2026/2027 WOMEN4CLIMATETO MENTORSHIP PROGRAM AND PITCH CONTEST

OFFICIAL COMPETITION RULES

Applying to the Women4ClimateTO Mentorship Program and Pitch Competition (the "Competition") constitutes your acceptance of the Official Competition Rules (the “Rules”) outlined herein.

Background

Toronto’s population is made up of diverse communities and groups. The City of Toronto values the contributions made by all residents and is committed to its motto “Diversity Our Strength”.

The City of Toronto recognizes the barriers presented by discrimination and the disadvantages faced by equity-deserving groups and vulnerable populations. In particular, the City recognizes the unique status and cultural diversity of Indigenous communities and their right to self- determination.

Women4ClimateTO acknowledges the importance of intersectionality and encourages applications from women-identifying, trans, and two-spirited applicants of diverse cultures, races, religions and abilities.

1. ORGANIZER

Organizer: The Competition is organized by the City of Toronto, 100 Queen Street West, Toronto, ON M5H 2N2 (the "Organizer").

2. PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

The Competition is open to women-identifying, trans, or two-spirited individuals who have submitted a completed application and who meet all the following criteria at the time of applying:

- at least 18 years old;
- reside, work, or attend a secondary school, college or university in Toronto or the Greater Toronto Area which includes the following municipalities:

    - Peel Region (Mississauga, Brampton, Caledon)
    - York Region (Markham, Richmond Hill, Vaughan, Whitchurch-Stouffville, Aurora, King, Newmarket, East Gwillimbury, Georgina)
    - Durham Region (Pickering, Ajax, Whitby, Oshawa, Clarington, Uxbridge, Scugog, Brock)
    - Halton Region (Oakville, Burlington, Milton, Halton Hills);
- have a climate-focused project, product, or start-up business, with complete intellectual property rights for the project, product, or start-up business;
- have signing authority and can bind the corporation, if applicable.

For individuals who apply to the Competition (the "Entrants"), the mentee selection jury panel will be looking for evidence of their ongoing commitment to climate action in cities and innovative projects.

Initial screening of applications will be conducted by city staff to ensure eligibility of entrants.

The mentee selection jury panel will assess eligible applications based on the clarity of the proposed project, its potential environmental or community impact, feasibility, the applicant's leadership potential, and alignment with the goals of the Women4ClimateTO Mentorship Program. Based on this assessment, shortlisted Entrants will be invited to participate in a virtual panel interview. Following the interviews, the mentee selection jury panel will consider the Entrants' leadership potential, commitment to advancing their climate initiative, and potential to benefit from the Mentorship Program in selecting the final Mentees.

Entrants' projects should involve the residents and communities of Toronto wherever possible. The goals of the project can be global, but they should relate to climate action at the local level. The project must align with the City of Toronto's TransformTO and/or Resilience Strategy. The mentee selection jury panel will consider applications for project ideas related to one or more of the following climate priorities:

- Renewable Energy
- Sustainable Buildings
- Sustainable Transport
- Air Quality
- Circular Economy
- Biodiversity
- Sustainable Waste Management

Entrants:

Interested persons must apply as an individual. We acknowledge that there may be group projects; however, upon applying to the program, one individual must be appointed as representative by the group. Should the group project be selected to participate in the Competition, their appointed representative will act as the Mentee and should the group project be awarded a Prize, their appointed representative will be the recipient of the Prize. Once a group representative has been appointed, no changes can be made. The appointed representative must have signing authority and complete intellectual property rights.

The following individuals are not eligible to enter the Competition:

- City of Toronto employees, its members of council and members of their immediate families (spouse, parent, sibling or child) as well as those living in the same household;
- City of Toronto agency and corporation employees, their board members and members of their immediate families (spouse, parent, sibling or child) as well as those living in the same household;
- members of the jury panels (who are involved in the Mentee selection process and the pitch competition adjudication process) and members of their immediate families (spouse, parent, sibling or child) as well as those living in the same household;
- Mentees of the 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025,2026 Women4ClimateTO Mentorship Program cohort;
- a bidder, proponent or applicant, or their representative, who is party to a concurrent City of Toronto procurement solicitation and award process; and/or
- a bidder, proponent or applicant, or their representative, who is party to a concurrent City of Toronto planning application or approval process.

