

SOCIAL INNOVATION SHARED SPACE

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JONI BAECHLER, FORMER MAYOR

“ Over the past few years there has been a dramatic shift in the way in which business, innovation and enterprise is conducted. Co-location, community hubs, incubators, hot desks are a variety of examples in which mission and market based organizations can collaborate, innovate, and engage in a more productive and meaningful manner.

A collaborative led by Pillar Network, Emerging Leaders, London Arts Council and the London Heritage Council, will offer affordable shared space for groups such as social purpose businesses, entrepreneurs, nonprofits, and social enterprises. This modern approach to shared resources, operational efficiencies, networking interactions, co-locational engagement, and shared knowledge will allow the opportunity to develop systemic solutions and collective impact changes for complex social problems in London. This shared space will allow the collective to address economic, social, environmental and cultural challenges in the city with outcomes intended to inspire, connect and empower people to achieve solutions and realize their potential.

LINA BOWDEN, SOCIAL FINANCE CONSULTANT, COMMUNITY ADVOCATE

“ London joins cities all around the world in a growing movement that acknowledges the power of shared spaces. We are creating a place where new thinking to old problems is nurtured, resources are shared and collaboration becomes the norm. At a personal level, in my work in social finance, the social innovation shared space will be an important means of connecting with other like-minded change makers and provide a place for executing community engagement initiatives. I look forward to being part of the energy of this new space and be a part of a shift in the way we get things done in London.

MICHELLE BOYER, PRINCIPAL, ON COMMUNICATION

“ An intentionally collaborative space like this has the potential to create a thriving community, and a place for like-minded individuals to uncover opportunities for London to continue to prosper. Social innovation shared spaces that have been created in other cities including Toronto and New York have proven the viability of the concept.

ADAM CAPLAN, FOUNDER, VIDEO PRODUCTION START-UP WEB.ISOD.ES & CENTRE FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION (CSI) TENANT

“ Innovation - once the near-exclusive domain of unkempt professors and unbathed inventors working alone in labs and garages - has necessarily evolved into a shared activity. Whether global, national, or local, finding ways to make our World a better place requires that we work together collaboratively and coincidentally. A shared space for social innovation removes barriers for communication, provides lubricants for conversation, and fosters an environment where the friendly collision of ideas, resources, and people can result in the activities, associations, and applications that is the stuff of a better tomorrow for all.

JUSTIN CARTER, CO-FOUNDER, NATIONWORKS

“ Social innovators often speak about breaking down barriers in the communities that they serve, but they may often fail to look at the barriers that separate organizations and change makers. The traditional office model - separate individuals and organizations working in separate, discrete locations - represents a significant barrier to the free and spontaneous exchange of knowledge, ideas, and insights as well as the emergence of new partnerships and collaborations. The growth of shared spaces stems from the insight that spaces need to be as innovative as the people who work in them.

As the founder and former manager of The Forge, a shared space in Sudbury, Ontario, I have seen the challenges and benefits in developing not only the physical space but also the community that will bring that space to life. I am excited by the potential of the shared space project to accelerate and enhance the impact of non-profits, social enterprises and other organizations in London, and I believe that the partners leading this project are uniquely positioned to bring a vibrant, living space to the downtown core.

PAUL H. COCKER, PRESIDENT, PHC-ADVISORS INC.

“ I was originally asked to assist Pillar Nonprofit Network by ensuring that they had a firm budget for construction and code upgrades. My background in the construction industry allowed me to create detailed costs for the anticipated work, on a volunteer basis. I was assisted by several consulting engineering firms and construction sub trades to prepare solid budgets. We ended up investigating and reporting on six buildings in the downtown core.

I soon became aware that the Pillar team took the term ‘due diligence’ very seriously. All decisions were vetted by their board, and my cost projections were incorporated into a detailed business plan, which was shared openly with me.

I am in a position to state that the Social Innovation Shared Space Project has been thoroughly developed, and is truly a business venture. I strongly recommend that the City of London supports this funding request.

DAVID CORKE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, LONDON TRAINING CENTRE

“ London Training Centre strongly encourages City Council to consider this one-time request of \$339,000 for start-up costs and capital costs related to accessibility improvements.

As a self-sustained social enterprise we know that the act of creating social change is possible and well beyond concept and idea. We believe that the collective leadership, energy and ideas that would flow from this shared space would inspire, encourage and create the city we seek to create.

