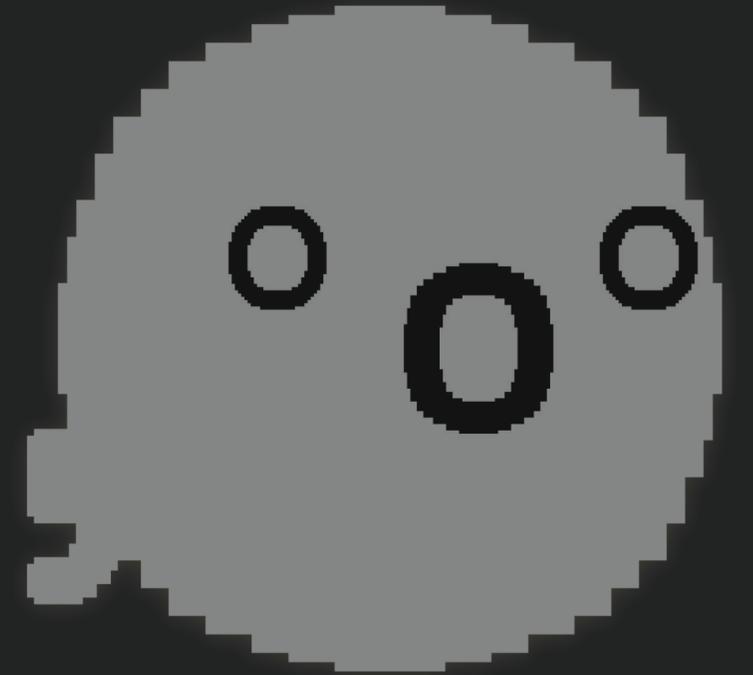


BABY GHOSTS

Cooperative Foundations Spring 2026 Info Session

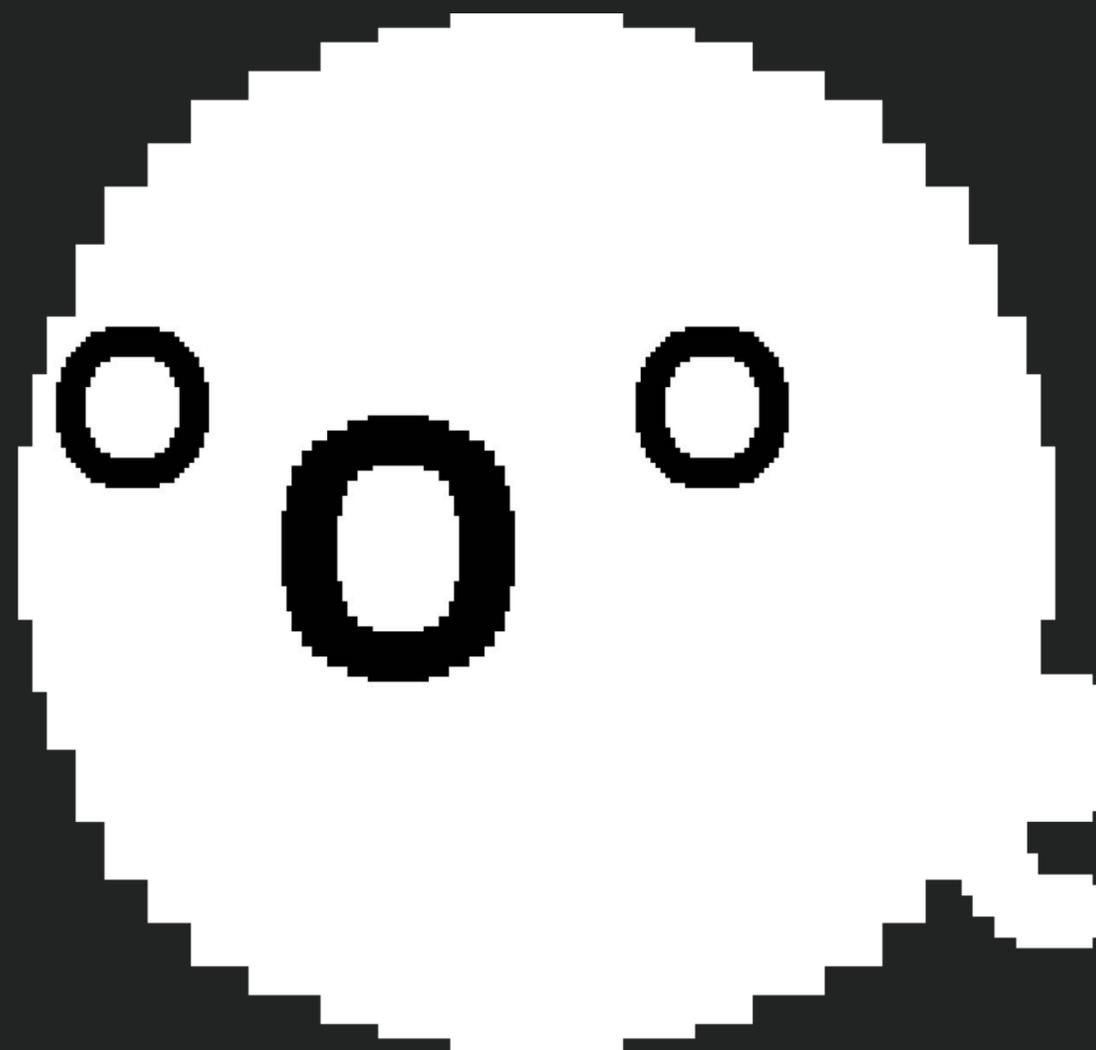
April 8 - June 3, 2026

eileen & jennie



Put your pronouns next to your
name (by clicking it)!

(if you want)



Land Acknowledgement



Our mission is to advance cooperative and
worker-centric labour models in the
Canadian interactive digital arts sector.



Acknowledgements

- All of our peer supports!
- Infrastructure support from Gamma Space Collaborative Studio
- Our funders!



Workforce Funder
Collaborative



TORONTO



ONTARIO
CREATES | ONTARIO
CRÉATIF



@leftistgammemes (Instagram)

