Unique business accelerator to grow tech-based ventures that improve community safety and wellness

EDMONTON, ALBERTA. September 23, 2021 – A first-of-its kind global business accelerator will be based in Edmonton to help grow tech companies and provide artificial intelligence solutions that address community and social challenges.

Alberta Innovates chose the **Community Safety & Wellness (CSW) Accelerator powered by Alchemist** as one of four proposals that will receive provincial, federal and municipal investment under an unprecedented accelerator initiative intended to help innovative tech companies scale up in Alberta and attract global companies and technologies to the province.

An Edmonton-based public-private group – comprising the Edmonton Police Foundation, the Alberta Machine Intelligence Institute (Amii), the University of Alberta, Telus, ATB Financial and Motorola – partnered to submit this unique proposal. The **CSW Accelerator powered by Alchemist** will support tech companies (including social enterprises) using artificial intelligence and machine learning to develop apps or digital platforms that specifically provide a social, community or wellness benefit.

The group partnered with a top-ranking firm from Silicon Valley called Alchemist Accelerator to develop a first-of-its-kind program to deliver business development, mentorship and opportunities to selected applicants in the community safety and wellness sector. These companies will be validating their business and technology in Edmonton by accessing local community service organizations. A group of investors led by Ashif Mawji, chair of the Edmonton Police Foundation, will form a fund to help invest in the companies coming through/out of the accelerator.

This accelerator is part of the Alberta Innovates Scaleup and Growth Accelerator Program (Scaleup GAP). The four accelerators are providing services in Alberta with the support of a funding consortium led by Alberta Innovates.

All three orders of government are investing about $35 million for the overall accelerator program. This includes funding from the Alberta Ministry of Jobs, Economy and Innovation to Alberta Innovates to lead and manage the overall Scaleup and Growth Accelerator Program. The Government of Canada, through Prairies Economic Development Canada (PrairiesCan), has invested in the Alberta Innovates program to expand funds available to not-for-profit business accelerators. Funding is coming from Innovate Edmonton at the municipal level.

Quotes:

"This is the first accelerator of its kind in Canada targeted to solving social challenges, and a unique opportunity for companies and investors. Participants in the CSW Accelerator will gain access to a global network of mentors, investors and entrepreneurs, plus access to Alberta's world-class talent in artificial intelligence and machine learning. In addition to helping Alberta-based tech companies scale and grow, we also want to highlight Alberta's capability to the world, attract global firms and create a global mindset in our local ecosystem."

– Laura Kilcrease, CEO, Alberta Innovates

"The world needs what Edmonton offers – a passionate and vibrant community of entrepreneurs committed to solving some of the world's biggest challenges. The CSW Accelerator fueled by Alchemist will support local innovators and digital IP designed for positive social impact, improving lives for Edmontonians and people around the world."

– Catherine Warren, CEO, Innovate Edmonton

"The CSW Accelerator powered by Alchemist will leverage robust and rich community data, and community service organizations as domain experts, pilot sites and first paying customers. The Edmonton Police Foundation, with the Alberta Machine Intelligence Institute (Amii), the University of Alberta, Telus, ATB Financial, Motorola and others, are excited to partner to make significant change in this space. Ultimately, the digital solutions generated by this program will create positive social impact, improve lives, and create and nurture a more livable and investable city and share our solutions, globally."

- Ashif Mawji, board chair, Edmonton Police Foundation, on behalf of the CSW Accelerator partnership

"Alchemist's mission is to bring Silicon Valley know-how and networks to the most interesting entrepreneurs all over the world. We can't wait to get started with our partners in Alberta."

– Rachel Chalmers, head of corporate and government programs, Alchemist Accelerator

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BACKGROUNDER/FAQs – CSW Accelerator powered by Alchemist

- Initiated by the Edmonton Police Foundation in partnership with the Edmonton Police Service, University of Alberta, Amii, ATB Financial, TELUS and Motorola.
- Programming will be delivered in Edmonton.
- Training, mentors and networking will be provided by Alchemist Accelerator through its AlchemistX program.
- This accelerator will leverage technology, data, artificial intelligence/machine learning to devise and deploy workable community safety and wellness solutions.
- Participants will have access to private funding. A group of Alberta investors will form a fund to invest in ventures coming through the accelerator.
- Local organizations and social agencies will be first paying customers.

Q: What do you mean by community safety and wellness?