KEVIN COUGLER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, PARTNERS IN RESEARCH

“ London is well served by many socially active organizations, volunteer organizations and individual volunteers committed to coming up with new ideas, large and small, for improving the lives of those they serve in response to local problems and social needs. Through a social innovation space such ideas can spread to other individuals or organizations, whether as the effect of a deliberate strategy or simply through a process of diffusion. Committed individuals, working in close proximity, sharing resources and ideas, are strengthened through that sharing and cooperative effort.

Partners In Research fully supports the efforts of Pillar and their partners as they seek City of London funding for one-time capital costs. Social innovation is urgently needed to address many of the complex problems facing the community, the province, the nation and our world.

AL DAY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, N'AMERIND FRIENDSHIP CENTRE

“ The N'Amerind Friendship Centre strongly supports Pillar Non-Profit Network for \$339,000.00. The non-profit sector operates in an environment of limited resources; Pillar has been extremely effective in organizing the non-profit network in London, which is demonstrated through their large membership.

By supporting Pillar's application, The City Council will enable Pillar to continue their excellent work in the City of London by addressing a growing demand for information disseminated through conferences and workshops for the non-profit sector which in turns enables the non-profit members to provide effective services to their clients.

On behalf of N'Amerind, we look forward to seeing a positive reaction to this innovative application and encourage the City Council to consider submission of the Pillar Non-Profit Network organization.

CHARLENE DOAK-GEBAUER, FOUNDER & CHAIR, CHILD PORNOGRAPHY HURTS

“ I have had the privilege of attending a tour of your proposed shared office facility. It is an excellent building with tremendous character.

The beauty of sharing office space with other small business owners is that there would be a collegial atmosphere. Having a small business tends to isolate owners. The collegial setting helps to keep spirits positive and progressive.

The fact that various office furniture, kitchen use and copying machines would be available is a tremendous saving. The fact that sharing of ideas, such as advertising, marketing, legal issues, insurance issues, business concepts and the like, is of tremendous value.

This organization is just building. To have an office with others would help build this much-needed organization in today's society. This would be facilitated because of the many people and their connections that would help to communicate the vision and mandate of our organization. The location is in the core, which is absolutely an asset.

DAN DOUGLAS, DEAN, CENTRE FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION, FANSHAWE COLLEGE

“ The establishment of a Social Innovation Shared Space is strongly supported by Fanshawe College as a means to fostering and nurturing the next generation of social innovators. Students and graduates of Fanshawe College seeking to establish themselves as social innovators, will need access to a local support system that can provide a wide range of supports they would otherwise be unable to obtain. Social innovation business development, creating a business plan, access to a formal business address, networking, administrative support, and cross-sector collaboration are but a few of the services a social innovation shared space would provide. Such a center would provide economic and social benefits to the community at large by providing support to those individuals dedicated to making their community a better place.

KATHRYN EGGERT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, DAYA COUNSELLING CENTRE

“ Inspiring and transforming our community of London...this is the opportunity of the Social Innovation Shared Space. It is the opportunity to create systemic change through innovation, engagement, cross-sector collaboration and collective action, for some of the most complex social problems in London – changes that will make a real difference for the citizens of our community.

Daya Counselling Centre helps some of the most vulnerable people in our community – we make it possible for people with financial barriers to access experienced quality therapeutic counselling...over 1000 people each year. Daya is a prospective tenant in this community initiative. We intend to operate a social purpose line of business from the location to generate additional revenue so that more people can make life improvements with the help of affordable counselling. We know it will provide opportunities to access new

networks and maximize resources...and we hope to be the face of self-care and mental health for all – including innovators!

As a professional, I have previous experience leading an organization from a shared space and can attest to the value of it as a community hub and change agent - it works and it is an investment in a better community.

LAURA ELLIOTT, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, THAMES VALLEY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

“ Thank you for the recent tour of the future Social Innovation Shared Space in London. As we mentioned, the Thames Valley District School Board is looking for new opportunities to encourage and inspire innovation in our schools. We believe the shared space model will help nurture new ideas and positive change - both vitally important to the future of education and community collaboration.

JOHNNY FANSHER, SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE INVESTMENT ADVISOR

“ Thank you for considering Pillar Nonprofit Network's request for accessibility renovation and operational funding. Our organizing committee is very excited to make a home on 201 King Street for our new Social Innovation Shared Space, a project I have been closely involved with since its inception in January 2008.