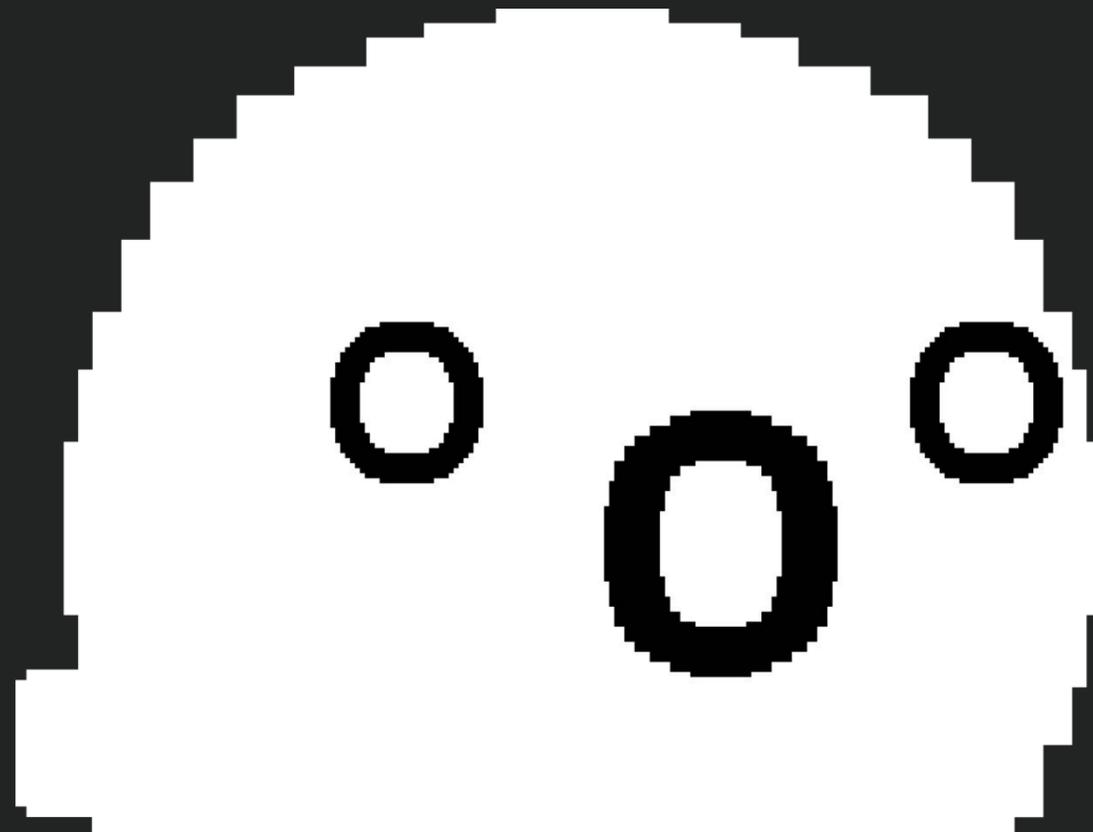
State of the Industry

(It's not so good...)

- Between 2022 - 2025, more than 35,000 layoffs
- 74% of workers say there is not equal treatment and opportunity in the games industry
- The industry itself is still profitable, but at a cost to workers
- Funding is hard to access and there is a massive disparity in how that funding is allocated
- Toxic cultures of crunch, burnout, and exploitation are built into the very fabric of the industry



Cooperative and worker-centric
development environments
are **fundamental**
to the ethical creation of games



Program Introduction

What does “cooperative” and “worker-centric” mean?

- **Cooperative:** A business jointly owned and democratically controlled by and for its members
- **Worker-centric:** Placing the well-being, rights, and needs of game workers at the centre of game development.



Program Introduction

What's a worker-centric development environment?

Fair compensation & labour

- Living wages with profit-sharing and transparent salaries
- No crunch culture; work-life balance prioritized

Equity & safety

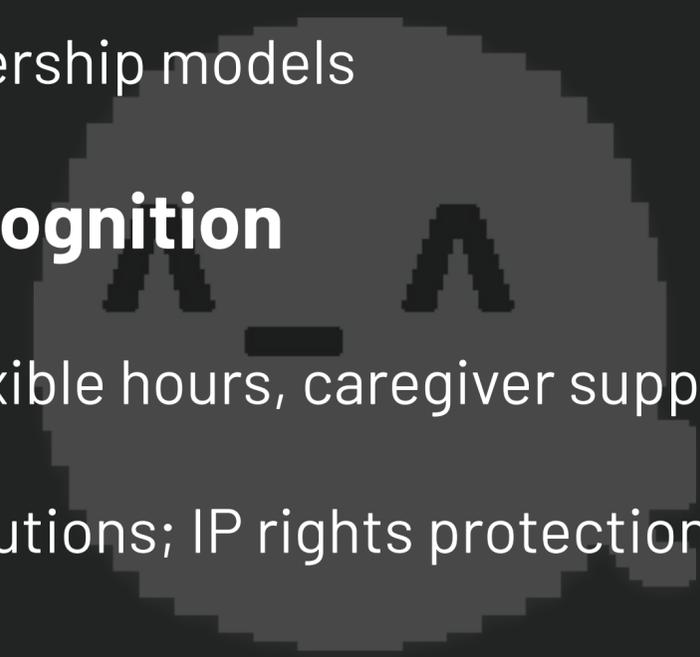
- Authentic hiring and support of marginalized people
- Anti-racism/anti-oppression training; zero-tolerance for harassment
- Accessible physical and digital workspaces
- Mental health support and anonymous reporting channels

Democratic governance

- Flat structures with collective decision-making
- Worker input on project direction and regular full-team meetings
- Cooperative ownership models

Flexibility & recognition

- Remote work, flexible hours, caregiver support
- Credit for contributions; IP rights protection



Program Introduction

Why do we prioritize these structures?

