

Diverse group accesses business support

A record number of applications from local businesses looking to build skills, adapt and grow during and after the health crisis have taken up the offer of a local business support program.

There were 49 applicants for 20 sponsored places in the City of Canning's Business Mentor program, with four places in the Curtin Ignition Program still to be selected in late July.

It is the largest number of applicants in the program's four-year history. A City of Canning spokesperson said he was impressed by the diversity of the applications. "There was a great mix of business people, ranging from teenage entrepreneurs through to seasoned business operators," he

said. "We also received applications from tradies, foodies, manufacturers and professionals."

One of the new programs piloted this year, Young Gems, received the greatest interest. It will take 12 budding entrepreneurs of all abilities or diverse backgrounds on a journey to create their own start-up, delivered in partnership with Multicultural Futures and Gemstar Technologies.

Owner of Comput-I Care Samantha Bax was one of the successful applicants for Young Gems, her business offers home visit computer tech support and she has had to adapt her business model during COVID-19. "We have now moved to offering a service where we can connect to your

computer from off-site – providing a social-distancing friendly service to our clients," she said.

"I look forward to the city's mentorship program to work with other participants and to enable Comput-I Care to develop the skills to gain greater market exposure." The Business Mentoring Programs will be rolled out from early May through to late October.

Many of the 25 applicants who missed out on this year's program will still receive a taste of mentoring with most partner agencies offering free or discounted sessions for those who were unsuccessful. Unsuccessful applicants are also encouraged to apply again for the 2021 program.



Successful applicant and Comput-I Care founder Samantha Bax.