Our space will be similar to Toronto's Centre for Social Innovation where I have kept hot-desk space since May 2007. What we have built in Toronto throughout the past decade has been a major game changer for innovative nonprofits and social entrepreneurs alike.

Creating a similar centre here in London bodes well for economic development in our community and enables our non-profit tenants and partners to reduce our overhead expenses with a vision towards everyone becoming less reliant on public funding en route to greater self reliance and sustainability through effective cost control, social entrepreneurship and collaboration.

As you contemplate the feasibility of funding our request, please recognize that once our space is running at full capacity, we will be the home for more than 100 tenant organizations. With that said, please see that our proposal is much more than a request from one organization alone. This is a request for support for a much greater cause, which has the potential to link London to a worldwide network of similar social innovation hubs and shared spaces.

When I was embraced by Toronto's Centre for Social Innovation and simultaneously branded an Agent of Social Change, I seriously contemplated the possibility of moving from London to Toronto to continue building my Socially Responsible Investment practice. Instead, I resolved to galvanize Londoners towards building a similar centre right here for the benefit of our entire community.

For the past seven years, countless individuals and organizations have collaborated towards shaping our vision to create not only a home for social innovation in London but to leave a lasting legacy for future generations of Londoners. We have been extraordinarily thoughtful about every detail all the way and we will be grateful and responsible stewards of every dollar that is invested towards helping us succeed in the realization of our vision.

We invite you to join us on a mission and thank you wholeheartedly for your consideration of this request.

CARA FINN, GENERAL MANAGER, THE BUSINESS HELP CENTRE (CFDC) OF MIDDLESEX COUNTY

“ Pillar Nonprofit Network’s Social Innovation Shared Space is an exciting initiative that the Business Help Centre (CFDC) of Middlesex County is excited to see get off the ground.

Collaborative models and sharing of resources are critical to strengthening the nonprofit sector. We have seen first hand in Middlesex County how shared space and resources can make a difference to a nonprofit organization. We are happy to hear that our neighbours in London will now have access to resources, partnerships and space to grow their nonprofit organizations, social enterprises and innovative business models.

The Social Innovation Shared Space would be a valuable resource to the City of London.

KEITH GIBBONS, PRESIDENT & CEO, MCCORMICK CANADA

“ McCormick Canada believes strongly in supporting the Community that has been our home for more than 130 years. We have a thriving business and much of this success is credited to the employees who have contributed to our company for so many years. Our employees tell us that London is a wonderful place to work, have a family and to play. But there are also ongoing challenges with respect to the need to deal with the social issues that do exist in our City. We believe that the creation of the Social Innovation Shared Space is an innovative approach to help with dealing with these issues. It will be complementary to much of the good work that goes on in our City today - a wonderful way for different sectors to work together - including business. We are very proud to support this initiative and to contribute to positive social change in our Community.

DAVID GLEN, OWNER, GLEN FARMS HERBS & PRESERVES INC.

“ As a lifelong micro-entrepreneur recently re-located to London, Glen Farms can’t wait for the opening of the Garvey Building. The dynamic opportunities to connect young grads in the tech and food industries with seasoned entrepreneurs will, for me, make this the new creative center of London. The inspiration that will come by assembling this critical mass of like minded people will make this the fastest place in London to grow new businesses of every type. Collaboration is the key to innovation and this shared-space creates a platform for new economic engines and business models that can address the social problems of poverty, nutrition, and community well being.

JAMES M. GOOD, PRESIDENT, GOOD FOUNDATION

“ The City of London is fortunate to be home to the Pillar Nonprofit Network. The organization has considerable experience working with local environmental, social and cultural groups. It is uniquely positioned to coordinate the exciting project of the Social Innovation Shared Space for London and Region. The recent purchase of 201 King Street has been done in the context of other successful Canadian social innovation projects, and with the support of many local organizations. There are still challenges of funding and financing the vision. Londoners face requests from many agencies, but it is worth keeping in mind that funds delivered here benefit and strengthen the entire sector.

TANIA GOODINE, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT ENGAGEMENT, LIBRO CREDIT UNION

“ Libro Credit Union enjoys a long history of partnering with the enterprises, not-for-profits and volunteer organizations in the 21 communities we serve across southwestern Ontario. As a credit union, our co-operative values and focus on mutual success play an integral role in building regional prosperity, for the two million people, farms, businesses and institutions that call this great place home.

