

# ANNUAL REPORT

2023



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## MESSAGE FROM THE SHAREHOLDER

Edmonton is filled with innovators who drive positive change. Edmonton Unlimited embodies Edmonton's spirit of possibility, providing the right assistance at the right time for aspiring innovators and a platform to transform their ideas into high-growth companies. By nurturing local talent and a culture of inclusive innovation, Edmonton Unlimited is instrumental in contributing to the realization of our city's Economic Action Plan. This means even more economic opportunities, new businesses, more jobs, and prosperity for all Edmontonians.

As we celebrate the achievements of Edmonton Unlimited and the technology and innovation ecosystem over the past year, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Board, staff, and partners for their unwavering dedication to our city's prosperity. Together, we will continue to build an economically thriving Edmonton—one that fosters innovation, embraces diversity, and empowers all residents to pursue their dreams.

### **AMARJEET SOHI** MAYOR OF EDMONTON

Edmonton Unlimited is the municipal innovation authority for the City of Edmonton. Our sole shareholder is Edmonton City Council, which appoints our Board of Directors.







## MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

Building on the incredible foundation established by so many dedicated community builders, the Edmonton Unlimited team and our partners are finding new ways to support Edmonton innovators.

Our purpose is clear: To support innovators as they navigate the challenges of creating new products, raising capital, attracting talent, and expanding into global markets. To that end, we continue to build relationships and deliver programs that accelerate the growth of Edmonton companies with global ambitions. With the opening of our new downtown innovation centre, participants in our innovation ecosystem have access to a vibrant hub where they can continue to learn, collaborate, and get the support they need to succeed.

Our funders, partners, and all three levels of government have been an integral part of this journey and will be critical to the ongoing success of our innovation ecosystem into the future. We thank them for their continued support.

As we reflect on our accomplishments over the past year and look forward to the year ahead, we are excited about the future of our innovators, our ecosystem, and our city.

**LINDSAY DODD**  
BOARD CHAIR

# WHO WE ARE

At Edmonton Unlimited, our mission is clear: to elevate innovation companies toward international impact. Serving as both a catalyst and connector, we champion the needs of innovators and their companies, ensuring access to crucial resources through programs, networks, and opportunities at every stage of their journey. This support translates into tangible outcomes like more jobs, a more diverse and resilient economy, and an enhanced quality of life for all Edmontonians.

Edmonton Unlimited is a vibrant hub where ideas are born, collaborations flourish, and innovations take flight. Our downtown space has been the epicentre of our operations since May 2023 and a home base to innovators, programs, world-class accelerators, community events, and mission-aligned partners.

Together, we will build on our city's strengths, undeniable passion, and limitless potential. We are Edmonton Unlimited – innovation from here, for the world.





# SUPPORTING INNOVATORS

Our innovator supports – offered through Startup, Accelerate, and Capital City Pilots – deliver targeted business content covering various aspects of the entrepreneurial journey, from innovating and commercializing ideas to achieving revenue growth, securing capital, and expanding internationally. By providing timely support tailored to the needs of Edmonton's innovators, we facilitate the transformation of their concepts into thriving, impactful businesses.

Within Edmonton's rich ecosystem of service providers and innovator supports, it's imperative for innovators to access the right resources for their journey. As an integral connector within this vibrant community, we hosted over 400 Get Started meetings in 2023, delivering bespoke navigation services tailored to innovators' needs. These meetings are designed to seamlessly steer participants toward third-party supports, grant opportunities, investment channels, and invaluable municipal and regulatory pathways. In collaboration with our partners and renowned legal and accounting firms, Dentons and MNP, we provide virtual and in-person [Office Hours](#) for innovators to tap into tailored advice to support their continued business growth.

\*Cumulative over the last three years.

\*\*May - Dec 2023.

## 1,372

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

## 136

NET INCREASE IN JOBS

## 89

NPS SCORE

## 6,496

1:1 COACHING HOURS

## \$21M

INVESTMENT IN STARTUPS\*

## 7,600+

COMMUNITY MEMBERS IN OUR SPACE\*\*

# STARTUP

Each innovation starts with an idea about how to do something differently. With a range of programs and supports, we help people turn their ideas into new enterprises.