An "Entrant" acknowledges compliance with and agree to be bound by these Competition Rules including, but not limited to, the eligibility requirements set out above. Entrants who fail to comply with a Competition Rule are subject to disqualification by the Organizer, at the Organizer's sole discretion.

3. COMPETITION DATES AND TIMES:

Applications:

The Competition starts on November 4, 2026, at 9:00 am EST, at which point applications may be made to the Women4ClimateTO Mentorship Program. Applications will be accepted until November 25, 2026, at 11:59.59 pm EST after which time no further applications will be accepted. The sole determinant of time for the making of an application is the City of Toronto records for the application information.

Selection of Mentees:

All completed (valid and verified) applications will be reviewed by a mentee selection jury panel. The Competition judging period for selecting 10 to 12 Mentees will commence on or about December 1, 2026, 9:00 a.m. EST, and will conclude on or about December 8, 2026 11:59:59 p.m. EDT.

The top 15 to 20 shortlisted Entrants will be notified by email on or about December 1, 2026 to participate in a virtual panel interview. Shortlisted Entrants are expected to make themselves available between December 2 and December 5,2026 (exact day and time to be determined). Additional interviews may be scheduled on or before December 8, 2026 as required.

Following the interview process, the selected 10 to 12 Mentees will be notified by means of the e-mail address provided on their applications on or around December 23, 2026.The Mentees must respond by e-mail, confirm their eligibility, and complete all required documentation within three (3) business days of notification. If a Mentee does not respond in accordance with these Competition Rules, they will be disqualified, and the Entrant who was selected as having the next best application by the jury panel will become a Mentee. The Organizer is not responsible for the Mentee failing, for any reason whatsoever, to receive notification, or, for the Organizer failing to receive a Mentee's response.

Entrants who are not selected for the Mentorship Program will be notified by email following the conclusion of the selection and confirmation process.

The official activities of the Women4ClimateTO Mentorship Program will begin during the week of January 18, 2027.

Mentees will be expected to attend an in-person orientation session in Toronto during the week of January 19-21, 2027 (exact date to be determined).

Key Dates:

Application screening	November 26 – December 1, 2026
Interview period	December 2 – 8, 2026
Notification of application results	December 21- 23 2026
Program begins	Week of January 18, 2027 (exact date to be confirmed)

Mentorship Program Activities and Honoraria:

Mentees will participate in six months of activities from January 2027 to July 2027 which include:

- Meetings with three assigned mentors for two, 1 hour, mentorship sessions each, for a total of six sessions.
- Participate in four mentorship knowledge labs on the following topics: Overview of TransformTO Climate Action Strategy, business and financial planning, marketing and communication techniques and pitch preparation.
- Honorarium: Upon successful completion of the six-month mentorship program, including attendance at a minimum of 80 per cent of scheduled program activities, mentees may receive a $500 honorarium, subject to City discretion and budget availability.

4. HOW TO APPLY:

Entrants must apply online by visiting the Competition website at Toronto.ca/women4Climate and following the links and instructions to make an application. For purposes of this Competition, receipt of an application occurs when the City of Toronto receives the electronic application. Entrants may only submit one application per project and only the first application will be valid. Each application will be registered and time coded.

Any attempt or suspected attempt to use robotic, automatic, programmed, or other illicit means to make an application, or any other methods not authorized by these

Competition Rules, for example but not limited to, creating multiple accounts, identities, or registrations, shall be deemed, all in the Organizer's sole discretion, as tampering and may disqualify the individual. Applications that contain false or incomplete information may be deemed void. Applications that do not conform with or satisfy any or all the conditions of the Competition Rules may be deemed void. All applications become the property of the Organizer upon receipt.