Credit unions were founded on the social purpose of neighbour helping neighbour, and today, it shines brightly on our culture. That culture, Be Libro, drives everything we do, which is to grow prosperity in southwestern Ontario by transforming banking. We understand growing prosperity is much more than financial transactions and balance sheets. It encompasses a culture of contributing to the common good and investing in our local communities.

This is why it is so important to fashion mutually inclusive spaces where diverse groups of people can come together and work with one another to collectively build prosperity around a common goal, a clear vision and a shared purpose. This is the bold opportunity Pillar's Social Innovation Shared Space sets out to accomplish. The Social Innovation Shared Space has tremendous potential to foster collaboration and support collective impact – bringing people together to support large-scale social change to make lasting and meaningful impact, creating stronger and better places for all of us to live, work and play.

Libro will continue working to leverage our core business to be a catalyst for change to deliver real and sustainable impact throughout the region. As well, the Social Innovation Shared Space creates the type of collaboration environment necessary to effect change, and we commend and support Pillar's efforts to make this centre a reality.

ANDREA HALWA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, LONDON ARTS COUNCIL AND ANDREA MCNAUGHTON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, LONDON HERITAGE COUNCIL

“ The London Arts Council and London Heritage Council have been co-located for the past four years resulting in a stronger resource for culture in London. Streamlined communication, shared resources and staff expertise have resulted in increased visibility and funding for programs and services supporting our vibrant culture sector. Moving to the shared space will enhance our existing collaborative model and create future opportunities to collaborate, communicate and grow with more like-minded organizations.

ZUL KARMALI & NASHILA DHARSHI, HOTEL METRO

“ Social innovation and the prospect of creating positive change is embedded in the DNA of newer generations. Social Innovation is the future of our interconnected world and will undoubtedly, with the help of technology, lead us into the future.

The SISS London initiative follows in the footsteps of other progressive populations and is a necessity for staying relevant to future Canadians. This facility should be seen as taking steps toward embarking on the journey to a new and enlightened future; a future where London will be an integral part. This journey requires creating opportunities that allow for discourse and the encouragement of ideas toward innovation. Having personal experience with the Centre of Social Innovation (CSI) in Toronto, I have seen first hand how shared spaces can attract minds, ignite action and provide support to those who directly help our communities.

Along with other local businesses, we look forward to participating and supporting the SISS initiative in our City.

TIM KINGSMILL, LONG-TIME OWNER, KINGSMILLS

“ My first contact with the Pillar Nonprofit Network occurred in October 2013 when the Kingsmill building was listed for sale. At that time, Pillar’s proposal was to purchase the building and convert a portion of it to a Social Innovation Shared Space (SISS). It was through this initial encounter that I began to realize the extent of Pillar’s reach within the community. Their amazing professionalism and dedicated hard-working team make them a driving force in our community for social innovation and change. They have a vision for a SISS and are dedicated to seeing it operational. It is by working with and supporting this dedicated group that our community can overcome some of our many challenges and move forward. We need the new ideas, inspired individuals and opportunities that a SISS would foster in our city.

GUS KOTSIOMITIS, VICE PRESIDENT, COMMERCIAL FINANCIAL SERVICES, ROYAL BANK OF CANADA

“ As part of RBC’s commitment to social finance, social enterprise and social innovation to ignite change, we are pleased to support Pillar Nonprofit Network in its efforts to launch a Social Innovation Shared Space in London. We strongly believe that this initiative, and the programs and services that it will deliver, can open doors to new opportunities, stimulate entrepreneurship, job creation and drive economic growth in London and the surrounding areas. We look forward to partnering with Pillar and the many for-profit social businesses and nonprofit social enterprises that will be supported and nurtured within this space. Together, we can make positive contributions to the well-being of our community and demonstrate the power of social finance and social enterprise to deliver significant social, environmental and financial returns.

JOHN A. LAPORTA, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE, TVCC

“ Pillar Nonprofit Network is providing City Council with an ‘opportunity’ in keeping with its focus on innovation and enhancing downtown London. The ‘opportunity’ comes in the form of a grant request for Pillar’s Social Innovation Share Space. The requested strategic investment would result in benefits to the City’s economy, integration of nonprofit service providers, collaborative community problem solving, and the modelling of sustainable downtown residency.

Thames Valley Children’s Centre is totally supportive of this innovative endeavour and urges London City Council to support the Pillar one-time funding request.