Our Startup programming provides new founders with the resources they need – from ideation to validation and beyond. This includes programs to build capacity and skills, enabling founders to develop and test their unique value propositions. New innovators can easily transition from one program to the next, getting the support they need along the way.



MADE POSSIBLE BY:



## STARTUP CORE & WORKSHOPS

- Business Model 101
- Discover & Validate
- Propel Fasttrack
- Preflight: Market, Sell & Pitch
- Preflight: Build, Test & Learn
- Various startup workshops

## SOCIAL IMPACT

- Social Impact Business Model
- Cultivate: Social Impact

## SUPPORT FOR POST SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

- Business Development Support
- Student Founders
- Studentpreneur Summer Grant
- Executive In Residence

## EXPERTS ON DEMAND

## EXTERNAL & PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAMS

- ELITE
- ANZA
- EPL: Innovation U



*The Preflight Build, Test & Learn program was an engaging, productive and safe cohort for me. I feel more confident as a startup entrepreneur now.*

**AYOOLA OLADAPO**  
Founder, LaurelSpace App



*Edmonton Unlimited has been and continues to be a valuable resource to Chromacare. We needed some marketing expertise to develop our go-to-market strategy but had no way of funding that work. The Experts on Demand program helped us fill gaps in our business plan, and provided us with a vetted expert, who carefully listened to our needs, and made introductions to others in the Edmonton tech scene. We are grateful to those at Edmonton Unlimited whose expertise helped our company navigate crucial steps and succeed."*

**CHRISTIAAN FULTON**  
Founder & CEO, Chromacare Labs Inc.





## STARTUP PROGRAM PARTICIPANT

# ZERO POINT CRYOGENICS



Zero Point Cryogenics (ZPC) manufactures cryogenic devices, including advanced dilution refrigerators, which are the primary low-temperature platform for quantum computers. From technology originally conceived at the University of Alberta in 2017 by physicist, researcher, and Professor Dr. John P. Davis, ZPC specializes in building robust and reliable dilution refrigerators for the quantum computing industry and research partners. As Canada's sole producer (and one of few globally), ZPC empowers labs to push quantum computing boundaries.

In 2023, ZPC achieved several major milestones, including receiving \$1.952M in funding from Prairies Economic Development Canada (PrairiesCan) as part of the Regional Quantum Initiative, \$3M as part of a collaboration with the University of Waterloo, Carleton University and Qubic as parts of the Innovation for Defence Excellence and Security (IDeaS), all while securing multiple government and academic contracts. In addition to growing their team, they delivered their first dilution refrigerator system, a cryogenic device that provides continuous cooling at millikelvin temperatures.

To enhance their business strategies, ZPC received business support and one-to-one coaching through the Experts on Demand program, helping them construct a comprehensive five-year forecast, and facilitating outreach to prospective investors.



*We had some challenges around creating a five-year forecast that would resonate well with investors. We were able to coordinate with an incredible coach [at Edmonton Unlimited] with deep financial knowledge of high-growth tech startups that helped us out.*

**Chris Cassin**

CEO, Zero Point Cryogenics  
2023 Experts on Demand Participant

ZPC is kicking off 2024 by optimizing its systems to meet the increasing needs of its customers and introducing faster cool-down times, increased cooling power, and extended intervals between scheduled maintenance. Connect with them on [LinkedIn](#) to see what's coming for Zero Point Cryogenics.

To learn more about Zero Point Cryogenics, visit their [website](#).



## STARTUP PROGRAM PARTICIPANT



C², headquartered in Edmonton, empowers fashion consumers to make climate-conscious purchases. Led by CEO & Founder, Amal Merali, their app generates carbon footprint labels for fashion and apparel items and educates consumers about the impact of product-level carbon footprint on land, air and sea. By addressing carbon emissions and broader environmental issues, C² advocates for sustainable consumption. As Amal puts it, C² is “climate action led by conscious consumers”. With the fashion industry being one of the largest contributors to greenhouse gas emissions, C² aims to demystify the supply chain and enable consumers to make impactful, sustainable choices to reduce emissions.

