



## ONTARIO NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

### **Startup Canada: Leadership, common vision key to Ontario's economic success**

*National Action Plan addresses urgent needs of province's entrepreneurs*

**OTTAWA – November 27, 2012 – Startup Canada** ([www.startupcan.ca](http://www.startupcan.ca)), a grassroots non-profit network committed to promoting a vibrant entrepreneurial culture, is calling for Ontario's business leaders, policy makers and public institutions to look past individual interests and work together to create a true startup culture and supporting framework that reaches into classrooms and communities across the province.

Startup Canada's call to action in Ontario is part of its national **Action Plan**, unveiled today to drive economic development, job creation and innovation across the country. The action plan is intended to make Canada one of the world's top five entrepreneurial economies, in which job creation and economic growth spring from innovative entrepreneurs powered by supportive local communities and financial networks.

The new action plan grew out of Startup Canada's 2012 national tour, the most extensive consultation process ever carried out with Canada's entrepreneurial community. The tour revealed a number of common challenges that must be addressed to create a more dynamic and successful startup environment across the country:

- Canada needs to re-discover its entrepreneurial roots and embrace entrepreneurship as central to its national culture.
- Canada needs to cultivate savvier and more visionary early-stage startups to produce more high-growth companies with global reach.
- Canadian entrepreneurship must be fuelled from the bottom up through development of vibrant local entrepreneurial communities, led by entrepreneurs (not by bureaucrats or not-for-profits, as is often the case today), as the basis of a national entrepreneurship network.

"Ontario has a rich industrial and manufacturing heritage, a vibrant financial sector and broad expertise in IT, health care and life sciences," said **Rick Spence, a Startup Canada Advisor** and former editor and publisher of *PROFIT, The Magazine for Canadian Entrepreneurs*. "With the right amount of innovation and collaboration, these are all industries of the future.



“Combined with world-leading educational research institutions and our highly skilled workforce, Ontario has all the ingredients to build a globally competitive entrepreneurial economy. Now our job is to bring together all these resources in a concerted approach that encourages Ontarians to think bigger and also provides the support they need to succeed.”

“Small businesses and startups are the most direct and effective vehicle for job growth and economic stimulation,” added **Harley Finkelstein, CPO of Shopify**. “As entrepreneurs and proud Canadians, it behooves us to unite as a community to inspire and support our local startups through mentorship, funding, and constant encouragement.”

## **The Way Forward**

Startup Canada’s Action Plan will promote and support entrepreneurship as never before. It comprises three national initiatives that will be financed through sponsorship dollars and a crowd-funding campaign from coast to coast:

**Startup Canada Connect:** A free, highly social online meeting place that will connect and support Canadian entrepreneurs with the tools and resources needed to build more successful businesses.

**Startup Canada Communities:** A national entrepreneurial strategy must be founded on vibrant local communities led by existing entrepreneurial champions. Building on the network created through its 40-city national tour, Startup Canada will encourage development of strong local networks that will create the conditions necessary for entrepreneurial growth and success locally and nationally.

**Startup Canada Campaign:** Entrepreneurs across the country have told Startup Canada they need more role models - more access to stories of successful Canadian innovators and entrepreneurs. Startup Canada will lever mainstream media, social media and key national institutions to celebrate and tell the stories of Canadian entrepreneurs, providing authentic case studies to inspire and motivate new generations of startups.

To learn more about Startup Canada’s Action Plan, please visit [www.startupblueprints.ca](http://www.startupblueprints.ca).

For more information or to arrange interviews, please contact:

Victoria Lennox  
Co-Founder, Startup Canada  
[press@startupcan.ca](mailto:press@startupcan.ca)  
(613) 316-6203

Leo Valiquette  
inmedia Public Relations  
(613) 769-9479



[lvaliquette@inmedia.ca](mailto:lvaliquette@inmedia.ca)

### **About Startup Canada**

Startup Canada is an entrepreneur-led movement to enhance the nation's competitiveness and prosperity by supporting and celebrating Canadian entrepreneurship. Startup Canada is the first Canadian organization to harness the collective energies of entrepreneurs and enterprise support communities from coast to coast to promote a vibrant entrepreneurial culture and to create a unified brand as a rallying point for Canadians.

Startup Canada sponsors include Microsoft, Gowlings, Ernst & Young, Best Western Hotels, the Canadian Innovation Commercialization Program, Export Development Canada, Business Development Canada, RGA, Francis Moran & Associates The VideoBooth Company, Artik, Kick Ass Media, PubliAir, the Ottawa Technology Transfer Network, the Association of University Research Parks Canada, Blab Media, the Canadian Association of Business Incubation, the Evidence Network, Francis Moran & Associates, FreshBooks, Global Advantage Consulting Group, Podio, Backbone Magazine, HootSuite, ITWorld Canada, NextMTL, Paper.li and Techvibes.