- Alignment with our values
- Potential to address industry issues
- More sustainable and resilient game dev ecosystem
- Empowering creators to have agency



Goals & Outcomes

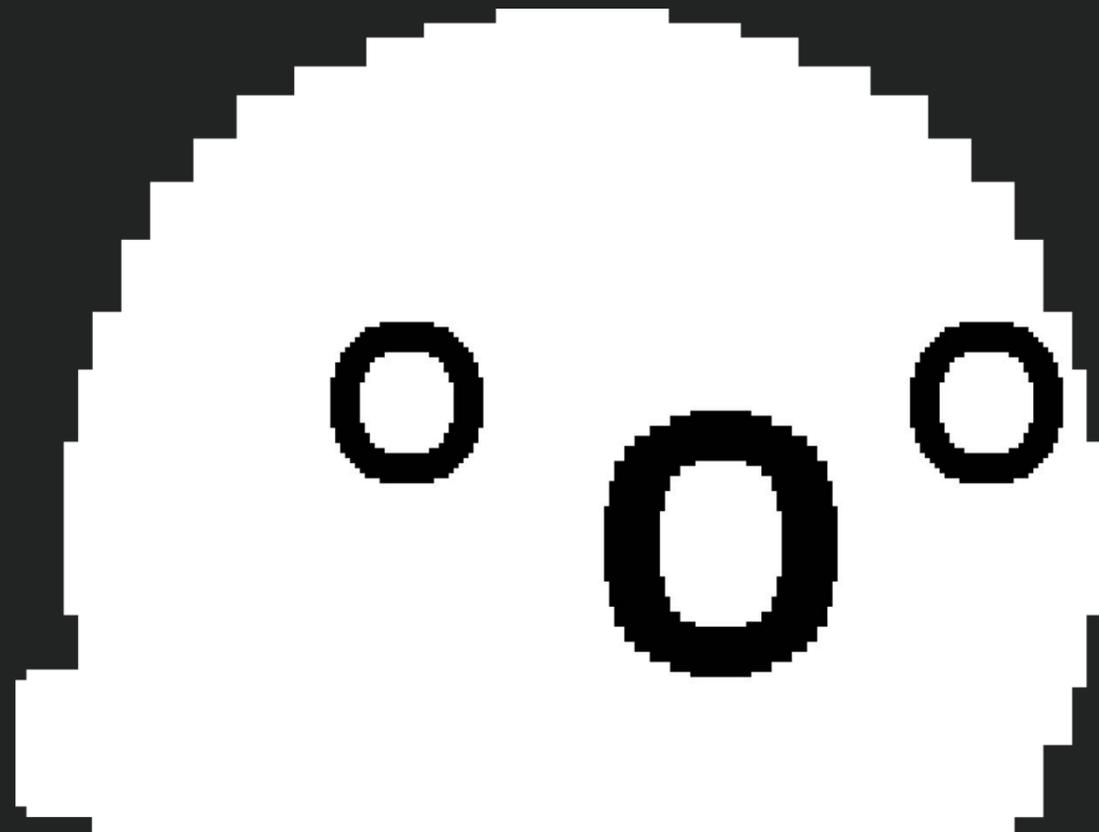


Program Goals & Outcomes

- Equip studios with the **knowledge and tools** to implement cooperative principles
- Create a supportive **community** of cooperative game devs
- Contribute to a broader **movement**
- Demonstrate the **viability and benefits** of cooperative models in this industry



Financial Support



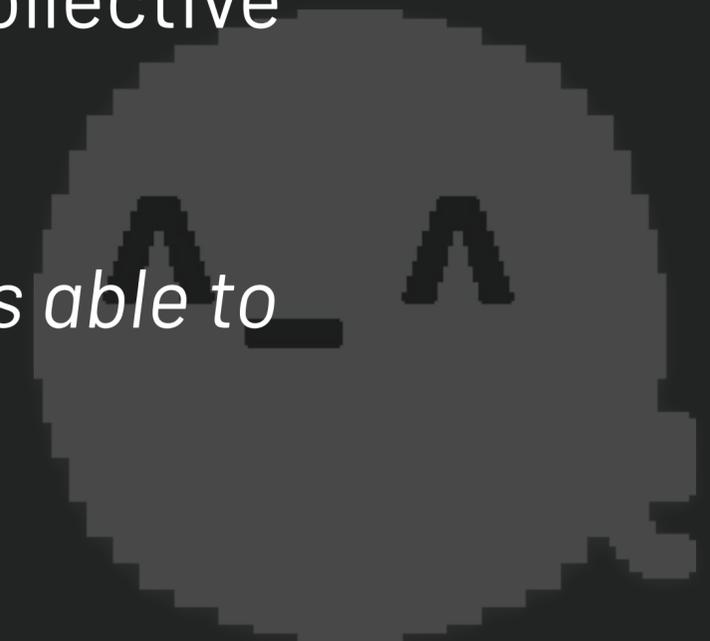
The grant is unrestricted — intended to support participation in the program and studio development however you decide



