



**Crowdfunding Non-Profit | Toronto, ON | Founded: 2014 | Employees: <50 | <https://sheeo.world>**

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## COMPANY OVERVIEW

SheEO is a crowdfunding non-profit organization with a mission to finance, support, and celebrate female entrepreneurs who are creating new solutions that are benefiting humanity. It is based on the idea of #RadicalGenerosity, where 500 female businesswomen (called Activators) pool together \$500,000 that is a 0% interest loan to five women-led local Ventures. This loan is paid back over five years into a fund, creating a perpetual fund used for lending. This idea is based on tackling the challenges that female entrepreneurs face; being under-financed, under-supported, and under-celebrated in the business world.

## SENIOR MANAGEMENT

**Vicky Saunders:** Founder (2013-Present). Previously: Members, Emmy Noether Council, Perimeter Institute (2014-Present); Member ForeSight Group Global Team, The ForeSight Group (2014-Present); Entrepreneur in Residence, Digital Media Zone at Ryerson University (2014-2015); Mentor, The Next 36 (2012-2014); Senior Advisor, Office of Social Enterprise, Government of Ontario (2013); Special Advisor, Ryerson University (2013); Senior Advisor, MaRS Discovery District (2011-2012); Founder, Zazengo (2007-2010); Advisory Board Member, The World Children's Prize for the Rights of the Child (2008-2010); Co-Founder, CEO, Impactnation (2001-2008); Consultant, Imagination (2004-2005); Co-Founder, CEO, The NRG Group/Kids NRG (1997-2001). Education MA, Comparative Foreign Policy, University of Toronto (1989).

**Leah Meers:** Chief Operating Officer (2016-Present). Previously: Head, WE Day Global, Free The Children (2015-2016); Director, Operations & Quality Assurance, Free The Children (2013-2015); Associate Director, Event Operation, Free The Children (2011-2013); Motivational Speaker, Me to We (2009-2011); Youth & Philanthropy Initiative Coordinator (2008-2009). Education: BA Psychology, Western University (2007); BA Social Sciences, Erasmus University Rotterdam (2006).

**Activators:** SheEO is a self-sustainable model, with the support of Activators. Beyond their contributions, they act as mentors for the 5 ventures they fund. SheEO is constantly approached by female entrepreneurs and support the cause.

## HISTORY

SheEO's success took off with having the first year funded entirely by BMO. As the business grew, it was a team effort of supporters that helped build SheEO, such as, Freshbooks, Grantbooks, Johnson Fung, and 150 people in the founders' network. To date, SheEO has a network of 3,000 Activators, with \$3M in Activator loans for 32 Ventures, and is located in 3 countries. The non-profit creates 3 jobs per Venture per year, and helps its Ventures achieve triple-digit revenue growth annually. SheEO's future goal is to have 1 million Activators globally, with a billion-dollar perpetual fund<sup>1</sup>.

## FUNDING

SheEO is a privately held non-profit organization that is working towards being self-sustainable. Activators' contribution of \$1100 includes a sustainability fee of \$100 to fund annual operations. Sponsorship and philanthropy from organizations and individuals also contribute to the operations of the business. Once scaled, the 10% sustainability fee will be sufficient. The founders have expressed intentions of adapting the funding model, as the business continues to grow and evolve.

## KEY CORPORATE DEVELOPMENTS

**May 15, 2018:** [A 'radical' funding model for female entrepreneurs](#)

**July 27, 2015:** [While you are out there chasing unicorns, we are building a better model](#)

**White Paper:** [Radically Generous Women Creating a New Economic Model](#)

## BUSINESS HIGHLIGHTS

### STRATEGY

The organization's strategy is to create a self-sustainable platform that fills the gap for female funding in the business world. As SheEO approaches their goal of having a network of a million Activators, all paying the \$100 fee, the scale will enable the self-sustainability of the platform. Activators' funding has already resulted in revenue growth and job creation for its Ventures. The expansion of SheEO's network will empower more women to leave a positive mark on the world through business.

<sup>1</sup> <https://sheeo.world/our-impact/>

**PRODUCTS / PRICING**

**Activators:** Activators contribute \$1100 to the perpetual fund, and loan out to local ventures at 0% interest. Activators bring their buying power as early customers, their expertise, advice, and connection to their vast networks to help grow the ventures.

**Ventures:** Ventures can apply through SheEO to receive a loan from the radically generous community of women. Ventures can apply during application periods online by answering 12 questions. The Top 25 are then asked to validate financials and submit a 1-minute video. The eligibility criteria are: at time of application generated between \$50K-\$2M in revenue within about 12 months, majority women-owned (51%+), majority women-led (i.e. CEO/President), and the Venture must be a registered legal entity in the region for which you are applying.

**Learning Lab:** SheEO Learning Lab is a series of live webinars and online resources that provides peer mentorship to any woman who wants to learn and grow as an entrepreneur.

**TECHNOLOGY**

SheEO uses its website as its network for Activator and Venture applications, as well as connecting the 500 women. Payments are accepted from all their operating countries and can be made by cheque to SheEO.

**DISTRIBUTION / LOGISTICS**

There are two parts to the logistics of this platform. The application for Ventures and funding from Activators, as well as the funding selection process. As previously mentioned, Ventures and Activators can apply online to participate in the platform. The online application process results in a top 25 venture list. Then, each top 25 sends in a video about their company, and the Activators select the top 5. The top 5 ventures are invited to the SheEO Retreat with all the Activators in that cohort, for a weekend of networking and female empowerment. The 500 Activators in that cohort then select how they divide up the loan amongst the 5 ventures. Granted loans are paid back over a five-year period, at 0% interest, and then loaned out again. This creates a perpetual fund that can help other female-led businesses gain funding in the future.

**MARKETING**

Due to the non-profit nature of the company's operations, SheEO does not partake in any formal marketing activities. Instead, they rely on word-of-mouth marketing within the strong network of female leaders and social media platforms to share word of learning labs and successfully funded ventures.

**COMPETITORS**

SheEO has been scaling successfully because it is unique to the market. It specifically targets female-led businesses, offers a network of expertise and advice, and provides a progressive self-sustaining model. The closest resemblance to SheEO's competitor would be another crowdfunding firm that grants 0% interest funding to ventures or causes.

**[ProjectHer:](#)** An online platform that allows female-led ventures to post their campaigns online for crowdfunding on their site. They offer *All or Nothing* and *Keep It All* campaigns and use the Stripe (tokenized payment software) technology for secure, tokenized payments. ProjectHer has not reached the scale of SheEO, and has a very different funding model.

**[Kickstarter:](#)** A platform that facilitates artists and creative passionaries' to obtain funding through a community.

**[GoFundMe:](#)** The world's largest online fundraising platform that brings together people and allows them to donate to one another's causes. There are no restrictions on what the cause may be, and so this expands beyond just the business/start-up world.

However, unlike SheEO, all companies mentioned above take a small fee from the amount raised as well as transaction fees.