



Unisphere Canada

ANNUAL REPORT 2016-2017



INTRODUCTION

Unisphere Canada (UC) is a not-for-profit organization. Our primary goal is to facilitate economic opportunities and promote income generation through entrepreneurship and innovation. Our efforts will be focused on vulnerable groups of Ontario residents who are proportionately excluded from the mainstream economy. UC strongly believes in action and seeks to transform communities across Ontario and Canada, making them more self-sufficient through sustainable entrepreneurship and innovative programs.

UC is determined to empower the community members to bring about change by providing support to their future entrepreneurs enabling them to make an impact on the oppressive cycle of poverty in which they currently reside. UC finds practical and innovative ways to empower these low-income people to lift themselves out of the cycle of poverty, then the payback to themselves, their communities and society as a whole will be significant.

We know that if we continue to strive to support the base of people who are struggling to earn enough money and often have to decide between keeping the lights on or feeding their kids, that with all of the resources we have at our disposal we will be able to make the change we see as so critical to our communities- again, with all of this benefiting the individual, their community and society. UC works with partner organizations.

We believe that together we can bring a positive impact and contribute to creating a world closer to breaking the cycle of poverty and economic inequality/injustice. Our work will help create a more fair world that truly respects the basic rights of all human beings, not just those considered to be higher economic status.

MISSION, VISSION & VALUES

MISSION

Unisphere Canada reduces poverty and promotes well-being through innovative economic development programs by providing support to entrepreneurs in low-income communities.

VISION

Creating economically vibrant, empowered and prosperous communities where everyone can thrive.

VALUES

- **Respect:** We value every individual.
- **Integrity:** We always act Ethically, and commit to conducting our activities with honesty, transparency and accountability.
- **Professionalism:** We care for and support each other and act professionally.
- **Diversity:** We believe everyone deserves a chance to prosper.
- **Equality:** We believe everyone should equality opportunity for economic independence.
- **Team work:** We believe in cooperation, coordination and collaborative partnerships.
- **Community Development:** the strongest voice in Unisphere Canada is the voice of the low-income people we work with.

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In Canada, the poverty rates among immigrants remain high compared to the native-born population. This is especially true for immigrants aged 25 and older. Based on these trends, we focus on some of the most vulnerable groups in Ontario to reduce the injustices that cause poverty. Our clients include: youth; Newcomers; Undocumented residents; and, Single parents. We seek to transform communities across Ontario and ultimately Canada, making them self-sufficient through sustainable entrepreneurship and innovative programs.

In 2016, Unisphere Canada (UC) empowered clients to begin their entrepreneurial journey by providing clients with business advice and technical support through basic training and food handling certifications to help women and newcomers upgrade their skills and start small businesses. We are also working with our partner organizations to facilitate small loans and providing grants to start a new business, with the purpose of integrating community economic development initiatives closer to low-income people.

In 2017, we continue to focus on Community Economic Development, Entrepreneurship and Capacity Development. This has been possible, with the collaboration and support of our partners, such as Credit Canada, St. James Town Community Corner, Access Community Capital Fund, Toronto Public Health and Yonge Street Mission. Services include: Financial literacy training, Microloans, Food Handling Certification, Capacity building related to business and the Women's Development Network with business related training programs.



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Hayatullah Ahmadzai

SUCCESS STORIES

SHAHINUR ISLAM

Shahinur, a married mother of two, who moved to Toronto from Bangladesh over four years ago, She participated in the Food Handler Certification training program, organized by Unisphere Canada in partnership with Toronto Public Health. Her friend told her about the program and she was interested in learning about food handling opportunities. "I'm passionate about cooking", says Shahinur. "I hope to open up a restaurant or a coffee shop with additional training, skills development and education that can be obtained through working with UC." Shahinur is working part-time as an Early Childhood Assistant and her future goal is to work in an administrative role on a full-time basis at a school or the YMCA.



"I hope to open up a restaurant or a coffee shop with additional training, skills development and education that can be obtained through working with UC."

SUCCESS STORIES

SYEDA FERDOWSSY

Syeda, a mother of one daughter has been living in Toronto for more than eight years, and has held various part-time jobs since moving to Canada from Bangladesh. She participated in the Food Handler Certification program, "I learned a lot" says Syeda. "The facilitator was amazing and she was very clear on explaining the steps." Syeda's interest in the program was sparked by a desire to search for additional job opportunities. In the future, she would like to start a small business. Syeda works on a part-time basis as an Early Childhood Educator. She recently started a second part-time job as an Early Childhood Assistant. She aspires to be an Early Childhood Educator with the City of Toronto, on a full-time basis.

