

# MINDTRUST LEADERSHIP

## Case for Support

### *The Next Generation of Leaders Campaign*

## A Message to Our Community

For more than two decades, Mindtrust has been quietly shaping the next generation of community leaders — one young person at a time. Through our programs, many hundreds of Ottawa youth have discovered their leadership potential, built lasting relationships, and gone on to make meaningful contributions to their organizations, communities, and beyond.

Today, we are at a pivotal moment. The need for skilled, confident, and empathetic leaders has never been greater — and the gap between that need and the number of youth we currently reach has never been more visible. The issues faced by youth, especially since the pandemic, have left many struggling to find their way in society and contribute to their full potential. Mental health issues, limited local connections, and a lack of confidence are key obstacles to success.

We are launching *The Next Generation of Leaders Campaign* to expand our reach, deepen our impact, and ensure that every young person in the National Capital Region has access to the leadership skills they need to thrive with confidence. We invite you to join us.

Mindtrust brings youth together to learn, share experiences, and connect with community mentors. Leadership skills and practices apply to entrepreneurial, civic, and community endeavours. We believe that everyone has the potential to be a good leader through confidence, encouragement, and support.

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## The Challenge We Face

### A Leadership Gap in Our Community

Mindtrust is about bringing youth together to learn, share experiences, and connect with other youth and community mentors. Leadership requires individuals to commit to taking responsibility for themselves, their team, and their community. Basic leadership skills and practices apply to entrepreneurial, civic, and community endeavours. We believe that everyone has the potential to be a leader, and great leaders can be made by building confidence, giving encouragement, and providing support. This results in mental health benefits through reduced social isolation, clarity of identity, and a sense of belonging; thereby providing an improved path for integration into society.

Ottawa is home to nearly 192,000 young people between the ages of 16 and 29 — representing 18.9% of the total population. Among these youth, over 84,000 are from immigrant backgrounds, and more than 30,000 live in low-income households. These are the young people who stand to benefit most from structured leadership development — and who face the greatest barriers to accessing it.

**192,000**

Youth aged 16–29 in Ottawa

**7,500**

Annual demand for youth leadership programs

**<500**

Youth served annually by all programs combined

Despite this enormous need, all youth leadership programs in Ottawa — including Mindtrust today — collectively serve fewer than 500 young people per year. That represents just 6.7% of the estimated market for youth leadership development. Currently, Mindtrust itself serves approximately 150 youth annually.

Leadership is not a trait people are born with — it is a skill developed through experience, practice, and mentorship. Without access to quality leadership development programs, too many of Ottawa's youth are left without the foundational skills they need to navigate their futures, contribute to their workplaces, and lead in their communities.

### The Core Problems We Are Solving

- Critically low access: fewer than 7% of Ottawa youth who could benefit from leadership programming are being served
- Equity gaps: youth from immigrant and low-income backgrounds face disproportionate barriers to leadership development and meaningful employment
- No pathway for advanced development: current programs lack a structured advanced leadership track for youth ready to go deeper
- Sector fragmentation: leadership organizations operate in silos, limiting the collective impact they can have on the community

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## Who We Are

Founded in 2005, Mindtrust is a registered charity dedicated to equipping youth with the skills, confidence, and networks they need to lead. Our vision is a next generation inspired to lead with confidence, grow with purpose, and drive meaningful impact in their communities.

Our mission is simple, but powerful: we equip youth with the skills to lead through self-discovery and shared learning experiences, while building life-long relationships with experienced community leaders.

### Our Guiding Principles

- Anyone Can Be a Leader — everyone has a voice
- Leadership is a Mindset — a fundamental life skill
- Mentorship is Leadership — a virtuous circle of giving back
- Build Strong Communities — through empathy and courage

### What Sets Us Apart

- 21 years of proven program delivery in Ottawa
- Led by experienced leadership development experts
- Alumni who return as mentors, creating community continuity
- Delivered at no cost to participants, ensuring equitable access



Our flagship Mindtrust Ascend program walks participants through four transformative modules: Leading Yourself First, Mastering Communications and Influence, Deciding with Confidence, and Executing for Impact — culminating in the presentation of a Personal Leadership Statement.

## The Next Generation of Leaders Campaign

### Our Purpose

This campaign has one overarching goal: to dramatically expand our reach and deepen our impact, equipping 500 youth per year with the confidence and leadership skills they need to succeed — more than three times our current capacity.

To achieve this, we are pursuing three interconnected initiatives: scaling our existing Ascend program, launching a new Advanced Leadership Program, and strengthening our partnerships in the community.

