



Toronto Finance International helps post-secondary students build critical work-ready skills with The ASPIRE Edge

The online program offers a pandemic-proof way for students across Canada to prepare for the world of work, and to differentiate themselves to employers

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Toronto Finance International

Toronto, August 18, 2020 - Toronto Finance International (TFI), the lead voice for the international promotion of the Toronto Financial Centre and a central hub for driving the growth and competitiveness of the financial services sector, has launched the third tier of [The ASPIRE Edge](#) – an online business skill-building program that is available for free to post-secondary students across Canada – along with a new digital badge to help students showcase their achievements.

“The ASPIRE Edge is cultivating the work-ready employees of today and tomorrow, and it’s a particularly timely program right now,” says Jennifer Reynolds, TFI’s President and CEO. “In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, students are finding it challenging to gain work experience. The ASPIRE Edge presents a unique opportunity for students to continue developing key skills that bridge the gap between education and the workplace.”

The ASPIRE Edge is delivered as a three-tier simulation at a fictional NextGen Financial Services organization, and helps students hone the knowledge and skills that employers value. In tier one, students work in an Associate role and begin building their communication, data acumen and resiliency skills. In tier two, they are promoted to an Analyst role, focusing on problem-solving, critical thinking and teamwork skills. In the third tier, students progress to a Manager Trainee role, where they establish leadership skills, learn how to manage budgets and engage direct reports.

Students who complete all three tiers will earn a digital badge, which can be added to their LinkedIn profile and shared across their social media channels as a way to highlight their newly acquired skills – and help them get noticed.

Financial services employers helped to design and develop The ASPIRE Edge, and are leveraging the program to train their student hires. “As an employer with student interns, we've found The ASPIRE Edge to be a fabulous interactive online simulation program,” says Ana Kulis, Talent and Student Program Partner at TMX Group. “It helps students to think outside the box, so they can tackle our day-to-day business challenges more strategically and confidently.”

"The ASPIRE Edge program has helped our students develop the fundamental skill sets needed to excel as young professionals in the workplace," adds Disha Patel, Campus Recruitment Manager at Scotiabank. “The workshops and simulations have provided them with a deeper understanding of what it takes to fill the gap between what they've learned in school and the workplace."

Post-secondary students interested in learning more or enrolling in The ASPIRE Edge program are encouraged to visit aspirefs.ca/the-edge/.

The ASPIRE Edge is a flagship initiative within ASPIRE, a work-integrated learning program to grow the pipeline of in-demand, “work-ready” talent for the financial services sector. ASPIRE is funded in part by the Government of Canada's Student Work Placement Program.

About Toronto Finance International

Toronto Finance International (TFI) is a public-private partnership between Canada's three levels of government, the financial services sector and academia. TFI's mission is to lead collective action that drives the competitiveness and growth of Toronto's financial sector and establishes its prominence as a leading international financial centre. For more information about TFI, please visit www.tfi.ca or follow us on Twitter: [@TFI_Canada](https://twitter.com/TFI_Canada) and LinkedIn: [Toronto Finance International](https://www.linkedin.com/company/toronto-finance-international).

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