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PROGRAMS

An impact report is a way for organizations to communicate the issues they are trying to improve. Our aim is to enhance the economic well-being of communities, through increased income generation opportunities and the creation of employment and to also increase capacity development opportunities, for individuals and entrepreneurs to support them to develop businesses in low-income communities. We are currently working with individuals and groups who are seeking advice and technical support to start or develop a small business. We are also working with partner organizations to connect these entrepreneurs with small/low-interest business loans, as well as basic training and food handling certifications, as well as help them strategize on how they facilitate change.

Our main strategic focus areas:



**Community
Economic
Development**

**Saving Box
Model**

**Capacity
Development of
Entrepreneurs**

**Organizational
Development**

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

We facilitate financing for entrepreneurs, which is made possible through our collaboration with Access Community Capital Fund.

**Mini Micro Loans
are available
from \$100 -
\$1000 (no
interest)
Micro Loans are
available from
\$1000 - \$10,000**

These loans enable individuals, entrepreneurs and newcomers with no credit history to gain access to knowledge, skills, support, outreach activities and grants. These loans will also help create income generation and increase the number of local businesses in the most vulnerable communities.



SAVING BOX MODEL

Our community-led development Saving Box model is geared towards both individuals and groups in low-income communities and provides them with resources and enhances their skills to successfully start-up their businesses. It consists of three streams of program delivery tailored to the size of the small start-up business, along with the specific needs of the entrepreneurs. Participants of the UC Saving Box programs receive comprehensive around services such as mentorship and coaching tailored to their unique objectives to ensure they reach their goals. The Saving Box Model enable individuals and newcomers with no credit history to gain access to knowledge, skills, supports and grants. It will also work to promote relationship between emerging local businesses and support that is available in the community to develop their businesses and markets. It leverages the synergy of participating groups by networking and promoting collaboration. They are then able to share this knowledge and skills with other members of the community, by gaining training and resources developed by UC.



CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT OF ENTREPRENEURS

We offer a range of free training programs in the areas of leadership, business management, business planning, entrepreneurial skills, and micro-lending.

Additional programming and support includes:

- Business Start-up information
- One-on-One business consulting
- Business plan development
- Entrepreneurial Skills
- Social Media and Marketing
- Micro-Lending and Financial Statements
- Financial Literacy and Budgeting
- Leadership and Communication Skills
- Life Skills and Decision Making
- Food Handling Certificate

To date, we have already supported over 56 entrepreneurs in the areas of business planning, micro-lending, and food handling.



Photo: Market Research

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

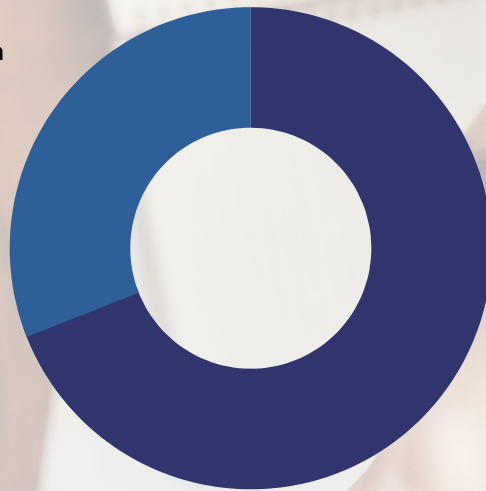


We will continue to develop our own organization in terms of infrastructure development and governance. Institutional strengthening includes a set of measures that improve the capability and performance of our organization, in order to attain our mission and strategic goals. We aim to engage with and coordinate with stakeholders involved in community development, establish synergies and advocate for the well-being of low-income communities so that community development is more efficiently and cohesively delivered.

FINANCES

Revenue

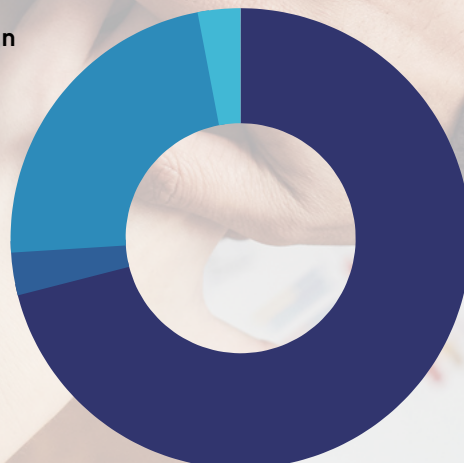
Individual Contribution
31%



Donation
69%

Expenses

Advertising
3%



Transportation
23%

Office Supplies
3%

Programs & Communication
71%

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Unisphere Canada is grateful to all of our volunteers who give their time and share their skills and help us to achieve our mission through our programs and services.

Laurie Di Brina
Tricia Ramnath
Rangoli Singh

THANKING OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Acting Executive Director:
Hayatullah Haleemi

Board Members:
Ali Aheed
Brendon Wrana
Fawad Nasir
Fazal Rahel
Laheeb Akbarzad
Tariq Ismati



We thank you for your
continued support in
our programs.

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