

REPORT TO COMMUNITY 2024





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Indigenous innovation has taken place on these lands, amiskwaciwāskahikan, or Edmonton, since time immemorial. At Edmonton Unlimited, we recognize, appreciate, and celebrate the Indigenous innovators whose footsteps have graced these lands for generations. We respectfully acknowledge that we are situated on Treaty 6 territory and the Métis Homeland, ancestral lands of the nêhiyawak, Dene, Niitsitapi, Nahkawiniwak, Nakota Sioux, and Métis, and the contemporary territory of many other Indigenous peoples. We also encourage, support, and promote the resurgence of Indigenous knowledge and practices and are committed to empowering Indigenous innovation in the spirit of Reconciliation.



MESSAGE FROM THE SHAREHOLDER

Made-in-Edmonton technologies, innovation and research are shaping our city every day. Local entrepreneurs pursue bold ideas and innovative strategies that diversify our economy, increase investment and make our community more globally competitive.

Edmonton's startup ecosystem is among the best in the world, and that reputation is growing every year thanks to Edmonton Unlimited. They connect local entrepreneurs with the knowledge, skills and community they need to build a strong foundation for their business and get their ideas into the world. Especially in times of uncertainty, the strong network that Edmonton Unlimited fosters among the business and innovation community is essential.

I want to thank the Edmonton Unlimited Board, staff, and partners for their unwavering dedication to our city's prosperity. Together, we will continue to build a strong and economically thriving city – one that fosters innovation, embraces diversity and empowers all Edmontonians to make their dreams a reality.

Amarjeet Sohi
Mayor of Edmonton



MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

Edmonton Unlimited exists to champion the incredible spirit of innovation and entrepreneurship in our city. Over the past year, we have listened intently to the community's call for a stronger entrepreneurial focus and have taken decisive steps to meet that challenge.

Welcoming Tom Viinikka as our entrepreneurial Chief Executive Officer marked a pivotal moment, setting the stage for a renewed vision. Through meaningful engagement with our community, we have ensured that Edmonton Unlimited's direction is firmly aligned with the ambitions and needs of our innovators. This past year has been one of strategic foundation-building—strengthening relationships, refining structures, and shaping strategies that will drive Edmonton's innovation ecosystem forward.

At the core of this transformation is our new three-year Strategic Plan—a bold and focused roadmap designed to empower entrepreneurs, accelerate growth, and solidify Edmonton's position as a global leader in innovation.

We are deeply grateful to our funders, partners, and all three levels of government for their steadfast support in this journey. Together, we are building an ecosystem that not only supports but celebrates entrepreneurship in Edmonton.

Looking forward, we are inspired by the momentum that has been built and excited to continue championing the entrepreneurs and ideas that will define Edmonton's future.

Lindsay Dodd
Board Chair



MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

The past year has been about listening, learning, and laying the foundation for what's next in Edmonton's entrepreneurial community.

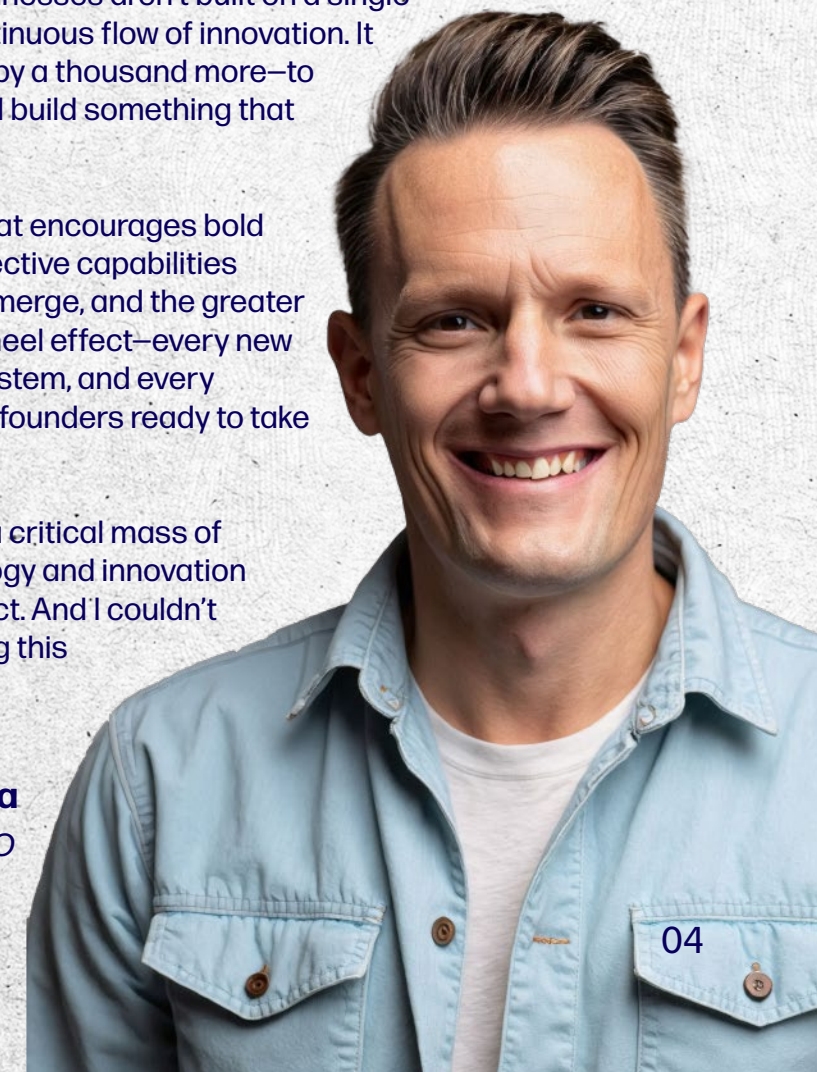
As an entrepreneur myself, I am honored to be part of building the ecosystem and I am grateful for the trust placed in me—by our board, our team, and most importantly, the entrepreneurs we serve.

