



Employment  
+Entrepreneurship



# NAVIGATING CHANGE

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

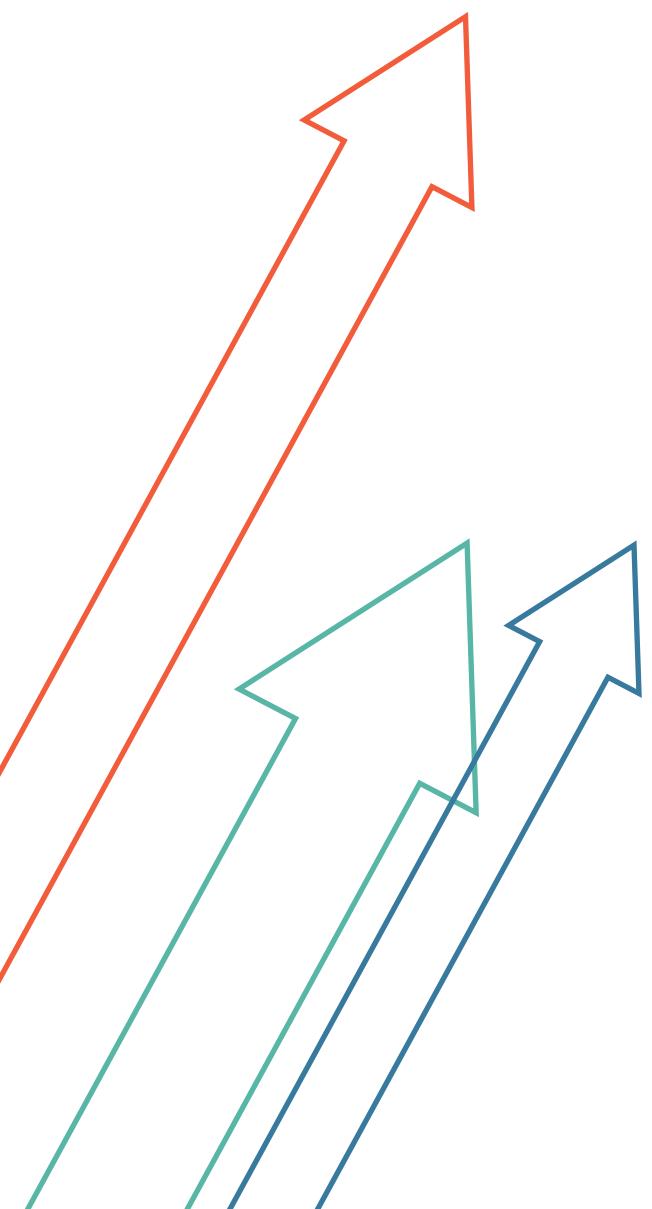




# MISSION

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.

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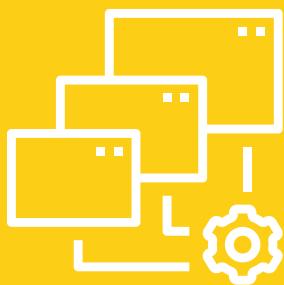
# BY THE NUMBERS



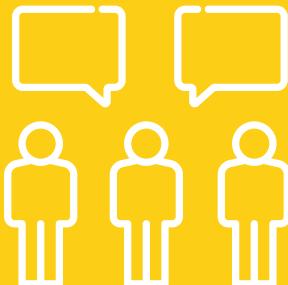
CLIENTS SERVED  
**3,327**



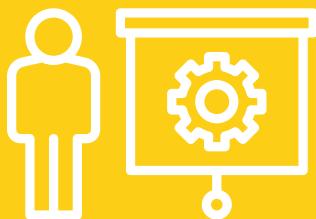
TOTAL VOLUNTEERS  
**177**



SERVICES DELIVERED  
**18,635** 



NETWORKING EVENTS  
**11**



WORKSHOPS  
**540**



WORKSHOP ATTENDANCE  
**5,474**

# A MESSAGE FROM YES

The 2024–2025 fiscal year marked a transformative chapter for YES Employment + Entrepreneurship, defined by purposeful adaptation, innovation, and collaboration. Amidst a shifting policy and funding landscape, YES remained a vital source of stability and opportunity for Quebecers seeking employment, launching businesses, or building creative careers.