Women4ClimateTO may contact applicants regarding their applications, including requesting additional information, schedule interviews, and notifying them of their application status, using the contact information provided in their applications.

5. PITCH COMPETITION AND PRIZES:

A Pitch Competition taking place in June 2027, or July 2027 (date to be determined) will be judged by a pitch competition jury panel composed of one City staff member and two external members.

The Pitch Competition jury panel will evaluate Mentees based on the following criteria:

- Clarity of the project: The Mentee's ability to clearly communicate their climate initiative, its objectives, and the problem it seeks to address.
- Environmental or community impact: The potential of the project to contribute to climate action and deliver environmental or community benefits.
- Feasibility: The potential for the project to be implemented or advanced, considering its current stage of development.
- Project development: The progress made in developing or advancing the project throughout the Women4ClimateTO Mentorship Program.
- Pitch presentation: The Mentee's ability to effectively communicate their project and respond to questions from the jury panel.

The jury panel will consider both the written submission and the pitch presentation in determining the Winner and Runners-up of the Pitch Competition.

Competition Prizes (the "Prizes") will be awarded to a total of four of the Mentees, which include (2) two runners-up, (1) one “Jury’s Choice” and (1) one winner of the Pitch Competition (the "Runners-up", “Jury’s Choice” and "Winner") and will consist of the following**:**

Each Runner-Up will receive a total Prize of $5,000 each, in accordance with the following:

- $3,000 within 90 days after the award is made; and
- $2,000 following submission of a short survey report on the progress of the project. The report must be submitted to the Organizer no later than October 1, 2027. Subject to receipt and review of the report by the Organizer, the final payment of $2,000 will be made within 60 days of submission.

Jury's Choice will receive a total Prize of $5,000, in accordance with the following:

- $3,000 within 90 days after the award is made; and
- $2,000 following submission of a short survey report on the progress of the project. The report must be submitted to the Organizer no later than October 1, 2027. Subject to receipt and review of the report by the Organizer, the final payment of $2,000 will be made within 60 days of submission.

The Winner will receive a total Prize of $15,000, in accordance with the following:

- $10,000 within 90 days after the award is made; and
- $5,000 following submission of a short survey report on the progress of the project. The report must be submitted to the Organizer no later than October 1, 2027. Subject to receipt and review of the report by the Organizer, the final payment of $5,000 will be made within 60 days of submission.

Prizes will be mailed to the address on file for the Runner-up, Jury's Choice and Winner or alternate arrangements may be made. Payment does not constitute an employer/employee relationship between the City and the award recipient. The recipient agrees that this is a one-time award and is not tied to the City of Toronto's recruitment selection process for employment.

Prize Eligibility

- The Mentees must attend at least 80 per cent of the Women4ClimateTO Mentorship Program activities to be eligible to participate in the Pitch Competition and the Prizes and must complete session evaluation forms following each activity.

- Women4ClimateTO Mentorship Program activities and the Pitch Competition may be held virtually or in-person. Mentees will be notified if Women4ClimateTO Mentorship Program activities and/or the Pitch Competition are to be held in-person and/or virtually in advance.

Pitch Competition Eligibility

- Mentees must complete an online written submission. Questions will be provided two – to three weeks in advance of the pitch competition.
- The written submission will be reviewed by the jury panel in advance of the Pitch Competition and will be considered along with the mentee's pitch as part of the overall evaluation of their project.
- Prior to the Pitch Competition, Mentees must register for a time slot to deliver their pitch. If accommodation is required, notice must be provided at least 15 business days in advance by emailing women4climateTO@toronto.ca.
- Pitches may be conducted in-person or virtually over the Teams platform. Only visual aids that can be viewed equally as well over the Teams platform as during an in-person presentation may be used.
- Pitches will be five minutes in length and there will be up to eight minutes allotted for a question-and-answer period with the jury panel, for a total allotted time of thirteen minutes.
- Mentees may pitch only one idea or concept which must be the original work of the individual and must be the concept initially accepted into the Women4ClimateTO Mentorship Program.
- Pitch ideas or concepts deemed by the jury panel to be deceptive, insincere, unethical, immoral, or offensive may be disqualified from the Competition.
- Mentees are reminded that by entering and participating in this Competition they have licensed, for the purposes of the Competition only, intellectual property rights in any application or pitch to the Sponsor, including, but not limited to, copyright and all economic rights, and have waived their moral rights with respect of the use of the license, with no compensation or further consent required. More generally, confidentiality is not guaranteed in any way and any material that the mentee does not wish to be disclosed to other competitors, audience members, judges or anyone else should not be included in their submission or their pitch.

