

# Co-op for Change Award

## Award Overview

The Co-op for Change Award is an initiative from the Lassonde School of Engineering, York University that recognizes and celebrates students who are using their co-op to drive meaningful change.

This award highlights the contributions of Lassonde students who take on roles that go beyond traditional industry co-ops through:

Non-profit organizations or registered charities with their main mission being to serve the public good and focusing on addressing societal or community-based challenges

Entrepreneurial ventures with a philanthropic or social mission (e.g. working in a start-up or launching a start-up)

Research initiatives that address community needs or drive social impact (e.g. RAY position, LURA or USRA positions)

## How to be considered for the Co-op for Change Award:

### What qualifies as a non-profit organization for the purpose of this award:

To qualify, the student's co-op must be with an organization that meets both of the following criteria:

#### 1. Organizational Structure

- Registered as a publicly funded or donor supported **non-profit, charity, community organization, public interest organization, or international development organization**

#### 2. Mission Alignment

The organization must demonstrate a **focus on**:

- Social justice, equity, or inclusion
- Public health or community wellbeing
- Environmental sustainability or climate action
- Human rights, advocacy, or international development
- Access to education or technology
- Support for underrepresented, marginalized, or vulnerable populations

### Your Co-op Position:

The students' co-op position must be with an organization whose work demonstrates a clear social mission or community impact. Simply being a non-profit or publicly funded organization would not be sufficient. The students' co-op position itself must actively contribute to public good, social justice, or innovation for positive change.

### Purpose

By honoring students who choose to make a difference, the Co-op for Change Award reflects Lassonde's commitment to innovation, social responsibility, and engineering for the public good.

The Co-op for Change Award seeks to drive positive change and foster global citizenship by:

- Recognizing and celebrating students who use their co-op experiences to support communities, advocate for marginalized groups, or contribute to critical social causes, both locally and globally, through meaningful work.

- Encouraging students to pursue impactful opportunities in the non-profit sector, create their own philanthropic ventures through entrepreneurship, or engage in research that promotes social good and innovation.
- Highlighting the power of co-op education as a platform for addressing societal challenges and creating tangible, lasting impact.
- Promoting the value of purpose-driven co-op education by emphasizing community engagement, global citizenship, and international collaboration as core outcomes of experiential learning.

## Award Details

- **Name:** Co-op for Change Award
- **Administered by:** Lassonde School of Engineering
- **Frequency:** Once annually (Summer term, conditional)
- **Recipients:** One student per year
- **Award Amount:** \$3,000 per one recipient, annually – posted to York University student account
- **Recognition:** Award presented at the annual Lassonde Awards ceremony ; Featured in York University newsletter(s) (conditional), Lassonde Co-op website spotlight, and across social media channels

## Application Process and Requirements

Students who wish to submit an application will be required to provide the items noted below.

### 1. Written Statement and 1 page resume (40 points)

- A personal statement of **500 – 750 words** and 1 page resume

#### **Must clearly outline:**

- Relevance of the position to the student's academic program
- Benefit to the organization and/or community
- Personal and professional growth resulting from the experience
- Evaluated based on clarity, depth of reflection, alignment with award values, and demonstrated impact

### 2. Job Description and Co-op Criteria (15 points)

- A complete and detailed job description must be provided

#### **Must demonstrate that the position:**

- Is supervised, full-time, and minimum 420 hours over 10 – 16 weeks
- Involves active, hands-on responsibilities (not observational)
- Takes place within a non-profit organization, including charitable, community-based, voluntary, or international development organizations or an entrepreneurial co-op through BEST, or research
- Clearly defines duties and responsibilities

### 3. Supporting materials: Video or Multimedia Presentation (15 points)

- A short multimedia piece that demonstrates the depth and impact of the student's co-op experience
- 2-3 minutes in length

- Answer to the question: How did your co-op experience create change in the community, organization or within yourself?

**Format:**

- Short video, audio/narrated presentation or photo montage with voice-over
- Video submission must be a link to a publicly viewable site (can be password protected or linked to access via email only, please use [askcoop@yorku.ca](mailto:askcoop@yorku.ca) as the email account that can access the submission.

**Devices/Tools:**

- Mobile phone, video camera or basic tools i.e. Canva, PowerPoint with video export, Adobe Express, iMovie or other editing tools

**4. Supervisor Statement (20 points)**

- A written supervisor statement or testimonial of 250 – 500 words

**Must clearly outline:**

- How the student contributed to the organization's mission and/or community impact
- Specific outcomes, improvements, or changes that resulted from the students work
- How the student demonstrated leadership, initiative, and/or problem-solving abilities
- Ways that the student demonstrated commitment to social responsibility, innovation, or community engagement

**5. Bonus points (10 points)**

As not for profits generally cannot compete with for profit organizations that have capacity to offer higher than minimum wage salary, up to 10 bonus points will be given to students who accept co-op roles that are well below the Lassonde Co-op average salary of the previous year as published on the [By-the-Numbers Page](#) . Bonus points will be awarded automatically to students who meet this criteria based on your Work Term Details on Experience York.

## 2025 Timelines:

**September 5:** Award call-out

**September 17:** Application deadline

**September 18-21:** Application shortlist review

**September 22-26:** Committee Award selection

**September 30:** Award recipient announcement

**October 8:** Lassonde Award Ceremony presentation of Award