This year, YES advanced its strategic priorities while reinforcing its role as a key player in Quebec's English-speaking community. The organization made significant progress on its capacity-building and strategic planning efforts, supported by the Rossy Foundation, ensuring the organization is well-positioned to navigate future challenges with clarity and impact.

YES explored new growth avenues, completing a feasibility study for an employability support program targeting youth aging out of foster care in Quebec. The development of this program lays the foundation for future impact in a critical and underserved area.

Increased government outreach and advocacy defined much of the year, culminating in a coordinated media campaign around the March 2025 provincial budget to draw attention to the end of provincial employment funding for YES. Engagements with MPs, MNAs, as well as officials at government economic development departments, reinforced our ongoing advocacy for sustained and equitable support for the English-speaking community of Quebec (ESCQ).

YES expanded its reach, including the successful completion of the second year of the ELLEvate Women Entrepreneurs Pre-Accelerator in partnership with York University, and a new collaboration with the Nunavik Investment Corporation to provide entrepreneurial and employment support in northern Quebec.

Operationally, YES undertook cost-saving measures, including the elimination of its 9th floor office, and initiated the Francisation certification process to align with provincial funding priorities and language mandates. We also deepened corporate partnerships with impactful

collaborations, including a Women's Month campaign with LinenChest, a sponsored workshop series with Squarespace, and renewed Desjardins support for the Business Bootcamp series.

As YES continues to evolve, our commitment to service, adaptability, and impact remains unwavering. In a year of navigating change, we reaffirmed our mission: to empower individuals and strengthen communities through opportunity.





# EMPLOYMENT RECAP

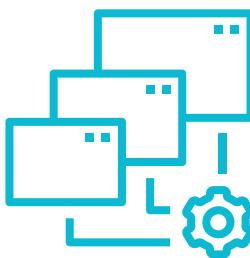
In a year marked by both innovation and uncertainty, YES Employment Services remained a vital resource for jobseekers across Quebec, helping them navigate a rapidly changing employment landscape with resilience and adaptability. We proudly expanded programming, deepened community partnerships, and empowered individuals through comprehensive services tailored to today's evolving workforce needs.

This year's Employment CommUNITY Open House welcomed over 60 participants, connecting them with local organizations, free professional resources, and networking opportunities in an engaging, supportive environment. Community collaboration was further enhanced with the creation of the Resource Guide for Jobseekers in Quebec, offering a curated list of essential tools and services to support meaningful employment outcomes.

Our core employment workshops continued to be a cornerstone of our services, offering dynamic learning on topics such as LinkedIn strategies, interview preparation, and career exploration. Flagship programs like CREATE and Youth on the Rise provided paid training and real-world work placements, equipping youth with in-demand digital and employability skills. Initiatives like French for the Workforce and the Breaking Barriers speaker series further supported inclusivity and professional growth.

The community showed up when news of provincial employment funding cuts broke in March 2025. Thankfully, YES has secured alternative support to continue delivering these crucial services. As we advocate for sustainable funding, we remain committed to guiding Quebec's jobseekers through change - toward opportunity, confidence, and success.

## EMPLOYMENT BY THE NUMBERS



4,035 SERVICES DELIVERED



79% SUCCEEDED IN GETTING A JOB OR RETURNING TO SCHOOL

# TESS COURNOYER

Tess Cournoyer exemplifies the resilience and transformation that YES Employment + Entrepreneurship aims to foster. Named Client of the Month in December–January, Tess began her journey with YES amid uncertainty about her next career steps. Supported through tailored coaching and skills-development resources, she charted a new direction in the sustainability sector and ultimately secured a role as Store Manager.