Entrepreneurship thrives on mentorship—learning from those who've been there before. That's why I'm thrilled about the work we're doing to create spaces, programs, and opportunities where entrepreneurs can connect, grow, and support each other. The right environment doesn't just spark ideas—it builds confidence, fuels action, and empowers founders to overcome challenges they might not tackle alone throughout the entire life of their business. Great businesses aren't built on a single great idea; they thrive on a continuous flow of innovation. It takes one great idea—followed by a thousand more—to transform vision into reality and build something that lasts.

The more we foster a culture that encourages bold attempts, the stronger our collective capabilities become, the more resources emerge, and the greater momentum we build. It's a flywheel effect—every new attempt strengthens the ecosystem, and every success fuels the next wave of founders ready to take their shot.

Our mission is clear: to create a critical mass of entrepreneurs scaling technology and innovation companies toward global impact. And I couldn't be more excited to keep building this future with all of you.

Tom Viinikka
CEO





WHO WE ARE

Backing Big Ideas, Every Step of the Way

Edmonton Unlimited exists to back big ideas, bold moves, and the people willing to take the leap. But innovation isn't just about starting—it's about growing, refining, and scaling. We support entrepreneurs at every stage, from first-time founders to experienced leaders building investment-ready companies.

Entrepreneurs learn best from each other. That's why we focus on creating spaces where real-world lessons, shared experiences, and collaboration can happen. **We embrace the failing-fast mentality, the pivots, and the persistence it takes to build something bigger.**

Now, more than ever, we're doubling down on that spirit—because when the community succeeds, our entire city moves forward.



SUPPORTING ENTREPRENEURS

As Edmonton's entrepreneurial community continues to grow, the demand for tailored resources has increased. This growth signals something important: the foundational work put in across the ecosystem over the last decade is paying off, and we're seeing that maturity take shape. While we continue to be a resource for founders taking their first steps, we also recognize the distinct needs of more venture-funded, growth-stage companies in our community.

Learning from peers while on the journey is invaluable. To strengthen this culture of shared knowledge, we've introduced **new initiatives like peer groups and roundtables discussions**, designed specifically for team leaders at fast-growing companies. These spaces create opportunities for entrepreneurs and builders to solve challenges together, share insights, and collaborate in real time.

Throughout the year, our hub saw **a surge in daily traffic** as more entrepreneurs came together to connect and collaborate. This growing activity led us to **extend operations to six days a week**, ensuring entrepreneurs had more opportunities to access resources, build relationships, and move their businesses forward.

With an evolving space and a growing community of entrepreneurs, builders and investors at all stages, Edmonton Unlimited is here to facilitate that next bold step—connecting innovators with the right support at the right time as the ecosystem moves forward together.

1,315
PROGRAM
PARTICIPANTS

89 NET PROMOTER
SCORE

FUNDERS INVESTED
\$39.4M IN **332**
COMPANIES WE SERVED*

*Cumulative over 4 years



BRINGING AI TO THE FRONTLINES OF PRIMARY CARE



Meet **CARM&A Health Inc.**, an Alberta-based startup using AI to tackle one of healthcare's biggest challenges – **physician burnout**. Founded in 2020 by **Dr. Marjan** and **Dr. Sheny**, two clinicians with 30+ years of experience, CARM&A is turning AI into a **seamless teammate** in healthcare, helping doctors spend less time on admin work and more time with patients.

THE PROBLEM THEY'RE SOLVING

50%+ of family physicians struggle with burnout due to overwhelming admin tasks. Many patients **aren't identified early enough** for preventative care.

Dr. Marjan, a geriatric specialist, saw an opportunity: **What if AI could help detect early signs of frailty and support doctors before patients reach a crisis?** That insight led to **CARM&A Health** – a company on a mission to build **AI-driven tools that enhance care and lighten the load for healthcare providers**.

