

West Coast schools signing up for the Dragon's Den

West Coast high schools who want to get a taste of the Dragon's Den can sign-up now for next year's Lion Foundation Young Enterprise Scheme.

Tai Poutini Polytechnic partners with The Young Enterprise Trust each year to bring the year-long programme to West Coast high schools. Teams of high school students are challenged to come up with a business idea, prepare a business and marketing plan and launch their product or service to the local community. Local mentors help along the way and the year ends in a final Dragon's Den-style pitch to a panel of judges.

Polytechnic Tertiary Liaison Coordinator Jade Mahuika says it is always an amazing experience for the students and schools from around the West Coast are welcome to enter as many teams as they wish.

It's free once again for schools to enter the year-long programme, with Development West Coast (DWC) funding the cost of entry fees.

"We recently hosted our first-ever West Coast final pitch and awards event which was a great opportunity to bring everyone together and celebrate the hard work of the students over the past year. Teams pitched their business plans and activity over the year to our panel of judges, who were hugely impressed with the student's achievements," she says.

"We're pleased to be able to bring the programme to the West Coast again in 2022 and we're hoping that, thanks to the ongoing support of DWC, we'll be able to reach more schools and more teams than ever."

Development West Coast Chief Executive Heath Milne says the organisation is proud to sponsor the West Coast Young Enterprise Scheme.

"By asking students to plant a seed of their own creation and nurture it all the way through to the end-user, YES develops an entrepreneurial mindset and pushes the students to understand and actively engage in the whole of the supply chain.

"It was inspiring to see the level of business acumen on display at the recent pitch night in Greymouth. It can be daunting to present and take questions at an event like that and they all did an excellent job. The participants from across the region have shown that the West Coast is in really good hands," he says.

The YES programme is an opportunity for senior secondary students to unleash their inner entrepreneur and experience the start-up world first-hand. Through the experiential programme students set up and run their own business through the course of a school year, completing five challenges along the way including validation, promotion, a mid-year pitch, sales, and an end of year review. All culminating in the regional and national finals.

Schools interested in getting involved in YES in 2022, or who would like to find out more about the programme can contact Tai Poutini Polytechnic Tertiary Liaison Coordinator Jade Mahuika on 03 769 9495 or email jadem@tpp.ac.nz. Find out more about YES at <http://youngenterprise.org.nz/>

For more information contact:

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