With guidance from YES, Tess explored meaningful employment options aligned with her values, constructed a clear action plan, and leveraged YES networks to access opportunities. Her progression from transitional exploration to leadership position illustrates the power of responsive, client-centred support during periods of transition.

Tess's story underscores how, in a year of significant shifts and uncertainty, YES's employment services adapted to meet clients where they were. Her success not only affirms the impact of our programs but also inspires others facing crossroads to believe that change—though challenging—can lead to renewed purpose and professional fulfilment.



“  
**Through YES I was able to reframe my professional identity and build the confidence to pivot entirely toward sustainability. The coaching, connections, and encouragement made me feel seen, heard, and capable of leading change in my own career.**



# ENTREPRENEURSHIP RECAP

In a year defined by transformation, YES's Entrepreneurship Services continued to empower Quebec's diverse entrepreneurial community with innovative programs, impactful events, and new strategic partnerships. With a focus on connection, resilience, and adaptability, we helped entrepreneurs navigate an evolving economic landscape.

A key milestone was the launch of our Entrepreneur Resource Guide, a comprehensive tool linking aspiring and established business owners with incubators, funders, and legal and financial resources across the province. Our Entrepreneurship COMMUNITY Open House on September 17, 2024, brought together a vibrant network of partners and featured tech founder Sharon K. Gillenwater, who inspired attendees by sharing her \$25M startup journey.

We rebranded our speaker series to Business Real Talk, offering candid, solution-driven discussions. Highlights included "Redefining Failure as Fuel for Success" (February 2025), with a powerhouse panel of women entrepreneurs, and "Navigating Today's Retail Landscape" (June 2024), in partnership with Desjardins.

Through initiatives like the Empowering Women Through Collaboration event with McGill's Dobson Centre and new partnerships with Makivvik and the Nunavut Economic Developers Association, we extended our reach to underrepresented and northern communities.

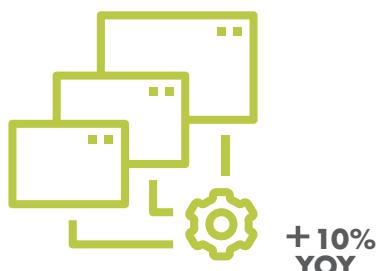
The ELLEVATE Women Entrepreneurs Pre-Accelerator culminated in a dynamic pitch competition, awarding \$21,000 in prizes and spotlighting the next generation of women-led ventures.

Amidst ongoing change, YES remained a steadfast guide—supporting entrepreneurs at every stage with tools, knowledge, and a thriving community.

## ENTREPRENEURSHIP BY THE NUMBERS



**6,901**  
COACHING SESSIONS



**11,130**  
SERVICES DELIVERED  
+10% YOY



**585**  
BUSINESSES STARTED OR GROWN

# RENATA GERMANO & JULIANA DA ROSA PEDERSON

We are proud to spotlight Renata Germano and Juliana da Rosa Pedersen, whose entrepreneurial journey exemplifies adaptability, courage, and growth. Originally from Brazil, Renata brought strong business experience from the corporate world, while Juliana's deep passion for culinary arts set the stage for their shared venture: Bah! Café, a Brazilian-inspired café in Plateau-Mont-Royal that blends heart, heritage, and hospitality.

Starting with limited familiarity with Quebec's regulatory and business environment, the pair turned to YES for foundational support. Through workshops, regular planning sessions, and hands-on guidance, they navigated complex bureaucratic processes, supplier relationships, and local market dynamics.

Within months, their café opened its doors—and now attracts visitors from beyond Montreal, including customers traveling from across Quebec and Ontario just to experience Bah! Café.

Their success is a testament to how YES's services help turn uncertainty into stability and momentum. By bridging gaps in knowledge, building confidence, and providing steady encouragement, we supported two immigrant entrepreneurs in transforming an idea into a thriving cultural and commercial venture. Their story underscores that amid change, opportunity exists—and with the right accompaniment, new paths can flourish.