LARRY LAU, PARTNER OF ATMOS MARKETING, BOARD OF DIRECTOR OF CCNC

“ As an entrepreneur who started my business immediately out of university, a social innovation shared space (SISS) would have accelerated the early stages of my journey as it would have allowed me the opportunity to meet like-minded individuals and build meaningful relationships. While establishing and growing a business, it can be extremely difficult to interact with external individuals because of time and proximity. A SISS can help remove these barriers and create an environment for collaboration.

For a board of directors of a local not-for-profit cultural organization, a SISS can help us and similar groups become more integrated within our local community. For many organizations, a SISS can provide a feasible and cost-effective alternative to existing office space, potentially reducing overhead costs that can increase funding of critical programs instead. In addition, a SISS can help maximize the exposure of smaller groups and potentially become a catalyst for strategic partnerships.

By supporting the SISS, the City of London would be investing into itself, creating an environment for entrepreneurs and non-profit/not-for-profit organizations to succeed - at least from my perspective.

ANDREW LOCKIE, CEO, UNITED WAY LONDON & MIDDLESEX

“ Shared space has been a conversation of great interest for London’s nonprofit sector for years. We wholeheartedly believe that the time is now to move beyond talking about the idea to introducing this social innovation platform here in London. As a funder of social service agencies in London and Middlesex County, we know that maximizing resources - across funders, across nonprofits, and across sectors - is more important than ever. Yes, shared space offers opportunities for co-location and other resource alignment. However, what is most exciting is the chance to leverage expertise, passion, and innovation.

Social entrepreneurs and cutting edge nonprofits have proven to benefit from a shared environment. This is a concept that is not only demonstrating success in Toronto; for example, our United Way colleagues in Winnipeg have opened a shared space social incubator like what is being explored through this proposal. The energy there is electric, and could be easily replicated right here in London (with our own local spin, of course!). Most importantly, shared space can foster collaboration on some of our most pressing social issues. For example, our community has consistently documented the needs related to poverty reduction. Addressing these gaps require innovation and start up efforts like social enterprise. In this case, shared space is a natural opportunity to advance these efforts. Similarly, engagement and inclusion of newcomers and ethnocultural organizations is a primary theme of the London Middlesex Local Immigration Partnership; again, shared space creates a new venue to move this work forward.

JANETTE MACDONALD, CEO & GENERAL MANAGER, DOWNTOWN LONDON

“ In my opinion the Social Innovation Shared Space is long overdue in London. The Hive at 55 in Lower Manhattan, Platform 302 in Hamilton and CSI in Toronto have proven that this model of collaboration not only works for the individuals who utilize the space but indeed attracts entrepreneurs from other cities and countries as well.

The challenges faced by London, although not unique to us, requires the full time passion and dedication of the organizations leading this critical initiative to both stem the brain drain and create an environment where entrepreneurship is not only encouraged but is affordable and nurtured.

The Downtown location is the icing on the cake for London's Downtown and we are proud to play a small role in the creation and ongoing sustainability of this excellent Social Innovation Shared Space.

SR. THERESA MAHONEY, THE URSULINES OF CHATHAM

“ I would like to offer my support for the concept of shared space currently being pursued by Pillar. It is a wonderfully creative response to enable many people to have access to just the amount of space they need in concert with other creative people. This can offer not only a cost effective way to have space for new ideas to flourish but also a wonderful way to spark others to be creative. While offering an opportunity for entrepreneurs to develop there is the added benefit of building our civic community.

The requested funds (\$339,000) are primarily for providing accessibility which is essential for all workers and also to meet the standards of the city’s accessibility requirements. The \$50,000 will be matched so city funding provides leverage for access to other funding.

The Ursulines of Chatham, of whom I am a member, living in London, have been following the development of this project and have donated a substantial amount of money as evidence of our support. We are proud to be a part of this exciting opportunity for a fresh look at building our London community. I hope that the city of London can see this opportunity as a wise and prudent way to help provide creative work for many young and not so young people.

Pillar has proven itself to be careful in planning and determined in their search for the best place to put down roots. I hope the City of London can add its financial support to solidify the next step.

CHRIS MOSS, PRINCIPAL CONSULTANT, MOSS LEADERSHIP CONSULTING

“ Shared space is a necessity in larger, more progressive communities who care to positively impact the social causes they face. My first hand experience seeing cities across Ontario who have implemented a shared space model is that many super-cool ideas come forward that actually change the way we help our most vulnerable citizens. The creativity that is sparked brings together many smart people who normally do not work together. Putting together academics with nonprofit leaders and entrepreneurs is a match made in heaven. Conversations that happen in person, while in this type of space, evolve into the most amazing concepts that have proven to make a huge difference. I've visited spaces in Stratford, several in Toronto and Ottawa and have seen their successes. I am so excited to have been on this journey with Pillar Nonprofit Network and I can't wait to see what will be possible in our great city because of this shared space opportunity.

