

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

## MEDIA RELEASE

# NEW YEAR, NEW STUDENT ENTREPRENEURS: APPLICATIONS OPEN FOR 2026 SUMMER COMPANY PROGRAM

*Local Youth Can Earn Up to \$3,000 to Launch a Summer Business*

Stratford, Ontario – Monday, January 12, 2026 ... The Stratford Perth Centre for Business is once again inviting local students with an entrepreneurial spirit to apply for the 2026 Summer Company program, a provincial initiative that supports youth in starting and operating a summer business. Funded by the Province of Ontario and delivered in partnership with the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, Summer Company provides students aged 15 to 29 with real-world experience, expert guidance, and financial support to bring their business ideas to life.

This year, the Stratford Perth Centre for Business will select up to eight students to participate. Successful applicants receive hands-on business training, one-on-one mentorship, and up to \$3,000 in provincial grant funding—\$1,500 to help launch their venture, and a second \$1,500 upon successful completion of the program at the end of the summer.

Over the past decade, the program has helped dozens of local students transform their ideas into thriving summer companies, with several continuing as year-round enterprises. In addition to Summer Company, the Stratford Perth Centre for Business offers workshops, networking opportunities, and individualized support for both emerging and established entrepreneurs across the region.

Students interested in applying must register and complete their full application no later than Friday, May 15, 2025 via <https://tinyurl.com/23wfj3fr>

Quotes:

*“Each year, we’re inspired by the creativity and determination of young people in our community. The Summer Company program gives them the structure, mentorship, and confidence they need to test their ideas and discover their potential as entrepreneurs. We’re proud to support their journey.” — **Joani Gerber, CEO, investStratford***

*“Summer Company gives students a rare opportunity: the chance to learn by doing. They gain practical skills, see their ideas come to life, and leave the program with a stronger sense of what’s possible for their future. We’re excited to welcome a new group of aspiring business owners in 2026.” — **Holly Mortimer, Business Advisor, Stratford Perth Centre for Business***

The Stratford Perth Centre for Business operates as a department of investStratford in partnership with the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade.

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About the Stratford-Perth Centre for Business

*The Stratford Perth Centre for Business is committed to helping small business owners achieve their business goals. The Centre offers local small business support and complimentary consultation and easy access to resources, including business start-up services to support the development of new and already established small businesses. In addition to advisory services, events, seminars, and training opportunities are held throughout the year to meet small business essentials. For more info visit: [stratfordperthbusiness.ca](http://stratfordperthbusiness.ca) or [info@stratfordperthbusiness.ca](mailto:info@stratfordperthbusiness.ca)*

About investStratford:

*investStratford is committed to advancing the economic future of Stratford, Ontario, Canada through investment in arts, education, and industry. Globally Connected | Community Driven For more info visit: [investStratford.com](http://investStratford.com)*

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