“

**Working with YES proved essential in understanding the complexities and providing the impetus needed to get started.**

**The partnership with YES has certainly allowed us to get here with confidence and certainty of where we want to get to and how. YES was an inexhaustible source of resources, guidance and encouragement.**





## ARTS RECAP

In a year marked by creative evolution and industry shifts, YES Employment + Entrepreneurship's Artist Services empowered Quebec's artistic community to embrace change and thrive. By providing targeted resources, impactful programming, and community-building opportunities, we supported artists in turning their passion into sustainable careers.

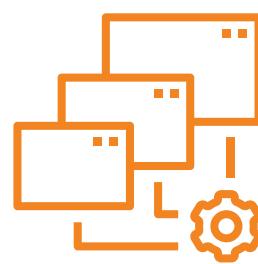
A major achievement was the launch of the YES Artist Resource Guide, a comprehensive tool offering essential information on funding bodies, arts councils, discipline-specific organizations, and professional development opportunities across Quebec. Designed to demystify the business side of the arts, the guide equips artists with the tools they need to succeed in a competitive and often unpredictable environment.

Our annual Business Skills for Creative Souls Conference (September 12, 2024), themed From Passion to Profit, brought together over 100 creative professionals for a full day of learning and inspiration. The event featured keynote speaker Lisa Rubin, Artistic and Executive Director of the Segal Centre, and dynamic panel discussions with industry leaders including Kakim Goh, Linda Leith, and Elise Moser.

YES also celebrated emerging talent through What the Pop!—a vibrant series of pop-up exhibitions across Montreal showcasing the work of over 40 local artists. Events such as the Arts Open House (November 28, 2024) and Connecting Artists: A Bilingual Networking Mixer (March 20, 2025) further fostered collaboration and inclusivity between Quebec's English- and French-speaking arts communities.

Through these initiatives, YES remained a trusted guide for artists navigating change, building careers, and forging creative connections.

