AKITCHITACOV
Executive Director

With the public health crisis lessening and the return to some form of normalcy (or at least predictability!), YES has been able to start to focus less on supporting our community through crisis, and more on how we can support our community moving forward in a changed world. Through these changes, the staff of YES has continued to pivot and offer opportunities that are effective, on-point, and relevant to our clients. We are so grateful for their tenacity and their dedication to uplifting our community as the economic landscape and our community's needs continue to shift and grow.

The impacts of Bills 96 and C-13 will continue to evolve, but in the short term, the English-speaking community in Quebec (ESCQ) has needed, above all, reassurance and resources. YES has remained firmly by its side, whether it be through assisting our clients in navigating legal implications for their business or empowering them with increased French language training to help them succeed in their employment journey. At the same time, YES has continued its community-building work and exploiting networking opportunities to increase connection and resiliency and position us for success moving forward.

This year saw the full return of in-person events, which proved to be hugely popular. From a renewed Entrepreneurship Speaker Series to a networking-focused Artist Conference, YES' community turned up and turned out consistently throughout the year. Cohort-based programming, such as the Youth on the Rise employability program, the What the Pop! art pop-up series, or the ELLevate Women Entrepreneurs Pre-Accelerator saw participants experiencing high levels of success in their field, all while making connections that will continue to strengthen them going forward.

At the same time, YES is positioning itself for the future by focusing on building its sustainability. How can we reduce our administrative burden and increase the use of technology so we may serve a broader range of clients? What are the most urgent needs of our community, and how (and where) can we best meet them to assist? We are grateful to The Rossy Family Foundation for their capacity-building support as we investigate our community's needs and YES' capabilities in an effort to build a comprehensive and sustainable plan for the next phase of the organization.

The ESCQ is facing increased barriers to financial stability and success. Nowhere was that made clearer than in the last federal census, where the disparity between the English- and French-speaking communities' employment and income outcomes were shown to not only persist, but to grow, with both the unemployment and the median employment income gaps doubling between English-speakers and French-speakers in Québec since the previous census.

As we look to build forward, YES will continue to rely on the pillars that have made our organization so effective over the past 27+ years: the support of our dedicated funders, donors and sponsors, our community of partners and volunteers, and our staff, who has continued to rise to every considerable challenge. To all those who continue to help us uplift, engage, educate and encourage – thank you!

EMPLOYMENT

This year saw the Employment program investing in job seekers' success through a multi-pronged approach, offering individual and cohort-based programming.

The Women's Employment Readiness Quebec (WERQ) program debuted in 2022, offering cohort-based pre-employability skills learning, coupled with job search and prep support. It is tailored for women experiencing barriers to employment who have been out of the job market for an extended period of time. The program was a resounding success, with a 100% completion rate, 88% of participants finding employment within six months of completing the program, and 28% opting to further their studies or training. The pilot program, funded by the Government of Canada, via Employment and Social Development Canada, also brought together local human resources leaders to create a guide with strategies and tools for employers to increase diversity and inclusion in their workplace.

In addition to cohort-based programming, workshops, and one-on-one career counseling, YES continued its popular French for the Workforce training program, to help candidates put their best foot forward as they build their careers in Quebec.

To round out the program, and with the effects of the past few years still weighing heavily on many, YES also partnered with the CHSSN to deliver an online mental health resource list for YES clients, as well as to offer mental health training to the staff, for better team communication, peer support and assistance to clients.



COACHING SESSIONS:

1,276

SERVICES DELIVERED:

7,295



79%

WERE HIRED

OR

RETURNED TO SCHOOL

“
At every turn, this program has exceeded my expectations and, truly, it has changed my life forever. I thought maybe I would have to leave Canada and go back home at the end of this year if I still couldn't find a job. Now, I get to start settling down properly and I am excited!

-WERQ participant”

EMPLOYMENT TESTIMONIAL



KIERAN DUNCH

Kieran Dunch moved to Montréal after receiving a BFA in Theatre from the University of Victoria. Kieran worked in the English Theatre sector as an artist and producer for some years before moving into software development. He now works as a software developer as well as a freelancer, specializing in building apps for digital/live art experiences.

In 2020, like many artists during the pandemic, Kieran began to explore new avenues for expression and creativity, and eventually expanded from redefining his artistic path to exploring a new professional one.

To help find clarity and get support in his search, Kieran connected with YES, where he worked with both an Artist Coach and a Career Counselor. His Coach and Counselor helped him discover what it meant to be a live theatre artist in a pandemic environment, and also guided him into a new industry that he had no knowledge about or experience in.

“The career counseling services gave me weekly goals to follow, and artist counselling gave me the guardrails to figure out if I was on the right path. YES offered me talented people who cared about my progress and who were willing to check in on me regularly. Having that support was a huge benefit to my job search,” notes Kieran.