ABE OUDSHOORN, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, ARTHUR LABATT FAMILY SCHOOL OF NURSING, WESTERN UNIVERSITY & CENTRE FOR RESEARCH ON HEALTH EQUITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

“ London is host to Western University, a hub of cutting edge research on health and social sciences. At the same time, London community agencies provide incredible front-line health and social services. However, there has been a gap in bringing together research and practice, and there is much opportunity to collaborate to do more. The Social Innovation Shared Space offers an ideal platform to build this community-university collaboration, and is the reason we have identified this space as the location for our new Centre for Research on Health Equity and Social Inclusion. This collaborative space will enhance how we as academics can generate and apply knowledge that is of use to the people of London.

DAVID PATCHELL-EVANS, FOUNDER AND CEO OF GOODLIFE FITNESS

“ London is ready for an injection of innovation. We have the talent, the passion and the drive to succeed in bringing together the City's most socially-aware organizations for one common goal: to improve our social, economic and cultural challenges. Pillar's vision to establish the Social Innovation Shared Space will create the cross-sector collaboration and spirit of camaraderie that is essential to making positive changes in our community.

GREG PLAYFORD, SOCIAL FINANCIAL COMMITTEE, LONDON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

“ The Social Innovation Shared Space will be an important, and potentially transformative, addition to Downtown London. Progressive cities around the world are finding that, more and more, people are looking to pursue good ideas independently or with collaborators. The new digital work environment encourages this and allows new enterprises to nurture and grow without large amounts of capital and corporate supports. Our new Social Innovation Shared Space will capture this environment and permit the interactions and provide the supports that will see good ideas flourish. It is well located and a perfect compliment to the post secondary education expansions in our core and the fast developing tech and digital sector. It is the right project at the right time for Downtown London and very deserving of support.

JOHN POLLOCK, MANAGING DIRECTOR, SOUTHWESTERN ONTARIO ANGEL GROUP

“ I am deeply impressed with the collaboration, commitment and vision of all of the partners working to bring a Social Innovation Shared Space to London. A welcoming downtown space for community innovators and entrepreneurs is a potential game changer and a clear demonstration that we "get it". Culture and strategy are linked. Let's nurture all those fragile green shoots working to build a high-energy, innovative, and creative downtown.

SIMON PONT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH LONDON

“ At this stage, I see the Social Innovation Shared Space as being an excellent ‘fit’ for the future development and integration of Neighbourhood Watch London into the Not-For-Profit landscape of London.

MARTHA POWELL, PRESIDENT & CEO, LONDON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

“ London Community Foundation has been an early supporter of the Social Innovation Shared Space through its Community Vitality grant to fund the initial feasibility study and business plan. I truly believe the Social Innovation Shared Space has the power to create change in the London community through innovation and cross-collaboration. Providing non-profits, social enterprises and social entrepreneurs with greater stability and sustainability, the Social Innovation Shared Space will facilitate a diverse and creative environment.

SEAN QUIGLEY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, EMERGING LEADERS

“ It is important to understand that Emerging Leaders will succeed or fail based upon the quality of partnerships and community participation we receive. We can have no better partner in this, or a greater chance for success, than Pillar. In the same way, we have a collective chance of succeeding as a City and as a sector if we collaborate. The concept of a Social Innovation Shared Space provides an opportunity for us to do this on a much closer basis than ever attempted before. The Centre For Social Innovation in Toronto is proof positive that this approach to collaborative space use and the opportunity to create innovation by having a diverse group come together is an opportunity Emerging Leaders feels compelled to explore. We fully support this proposal to the London Community Foundation in understanding the feasibility of such an endeavour and are fully committed as an organization to partnering with Pillar to make this project a success.

MICHELLE QUINTYN, PRESIDENT & CEO, GOODWILL INDUSTRIES, ONTARIO GREAT LAKES

“ This is a once in a lifetime game changer. It follows a model of success yet it is leading edge. It touches society's most opportune issues - innovation, social good and economic prosperity. Decades from now we will remember this as a transformative step in our community's evolution.