## ARTS BY THE NUMBERS



1,775 SERVICES DELIVERED



862 CLIENTS  
+ 81% YOY  
492 NEW CLIENTS

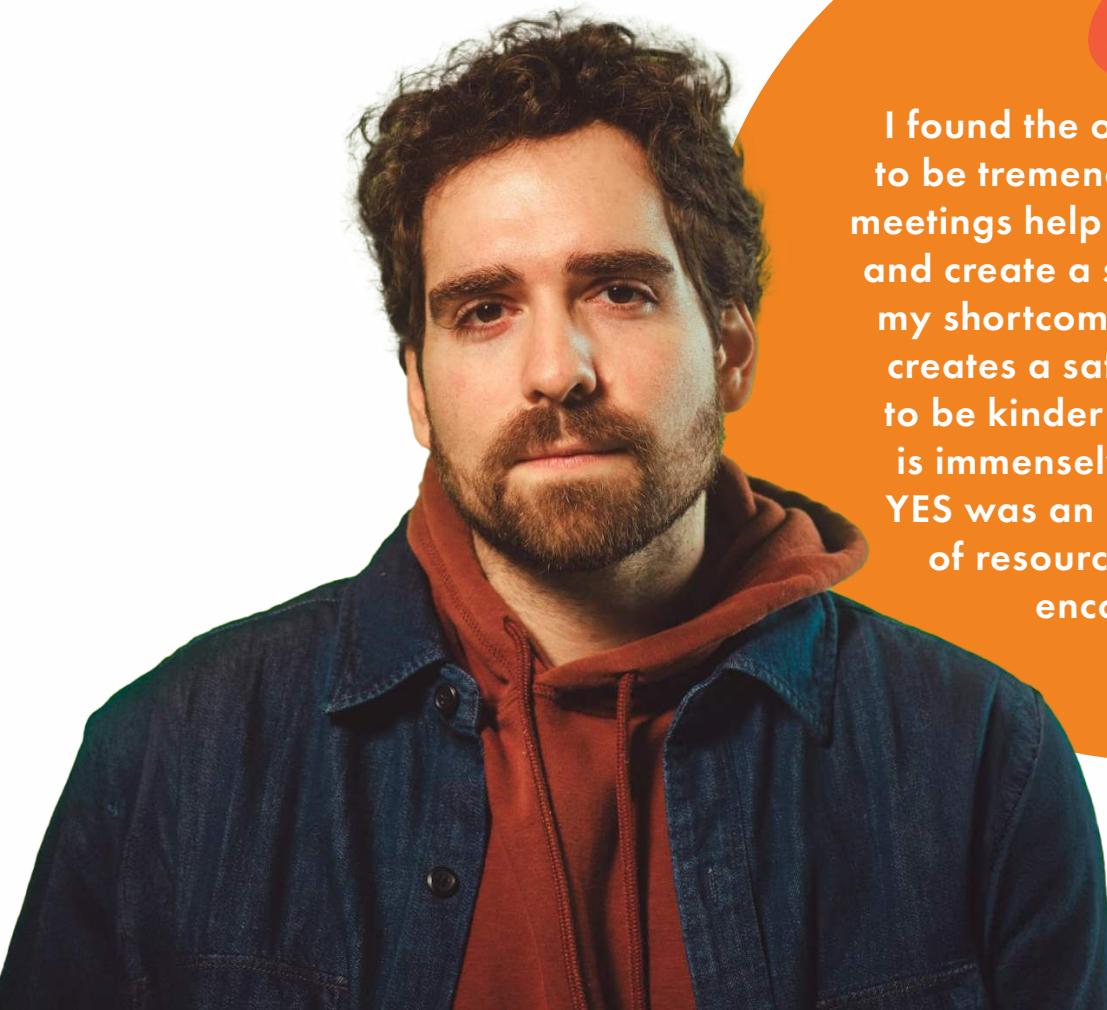
# ADAM FAINMAN, AKA BEATOX

YES is excited to present Adam Fainman (Beatox) - a creative entrepreneur whose journey embodies adaptability, ambition, and innovation. A multifaceted artist, beatboxer, vocalist, and producer, Beatox harnesses the expressive power of voice—layering beatboxing, smooth lyricism, and introspective storytelling—to forge a sound at the intersection of hip-hop, soul, funk, and jazz.

When he joined YES, Adam's ambition was clear: to build a sustainable music career, expand his network in Montreal, release original work, and tour his art. Since then, his 12-track album *Been A Long Time* launched June 2024 under his own label, Moonlite Media, and he toured across multiple provinces, debuting with a vinyl release show at L'Escogriffe in Montreal.

Under YES's coaching framework, Adam acquired clarity and accountability. He credits one-on-one sessions with coaches Stacey and Farshad for helping him refine his vision and balance his dual roles as artist and CEO. His successes now include placement on major Spotify editorial playlists (Northern Bars, Fresh Finds Canada), radio airtime on CBC and Virgin Radio, and federal funding support for Moonlite's development.

Beatox's path illustrates how, even as the industry evolves, emerging artists can navigate change with resilience and strategy. YES remains proud to accompany him as he shapes the future of music and multimedia.



**“**  
**I found the one-on-one coaching to be tremendously helpful. ... The meetings help keep me accountable, and create a safe space to work on my shortcomings. ... Stacey really creates a safe space to allow me to be kinder to myself ... Farshad is immensely knowledgeable ... YES was an inexhaustible source of resources, guidance, and encouragement.**



## TUNE IN TO YES 2024: STRIKING GOLD FOR A GREAT CAUSE

The YES Gold Rush Gala brought a bold and innovative approach to fundraising, combining fun, community, and purpose in one unforgettable evening. Emceed by the much-loved broadcaster Terry DiMonte, renowned for his longtime role as host of CHOM 97.7's morning show, the event treated guests to an evening of high-energy entertainment and Western flair.