Throughout 2023, Amal propelled C²'s business journey forward by actively engaging in various startup workshops offered by Edmonton Unlimited, which provided her with the essential tools and guidance necessary to refine and elevate her business ideas. Concurrently, her company's selection as an industry Capstone Project at the University of Alberta reinforced its position in the market, contributing to C²'s continued growth and recognition.

This year, C² is actively fundraising while also completing the technological advancements needed to support its business development and operations. This dual focus represents a critical growth stage for C² as it poises for growth as a trailblazer in the fashion retail industry.

To learn more about C² and the journey ahead, follow Amal Merali on [LinkedIn](#).

“Edmonton Unlimited's combination of courses and friendly support team demonstrated this in easy-to-palate components. In less than one year, I am concluding the "proof of concept" while securing funding to further product development.

**Amal Merali**

CEO & Founder, C²

2023 Startup Program Participant:

Business Model 101, Discover & Validate, Cultivate: Social Impact, Preflight: Build, Test, & Learn, FastTrack: Propel



# ACCELERATE

Edmonton Unlimited is part of a consortium led by Alberta Innovates that funds the Alberta Scaleup and Growth Accelerator Program (Scaleup GAP). The consortium, which is comprised of three levels of government including the Government of Alberta, Prairies Economic Development Canada (PrairiesCAN), and the City of Calgary (Opportunity Calgary Investment Fund), allocated \$35 million over three years to contract five world-class accelerators:

- **Plug and Play Alberta**
- **Alberta Accelerator by 500**
- **TELUS Community Safety & Wellness (CSW) Accelerator, powered by Alchemist X**
- **SVG Thrive**
- **Alberta Catalyzer**



## ALBERTA CATALYZER

Developed and delivered in partnership with Platform Calgary, Alberta Catalyzer is a pre-accelerator that offers support, resources and coaching to entrepreneurs who want to grow their tech-enabled companies. Through three levels of programming – Engage, Traction and Velocity – Alberta Catalyzer provides the right combination of supports given a company's stage of development.



“This [Velocity] program is nothing short of a game-changer, designed to accelerate a startup's growth to scale-up stages.

**MICHELLE K.**  
Clinical Affairs Project Manager  
SpectraCann

# 33%

**VELOCITY 2023 GRADUATES  
ACCEPTED TO AN  
ACCELERATOR**

# 215

**COMPANIES IN  
PROGRAMMING**

Includes all companies that enrolled in Engage, Traction, or and Velocity North.

“If you're a tech entrepreneur in Alberta **"THIS IS THE PROGRAM FOR YOU!"** This 8-week program allowed me to share some incredible ideas, build friendships and see the potential in not only myself but in the others who joined me on this entrepreneurial journey.

**JASON TSCHETTER**  
Founder  
Fraud Hunters Canada

# 300+

**COMBINED  
ATTENDANCE  
OVER TWO VELOCITY  
NORTH SHOWCASES**

“The Catalyzer program has really become a valued partner to the TELUS Community Safety & Wellness (CSW) Accelerator program over the course of the Scaleup GAP program. By providing support to startups through the Catalyzer program, these emerging companies are better equipped to join accelerator programs like CSW and continue their growth trajectory. This not only benefits the startups themselves but also has the potential to lead to significant social impact through the development of innovative solutions.

**JILLIAN MCLAREN**  
Program Director  
TELUS Community Safety & Wellness (CSW) Accelerator

**MADE POSSIBLE BY**

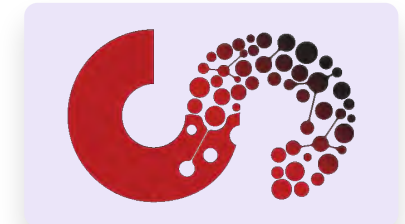


**THROUGH SCALEUP GAP**



## STARTUP & ALBERTA CATALYZER PROGRAM PARTICIPANT

# SPECTRACANN



Co-Founded in 2022 by CEO, Leyla Kara, COO, Anna Harb, and CTO Charles Harb, SpectraCann is changing the on-site, rapid drug detection market with cutting-edge breathalyzers. Powered by optical physics quantum technology, their drug testing solution can detect multiple substances from a single breath sample, providing results in 30 seconds.