SISTER MARGO RITCHIE, SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH

“ On January 14, 2015, a group of 15 of us in London Ontario participated in the first part of a six-week online course called Transforming Business, Society and Self. There were 25,000 participants globally with 60% of participants being under the age of 40 years. There is a movement afoot locally in London and globally to engage complex and seemingly intractable social problems and to find new ways of finding solutions that work for everyone. This is exactly the work of the Social Innovation Shared Space initiative. From my involvement with this initiative over the past three years, I have seen a movement from concept, to extensive citizen engagement to the purchase of a building, which will draw together individuals and groups that want to create a future that provides for the well-being of all in our city.

While city budget constraints are real, I would heartily endorse a financial contribution by the city as an investment that will reap results in the near future. I trust the leadership of the Social Innovation Shared Space and see the Centre as one practical way to involve younger generations of leaders, thinkers and activists. When the initiators of this Centre came to meet with us [Sisters of St. Joseph], we rather quickly saw it as aligning with some of our deepest values: social inclusion, innovation, practicality. I think that these might also be the values desired by our city.

TRAE ROBINSON, PROJECT MANAGER, LHSC

“ A pioneer in urban planning, Jane Jacobs warned against false structures that impede the growth and innovation of a city, or what she called 'real order.' The shared space for social innovation in London and surrounds is the very best thing that we can foster in our city. Support it and it will support everything else.

NOEL RONDINELLI, MARKETING COORDINATOR, LONDON EMPLOYMENT HELP CENTRE

“ I always found Pillar Nonprofit Network as being a very productive and resourceful organization that not only provides a great service to its nonprofit members but is highly effective to the London community at large.

Pillar is at the forefront of community partnership and excels at bringing together people, groups and ideas that leads to a more beneficial result for everyone! The more that Pillar has the resources to continue with its mission and the Social Innovation Shared Space, the more that London has to gain.

MCMICHAEL RUTH, PRINCIPAL, ARCHITECTS TILLMANN RUTH ROBINSON

“ Change will be built, in pieces, and from below. Places like the Social Innovation Shared Space in London could be the beginning of a civil commons that facilitates these changes. Ideas sometimes need a home, a shared place where ideas come to mingle and swap. Today’s complex challenges have less respect for traditional disciplinary boundaries and more for connected, even chance endeavors that cross boundaries. The Social Innovation Shared Space is a signal of hope through which we can build prosperous and equitable opportunities for ourselves and generations to follow. Hope strengthens a community as a whole and supports the bonds of its citizens. It is a rediscovery of the passion and joy of working together on something that matters.

As an architectural firm, we believe in the power of collaboration to create a shared vision for our communities. We work with our co-creators effecting positive change through direct and meaningful community impact projects. The Social Innovation Shared Space captures this spirit of social collaboration by creating a place for a diverse co-working community, which will nurture new ideas, break down silos, and foster cross-sector interaction.

I strongly believe that the Social Innovation Shared Space project will bring a much-needed creative energy to London. It will attract entrepreneurs and social purpose businesses to the direct benefit of our community, and through its collaborative nature it will enable different sectors to work together, in a planned and unplanned way, to solve complex problems and create new ideas. It will attract by offering affordable space, which captures operational efficiencies through the sharing of resources, which is unique to London. New innovations and cross-sector collaboration are critical to turning challenges into opportunities and enhancing our community. Creating an incubator for new ideas and an environment that fosters social innovation for community change is something that I know will be of great value to our City.

The Social Innovation Shared Space not only resonates with the philosophy of our firm through its collaborative spirit but is something that I believe will make London a better place.

ROBERT G. SISKIND, DECADE GROUP INC.

“ I am pleased to share my thoughts in support of Pillar Nonprofit Network’s business and feasibility planning for a social innovation shared space.

I believe that this concept has been successful in many other centres in Ontario and Canada. My own business, Decade Group Inc., has been part of a shared office space for over 25 years with great success.

We wish you every success in your future collaboration, which will no doubt enhance our community.

PAULETTE SOSCIA, PROJECT MANAGER, SOCIAL INNOVATION SHARED SPACE

“ As project manager for the Social Innovation Shared Space project, I am honoured to be part of such an exciting initiative. The group of individuals that has been assembled to plan and execute the move are extremely professional and passionate people. I initially became involved as I saw it as an opportunity to grow professionally. The way it has impacted me personally is beyond words. In the short time that I've been involved, the positive energy and belief in this project is contagious. I know it will impact the City of London in ways that are unique and invaluable. The benefits to the organizations that will share the space are immeasurable beyond sharing resources and ideas. I am excited to see the project unfold and sincerely hope that the City of London shares in its belief.