Under the leadership of Bonnie Robinson, the Gala's organizing committee—Josef Azam, Jen DeTracey, Diane Hillier, Stephanie Murdoch, Lina Racaniello, and Geoff Wagner—created an immersive experience that kept guests smiling and engaged from start to finish. Attendees enjoyed live bluegrass music, Western-inspired cuisine, and lively casino games including poker, blackjack, and roulette. The festivities also featured a spirited 50/50 raffle, classic Western games like Saddlebag Toss and Horseshoe Pitching, and even line-dancing lessons.

A highlight of the evening was the presentation of the Iris Unger Award to Karin Hazé, founder of 75 Shots, a start-up non-profit that empowers LGBTQ+ artists from

countries where homosexuality remains criminalized. Through training, tools, and a safe digital platform, 75 Shots amplifies marginalized voices in the arts, embodying YES's values of innovation, inclusion, and community impact.



*"I could see these powerful tools in their hands. I didn't want to be that Foreigner that comes in and makes a film about the poor queer people, but rather see what they had in their hands and what they were able to do with it. And I wanted to give them a platform and uplift those stories."*

— Karin Hazé

# THE EVENT'S SUCCESS WAS MADE POSSIBLE THANKS TO THE GENEROUS SUPPORT OF OUR SPONSORS

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A special thank-you goes to Colleen and Mirko Wicha for their exceptional generosity and support.

Fundraising events like the Gold Rush Gala and Tune in to YES play a crucial role in sustaining and expanding YES's impact. While government grants fund much of our programming, donations and community support enable YES to respond to emerging needs and deliver innovative services beyond the scope of our grants—ensuring that we continue to empower Quebecers to build sustainable careers and businesses.



# THE YES TEAM

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Miriam Gaudelli

Caroline Gauthier

Sherry Hollinger

Coby Ingham

Annalise Iten

Amanda LaBillois

Stacey Lavender

Daniel Légaré

Cristina Lupu

Derek MacNeil

Zeitun Manjothi

Sara Meyer

Erjona Mulellari

Jayna Patel



# STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

Revenues	2025	2024
Grants	2,367,904	2,538,578
Donations and Fundraising	316,545	197,339
Services	81,780	87,733
Interest	23,014	15,855
	<b>2,789,246</b>	<b>2,839,505</b>
Expenditures	2025	2024
Salaries and Benefits	1,984,064	1,900,756
Rent	179,428	171,127
Office Administration	137,291	132,911
Publicity and Promotion	58,860	83,479
Women Based Project	43,124	55,177
Community Sector Recovery Fund Project	34,116	48,355
Workshops, Events, and Services	165,088	189,181
Sales Tax — Non reimbursed	48,363	43,256
Amortization	21,101	36,861
Regional Project	23,930	31,422
Strengthening Montreal Project	39,009	22,152
Fundraising	24,643	17,840
Interest and Bank Charges	6,277	7,705
Write Down on Capital Assets	0	5,575
Conferences	3,159	4,942
	<b>2,768,453</b>	<b>2,750,739</b>
<b>Excess of Revenue over Expenses</b>	<b>20,793</b>	<b>88,766</b>

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

# THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS AND PARTNERS

OUR PROGRAMS ARE MADE POSSIBLE WITH THE SUPPORT OF:

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The Peacock Family Foundation | The Rossy Family Foundation | The SSQ (Beneva) Foundation

The Tauben Family Foundation | The Zeller Family Foundation





# SEE HOW FAR WE'VE ALL COME!

OVER THE PAST YEAR, YOU'VE HELPED STRENGTHEN OUR COMMUNITY OF SUPPORT AND CONNECTION AND WE WANT TO THANK YOU.



While nobody can predict the future, you can rest assured that YES will be beside you. We will be here serving thousands more clients in the coming year and in the years ahead. We are so grateful to you for accompanying us on our mission to enrich this diverse and innovative community, empowering Quebecers with tools for bright futures.





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