

## **READY, SET... HACK! "HACKING FOR HUMANITY" AT THIS WEEKEND'S RANDOM HACKS OF KINDNESS OTTAWA HACKATHON**

The next Random Hacks of Kindness Ottawa (or RHoK for short) hackathon takes place this weekend, June 5-7, at 126 York St in the ByWard Market. At the event, self-formed teams of strategists, designers, developers, project managers and other tech-savvy do-gooders, will use technology to tackle problems faced by charitable, community and social enterprise organisations. Anyone looking to join in the hacking are invited to register via the organization's website: <http://rhok.ca>

This event is in part a give-back to the community and in part a professional development opportunity for its participants. "This is an occasion for folks of diverse backgrounds to put their professional skills to use helping an organization they identify with, believe in, and support; an organization that doesn't necessarily have the funds to hire a team of professionals to solve the problem at hand" says Brett Tackaberry, one of the organizers and a long-time event participant.

For Welsey Ellis, the founder of RHoK Ottawa, it's more about the personal and professional development to be gained in working alongside people whose skills differ from your own: "For example, if you don't know Ruby (programming language), but have always wanted to learn it, well – this is your chance to come out and learn from someone who is an expert, because that's the kind of people that this event attracts. This way, you're not only learning a new skill, you're also immediately applying it to a worthy cause."

Although in previous years the event tended to draw mostly a software developer crowd, this year, the organizers want to make sure it's open to a more diverse audience: "We are especially looking for designers and strategists to come out and participate and we've gone after projects that require that kind of expertise," explains Tackaberry.

This year's event features an impressive line-up of participating organizations and projects: from exMNA – an international movement that's meant to provide a safe place for individuals choosing to leave the faith of Islam – to Ottawa Riverkeepers, an organization that brings together volunteers, communities, businesses and all levels of government to find solutions to the problems that threaten the health of the Ottawa river. Other participating organizations include COMPASS, Child Nature Alliance Canada, Riverkeepers, Ottawa-Carleton Ultimate Association and VoteSavvy/Carleton University's School of Public Administration.

The hackathon is entirely supported by the generosity of local companies and individuals who provide funds to cover the cost of the event – from coffee to food to beer – all of which help keep the participants fueled throughout the week-end. This year's sponsors include: Kivuto, bv02, Shopify, IBM, A2Z digital Studios, 12 Labs, Corporate Renaissance Group, Macadamian, and Canadian Bank Note.

### **About Random Hacks of Kindness Ottawa**

RHoK is an international movement that grew out of a 2009 panel discussion between Microsoft, Yahoo, and Google. Since the first hackathon, the movement has spread both in scope and geographically. Today, independent events are organized all around the world at various times and frequencies throughout the year. In Canada, events take place throughout the year in Toronto, Hamilton, Montreal, Vancouver and Ottawa. RHoK Ottawa has evolved greatly since its humble beginnings thanks to a group of dedicated volunteers. It will continue to grow and develop its own personality. For more information about RHoK Ottawa, visit [rhok.ca](http://rhok.ca).

For more information about the event, please contact:

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