SpectraCann's flagship product, the THC breathalyzer, is set to soft launch by the end of 2024, marking a significant advancement in drug detection technology for enhanced road safety and workplace safety, ultimately reducing accidents and fatalities. Beyond THC detection, SpectraCann's technology offers real-time multi-substance detection for fentanyl, and more, addressing critical issues such as drug overdoses. Their technology will play a significant role in changing the status quo in drug screening, transportation safety, and emergency support services.

In 2023, SpectraCann witnessed a notable surge in momentum, with business support and one-to-one coaching from the Experts on Demand program after successfully graduating from Alberta Catalyzer's Velocity program and clinching the People's Choice Award at the Fall 2023 Northern Velocity Showcase. They also developed their third prototype, began the final stages of securing their first capital raise, and were accepted into the Alchemist X, TELUS Community Safety & Wellness Accelerator (CSW).

At the core of their 2024 strategic path lies the initiation of third-party validation studies and pilot programs, coupled with dedicated efforts to enhance their machine-learning algorithm through a new partnership with the Alberta Machine Intelligence Institute (Amii). In the next six months, they'll actively seek fundraising opportunities from angel investors and venture capitalists to further their mission of fostering a safer society. Connect with them on [LinkedIn](#) and stay updated on the latest developments at SpectraCann. To learn more, about SpectraCann, visit their [website](#).



*Coaching support was one of the main strengths of the Catalyzer program, and we are beyond grateful for experts such as Mark Mitchel for his unwavering support. The guidance and mentorship provided...were invaluable in helping us navigate the complexities of entrepreneurship and refine our strategies for success. Experts on Demand [helped us] to further enhance our knowledge base and address specific needs or questions that we face during our entrepreneurial journey.*

### Leyla Kara

CEO & Co-Founder, SpectraCann  
2023 Alberta Catalyzer Velocity Graduate  
2023 Experts On Demand Participant



ALBERTA CATALYZER PROGRAM PARTICIPANT

# UPROW



UpRow founder, Kelise Williams envisions her service as a guiding light for immigrants nationwide, a one-stop settlement solution that helps newcomers seamlessly transition into Canadian society.

Powered by cutting-edge artificial intelligence, UpRow offers a wide range of services and personalized recommendations to make transitioning into Canadian society as smooth as possible.

UpRow's mission to simplify the Canadian settlement process by addressing challenges from housing and employment to legal procedures and building community connections has been successful over the past year.

UpRow expanded its network to 20+ service providers, attracting businesses with their growing user base. Their community of 4,000 newcomers validated UpRow's mission, driving growth of the platform.

From winning both the BIPOC Women Founders in Tech and HerStory Story-pitch competitions, to being named among the top 20 startups in Edmonton at the Startup TNT Investment Summit, UpRow cemented its presence in the Alberta tech scene last year. A graduate of Alberta Catalyzer's Velocity program, Kelise also received business support and one-to-one coaching through the [Experts on Demand](#) program.

UpRow kicked off 2024 on a high note with Kelise recently graduating from the Alberta Accelerator by 500 Global, where she refined her go-to-market strategy for the launch of UpRow 2.0. This latest version introduces enhanced features complemented by a more user-friendly interface. These developments and milestones aim to expand UpRow's reach within the newcomer community. Connect with UpRow on [LinkedIn](#) to stay in the loop about new updates.

To learn more about UpRow, visit their [website](#).

“Edmonton Unlimited has been instrumental in UpRow's journey, providing critical support through mentorship, networking opportunities, and access to resources tailored for tech startups. Their guidance has helped us refine our business model and strategy, enabling us to navigate the complexities of the tech ecosystem with confidence.

