

# Eleven Innovative Social Ventures Selected for LEAP's Healthy Futures Accelerator

*Over the next five years, LEAP will partner with the ventures to improve the lives of over two million Canadians annually*

TORONTO, ON, CANADA, December 2, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Meaningful change is in store for public health. LEAP | Pecaut Centre for Social Impact announced today the 11 social ventures selected for [Healthy Futures](#), an accelerator designed to scale initiatives that help Canadians to move more, sit less, eat better, and stop smoking. The aim is [to prevent unhealthy behaviours contributing to chronic diseases](#) impacting Canadians, a concerning trend that has been magnified by the COVID-19 pandemic.



With LEAP's support, Second Harvest will expand its web-based application to improve efficiencies, develop a national infrastructure program to reach more rural communities, and renovate a new facility to support the volume of food rescued.

"While the pandemic has highlighted the importance of chronic disease prevention, significant numbers of Canadians have not yet embraced the building blocks that can lead to a lifetime of good health," said Joan Dea, Chair of the Board with LEAP. "LEAP is excited to be collaborating with passionate leaders and their high-impact social ventures to address public health in Canada, particularly among equity-seeking communities."

With financial contribution from Public Health Agency of Canada, LEAP will provide in-depth strategic and operational support, coaching, capacity building and funding to the selected social ventures. These ventures currently serve 600,000 Canadians annually across all provinces and territories. Over the next five years, the goal is for the cohort to scale their combined impact to improve the lives of over two million Canadians annually.

Funding and pro bono support worth up to \$10 million will be made available to the ventures,

taking their needs and stages of development into account. Pro bono expertise will also be contributed by best-in-class business partners including Boston Consulting Group, EY, McCarthy Tétrault, Hill+Knowlton Strategies, Offord Group and Google.org.

The numbers behind the selected Healthy Futures social ventures:

- From May to June 2020, 7,000+ ventures were engaged through the open call for applications for Healthy Futures. More than 150 high-calibre submissions were received.
- Over the course of four months, through a rigorous, data-driven assessment, LEAP's staff, its Board, an investment committee, and a panel of experts identified each venture's potential for impact and selected the top 11 applicants.
- Seven selected ventures support equity-seeking communities, including four ventures serving Indigenous communities, one venture serving Black Canadians, one venture serving youth with disabilities, and one venture serving low socio-economic status Canadians.
- Four ventures target rural and remote communities, including:
  - o 4 First Nations communities in Saskatchewan.
  - o 5 First Nations communities in the North.
  - o 1,000 students in 75 rural schools across four provinces served annually.
  - o 1,500+ First Nations youth across 50 communities served annually.
- Nine ventures are female-led.
- Five ventures are using tech-enabled interventions to scale their impact nationwide.

Selected Healthy Futures Social Ventures at a Glance:

APPLE Schools enhances the lives of 21,000 students in 75 schools annually by improving their healthy eating, physical activity, and mental health habits. Over the next five years with support from LEAP, APPLE Schools will extend its reach to 62,000 students in 200 schools.

Black Health Alliance works to improve the health and well-being of Black communities in Canada. Support from LEAP will allow Black Health Alliance to launch THRIVE, a strategic, scalable, and results-based initiative aiming to improve health and well-being outcomes in Black communities.



Fresh Routes' Mobile Grocery Stores bring healthy, fresh, and affordable food into neighbourhoods facing barriers — allowing choice, maintaining dignity, and building community

Challenger Baseball is an adaptive baseball program led by Jays Care Foundation for individuals living with disabilities. Together with LEAP, Jays Care Foundation will identify new pathways to scale Challenger Baseball to meet its goal of reaching 30,000 athletes annually in five years, from 8,500 today.

Fresh Routes' Mobile Grocery Stores bring healthy, fresh, and affordable food into neighbourhoods facing barriers — allowing choice, maintaining dignity, and building community. Fresh Routes operates out of Alberta, serving 2,000 Canadians every month. LEAP will enable its expansion over the next five years, growing the number of routes and extending its reach into Manitoba.

Green Iglu's integrated, community-focused approach promotes food sovereignty across Canada through educational programming that enables remote communities to grow nutritious food. LEAP will support Green Iglu's scaling plans to deepen its impact and broaden its reach across more communities in Canada.

iamYiam is an award-winning preventive health partner which empowers people and organizations to take charge of their health. iamYiam currently serves 100,000+ users in 26 countries. Through its partnership with LEAP, iamYiam will establish a foundation in Canada to reach marginalized population groups.

Indigenous Youth Mentorship Program is a relationship-based, mentor-led healthy living afterschool program delivered by Indigenous adolescents for children in their community. In partnership with LEAP, Indigenous Youth Mentorship Program will enhance the breadth of its programming in the existing 50 communities where it currently operates, and expand to 100+ communities in the next five years.

MyHeart Counts Canada is an AI-driven mobile application in development within McGill University Health Centre, which will provide real-time feedback and support to individuals that improve physical activity, using behavioral strategies based on unique needs. LEAP's support will allow MyHeart Counts Canada to bring emerging technology to marginalized populations and reach 100,000 Canadians.

Second Harvest is Canada's largest food rescue charity with a dual mission of hunger relief and environmental protection. With LEAP's support, Second Harvest will expand its web-based application to improve efficiencies, develop a national infrastructure program to reach more rural communities, and renovate a new facility to support the volume of food rescued.

Smoking Treatment Optimization Program (STOP) provides quit smoking treatment to 24,000 people each year across Ontario. STOP has an ambitious goal to grow nationally and expand its reach from 270,000 people treated so far to two million Canadians who smoke, and in partnership with LEAP, will identify a sustainable growth model to achieve these goals.

Youth4Change is a proposed advocacy and education initiative targeting youth and young adults to reduce smoking rates within First Nations communities. Strategic guidance and funding from LEAP will allow Youth4Change to define and develop tools to support programming in 74 Indigenous communities in Saskatchewan.

"Investing in community-based interventions is vital to the health of every Canadian, and that is truer than ever before due to the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic," said Joe Manget, Board Lead, Healthy Futures at LEAP. "We have ambitious goals for this cohort of social ventures."

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