

McKenna Center

Toronto, CAN – Equity Cubed Community Ventures

Location: Toronto, Canada

Venue: Equity Cubed, Parkdale

Intro to the City and Overview of the Economy

Toronto, the capital city of Ontario, is a bustling metropolis known for its cultural diversity, vibrant arts scene, and economic prowess. Parkdale, a neighborhood within Toronto, is distinctive for its rich history, eclectic mix of residents, and strong sense of community. With a population of approximately 21,000, Parkdale is home to a diverse demographic, including a significant number of immigrants and low-income households.

Regional Assets: Parkdale's strategic location within Toronto provides residents and businesses with access to a wide range of resources and opportunities. The neighborhood is well-connected by public transportation, making it easy to reach other parts of the city. Parkdale's proximity to downtown Toronto offers access to major financial institutions, cultural landmarks, and educational facilities.

The Entrepreneurial Ecosystem: Parkdale boasts a growing entrepreneurial ecosystem, with numerous local businesses, startups, and community organizations working together to foster economic development. The neighborhood is known for its vibrant arts and culture scene, which attracts creative entrepreneurs and innovators. Local initiatives and support networks, such as the Parkdale Centre for Innovation, provide training, mentorship, and resources to aspiring entrepreneurs.

The challenge

Despite its many assets, Parkdale faces significant challenges related to poverty and disadvantage. According to Stats Canada, a substantial portion of the population lives below the poverty line, and the neighborhood struggles with issues such as affordable housing, unemployment, and social exclusion. These challenges disproportionately affect minority and immigrant communities, making it essential to address these issues through targeted programs and initiatives.

The program

Name: Equity Cubed Community Ventures

Parkdale is a dynamic and evolving community of about 24,000 that continues to attract residents and visitors with its unique atmosphere, diverse history, and strong sense of community. It is known for having a large population of residents living on low incomes, including newcomers, immigrants, and other vulnerable community members. The neighborhood is facing rapid changes and is experiencing increased gentrification, particularly in the areas north of Queen Street, leading to rising rents and displacement of low-income residents. Parkdale is home to various organizations dedicated to addressing the needs of low-income residents, including the Parkdale Peoples Economy, Parkdale Neighborhood Land Trust, PARC | Parkdale Activity Recreation Centre, and others. Parkdale has a wide range of community services, including housing support, healthcare, counselling, and programs for youth, seniors, and newcomers.

Equity Cubed Community Ventures is managed by Equity Cubed, a majority Indigenous owned, purpose-driven business. We are currently working to find local partners who can collaborate with us on program delivery.

The program will begin in mid-October 2025 and conclude in September 2026. Throughout the year, we will offer a range of activities, including workshops, training sessions, networking events, and community forums.

Uniqueness of Our Approach

Equity Cubed offers a place for social ventures to experiment and operate at the cutting edge of impact. Using an Indigenous and ancestral wisdoms lens, and by prioritizing under-represented founders, we support entrepreneurs to tackle society's wicked equity challenges. Our approach is unique in its emphasis on place-based solutions and collective or alternative business models. We believe that by leveraging local assets within a specific neighborhood, and creating the conditions for mutual support among businesses, we can create a cohesive and resilient community.

Our Goal

We aim to expand our reach, increase the number of businesses we support, and deepen our impact on the community. By growing economic resilience, social inclusion, and community cohesion, we hope to be part of building a brighter future for Parkdale.

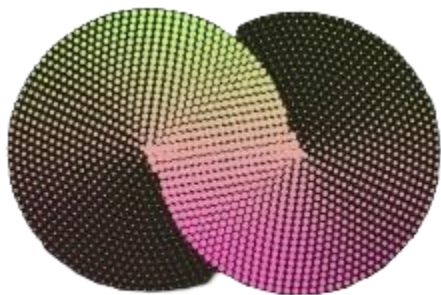
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