HOUSING 2024
HACKATHON

POST EVENT
REPORT

Prepared By :

Seneca Hackathon
Organizing Committee

www.senecahackathon.com

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Held last March 16, 2024, the 5th Annual Seneca Housing Hackathon gathered 1,018 participants from 32 colleges and universities across Ontario, marking a notable increase of 49.3% from the previous year. This year's finale event has the highest attendance to date with around 160 finalists, 72 dedicated volunteer student organizers and 40 guests including students, public officials, entrepreneurs and industry leaders. This highlights the ever-growing passion and excitement for the event among various stakeholders.

Apart from idea generation and solution development, the event also features interactive mentoring sessions from field specialists, enriching keynote speeches from successful entrepreneurs and IT experts, and endless networking opportunities. Moreover, the presence of key government officials adds a layer of significance to the event, emphasizing its alignment with broader societal goals and objectives.

Overall, this year's hackathon garnered overwhelmingly positive feedback from participants, highlighting the valuable opportunities it provided for rapport building, knowledge exchange, and collaborative problem-solving. Spectators praised the inclusive atmosphere and the platform it offered for nurturing innovative ideas from the younger generation to address important issues facing our society today.

THE THEME

The theme this year is a response to the current pressing challenges of Canada's housing crisis. Seneca Housing Hackathon aimed to address spectrum of issues, and explore opportunities within the housing sector by strategically breaking down the overarching problem into manageable "challenge sets" jointly with our sponsors and partner institutions.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1 Showcase Seneca Polytechnic's proactive approach to lead positive change within both the student body and the wider community in tackling the housing challenge.

2 Offer both student organizers and participants a hands-on, experiential learning experience.

3 Facilitating networking opportunities between participants and industry professionals through mentorship programs and networking events. Bridging the gap between academic learning and real-world industry practices.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Shared passion for innovation

At the hackathon, despite our diverse set of backgrounds and interests, what binds us together is our shared passion for innovation.

We celebrate the collaborative efforts of our participants, mentors, judges, and sponsors during the hackathon. Each of their involvement whether through guidance, evaluation, or support, collectively contributed to success of the event. Further, as with every hackathon each year, our dedicated volunteers played a significant role in making this event run smoothly, creating a welcoming environment for everyone involved. Their hard work and dedication were standout features of this year's hackathon, showing strong sense of teamwork and community spirit.

Meaningful cause

In addition to finding creative solutions to the current housing crisis, Seneca Housing Hackathon also aims to raise awareness on this important societal issue. We believe we were able to achieve these objectives through the support of key public officials and business leaders who joined us and generously shared their ideas and strategies, enabling us to make an even more significant impact on our mission.

> " The Housing Hackathon showcased a bright future for the next generation of IT Leaders! "
>
> – Lorraine Bauer, Executive Director
> CIO Assiociation of Canada

NOTABLE GUESTS

Distinguished guests in attendance are Mayor David West of Richmond Hill, who graced the hackathon event with his opening remarks and Mayor Iain Lovatt of Whitchurch-Stouffville, who gave a special address. Moreover, we were delighted to have City of Markham Councillor Andrew Keyes from Ward 5, joined by Regional Councillor Jim Jones, who shared enriching perspectives during discussions. Attendees had the privilege of hearing inspiring business start-up lessons from Rylan Kinnon, CEO of SpacesShared. Additionally, the Executive Director of the CIO Association of Canada, Lorraine Bauer, also joined us.