**500**

### Our Reach Goal

Youth equipped with leadership skills every year — growing from ~150 today

### Initiative 1: Scaling the Mindtrust Ascend Program

We will expand delivery of our proven Ascend program by increasing the number of cohorts we run each year, deepening partnerships with community organizations, schools, and settlement services to reach youth who need us most — including newcomers and youth from lower-income households.

Expanded program delivery requires investment in facilitation capacity, program materials, and coordination — all of which this campaign will fund.

### Initiative 2: Launching the Apex Advanced Leadership Program

Many of our program graduates have expressed both a desire to continue their leadership journey, and a need for a more extensive program. Until now, we haven't had a structured pathway to support them. That changes with this campaign.

The new Apex Advanced Leadership Program will be a rigorous, experiential offering designed for Mindtrust alumni who are ready to take their leadership to the next level. The program will include:

#### Apex Advanced Leadership Program — Core Elements

- Deep-dive leadership application: moving from theory to real-world practice through project-based learning and community challenges
- Mentorship and coaching: one-on-one pairing with senior community and business leaders who provide sustained guidance

- Peer leadership: participants take on facilitation and mentorship roles within the broader Mindtrust community
- Network building: structured access to the growing Mindtrust community of alumni, mentors, and partner organizations
- Capstone project: a real community initiative led by participants, demonstrating leadership in action

This program will create a virtuous circle. Advanced participants become excellent candidates as future Mindtrust mentors, deepening the impact of program investments.

### Initiative 3: Strengthening Community Partnerships

Mindtrust has always believed that we are stronger together. This campaign will allow us to deepen our partnerships with community organizations, public sector agencies, and private sector leaders — expanding the network of mentors available to our participants, and increasing the pathways through which youth can enter our programs.

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## How We Measure Success

Impact must be earned and demonstrated. Mindtrust is committed to rigorous, transparent measurement of our outcomes. The following indicators will guide our progress:

### Reach & Participation

- Number of youth enrolled annually (target: 500 per year)
- Demographic representation: % from immigrant and low-income backgrounds
- Number of Ascend and Apex graduates per year

### Program Quality

- Participant satisfaction and Net Promoter Score
- Completion rates for both programs
- Mentor and facilitator quality ratings
- Alumni return rate as mentors, program participants, and volunteers

### Leadership Outcomes

- Self-reported gains in confidence and leadership skills
- Employment and education outcomes for graduates
- Alumni in leadership roles (community, career, civic) and alumni-led initiatives or ventures

### Community Impact

- Growth in the Mindtrust mentor and alumni network
  - Number of active community partnerships
- Sector-wide increase in youth served across Ottawa

We will report annually to our donors on progress against these measures, using both quantitative data and the stories of the young people whose lives have been changed by this program.

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## In Their Own Words

Our alumni are our most powerful proof point. Here is what they say about the Mindtrust experience:

*“The Mindtrust program is truly an eye-opening experience... It has equipped me with a diversity of life skills and problem-solving skills, and has helped me gain more confidence.”*

*“The unique part, I’d say, is the focus on your own skills and your own introspection – which is very important, but often overlooked.”*

*“Participating in the program has changed my perspective and approach to working with people in teams.”*

— **Mindtrust Alumni**

Graduates of Mindtrust programs have found career-based employment through connections in the Mindtrust network, become community leaders by starting their own charities, and have founded multi-million-dollar businesses right here in Ottawa. More detail can be found on the Mindtrust website.

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## Join Us

This campaign represents a significant and timely opportunity to transform the landscape of youth leadership development in Ottawa. The need is clear. The model is proven. The moment is now.

Your investment will directly fund the expansion of our programs, the launch of the Apex Advanced Leadership Program, and the infrastructure we need to reach 500 youth per year with transformative leadership experiences.

### Impact of Gifts

Each \$500 donated ➡ another participant in a Mindtrust program

Each \$7,500 donated ➡ another Ascend cohort

Each \$15,000 donated ➡ another Apex cohort

Target: 500 participants/year

Campaign: \$250,000/year

Every dollar you invest is a vote for a more confident, capable, and compassionate next generation of community leaders.

### Gift Levels (Five-Year Commitment)

Platinum: \$100,000+

Gold: \$50,000+

Silver: \$25,000+

Bronze: \$10,000+

All donors will be recognized on the Donor Wall on the Mindtrust website and at community events hosted by Mindtrust. An opportunity is available to be the annual title sponsor for specific program cohorts and events, and will be acknowledged in associated program brochures, presentation materials and tabletop displays. For donors wishing to remain anonymous, we are committed to recognizing your gift in a non-public manner.

To make a gift or learn more about the campaign, visit:  
**[mindtrustleadership.ca/donate](https://mindtrustleadership.ca/donate)**

Mindtrust is a registered charity. All donations are eligible for a tax receipt.