WHAT'S NEXT?

- Expanding pilot programs and turning early adopters into long-term customers.
- Increasing AI acceptance by educating healthcare providers on digital assistants like Carmi.
- Developing customization features to tailor solutions to different healthcare settings.
- Preparing to pitch to investors and scale.

"One of the most exciting aspects of our journey has been helping the healthcare sector become more comfortable with AI. With Carmi, we're bringing ethical AI into healthcare. For the first time, I feel like we're getting closer to what electronic health records were meant to be – a platform that reduces administrative burden, fosters collaboration, and ultimately drives better health outcomes."

– Dr. Marjan Abbasi & Dr. Sheny Khera
Founders of CARM&A Health Inc.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Our space is a community hub where connections are made, ideas are shared, entrepreneurs are inspired, and encouraged to take the next step.



19,311
CUPS OF COFFEE
IN 2024

12 COMMUNITY COFFEE
TAKEOVERS

10,826
VISITORS IN
OUR SPACE

121 PARTNERED EVENTS

By partnering with organizations like MNP, Alberta Machine Intelligence Institute (Amii), Dentons, Applied Pharmaceutical Innovation (API), and StartupTNT, we host events that create valuable opportunities for growth and collaboration. From workshops and lunch & learns to panels and fireside chats, we're focused on helping entrepreneurs build connections, gain industry insights, and access the resources needed to scale their businesses.

220
EVENTS ACTIVATED
IN OUR SPACE

Entrepreneurs are at the center of everything we do. The most important piece is bringing them together—so they can learn from each other, gain courage from each other, and inspire each other to take the next step.



STARTUP WEEK

THINKING BIGGER

The theme for Edmonton Startup Week was Think Bigger—and that's exactly what happened. Over five days, we saw **more than 5,600 people register for 60 events** that showcased the energy, creativity, and momentum of our entrepreneurial community.



Women in Tech & Innovation

ALWAYS INNOVATING

New events made a splash, including the **Pancake Kickoff Breakfast, Women in Tech & Innovation, Mega Meetup, DevCon, and the Venture Summit**. These additions created new spaces for founders, investors, and industry to connect.



Pancake Kickoff Breakfast

STAYING TRUE TO OUR ROOTS

Flagship events continued to shine, with the ever-popular **Startup Crawl** offering a behind-the-scenes look at a few of Edmonton's tech companies.

Launch Party celebrated the most promising startups with a **Canadian Bush Party**-theme.



Launch Party 15

10 NEW LAUNCH PARTY COMPANIES



Launch Party 15

COMMUNITY-LED EVENTS

The *Think Bigger* theme was embraced by the community hosting 34 events. From the downtown core to venues throughout Edmonton, these events sparked bold conversations, new connections, and big ideas.



Chris Heivly
Keynote Speaker

60
EVENTS
over five days

MORE THAN
5,600
REGISTRANTS



Startup
Crawl



DevCon

Startup Week proved once again that when entrepreneurs, investors, and industry come together, anything is possible.

THE DRIVE AI: YOUR SECOND BRAIN



Meet the person behind [The Drive AI](#), creator of the world's first agentic file management system—designed to make managing files as easy as having a conversation. With The Drive AI, users can create, move, share, and organize files simply by using natural language. No endless clicking or searching—just tell The Drive AI what you need, and it handles the rest.

2024: A YEAR OF GROWTH

- Refreshed their website and introduced flexible payment plans.
- Grew 300% generating early revenue along the way.
- Secured a \$7,500 grant from a student-focused program.
- Engaged in meaningful conversations with investors.

WHY A COMMUNITY HUB MATTERS

"Having workspace access on evenings and weekends—plus guidance from experienced mentors—has been a game-changer."

"We're building a fully authentic system where all file operations—creating, moving, sorting, editing, sharing, organizing—can be done using natural language. No other companies are doing that."

*— Bigyan Karki
Founder, The Drive AI*

WHAT'S NEXT

Edmonton's entrepreneurial community has been building something big. More founders are taking bold swings, scaling their businesses, and proving that innovation thrives here. Every step forward strengthens the ecosystem, creating more opportunities for the next wave of entrepreneurs ready to make their mark.

Those that do step forward strengthen the ecosystem, laying the ground work and creating more opportunities for the next wave of aspiring entrepreneurs.

Looking ahead, we're focused on what entrepreneurs and innovators need most: the right connections, peer-to-peer learning, and access to resources that turn ideas into lasting companies.

But the real key? Continuing to bring great people together—to inspire, support, and challenge one another. Because when that happens, we don't just launch more businesses – we create a critical mass of entrepreneurs working towards global impact. And that's the future we're building, together.



MADE POSSIBLE BY:



With the support of:
Prairies Economic
Development Canada