Jury's Choice Award

- The Jury's Choice Award shall be awarded, at the sole discretion of the pitch competition jury panel, to one (1) Mentee whose project demonstrates exceptional merit beyond the primary pitch evaluation criteria. In determining the recipient of the award, the jury panel may consider factors including, but not limited to, the project's alignment with the TransformTO Net Zero Strategy and the City of Toronto's climate objectives, demonstrated community impact, significant progress or development achieved throughout the Women4ClimateTO Mentorship Program, creativity, perseverance, leadership, and other distinguishing qualities deemed deserving of recognition. The Jury's Choice Award is intended to recognize a Mentee whose project and participation have demonstrated exceptional promise and achievement throughout the program, including merit that may not be fully reflected through pitch delivery alone.

6. ODDS OF WINNING:

The odds of winning depend on the number of applications, the quality of the applications and quality of the Mentee pitches.

Selection is based on an assessment of applicants and their proposed climate initiatives and not random chance.

7. COMMUNICATION WITH THE RUNNERS-UP, JURY'S CHOICE AND WINNER:

The Runners-up, Jury's Choice and Winner will be notified after the Competition. The Runners-up, Jury's Choice and Winner must complete and return by e-mail, the "Prize winners declaration" form, and all other required documentation within 5 business days. If a Runner-up, Jury's Choice or Winner does not return the required documentation in accordance with these Competition Rules, they will be disqualified, will not receive their Prize, and the Prizes will be awarded according to the rankings of the remaining Mentees. For example, if the Winner is disqualified, then the second-ranked Mentee will become the Winner, the third-ranked Mentee will become the first Runner-up and the fourth-ranked Mentee will come the second Runner-up. The Organizer is not responsible for the failure for any reason whatsoever of a Runner-up, Jury's Choice or Winner to receive notification or for the Organizer to receive a Runner-up, Jury's Choice or Winner's response.

8. RELEASE AND INDEMNIFICATION:

All Entrants assume any and all liability for any injury or damage caused, or claimed to be caused, by entering, participating in the Competition and release, discharge and hold harmless the Organizer, its members of council, officers, directors, employees, agents, representatives, successors and assignees and all others associated with the administration, development and execution of the Competition ("Released Parties") from and against any and all manner of action, cause of action, claim or demand, loss or injury, use or misuse of the Prizes, suit, debt, covenant, contract, including legal fees and expenses, whatsoever, including but not limited to, claims based on negligence, breach of contract and fundamental breach, failure of any third party contractor or supplier used in connection with any aspect of the Competition to perform or deliver any goods or services, any act of God or any other event beyond the Released Parties' control, any dissatisfaction of any kind by an Entrant with any aspect of the Competition or the Prizes, liability for physical injury, death, or property damage which the Entrants, their heirs, successors or assignees have, might have or could have suffered, by reason of or arising out of their participation in the Competition.

All Entrants indemnify the Released Parties against any loss, damage, or expense, including legal fees that any of the Released Parties may suffer or incur as a result of any non-compliance by an Entrant with any of the Competition Rules or participation in the Competition.

By entering and participating in this Competition, each Entrant warrants that their application, and each Mentee warrants that their pitch, is original and does not infringe any third-party intellectual property and agrees to license, for the purposes of the Competition only, intellectual property rights in any application or pitch to the Organizer, including, but not limited to, copyright and all economic rights, and to waive their moral rights respect of the use of the license, with no compensation or further consent required.

