

Q&A's / Speaking Notes

Where have you been?

After two years of activity and momentum, the EL organization suffered some volunteer burnout. Though support from members (almost 800 strong) and community partners (nearly 100 in total) was high, the volunteer group was struggling to support the range of needs and possibilities EL represented. And so, in the summer of 2008, the Emerging Leaders Steering Committee resolved to engage a third party group in an objective review of the value and future sustainability of EL.

Supported by a consulting team from the Richard Ivey School of Business, this group of emerging leaders (some who had participated in EL, some who were new to London and even some who were skeptical of the concept) conducted a complete review of the need for EL and its future viability. You can find a full list of these dedicated volunteers on the EL website at www.emergingleaders.ca.

That review is now complete and an action plan for EL's future is underway. The new organizational structure is expected to be finalized in early 2010.

What's the plan?

Over the next 4 months, a tactical team will be working to implement the recommendations of the advisory group as follows:

- To create a new organization that is innovative, inclusive, strategic and intensely collaborative, focused on the retention and development of London's 18-35 year old population;
- To focus specifically in the areas of professional development, community building, networking, demographic research and project funding;
- To ensure a diversified funding model that does not put additional pressure on already limited local funding sources.

Next steps?

Even while the new structure is being finalized, this fall will mark the release of the results of the think tank series and the launch of a number of new community projects and new opportunities for participation and volunteerism, in support of a stronger, more vibrant community.

Why do we need EL?

Though London has a number of organizations working to build our economy, social infrastructure and cultural life, there is no one entity dedicated to the retention and development of the next generation of talent – business and community

leaders, artists and cultural workers, nonprofit innovators, urban and environmental developers, philanthropists. With global competition and the growing workforce shortage, retention and engagement of this demographic is critical to our community's future. Emerging Leaders aims to collaborate across sectors, encourage involvement and investment by our demographic, and facilitate a collective voice for our generation in London's future development. Join us!

What have you done for me lately?

Since 2006, EL has:

- Held 4 think tanks on the future of the London community, involving over 600 emerging leaders;
- Helped dozens of emerging leaders connect with mentors, and many more connect with volunteer opportunities on local boards and special committees;
- Hosted professional development seminars and community lectures on topics ranging from economic development to urban design;
- Connected our members with one another and with new professional and social relationships through networking events and mixers.

Though we've been quiet the past year, we have been working to develop a smart, sustainable structure for EL's longevity...so we can do so much more! While formalizing these plans, we've continued to partner with local leaders and organizations to facilitate mentorship and volunteer board positions, and partnered with other like-minded groups like Young Professionals Social Group and the London Creative Network, to provide opportunities for our demographic to network and socialize.

Where is the think tank report?

Assembling a coherent report out of piles of post-it's, digital photographs of whiteboards, audio and video-recordings and scribbles on cocktail napkins, is no easy task. Though it's been a long time coming, the Emerging London Report, due out this fall, will be an interactive online experience that links like-minds to projects and action plans for change. Best of all, you will be able to get involved with whatever you are passionate about in a few simple clicks. Thanks for your patience and stay tuned!

What's going on with OnBoard and MentorNET?

There are plans to reinvigorate the MentorNET program as a community project under the think tank report. The OnBoard project has just completed its THIRD round of placements, with a fourth to come this fall. Overall, OnBoard has helped place ELs with positions on over 40 community boards, commissions and special committees.

When will there be new community projects?

Following the release of the think tank report, there will be literally DOZENS of new community projects to get involved in...and even lead.

How can I get involved?

In addition to community projects, the new EL structure is designed to maximize the number of volunteer opportunities available. There will be over 50 individual positions within working pods and a new sponsored employee program, all coming in early 2010.