

Performance Results for 2017-18 Community Futures Centre West

Community Futures (CF) is a program that supports community economic development and builds the capacity of communities to realize their full sustainable potential. The purpose of the CF Program is to help communities develop and implement *local solutions to local problems*.

Community Futures Performance Results	Results as of 2017-18
<i>Strong rural community strategic planning and implementation</i>	
1. Total number of community-based projects (new & on-going)	33
2. Total number of local and regionally-based community strategic plans developed and/or updated	5
<i>Rural access to business development services</i>	
3. Total number of business training session participants	498
4. Total number of business advisory services	259
<i>Rural access to capital and leveraged capital</i>	
5. Dollar value of loans	220,000
6. Total number of loans	5
7. Number of jobs created/maintained/expanded through lending ¹	7.5
Provide additional information (e.g. Success stories, Links to priorities, leveraging work, communication events, etc...)	
<p>SMARTstart Entrepreneurship Program, Airdrie</p> <p>SMARTstart is a 8 month entrepreneurship training program consisting of on-line and in person training sessions, complete with a mentorship component. CFCWest has been involved with the program for 4 years with the 5th year launching in spring of 2018.</p> <p>Online learning via GoForth Institute</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100 Essential Business Skills™ program • 10 modules to complete on your own time • 30, 20-minute video lessons – plus downloadable summaries, quizzes & slides <p>2. Seminars</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-person small group sessions • 11 sessions (1.5 hours each), alternating between lunch & evening sessions to accommodate work and personal schedules 	

¹ Estimated at the time of lending

- Topics include financing, marketing, taxation, networking and more
- Delivered by local experts
- Plus 2-3 fun Peer-to-Peer sessions where you share ideas with fellow participants and mentors in an informal setting

3. Mentorship

- Each entrepreneur is paired with an experienced local business owner (volunteer mentor)
- Mentors share their experiences and effective small business management practices
- Mentors provide guidance to entrepreneurs as they develop their plan

Learn more about [being a mentor](#) and [meet our mentors](#).

Plan Creation

Having a plan is what SMARTstart is all about.

Each entrepreneur walks away from SMARTstart with a plan they have created to set their business up for success.

- Entrepreneurs meet with a Business Advisor from [Community Futures Centre West](#) to set learning goals and determine what plan they will create
- One of three plan types is completed: a business plan, feasibility study or strategic plan
- Mentors and program organizers provide tools and support

The creation of a plan is foundational to SMARTstart. It is expected all participants complete or update a plan by the end of the program.

To date 75, participants have completed the full training program. The mentorship program continues to grow and evolve and past participants (Encore) continue to attend alumni training events. Many mentors from past years remain in strong relationships with participants and past participants and mentors have become sponsors for the next years program. On May 29, 2018 I attended a workshop on Intellectual Property and Security, designed for current participants, mentors and alumni, and there were participants in attendance from all five years of the program, 2014,2015,2016,2017,2018. The program has helped build a very collaborative and cohesive business community in Airdrie.

Lending Client Success

Real Treats Kitchen Ltd.

Real Treat makes “certified organic unapologetically delicious cookies” that carry organic certification. Founded in the fall of 2014, and based in Cochrane, Alberta, Real Treat Cookies are retailed in Quebec, Ontario, Alberta, BC, and Hong Kong. In May of 2014 Real Treat commenced a distribution partnership with UNFI (United Natural Foods Inc) Canada, the largest distributor of natural and organic foods in North America. To meet the increased demand of national retail distribution, as well as opportunities in the hospitality and gift sectors, and an expansion into the US market in year 2019, Real Treat required a larger space, high capacity Equipment for added production and efficiency, additional staff, and operation capital to enable them to take ab advantage of increased purchasing power in anticipation of higher production, making them more efficient while increasing their margins. To make expansion a reality, in October of 2018 CFCWest granted Real Treats a LOC to expand her commercial kitchen in the basement of her home. The major appliances (Ovens, refrigerators) that Jacqueline purchased are all on wheels for easy transferability to a future, larger commercial space. As a result of the expansion Jacqueline has more than doubled her production and has hired 6 new staff for her operation. The following quote just sent to CFCWest shows direct impact resulting from CF funding. “I had a very successful CHFA in Vancouver. Real Treat has been listed at Planet Organic stores nation-wide! As well as Amaranth, Blush Lane, and Nature's Fare in the Okanagan! Plus, a bunch of independents. We are on the verge of conquering the West! “