The Runners-up, Jury's Choice and Winner must provide proof of identification and sign a Declaration of Prize Eligibility and Liability/Publicity Release form (the "Declaration") to: confirm compliance with the Competition Rules; agree to accept the Prizes as awarded; and release, discharge and hold harmless the "Released Parties". The signed Declaration must be returned to the Organizer by e-mail within five business days after it is sent to the Runners-up, Jury's Choice and Winner.

The Organizer is not responsible for: incorrect or inaccurate application information which may affect an individual's ability to participate in the Competition or be awarded

the Prizes, including but not limited to human error, technical malfunctions, lost or delayed applications for any reason, omission, or any combination thereof, and applications which fail to fully comply with these Competition Rules; technical failures of any kind at any time, including but not limited to, malfunctions, interruptions, or disconnections in phone lines or network hardware or software; lost, incomplete, delayed, mutilated or misdirected applications or Declarations; injury or damage to an Entrant's computer or to any other individual's computer related to or resulting from participating in, or downloading any material regarding the Competition or being awarded the Prizes; any injury or damage to persons or property which may be caused, directly or indirectly, in whole or in part, from an Entrant's participation in the Competition or receipt or use or misuse of the Prizes; the security or privacy of information transmitted via computer networks or for breaches of privacy due to interference by third party computer "hackers" or otherwise; late, lost, misdirected or unsuccessful efforts to notify a Runner-up, Jury's Choice or Winner; or any part of the Prizes that cannot be awarded due to acts of God, acts of war, natural disasters, weather, acts of terrorism or other factors beyond the Released Parties' control.

9. CONDUCT:

The Organizer reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to disqualify any Entrant if they are found to be: violating these Competition Rules; tampering or attempting to tamper with the application process or the operation of the Competition; acting in an un-sportsperson-like or disruptive manner, or with the intent to annoy, abuse, threaten or harass any other person.

Any attempt by an Entrant or any other individual to undermine the legitimate operation of the Competition may be a violation of criminal and/or civil laws. Should any such attempt be made, the Organizer reserves the right to seek remedies and damages to the fullest extent permitted by law.

10. OTHER CONDITIONS:

Termination or Amendment of the Competition:

The Organizer reserves the right to terminate or amend this Competition at any time and in any way, without prior notice. Without limiting the foregoing, if for any reason, the Competition is not capable of running as originally planned, such as tampering, the Organizer reserves the right to cancel the Competition.

Publicity:

All Mentees agree to permit the Organizer or its designate to interview the Mentee, and if selected, the Runner-up, Jury's Choice or the Winner. Further, the Mentee agrees to be photographed, filmed and recorded, and agrees to permit the Organizer to use in any media throughout the world in perpetuity, their name, Prize won, biographic information, likeness, photograph, voice, audio or video recording and/or any statements made by them regarding the Competition for purposes of publicity or promotion without notice or additional compensation, notification or permission, except where prohibited by law. All Mentees, whether or not they are chosen as the Runners-up or Winner agree to sign a publicity release confirming such consent prior to participating in the Competition.

Law:

The Competition is void where prohibited by law and is subject to all applicable Canadian federal, provincial, territorial, municipal, and local laws. The Competition and these Competition Rules shall be governed exclusively by the laws of the province of Ontario and the federal laws of Canada applicable in Ontario, and any dispute shall be adjudicated by the courts sitting in Toronto, Ontario.

Intellectual Property of the Organizer:

All intellectual property of the Organizer, including but not limited to trademarks, logos, designs, promotional materials, web pages, source codes, images, drawings, illustrations, slogans, and representations are owned by the Organizer. All rights are reserved. Unauthorized copying or use of any copyrighted material or other intellectual property without the express written consent of the Organizer is strictly prohibited.

No Purchase:

No purchase of any kind is necessary to enter or win and making a purchase will not increase your chances of winning.