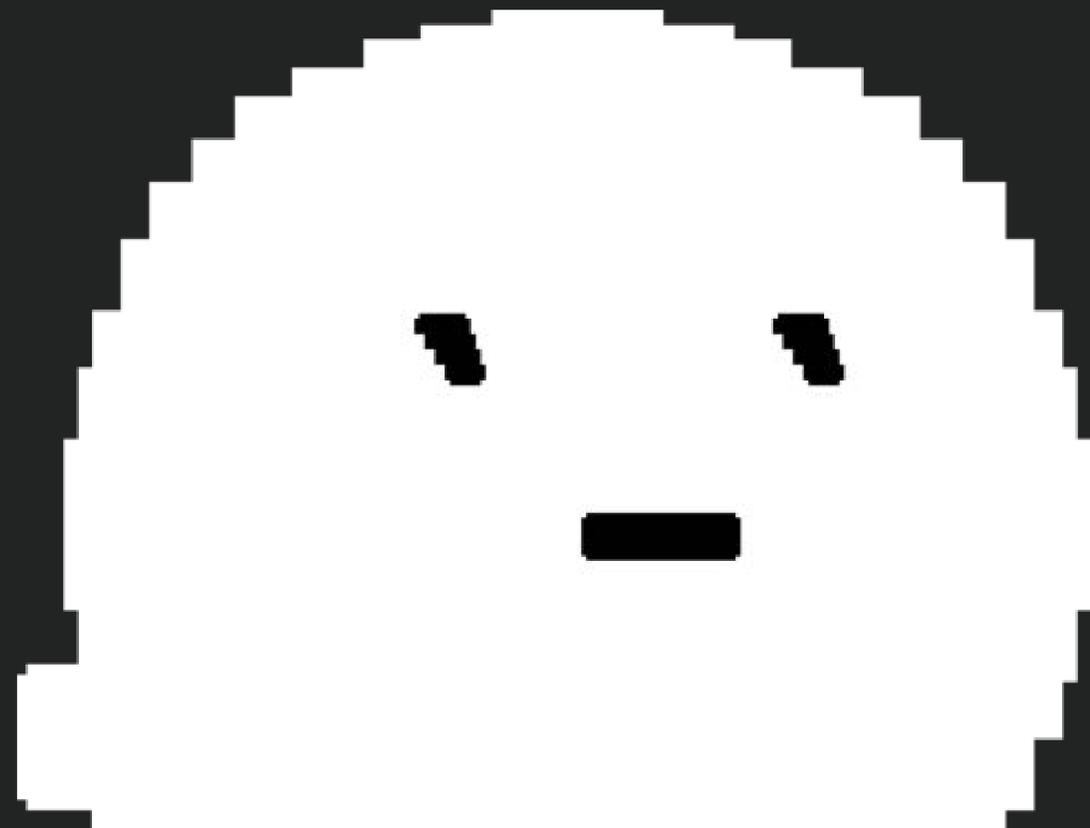
Financial Support

What is the grant for?

