

For Immediate Release

June 10, 2020

Recovery & Rebuilding the Region: Design Challenge Two Seeking Collaborative Solution for \$20K

Three prominent southwestern Ontario organizations are searching for collaborative solutions towards the rebuilding and revitalization of communities across southwestern Ontario.

Libro Credit Union, Pillar Nonprofit Network and TechAlliance launch the second stage of the Recovery & Rebuilding the Region: Design Challenges that seek collaborative solutions “made in southwestern Ontario” that support economic recovery and community prosperity. The challenges are co-presented by Communittech, in Waterloo Region, and WEtech Alliance, in Windsor Essex.

The second challenge taps into the collaborative spirit across the region, asking innovators, entrepreneurs and community organizations to work together on an application that will:

- address rebuilding and revitalizing our communities;
- support regional economic recovery; and
- demonstrate measurable social, environmental, and economic impact.

The successful applicant will be granted \$20,000 in funding, as well as a personalized suite of business advisory, financial coaching and community impact services provided by the Design Challenge partners.

Design Challenge Two will focus on a collaborative and innovative solution that supports economic recovery and community prosperity for Southwestern Ontario.

- Applications open at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, June 15.
- Applications close at 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 17.
- The successful applicant will be announced on Wednesday, June 24.

Interested parties are able to see the application questions and access a frequently asked questions document in advance of the application portal opening on June 15. For those resources, and to learn more, visit: techalliance.ca/designchallenge.

Putting collaboration at the centre of this challenge opens the door to new, inclusive and disruptive approaches to economic recovery and community prosperity.

The challenge is open to individuals and teams of people, who are collaborating or seeking to collaborate on initiatives, startups or growth for enterprises and nonprofits. Applicants are encouraged to design with empathy for those most affected by COVID-19, and to be mindful of diverse perspectives as they create their solutions.



The recipient of the first Recovery & Rebuilding the Region Design Challenge was London-based [Go Fog It](#), founded by Diana House and Melissa McInerney. Go Fog It, which offers disinfectant fogging to make spaces safer, was selected for their innovative response to the immediate health and social issues related to COVID-19. The successful applicants receive \$20,000 seed funding and significant coaching and wraparound support offered by the project partners, announced in a [release](#) on May 6 2020.

Lori Atkinson, Regional Manager Advice and Service Delivery, Libro Credit Union said:

“We were amazed to receive over 100 applications in our first challenge! We will welcome new applicants and those interested in re-applying. We were already wowed once and we’re ready to be inspired again by the great minds and talent in our region who will work together to help southwestern Ontario move past immediate responses to Covid-19 and on the road to recovery.”

Michelle Baldwin, Executive Director, Pillar Nonprofit Network, said:

“This moment requires us to look beyond ourselves, our organizations, our businesses and dream of what is possible together. Bringing diverse people and perspectives to a new product, service or solution will amplify its innovation, inclusiveness and impact. Collaboration is the way forward in this crisis.”

Christina Fox, Chief Executive Officer, TechAlliance, said:

“Despite disruption, southwestern Ontario innovators, entrepreneurs and industry have adapted with urgency to create extraordinary collaborative solutions under circumstances that once felt impossible. We're confident that passionate, thoughtful and forward-thinking innovators will respond to our call through the Design Challenge. TechAlliance is proud to be driving this initiative alongside our partners, to ignite collaboration between innovators and catalyze unique technology-enabled solutions their diverse perspectives can produce.”

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We warmly welcome interview opportunities. For more information, please contact:

Libro Credit Union

The largest credit union in southwestern Ontario and a registered B Corp, Libro Credit Union serves 106,790 Owners – the customers who all own a piece of the company, including 9,566 businesses. Libro has more than 700 employees, 36 locations and a wide range of digital services, all supporting Owners as a full-service financial institution.

In existence for more than 75 years, Libro is also run as a cooperative, in which the customers are the shareholders, electing the Board of Directors. All of Libro’s profits stay in southwestern Ontario and everything Libro does is aligned with its social purpose of growing prosperity for everyone in the region.

Liz Arkinstall, Corporate Social Responsibility Manager

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Pillar Nonprofit Network

Pillar Nonprofit Network strengthens individuals, organizations and enterprises invested in positive community impact.

We support more than 610 nonprofits, social enterprises and social innovators by sharing resources, exchanging knowledge and creating meaningful connections across the three pillars of nonprofit, business and government.

Pillar Nonprofit Network believes that a connected network sparks collaboration and a willingness to lean on each other to help build an engaged, inclusive and vibrant community.

Michelle Baldwin, Executive Director

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TechAlliance of Southwestern Ontario

TechAlliance is the place for dreamers, innovators, and world-changing ideas. We launch new startups and accelerate growth for established tech companies through our Venture Growth & Corporate Innovation, early-stage incubation, and GROW Accelerator.

We create an entrepreneurial culture across Southwestern Ontario that attracts, connects, and retains the next generation of tech talent, building community through experiences, and creating access to capital.

We advocate for startups and fast-growing technology companies, connecting all levels of government and industry to create an environment for businesses to start, grow, and innovate.

Christina Fox, Chief Executive Officer

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