JENS STICKLING, PRESIDENT, WESTANY HOLDINGS

“ Here at Westany Construction and Property Management and Westany Holdings Inc we are big believers and supporters of the Social Innovation Shared Space concept that is a global phenomenon and now has a strong local champion in Michelle Baldwin, the Pillar Nonprofit Network and its supporting organizations. The concept is based on bringing organizations and people from all sectors together in one space to collaborate, share ideas and foster innovation. As a commercial property manager we have noticed the increased demand for small spaces and shared facilities in London. Individuals and groups are looking for economical options for workspace without sacrificing on amenities and facility features. The Pillar SSIS offers all this plus much much more through its tremendous network led by Pillar.

The SSIS model will be an exciting accelerator of local innovation. It is certain to bring London's brightest thinkers, doers and organizers together to address the many social, environmental and economic challenges and opportunities.

Triple-bottom line thinking through its focus on environmental, social and economic benefits is at the root of the SISS concept. It is important that we all work together to make the Social Innovation and Shared Space a reality.

TONYA SURMAN, CEO, CENTRE FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION

“ The Centre for Social Innovation (CSI) is delighted to be a part of the feasibility study to explore the creation of a shared space in London, Ontario. CSI has eight years of history and experience building one of the most vibrant and viable shared spaces in the world. We know the power of collaboration to change the world. We are deeply committed to helping other communities leverage what we have learned and helping them to grow their own vibrant social innovation communities. As such, we have open sourced our business model, sharing all that we know in the Shared Spaces for Social Innovation publications. But we recognize that this is only the first step. The building has to work. The community has to work. The numbers have to work. There is so much to explore to assess the viability of a project like this. We are committed to continuing to explore how we might collaborate with the development of this exciting initiative.

KADIE WARD, FOUNDER, BUILD STRONG CITIES, CORP.

“ Community economic development is good when it creates value, elevates potential, lifts people out of poverty, and creates prosperity. Pillar Nonprofit and its Social Innovation Shared Space initiative accomplishes exactly that. As an economic development professional working in Canada, Europe, Asia, and the Caribbean, I can tell you that community economic development around the world is changing. It is evolving into a more inclusive, collaborative model that supports entrepreneurs with social values. Why? Because the fabric of our local economies and communities are changing. As such, sites for social innovation are driving authentic sustainable growth by addressing the direct social and economic needs of a community. The Social Innovation Shared Space will create an unprecedented place for this to happen in London. SISS will be a site for collaboration that will nurture new ideas and generate social change with positive economic outcomes.

ASSAF WEISZ, CO-FOUNDER & PARTNER, PURPOSE CAPITAL

“ The London SISS is an important opportunity for energizing the city's civic dynamism and economic prospects. We know from many other places around the world that thriving economies are rooted in clusters of practitioners. By co-locating London's core group of innovators, the space will foster all sorts of interconnections that allow for the freer flow of social & financial capital. It'll accelerate the learnings of individual changemakers and allow them to dream bigger while executing better, and while the organizations will be located there, their impact will reach far beyond.

Around the world shared spaces are being shown to have multiple benefits, from increased revenue for tenant organizations, to increasing the property value of surrounding neighbourhoods, to acting as magnetic hubs for impact investment and social finance innovation. This is a smart and timely play for the city of London, and if early consultations were any evidence, the project has hundreds of allies and advocates already.

KATE WIGGINS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, WOMEN'S COMMUNITY HOUSE

“ Women's Community House is a member of Pillar and supports their request to the City of London for additional funding to support start-up costs associated with the new Social Innovation Shared Space. This project connects beautifully with the goal of the City of London to build on our resources to create a sustainable, creative and vibrant community. A space to gather, work, share and work on unique solutions to new and ongoing problems is something that this City has been seeking for a long time. The new Social Innovation Shared Space will assist in putting London back on the map as a progressive, inclusive community that is forward looking.

JILL WILCOX, OWNER, JILL'S TABLE

“ As a Londoner and downtown business owner, I recognize the challenges our city faces. A shared space will allow for the incubation of new ideas, collaboration that will help foster social innovation for much needed community change. This shared space will also offer needed affordable space for nonprofits in our community.