

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

For WIL partners

An entrepreneurship Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) experience provides students with an opportunity to start and build their own business. Often, these experiences are supported through school-supported incubators or accelerators. They allow students to leverage resources, space, mentorship, and funding to engage in business startups' early-stage development and advance external ideas that address real-world problems for academic credit.

PATHWAYS



BE A MENTOR

Engage as a mentor, offering advice, answering questions & guiding students.



BE A PARTNER

Engage as a partner & participate in the start-up or scale-up phase of business development.



BE A SUPERVISOR

Engage as a supervisor & bring students into the fold of your start-up or scale-up business processes.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

SUPPORTING BUSINESS OBJECTIVES WITH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Top 5 ways Entrepreneurship can support your business objectives

1. Connect with entrepreneurially minded students at various points in their academic journey
2. Bring fresh and innovative ideas to your new or growing venture
3. Opportunity to mentor and coach the next generation of entrepreneurs
4. Complete short-term projects and undertake research
5. Access resource support for new or existing projects



ENTREPRENEURSHIP

BE A MENTOR

At the most basic form its students using these opportunities to explore their own ideas, potentially launch a business and earn academic credit along the way. WIL Partners engage in this process as mentors, offering advice, answering questions, guiding students along typically with a faculty member or instructor. In some instances, this mentorship is more involved; partners might take on a contracted role within an institution. This could lead to being integrated into courses to advise students on projects involving industry.

Mentorship will vary from institution to institution. These could be volunteer roles or contracted positions; it all depends on the structure. Most often these are long term commitments, a relationship built over time for those that love coaching entrepreneurial minded students.

The Charles Chang Institute for Entrepreneurship (CCIE) at Simon Fraser University runs an Embedded Mentor program, which sees Mentors-in-Residence attached to interdisciplinary certificates and embedded right into the classroom, advising and coaching students as they work on course projects and enabling these teams and ideas to launch beyond classroom walls as ventures. These contracted mentor positions are typically a long-term commitment for serial entrepreneurs with a love of coaching.

BE A PARTNER

At other times it might be a student taking up a role with a start-up or small business. There are incubators and accelerators at Universities and Colleges across the country that welcome students from every academic program into their space. These students dive deeper into entrepreneurial thinking under the guidance of a faculty member and staff. They work with businesses in the start-up or scale-up phase to hone their skills and foster creativity. They learn to identify challenges, solve problems and build unique solutions. From this, students are well equipped to begin down the path of launching their venture – and there are mentorship and engagement opportunities along the way.

At the Université de Sherbrooke, The Desjardins Entrepreneurship Accelerator (AED) supports students who want to carry out concrete projects with local startups. At the AED, entrepreneurship knows no boundaries as students from any faculty or discipline are eligible to register and participate in this program.



ENTREPRENEURSHIP

BE A SUPERVISOR

Entrepreneurship engagement could also follow a structure like that of Co-op or Internships.

Keeping with the true spirit of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial thinking, a business in the start-up phase, or scale-up phase, could bring on a student to aid in that process. You would be contributing to and helping shape the very foundation of a new business or guiding an existing company through that next level. Take marketing, for example; it should be more than having a student create marketing materials – they would be building the core of your marketing strategy and then helping to implement it.

As a start-up company, your business model will be evolving and in a state of flux, and this offers opportunities for students to contribute to your business strategy.

The structure of these opportunities will vary across institutions as some may require a longer commitment than the typical four months seen with most co-ops.

The Centre for Entrepreneurship at The University of Toronto runs an Exploring New Ventures course whereby students explore the inner working of new venture companies or other innovative organizations. Most of the course consists of activities applying entrepreneurial concepts within a local organization, with oversight from the Centre for Entrepreneurship.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

- Self-funded
- Full-time or Part-time
- For credit
- Can be mandatory or optional
- No competitive recruitment process