**Kelise Williams**

CEO & Founder, UpRow  
2023 Alberta Catalyzer Velocity Graduate  
2023 Experts On Demand Participant

# CAPITAL CITY PILOTS



12

**COMPANIES  
EVALUATED**

*Companies may have submitted  
entries to multiple challenges.*

90

3

**INNOVATION  
CHALLENGES  
LAUNCHED IN 2023**

**INNOVATORS  
DIRECTLY  
ENGAGED**

Launched in July 2023 through a collaboration with the City of Edmonton, Capital City Pilots invites forward-thinking entrepreneurs to tackle a series of Innovation Challenges and address specific pain points identified by the city. Once a challenge is identified by the city, Capital City Pilots releases it as a call for innovation, inviting submissions for potential solutions. This unique approach empowers local innovators to deploy their solutions and collaborate directly with the city as a client, providing them with invaluable hands-on experience and the opportunity to develop compelling case studies. By participating, innovators not only gain practical insights but also gain tangible opportunities to test their minimum viable products (MVPs) and enhance their appeal to potential customers and investors.

The first three city challenges called for solutions that enhance downtown vibrancy, reimagine public spaces and renew neighbourhoods.

**Challenge #1: Data-Driven Downtown.** Innovations to visualize real-time data in the downtown core, encompassing residents, workers and tourists.

**Challenge #2: Environmental Records for Contamination Sites.** Mapping out potential contamination sites for redevelopment throughout Edmonton.

**Challenge #3: Igniting Vibrancy in the Quarters.** Creative innovation to inhabit The Quarters, an area nestled next to North America's largest stretch of urban parkland in Northeast Edmonton.

With three new challenges going live in the first quarter of 2024, Capital City Pilots looks forward to driving positive change in partnership with the City of Edmonton, bringing innovative solutions to the public realm, and creating more investable companies.



MADE POSSIBLE BY:



Alberta

With the support of:  
Prairies Economic  
Development Canada

Canada



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Our space serves as a vibrant hub where connections are forged, ideas are exchanged, and events come to life. Through a myriad of activities and gatherings, we aim to foster a sense of belonging and collaboration, enriching the fabric of our city. We've partnered with organizations like Alberta Machine Intelligence Institute (Amii), C-Tribe, Startup TNT, The Firehood, Careers in Technology and Innovation (CITI), Digital Alberta and more, to host a variety of collaborative events. From workshops to networking, these partnerships foster innovation and connection. Join us as we celebrate the spirit of collaboration and the transformative power of community engagement.

## EVENT SPOTLIGHT

### EDMONTON UNLIMITED OPEN HOUSE

On May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Edmonton Unlimited celebrated the opening of our new headquarters situated in the heart of downtown Edmonton. Our open house brought together over 500 innovators, industry leaders, and city officials, highlighting the collective effort toward driving economic prosperity and downtown vibrancy.

5,408

**EVENT ATTENDEES IN 2023**

*From May 2023 – Dec 2023*

119

**EVENTS ACTIVATED  
IN OUR SPACE IN 2023**



**MADE POSSIBLE BY:**



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

600+

LAUNCH PARTIERS



10

PITCHING COMPANIES



65+

EVENTS

2000+

OVERALL ATTENDEES



EVENT SPOTLIGHT

EDMONTON STARTUP WEEK

Edmonton Startup Week is a five-day celebration of community-led workshops, socials, and events showcasing Edmonton's startup community, entrepreneurs, and culture of innovation. Hosted at venues across the city by over 50 community partners, Edmonton Startup Week is a week for entrepreneurs, problem solvers, and their teams to sharpen a new skill, and feel a sense of community.

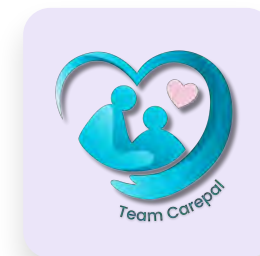
The 2023 edition of Edmonton Startup Week marked its 10<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, consisting of daily events centred around innovation and professional development, and Launch Party 14. In celebration of the Startup Week anniversary, we proudly awarded a \$10,000 cash prize to support one exceptional company with early capital toward a major growth milestone. Standard Field Systems claimed the \$10,000 prize, and Team CarePal, won the People's Choice Award.