- Removing financial barriers to participation
- Allowing studios to dedicate time and resources to cooperative development
- Deciding how to allocate these funds is one of your first collective governance decisions
- *Consider how you will allocate funds to ensure your studio is able to participate throughout the program*



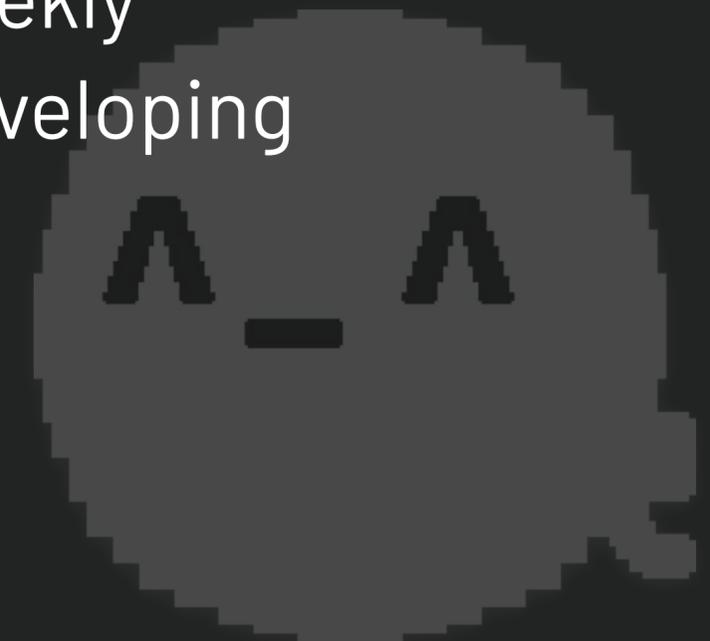
Program Structure



Program Structure

Overview

- Eight-week intensive
- Tailored, peer-led support to help you explore worker-led studio models, such as cooperatives, with a community of indie peers.
- We offer you a private online space, tools, workshops, weekly mentorship, and a \$5,000 stipend to help you focus on developing a studio built on a foundation of collective values.



Program Overview

Core Themes

- Anti-capitalist alternatives to growth-at-all-costs models
- Democratic decision-making (consent, consensus)
- Financial transparency and equitable compensation
- Conflict as care rather than failure
- Patience for the pace of trust - moving slowly with intention
- Horizontal power structures vs hierarchical defaults



Program Overview

Curriculum

- Coop principles & power
- Shared purpose / alignment
- Actionable values & impact
- Coop structures & governance
- Decision-making in practice
- Equitable economics
- Conflict resolution & collective care
- Self-evaluation & pathways

Sessions are 1.5 hours

Wednesdays

11:00AM PST / 2:00PM EST



Program Overview

After the program?

- Stay in our community!
- Cooperate with other coops
- We will continue to host workshops after the program ends through *Ghost Guild*
- Become a Peer Support in the future!



Peer Support



Peer Support replaces traditional,
hierarchical mentorship with
mutual, peer-to-peer learning



What is Peer Support?

Mutual, peer-to-peer learning!

- You'll be matched with 2 Peer Supports
- Recognizes lived experiences
- Supports mutual learning and reciprocity
- Builds our community of practice
- Prepares you to be a future Peer Support



Who are Peer Supports?

- Alumni of previous cohorts
- Have game dev experience
- Solid understanding of coop principles
- Experience working with underrepresented groups
- Goals and motivations aligned with Baby Ghosts'



What is Peer Support like?

