



INNOVATION
LEADERSHIP
ACCELERATOR

Innovation Leadership Accelerator program for CPAs



Join the Future Leaders of the Innovation Economy

The Innovation Leadership Accelerator program is a unique opportunity designed to fast-track your career to a C-suite position.

Experience 11-weeks of immersive development and learn directly from leading Canadian innovators including **Jim Balsillie**, **John Ruffolo**, and **more**.

This opportunity is designed to empower CPAs with the knowledge, exposure and experience needed to become financial leaders of organizations that are driving innovation.

Are you ready to join an elite group of CPAs?



What You Will Learn

By the end of the The Innovation Leadership Accelerator program, you will have developed a powerful set of skills to lead and support growth and innovation in any organization:



Thinking like a president, founder or CEO to identify opportunities, solve problems creatively, and support entrepreneurial decision-making.



Leading through change by understanding how the C-suite roles evolve and making strategic decisions at every stage of growth.



Communicating with clarity and influence to tell your company's story, engage stakeholders, and motivate teams.

Program Topics & Schedule

January 20 Kickoff & Welcome

Jim Balsillie

Introduction to the Innovation Economy & the ILA

Explore Canada's innovation landscape and the role CPAs play in shaping its future.

January 27 The Founder Mindset

TBA

Understand how founders think, what they need, and how financial leaders can support their vision.

February 3 The Leadership Journey

Ralf Riekers

Learn how the CFO role evolves across growth stages and how to lead through strategic decision-making.

February 10 Strategic Communication

Matt Hodgson & Lois Norris

Master storytelling, stakeholder engagement, and team motivation through clear, influential communication.

February 17 FP&A & Commercialization

Tom Seegmiller

Use KPIs to measure performance, drive business growth, and support commercialization strategies.

February 24 Inorganic Growth & Capital Strategy

TBA

Explore strategies for scaling through mergers and acquisitions, preparing for IPOs, and planning successful exits.

March 3 Raising Capital

Brice Scheschuk

Explore M&A, IPO readiness, and exit planning. Learn how to raise capital through debt, equity, and alternative options. Includes MindFrame Connect mentee training.

March 10 Venture Capital

Omar Dhalla

Understand how VC works, who gets funded, and the best practices and common pitfalls to avoid.

March 24 Private Equity

George Rossolatos

Learn when to use growth capital, what PE firms look for, and how to value private companies.

March 31 AI & the New Controllershship

Brandon Nussey

Discover how AI is reshaping the controllershship function and what it means for financial leadership.

April 7 Summary & Conclusion

John Ruffolo

Reflect on key learnings, leadership growth, and next steps in your innovation leadership journey.

Not only did I get a clear picture of what it takes to lead a team in the innovation economy, but I also **formed lasting connections that have expanded my network** immensely.



Dwyane Goodridge
CPA, CMA

**Senior Relationship Manager,
Supply Chain, RBC**

ILA Cohort – 2024

Learn From the Best



Jim Balsillie, FCPA

An internationally renowned voice on innovation strategy, competitiveness and international economic policy, Jim Balsillie's career in Canadian business spans volumes.



John Ruffolo, FCPA, FCA

John is the Founder and Managing Partner of Maverix Private Equity, a private equity firm funded and operated by entrepreneurs for entrepreneurs. He is also the Founder of OMERS Ventures and Co-Founder and Vice Chair of the Council of Canadian Innovators.



Ralf Riekers

Ralf Riekers Ralf is a Startup & ScaleUp coach, advisor, and fractional CFO/COO. He helped scale Eloqua and Top Hat to major growth milestones and now mentors emerging leaders in Canada's tech ecosystem.



Brice Scheschuk CPA, CA

Brice is the managing partner of Globalive Capital. He was a co-founder and CFO of WIND Mobile as well as CEO of Globalive Communications.

Who Should Apply



Are you a **CPA** and currently working at a **startup or scaleup**, or interested in learning more about them?



Do you possess **strong leadership skills** and see your future self as a senior financial leader **driving Canada's innovation economy forward**?



Do you love learning, developing yourself and **being at the forefront of innovation**?



Are you energized at the thought of **sharing ideas and experiences with like-minded peers** while learning directly from Canadian finance leaders?

**If so, this program
is made for you.**



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INNOVATION
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ONE **111** ELEVEN
Built to **Scale.**

If you are interested in leading a finance function at a start-up or scale-up, then **this course is the perfect primer. I feel excited about my future as a leader in this space**, and understand much better where I need to focus to accomplish my career goals.



Sattwica Goyal
CPA, CA

**Sr. Director of Finance,
Corporate Controller, Compucom**

ILA Cohort – 2024

Program Cost and Timing

Launch Date

The program kicks off on January 20, 2026 in Toronto, at 69 Bloor Street with an exclusive Welcome Event, hosted by founders Carol Wilding, Jim Balsillie and John Ruffolo.

Weekly Sessions

For 11 weeks, sessions will run every Tuesday from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. and will include a formal lesson, panel discussion, and networking social. A light dinner and refreshments are also included each week.

Graduation Date

The program runs until April 7, 2026, when upon successful completion of the program you will be presented with a certificate at a graduation ceremony celebrating your achievement.

Program Cost

The course tuition is \$6,500 CDN and is due in full at the time of enrollment.

Scholarships

For scholarship eligibility, please provide the required information in your application to be considered or email ILA@cpaontario.ca for further information.

→ How to Apply

Space in this program is very limited. Apply now, commitment-free at CPAOntario.ca/ILAApPLY.

Our admissions committee will review your profile to determine fit based on previous experience before you are officially accepted into the program.



Learning directly from knowledgeable industry leaders has been an **invaluable experience**. This class has served as a **catalyst for personal and professional growth**.



Shruti Agnihotri
CPA

Finance Manager, Sun Life
ILA Cohort – 2024



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ILA@cpaontario.ca



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