In January of 2022, he began a full-time web development bootcamp over a nine-week period, which led to many new opportunities both as a professional and as an artist. Currently, Kieran has found a position as a back-end software developer as his full-time job, and does freelance work as an arts and tech specialist on the side. As a part of that, he is building applications for live theatre performances, which is his most exciting work.

“The service I received at YES is awesome. I would recommend it to anyone who’s looking to either change careers or continue their career and just discover what their trajectory is.

The work that YES does is fantastic. They’re constantly learning and constantly improving and I’m so grateful to have been a part of the YES community.

Thank you to Annalise, Caroline, and YES!

”

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

YES' Entrepreneurship program rallied to get folks back to business at a dizzying pace last year. Business coaches worked to deliver guidance and support both in Montreal and in Quebec's regions, covering more than 21,500 km!

Collaboration has been key as we gather the resources and information English-speaking entrepreneurs need to meet with success in Quebec. New partnerships were formed with industry experts like Educaloi, pro bono service providers like Narose, who continue to provide free accounting clinics for YES clients, and partnerships with organizations across eight of Quebec's regions. Together, we are helping to inform and inspire the next generation of entrepreneurs, right where they are.

In addition to hybrid services like one-on-one coaching, workshops, and start-up accelerators, the Entrepreneurship department continued to build out its digital resource library, for on-demand learning and support. New video tutorials were released outlining business ideation and validation steps, along with 2 new ELLEvate role model videos, featuring Mavra Toufidis, of Mavra Toufidis Couture, and Anie Rouleau, of The Unscented Company.

In order to further facilitate collaboration and connection amongst the YES community, a small business directory was launched, giving freelancers, artists and businesses the opportunity to showcase their offerings and gain exposure...all for free!



COACHING SESSIONS:

6,690

SERVICES DELIVERED:

9,336



542

**BUSINESSES
STARTED OR
GROWN**

YES has helped put me in a more direct path to running a successful business, with constructive feedback and helpful suggestions.

-YES Entrepreneurship client

ENTREPRENEURSHIP TESTIMONIAL



REEM BIAZID

Reem Baiazid is a mother and co-founder and CEO of Leedus. She holds a master's degree in software engineering and has 7 years of experience working as a consultant at a large firm serving Fortune 500 clients to drive digital transformations. She is a mission-driven entrepreneur with a goal to skill and develop the future workforce using technology.

The idea for Leedus started when Reem read a book that mentioned that by 2025, 85 million jobs will be replaced due to automation, while creating 97 million new jobs that require new skills. Experts predict that if we don't do anything we will end up with a massive number of unemployed individuals while having a large number of jobs left unfilled due to skill shortages.

Reem founded Leedus to address the struggles she faced during her own upskilling journey.

Reem came to YES to help understand the startup ecosystem and to find out about the available resources that could help her succeed. She also uses weekly coaching sessions to discuss the challenges they are facing and to develop a strategy to solve them.

Their main focus when starting the business was to validate their hypothesis by speaking to clients, as well as to find their product market fit - the profile of clients who's needs Leedus suits best.

A social EdTech that will be sold as an SaaS subscription-based model, Leedus is currently piloting their solution and will be onboarding additional clients.

As a female entrepreneur, I found YES to be the best support network for me. YES offers resources, tools & workshops to advance and empower women through their entrepreneurship journey.

ARTS

The Artist program was thrilled to add an additional Artist Business Coach to our organization this year, in partnership with CEDEC. One-on-one business coaching demands for Artist clients have exceeded YES' capacity for years. With an additional coach, YES clients will be able to receive more coaching support to help their artistic business grow – a win for the English-speaking cultural community!

YES continued to offer the programming and events that our community have grown to love, like What the Pop!, which in 2022 saw 4 pop-up locations hosting more than 50 artists and over 3,300 visitors, while piloting new offerings, like drop-in coworking days, where artists were able to work, collaborate and receive the assistance of the Artist Coaches with their projects. The annual Business Skills for Creative Souls Artist conference returned to in-person activities after years away, with 112 attendees coming together to learn from and be inspired by the amazing panelists as well as the keynote speaker, Julie Tamiko Manning, and to engage in networking opportunities with their peers.

YES continues to build on the momentum to foster the creative community and economy of the English-speaking population of Quebec!



COACHING SESSIONS:

1,182

SERVICES DELIVERED:

1,846



678

CLIENTS

250

NEW CLIENTS

“
It was awesome! Loved the honesty of the artists who presented.

-Artist Conference attendee
”

ARTS TESTIMONIAL



DOROTHÉE BOLADE

In the winter of 2017, Dorothee Bolade arrived in Montreal from the UK with her one-year-old daughter, ready to embark on a new adventure and expand her resume with international work experience. As an English speaker, Dorothee found out about YES and signed up soon after her arrival, as she was eager to find employment.