Mayor Iain Lovatt
Whitchurch-Stouffville

Mayor David West
City of
Richmond Hill

Jim Jones
Regional Councillor
City of Markham

Andrew Keyes
Councillor
City of Markham

Rylan Kinnon
CEO
SpacesShared

Lorraine Bauer
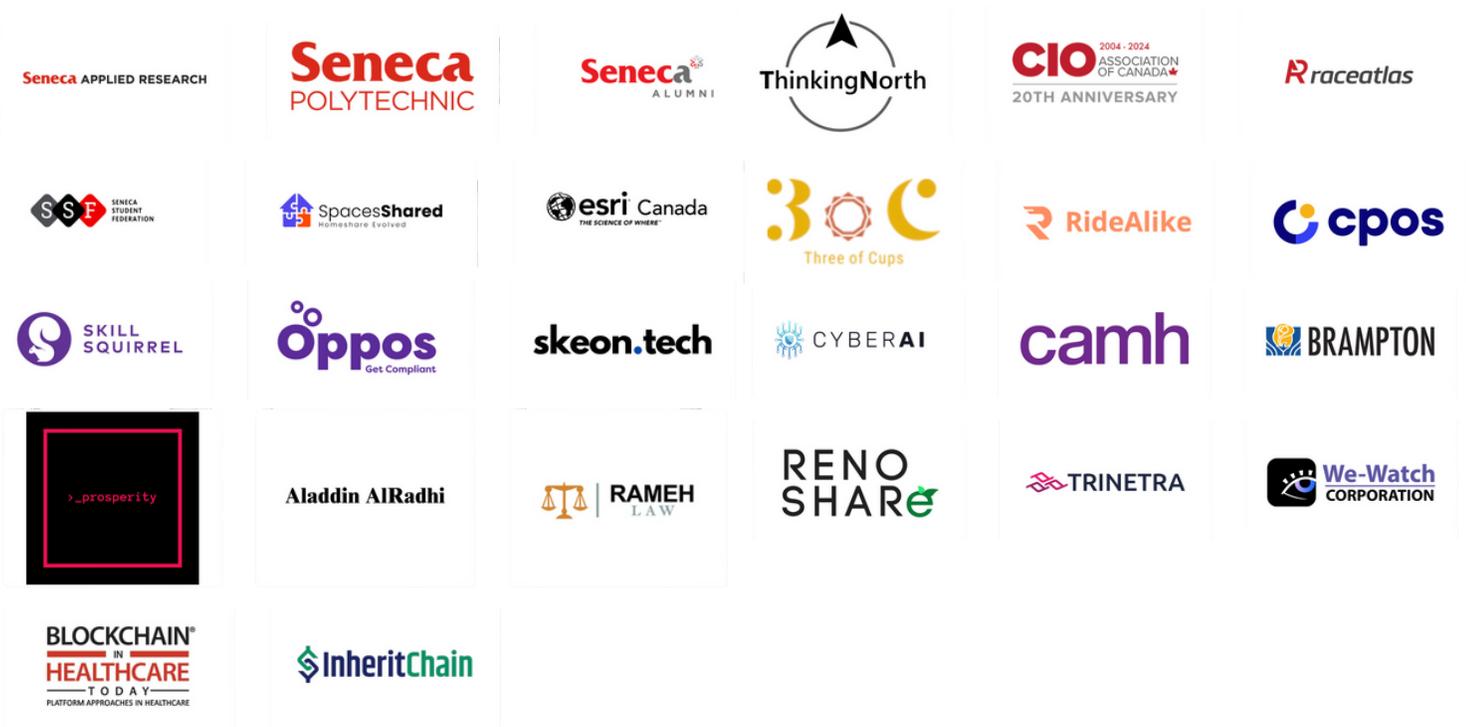Executive Director
CIO Association
of Canada

This year, our approach to awards differed slightly from previous years. Rather than having winners within specific categories, we recognized overall winners. This includes 1st, 2nd, and 3rd prize recipients, as well as the recipients of the special awards such as Innovation Award, Inclusion Award, and Sustainability Award. The top 4 teams were determined by the judges without ranking them, but the winners were ranked by public vote (Mentimeter), including both participants and guests after the presentation.

- **1st Place:** Team Enigma (in the top photo) won 1st place with their website featuring AI/ML backend analysis that assists students in finding rental homes and gaining market insights. All students are from Seneca Polytechnic.
- **2nd Place:** Students from Seneca Polytechnic, University of Toronto, and Humber College, collectively known as Neighbourhood Cool Cats (bottom right photo), were awarded 2nd place with their gamified apps to support high-density living harmony, including chores and household items.
- **3rd Place:** The 3rd place was awarded to Team Homies (bottom left photo), whose members are students from Seneca Polytechnic, University of Toronto, and Sault College. They developed a rent and lease contract management system and dashboard, including an AI-based chatbot assistant.
- **Special Awards:** Special awards for Innovation and Inclusion were given to Team Signify for their gesture-controlled home assistance system, and the Sustainability Award was given to Team Miraurbana for their e-book and website for housing furniture. Students from both teams are all from Seneca Polytechnic.

Our Partner Institutions

Our Sponsors

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to all our sponsors and partners whose generous support and commitment to our cause made the 5th Annual Seneca Housing Hackathon possible. We look forward to continuing our partnership with them and exploring new collaborative opportunities in the future.

Moving Forward

Leveraging Innovations through Strategic Partnerships

- Strengthen industry partnerships to leverage top innovations from the Hackathon.
- Initiate a proactive sales campaign targeting major corporations to secure title sponsorship.
- Utilize resources from Seneca Applied Research and Seneca Works to further develop and integrate promising solutions into practical applications.

Timely Announcement of Theme and Date

- Define the theme and dates for six months prior to the event.
- Engage sponsors early in the process to solicit input and feedback on challenge set definitions.

Exploration of Hybrid Day 1 Finale

- Investigate the feasibility of implementing a hybrid format for Day 1 of the finale to provide deeper mentorship opportunities.

Scaling for Increased Participation

- Scale the overall event for greater numbers by expanding partnerships with schools, organizations, and communities.