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MEDIA RELEASE

STRATFORD PERTH CENTRE FOR BUSINESS OPENS APPLICATIONS FOR SMALL BUSINESS COACHING PROGRAM

Provincial Starter Company Plus Program Offers Entrepreneurial Grants totalling \$30,000

Stratford, Ontario – September 7, 2023... **Today the Stratford Perth Centre for Business opened the application portal for the Starter Company Plus program, a provincially supported program aimed at entrepreneurs within Stratford, St Marys, and Perth County.** The Starter Company Plus program is funded by the Province of Ontario, and the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, and delivers 2 cohorts each year. This year's fall session offers 6 successful applicants 4 weeks of business planning training beginning October 16 and ending November 14, focusing on areas of business planning, cash flow, operations, and marketing. After 4 weeks of training the graduates are eligible to receive a \$5,000 grant. The Stratford Perth Centre for Business, a department of investStratford, provides mentorship via a 4-week hybrid training and mentorship program with individual coaching to support their entrepreneurial business dreams.

The program features: Weekly online lessons that will teach entrepreneurs how to build a business plan with an emphasis on cash flow planning and digital marketing. The program also includes a mentorship component where the participants will learn from a matched mentor who specializes in accounting, financial planning, digital marketing, and policy creation. New this season, will be a return to a hybrid model in which to meet and learn together in person, creating conversations around partnerships, networking and idea sharing. Interested applicants can register at www.stratfordperthbusiness.ca/startercompanyplusprogram

Holly Mortimer, Business Advisor, Stratford Perth Centre for Business: *"Aside from the structured learning The Starter Company Plus program offers, there is a unique experience that takes place among the participants that I found unexpected but extremely important. There is the creation of this unique community of new entrepreneurs, where they can navigate the 4-week course material together and rely, not only on the program instructors but also on each other. Becoming an entrepreneur can be a lonely experience and the sense of support and community created within the 4 weeks last as a peer networking group for many long after the program concludes."*

Joani Gerber, CEO, investStratford: *"Starter Company Plus has been a flagship grant program of the Stratford Perth Centre for Business for many years. I am thrilled to see this excited and inspired group of business owners get started and grow in our community."*

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About the Stratford Perth Centre for Business

The Stratford Perth Centre for Business operates as a department of investStratford in partnership with the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade. It is committed to helping small business owners achieve their business goals. The Centre offers local small business support and complimentary consultation and easy access to resources, including business start-up services to support the development of new and already established small businesses. In addition to advisory services, events, seminars, and training opportunities are held throughout the year to meet small business essentials. For more info visit: stratfordperthbusiness.ca or info@stratfordperthbusiness.ca

About investStratford:

investStratford is committed to advancing the economic future of Stratford, Ontario, Canada through investment in arts, education, and industry. Globally Connected | Community Driven For more info visit: investStratford.com

For further information contact:

Holly Mortimer, Business Advisor, Stratford Perth Centre for Business 519-305-5055 x 1005

Elke Bidner, Marketing and Communications Lead 519-305-5055 x1003