A: This is a broad umbrella term encompassing health, criminal justice and social issues from a preventative lens. It addresses wellness, addictions, domestic violence, homelessness and other social challenges.

Q: The **CSW Accelerator powered by Alchemist** will be attracting global firms. Why should we fund non-Alberta companies?

A: One of the goals of the program is to highlight Alberta capability to the world and make Alberta a preferred technology destination for entrepreneurs and investment. The Alberta Scaleup and Growth Accelerator Program (Scaleup GAP) administered by Alberta Innovates is unprecedented for Alberta in terms of its global scope and quality of programming. It is intended to attract both Alberta and eligible global companies to come to Alberta to strengthen the Alberta ecosystem, and provide access to global collaborations and capital. Participating companies will be selected accordingly to the criteria set by the Community Safety and Wellness Accelerator with their service delivery partner, Alchemist Accelerator.

Q: Is there a fee to apply?

A: There will be no fees to apply or participate.

Q: Is this intended to only address social problems in Edmonton? What's in it for Alberta and global companies?

A: The community safety and wellness challenges we face are common elsewhere. The solutions we commercialize/launch here can be scaled to help the provincial and global community. Participating companies can scale globally, after they prove their solution works here and they get their first paying customer. Also, ventures from around the world can come here to help further their business through an accelerator offering a unique opportunity in the social space.

Q: What kinds of digital products or platforms could be developed through the CSW Accelerator to help address societal challenges?

A: Some examples of what's possible: Predicting domestic violence earlier, for early intervention; empowering homeless people with tools that predict needs and match solutions; technology-based addiction management/reduction solutions; solving cold cases on missing people; gamified platform to provide racial bias awareness and corrective solutions; proactive mental health and wellness platforms for individuals and businesses/entities; predictive tool to enable law enforcement to help offenders of certain crimes go through rehab instead of putting them through the criminal justice system.

About Alberta Innovates

Alberta Innovates is the province's largest and Canada's first provincial research and innovation agency. For a century we have worked closely with researchers, companies and entrepreneurs – trailblazers who built industries and strengthened communities. Today we are pivoting to the next frontier of opportunity in Alberta and worldwide by driving emerging technologies across sectors. We are a provincial corporation delivering seed funding, business advice, applied research and technical services, and avenues for partnership and collaboration. **Learn how Alberta Innovates.**

About Innovate Edmonton

Headquartered in Alberta's capital city, Innovate Edmonton leverages, unites, and promotes home-grown innovation as a gateway to solving the world's most pressing problems. We harness the power of the public and private sectors, ground-breaking academic research, and purpose-driven investment to build a shared prosperity and open international markets. From sustainable climate solutions to public health and digital education, Edmonton is a leading global centre for inspiration, ingenuity, and inclusion. Learn more about Innovate Edmonton and Startup Edmonton, a division of Innovate Edmonton.

About the Community Safety and Wellness Accelerator

The Community Safety and Wellness Accelerator (CSW) is sponsored by the Edmonton Police Foundation in conjunction with various partners, including ATB Financial, TELUS, Motorola, U of A, AMII, Edmonton Police Service and others. Using a combination of data, artificial intelligence and machine learning, entrepreneurship, mentorship, domain expertise, funding, structured accelerator programming and other key ingredients to help create successful social impact ventures, its mission is to help solve our community's challenges and create a sustainable model to help bring those solutions to the world. Being one of the first in the world with this unique combination will allow the CSW to demonstrate the social impact power of Albertans. For more information, visit https://cswaccelerator.com/.

About Alchemist Accelerator

Alchemist is a venture-backed accelerator focused on accelerating the development of seed-stage ventures that monetize from enterprises (not consumers). CB Insights rated Alchemist the top

accelerator based on median funding rates of its grads (YC was #2). The accelerator's primary screening criteria is on teams, with primacy placed on having distinctive technical co-founders. The organization provides seed investment into companies it admits and provides founders a structured path to traction, fundraising, mentorship, and community over the course of a 6-month program. Our backers include many of the top corporate and VC funds in the Valley -- including Khosla Ventures, DFJ, Cisco, GE, next47(Siemens), and Salesforce, among others. The accelerator seeds around 75 enterprise-monetizing ventures / year. Notable alumni include LaunchDarkly, Rigetti Quantum Computing, mPharma, Matternet, and Mightyhive.