MADE POSSIBLE BY:



STARTUP PROGRAM PARTICIPANT & LAUNCH PARTY 14 COMPANY

# TEAM CAREPAL



Team CarePal leads the charge in transforming the family caregiving experience through its comprehensive management app, streamlining communication, scheduling, delegation, and task tracking. Founded by CEO Cindy Sim in 2020, their digital solution delivers personalized resources to combat burnout and health issues that more than a million Alberta caregivers face daily.

Team CarePal offers two key solutions: a Caregiver Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system to equip organizations with tools to enable better care coordination, and an Employer Wellness Program to support caregiving employees. Made feasible by the Alberta Machine Intelligence Institute (Amii), Team CarePal plans to predict and prevent caregiver burnout by leveraging data and machine learning.

In 2023, Team CarePal celebrated many milestones including the launch of their customer-facing app, onboarding 400 clients and winning the People's Choice Award at Launch Party 14 during Edmonton Startup Week. Team CarePal also successfully received funding from Alberta Innovates and The National Research Council of Canada Industrial Research Assistance Program (NRC IRAP). After completing several Startup programs in 2022, Team CarePal connected with business leaders and experts through Edmonton Unlimited's Experts on Demand program in 2023, who provided their team with real-time support as the team prepared to bring their product to market.

Team CarePal has already begun 2024 with an exciting itinerary. Among the highlights are the initiation of two pilots with long-term care facilities in Alberta and Saskatchewan, the investigation into expanding their employer wellness program insurance companies, and the highly anticipated launch of their artificial intelligence digital navigation bot. This innovative tool is designed to provide guidance and support to caregivers navigating the complex healthcare ecosystem. Connect with Team CarePal on [LinkedIn](#) to follow their journey.

To learn more about Team CarePal, visit their [website](#).



*I was looking to find guidance and education on the gaps in my business plan and how to launch our product into the market successfully. Edmonton Unlimited provided us with exceptional programs that laid a strong foundation for our business's growth. The access to a network and introductions to industry leaders proved to be immeasurably valuable in launching our company.*

**Cindy Sim**

CEO & Founder, Team CarePal  
2023 Experts On Demand Participant  
Launch Party 14 Alumni

# OUR SPACE

Welcome to the Edmonton Unlimited Space! Our 18,000+ square footprint anchors our operations and is home to innovators, programs, world-class accelerators, experts, community events, and mission-aligned partners.

This space embodies our dedication to inclusive innovation, serving as a dynamic hub for Edmonton's diverse innovation communities. With features like hot-desking, program rooms, ideation labs, a café and gathering space, and "The Pitch Deck" event space, it fosters flexibility and collaboration as innovators start, grow, and scale their ideas and companies.

MADE POSSIBLE BY:



With the support of:  
Prairies Economic  
Development Canada

| **Canada**



**CHECK OUT  
OUR SPACE**



# LOOKING AHEAD TO 2024

Looking ahead to 2024, Edmonton Unlimited anticipates an exciting journey of growth and transformation. With a year full of successes behind us, we remain committed to advancing our mission of supporting and empowering growth-ambitious innovators.

Building on the foundation of our programs, our space, and community events, we are poised to expand and evolve our offerings, tailored to meet the evolving needs of Edmonton's dynamic innovation landscape. Bolstered by unwavering support from every corner of our city, including our valued funders and mission-aligned community partners, we are driven by a singular focus: to empower local innovators in their quest to establish and scale high-growth enterprises.

As we embark on this journey, we invite you to join us in harnessing the collective spirit of Edmonton's diverse innovation communities. Together, let's unleash the transformative power of innovation and shape a brighter future for all, right here from our dynamic city in the North.

**LEARN MORE AT [EDMONTONUNLIMITED.COM](https://edmontonunlimited.com)**