During the lockdowns of 2020, Dorothee was juggling working remotely with home-schooling, and started to really examine her daughter's reading and learning materials. Dorothee realized that there was a lack of culturally diverse coloring books celebrating African history on the market and decided that she would create her own. It was around this time that she re-engaged with the Artist coaching services offered by YES for guidance on business basics like how and where to register a business in Quebec. Her coach also supports her in other ways, sharing time-management hacks, and encouraging and guiding her in how to market her books on social media. Dorothee has also tapped into networking opportunities with the community of like-minded entrepreneurs and artists at YES, and attends workshops to stay on top of current trends, such as NFTs and how to sell on Amazon.

With her first book, 'The Kings and One Queen of the Bamoun Kingdom' available at Indigo Books in Downtown Montreal, and subsequent coloring books, 'Get to know the Benin Bronzes' and 'A to Z of the NICU', receiving excellent feedback following online sales, Dorothee was named a [CBC Montreal Black Changemaker](#) in February 2023.

“The variety of affordable activities and resources that can be accessed (at YES) is very unique, even compared to those offered in bigger cities like London (UK), where I'm from... Some of my most productive periods are those days leading up to my meeting with my coach, where I force myself to carve out the time to make sure that I get things done. To have someone who is consistently interested in how I am progressing and genuinely wants to see me succeed makes a big difference.”

MEET THE WINNER OF THE 2022 IRIS UNGER RECOGNITION AWARD



ALISHA WISSANJI

The winner of the Iris Unger Recognition award for 2022 is Alisha Wissanji. Alisha got her start tutoring immigrants when she was just 8 years old. Passionate about helping underserved communities achieve better educational outcomes, Alisha has spent the better part of her life building programs to help youth. This work has culminated in the creation of [Fondation W](#), a registered charity organization with a mission to achieve educational success for all.

Fondation W's flagship program, School of the Greats (École des Grands), was developed as a response to Wissanji's experience tutoring and as a CÉGEP teacher in Montreal Nord, which in 2014 had a high school dropout rate of 25%. Recognizing the potential of mentorship, Alisha developed a program that paired CÉGEP students with underserved youth. The free program brings at-risk elementary students to local CÉGEPs on Saturday mornings, where they are provided with breakfast and meet with CÉGEP student volunteers who provide French and Math lessons and homework help, as well as introductory science and computer programming activities. Low cost and turnkey, the benefits are clear, with improvements reported in the educational success of both the elementary students as well as their college mentors.

How YES Employment + Entrepreneurship Helped

The School of the Greats program has quickly taken off, growing from one centre in 2015 to ten CÉGEPs and fifteen elementary schools in 2022. As the program grew, Alisha came to YES for help structuring the organization.

Alisha's business coach at YES later encouraged her to apply for the Iris Unger Recognition Award. With a \$1,000 cash prize, the award recognizes artists and entrepreneurs whose project best reflects the values that Iris Unger, YES' former Executive Director, instilled during her 18 years at YES: dedication and passion, success through hard work, and a true commitment to making a difference in the community.

Alisha is hoping that receiving the Iris Unger Recognition Award will help broaden awareness of the Foundation and its work as she works toward the goal of uplifting 500,000 students across Canada. With more schools in the pipeline, including in Ontario, and over 1000 beneficiaries since the program's inception, Alisha is well on her way toward her goal.

“This (YES) is such an amazing resource for entrepreneurs. It revolutionized the way I was thinking about things and really educated me and planted the seed of what I needed to pursue this.”

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Thank you to all of the donors, speakers, and volunteers who have helped us in 2022. We couldn't have done it without you!

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FINANCIAL REPORT

Youth Employment Services Foundation		
Statement of Operations		
For the year ending March 31	2023	2022
Statement of Operations		
Revenues		
Grants	\$2,306,128	\$2,223,405
Donations and Fundraising	183,408	239,243
Services	85,056	65,989
Interest	1,508	1,438
	<u>2,576,100</u>	<u>2,530,075</u>
Expenditures		
Salaries and Benefits	1,962,732	1,871,257
Rent	170,308	167,908
Office Administration	129,124	138,563
Women Based Project	68,762	52,067
Regional Project	28,088	21,736
Employment Roundtable Project	7,500	25,116
Publicity and Promotion	88,386	99,133
Workshops, Events and Services	34,155	25,893
Conferences	5,921	7,391
Fundraising	18,544	20,472
Sales Tax - Non reimbursed	27,403	53,218
Amortization	28,026	26,256
Interest and Bank Charges	5,602	7,117
	<u>2,574,551</u>	<u>2,516,127</u>
Write-down on intangible assets	0	(8,850)
Excess of Revenue over Expenses	\$1,549	\$5,098

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

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