Here's what to expect

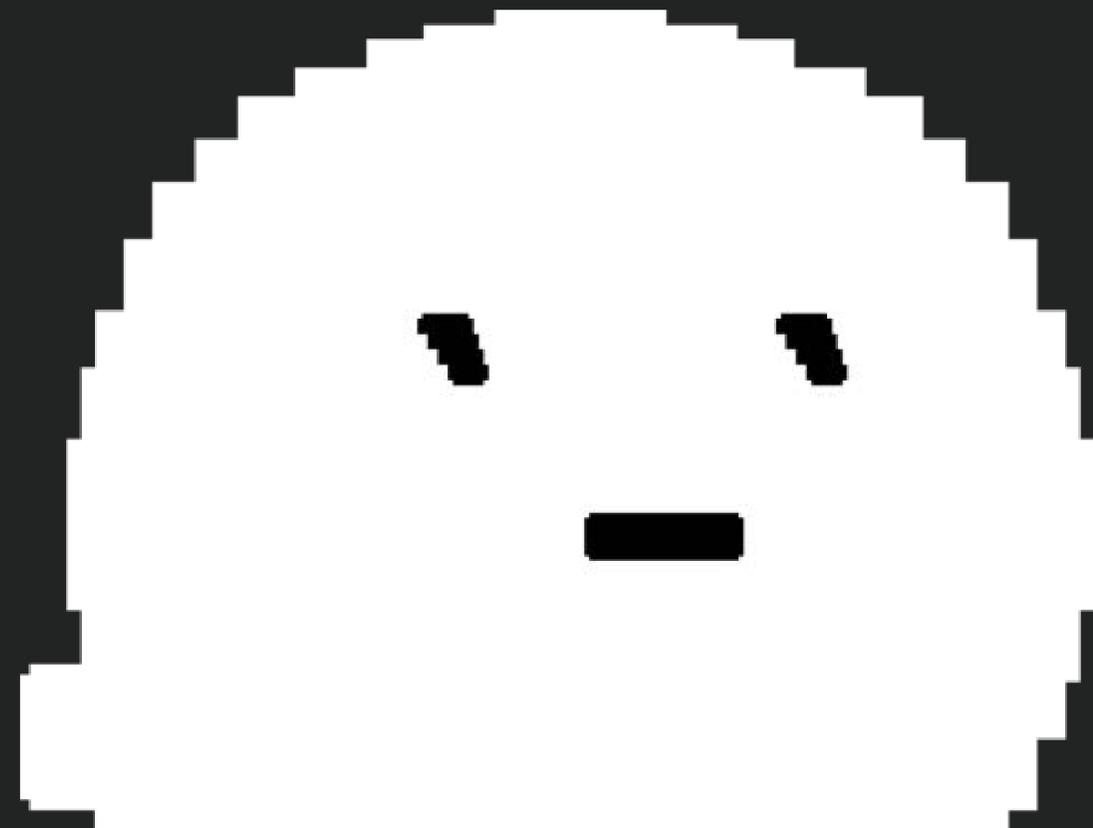
- Facilitated deep dives
- Help working on homework
- Sounding board and collaborator
- Consistent support from the same people
- A peer, not a coach or teacher



**We'll make the initial matches, but
we are open to feedback and can
adjust to best support your studio!**



Participation Expectations



Participation Expectations

- **All team members** must participate
- Be open to discussing your challenges, concerns, fears, and experiences
- Contribute to cohort-wide discussions
- Join social events
- Regular chat and check-ins in Slack



Participation Expectations

Time expectations

Here's how your weekly time as a Baby Ghost breaks down:

- Live sessions: 1.5 hours per week
- Peer Support sessions: 1 hours per week
- Async work: 1 hour per week
 - Miro activities, journaling, readings, Slack reflections
- Four optional social events throughout the program

Total estimated time commitment per person:

- ~2-4 hours/week over 8 weeks



Carefully consider these expectations and ensure they align with your studio's goals and capacity before applying to the program!



Application Process



Eligibility

To be eligible for the Baby Ghosts Accelerator Program, your studio must:

- Be based in Canada
- Have 2-6 members
- Have more than half the team coming from underrepresented backgrounds
- Have worked together
- Show genuine interest in cooperative or worker-led models
- Be able to commit 2-5 hours per week to the program



Application Steps

- Review the Pre-Program Assessment questions on our website
- Complete values, goals, and pain points Miro exercises
- Complete the online application form, which includes:
 - Studio information and team member details
 - Your interest in cooperative/worker-centric models
 - How your studio collaborates and handles challenges
- If selected, participate in a **30-minute first-round interview**
- If selected, participate in a **1.5-hour second-round interview**



What We Look For

- Team alignment
- Co-op interest
- Studio development intent
- Community-mindedness
- Capacity



Selection Process

We make our final selections based on:

- Your studio's potential for development and impact
- How you'd contribute to the diversity of the cohort
- Your alignment with the program's goals and structure





@canadianworkercoop (Instagram)

Important dates

- Applications are open until 11:59 pm PT on March 6, 2026
- First round interviews - now-March 11
- Second round interviews - Feb 23-March 20
- Final notifications - March 27
- Onboarding - April 7
- Program runs - April 8-June 3



Thank you!

hello@babyghosts.fund

