



2025 Press Start CoLab High School Program FAQ's

What is the CoLab High School Program?

The Press Start CoLab High School Program is like a collaborative workshop that helps youth changemakers build and develop an idea. Throughout the 7-week Program, high school students from across Ontario will work collaboratively with their friends and a member of the educational community to build a creative solution for improving mental health among youth in Canada. Participants will receive helpful entrepreneurial tools and resources, support from mentors who have experience as mental health entrepreneurs, an inspiring talk from a keynote speaker, and access to a total pool of \$25,000 in grants to make their ideas come to life.

What is the purpose of the CoLab High School Program, and who's behind it?

Brought to you by Teachers Life, the Press Start CoLab High School Program is an innovation accelerator that supports high school students and the education community from across Ontario in creating a minimally viable solution focused on the mental health of Canadian youth. The Program's goal is to create truly meaningful change in our communities.

The CoLab High School Program strives to establish a safe space with respect for growth and collaboration. This goal is reflected in the Program's values of encouraging authenticity, fostering community, establishing connections, building networks, and creating opportunities.



What is this year's focus area?

In this year's Press Start CoLab High School Program, we want to encourage positive and creative ideas that consider different perspectives to improve young people's mental health.

We are asking participants to develop new and creative solutions for youth in their community that address at least 1 of the 3 sub-focus areas of mental health. These include: De-Stigmatizing Mental Health, Building Confidence and Self-Image, and Creating Safe Spaces for Connectedness.



**De-stigmatizing
mental health**



**Building confidence
and self-image**



**Creating safe spaces
for connectedness**

What tools and resources will be provided to participants and their group leaders?

Although the Program's focus is mental health and well-being among youth, its assets and mechanics aim solely to support the development of positive and creative solutions that address this focus.

Throughout the Program, there are three Co-Creation Sessions designed to take participants through the stages of ideation: Problem Finding, Problem Framing and Problem Solving. We provide participants and their group leaders with unique entrepreneurial tools and resources. Examples include a Hypothesis Framework Tool, a Value Proposition Tool, and a Business Model Canvas.

During the three Co-Creation Sessions, participant groups will have opportunities to collaborate and receive feedback from their peers, while our Program's mentors will offer experience and perspective on youth entrepreneurship, as well as guidance on how to make the most of the Program's entrepreneurial tools and resources.



What is the role of a group leader, and who qualifies as a member of the educational community?

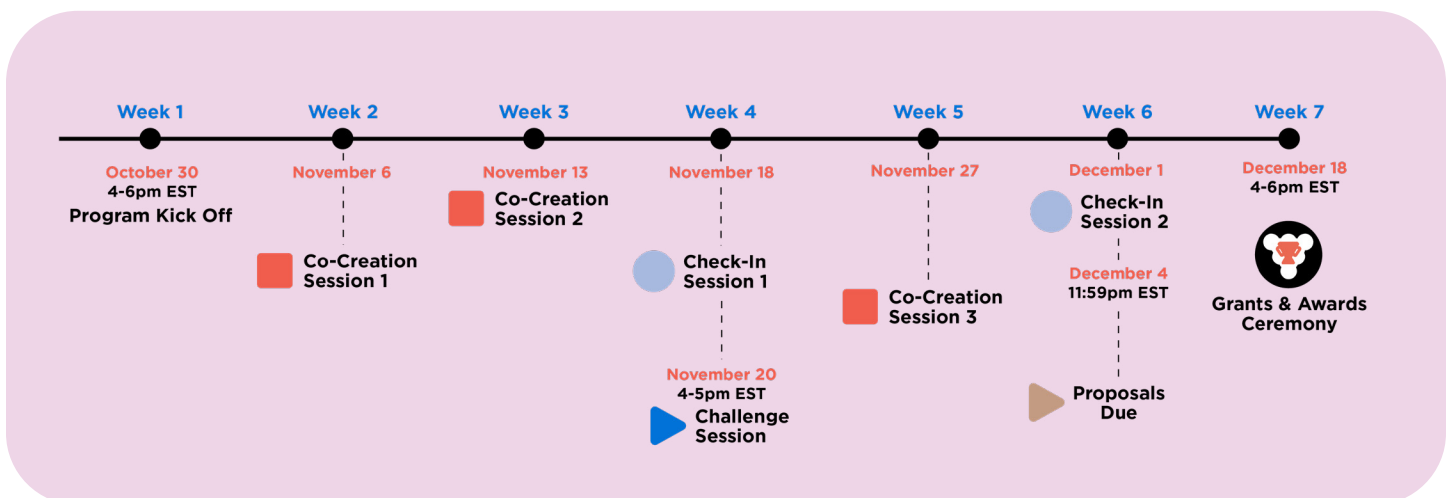
A group leader is a member of the educational community (ages 18+) who will be the facilitator and representative of their student group. The responsibilities of a group leader include:

- Applying on behalf of their student group
- Sharing all program communications, tools, resources, and event links with their student group
- Submitting a project proposal on behalf of their student group

For this Program, a member of the educational community is someone like a teacher, education worker, guidance counsellor, or social worker employed in the Ontario education system. If you need clarification on whether you qualify for the Press Start CoLab High School Program, feel free to reach out and ask us any questions. We're here to help! You can also read the full program rules and regulations [here](#).

What are the Program's main events?

The Program's main events are the Kick-off Session, three Co-Creation Sessions with fellow participants and mentors, a Challenge Session with our keynote speaker, and the Grants & Awards Ceremony. We will also provide optional Mentor Office Hours and Networking Sessions throughout the Program. The timeline below provides specific dates and times of our main events.



How much grant funding is available, and who can apply for grant funding?

At the end of the Program, participant groups will submit their final solution as a project proposal. All project proposals have the opportunity to receive grant funding from a total pool of \$25,000, which will be distributed across multiple successful ideas. All 10 participating groups can apply for grant funding, with a maximum request of up to \$5,000 per group. OTIP is generously giving \$15,000 toward the total pool of \$25,000.

Who can apply, and is an application fee required?

If you're a high school student in Ontario who cares about mental health, we encourage you to apply with a team of 2-5 students. For example: 4 students + 1 education leader = maximum official team of 5. A minimum group of 2 people = leader + 1 student. Your application must be sent in by a group leader who is a member of the educational community. Applications will be open from September 3 to October 6, 2025. There is no application fee required. We welcome all stages of ideas, so don't hesitate to join!

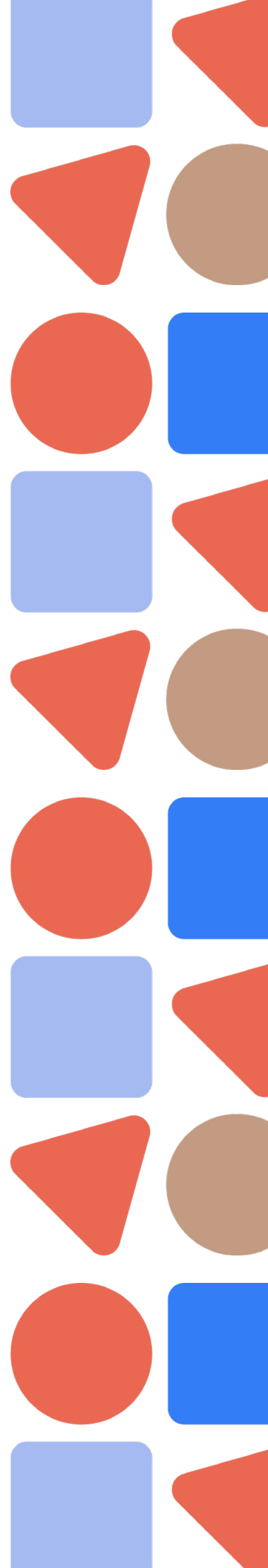
What qualities make a strong application?

A panel of judges reviews each application based on the clarity and originality of the responses, the applicant's drive and passion for the theme, the demonstration of innovative and creative thinking, and the alignment with program goals and values.

Will the Program be remote or in-person?

To foster community connections across Ontario and overcome challenges with travel and access, the CoLab High School Program is set up to be completely online.

Do you or a member of your team have an accessibility requirement? Ensuring equity and accessibility for all CoLab High School Program community members is an essential part of our Program's mission and values. Please indicate your accommodation requirements on your application or by email.



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