

## Edmonton-based business accelerator brings 20 global start-ups to Alberta to address social challenges

EDMONTON, ALBERTA. January 24, 2022 – The TELUS Community Safety and Wellness Accelerator (TELUS CSW), in partnership with the Edmonton Police Foundation (EPF) and Silicon Valley accelerator AlchemistX, is proud to announce it has selected its first cohort.

Starting January 25, 2022, 20 tech startups from around the world will participate in a first-of-its-kind program to deliver business development and mentorship opportunities to technology startups that provide a social, community or wellness benefit. The selected businesses have applied artificial intelligence, machine learning and other advanced technologies to develop apps or digital platforms, and will be validating their business and technology by accessing local community service agencies as well as data from the Edmonton Police Service (EPS).

“One of our key goals is to demonstrate to the world the entrepreneurial power within Alberta and how we can help deliver better social outcomes using data, technology, AI/ML, mentorship and working with amazing community agencies and partners in making a measurable and impactful difference,” said Ashif Mawji, Chair, in the Edmonton Police Foundation and the TELUS CSW.

"Helping these businesses with the right information and navigating our social ecosystem is vital to the success of these businesses and to ensure positive social outcomes are achieved," said Supt. Devin Laforce, who is the EPS contact for the Accelerator.

TELUS CSW received applications from around the world for the coveted 20 available spots. Judges shortlisted and interviewed top applicants, resulting in a compelling first cohort with an under 30% admissions rate. Companies selected are from Russia, New Zealand, Israel, Turkey, Argentina, the United States, and Canada, including Alberta.

“We could not be more impressed with the quality and diversity of applicants for our first cohort,” said Ian Bergman, Partner at AlchemistX. “Whether from Alberta, across Canada, or abroad, these start-ups bring innovative technological solutions to bear against some of the most pressing challenges facing our communities today.”

The ventures in the first cohort help address challenges including racism, hate, domestic violence, personal safety and security, addiction, mental health and wellbeing, misinformation, child abuse, accessibility, child support payments, early emergency detection and more.

One of the Alberta based startups is Areto Labs. Their suite of apps uses artificial intelligence to analyze sentiment on social media, moderate online abuse and deliver communication campaigns through automated messaging to help protect public figures & employees online, increase brand loyalty and engagement, grow fanbase, and bust trolls. Watch their video [here](#).

Another participating startup is Digital Public Square which is dedicated to helping communities become more inclusive, responsive, and better equipped to change lives with good technology. "I'm so excited to be joining the CSW. Digital Public Square is building new technology to rapidly fight misinformation, gamify learning, reduce intolerance and lift communities. The CSW is how we're going to scale the impact we're having." said Farhaan Ladhani who is the CEO of Digital Public Square. Watch their video [here](#).

The TELUS CSW Accelerator is part of Alberta Innovates' [Scaleup and Growth Accelerator Program \(Scaleup GAP\)](#). Scaleup GAP intends to attract Alberta and eligible global companies to strengthen the Alberta ecosystem with a global mindset and provide them access to international collaborations and capital. Scaleup GAP is run by a consortium led by Alberta Innovates, which also includes the Ministry of Jobs, Economy and Innovation, Innovate Edmonton and Prairies Economic Development Canada (PrairiesCan). The unique partnership is allocating \$35 million over three years to retain business accelerators. It's part of an overall government goal to help create 20,000 jobs and increase technology firm revenue to \$5 billion by 2030.

#### Quotes:

"The Government of Canada is supporting innovative solutions that contribute to strong, healthy and vibrant communities. With its focus on addressing important social and community needs, the Community Safety and Wellness Accelerator adds an important and welcome dimension to Alberta's technology ecosystem."

- Honourable Daniel Vandal, Minister of Northern Affairs, Minister responsible for Prairies Economic Development Canada and Minister responsible for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency

"Opportunities in Alberta's tech sector are attracting global talent. The first cohort of startups for the Community Safety and Wellness Accelerator will benefit from strong partnerships with the Edmonton Police Foundation and AlchemistX, as well as each partner's knowledge and expertise. Our investments in accelerators is making the world's innovators sit up, take notice, and look to Alberta to grow their business."

- Minister Doug Schweitzer, Jobs, Economy and Innovation

"Global innovation efforts like these have the potential to make great progress in meeting the social challenges that face our community. I am thrilled that all three levels of our government came together to fuel this important work, and I am greatly anticipating what the selected start-ups will achieve for Edmonton and the world."

- Mayor Amarjeet Sohi, City of Edmonton

"We have a real opportunity to leverage technology and artificial intelligence in a way that has never been done before by any police agency in North America. The complexity of social issues and crime require us to use evidence and data in new ways to get to the root causes and find people-focused solutions. This collaboration will give us new tools to improve the lives of the most vulnerable in the community, reduce demand on police services, and help to better coordinate the social safety ecosystem."

- Chief Dale McFee, Edmonton Police Service

"When you infuse entrepreneurship, data, AI/ML, domain expertise, funding, mentorship and a proven accelerator program, only good things can come out of that. Now applying those ingredients to our community's pressing challenges is something we must do. The Edmonton Police Foundation is proud to be a founding partner in this initiative and look forward to lending our expertise and resources in making this a huge success!"

- Ashif Mawji, Chair - Edmonton Police Foundation

“This unique model, believed to be the first of its kind in Canada, is targeted to solving social challenges. The Community Safety and Wellness accelerator’s double bottom line approach will give it meaningful business and social impacts.”

- 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

“When socially-minded startups come from around the world to Alberta, they help the economy thrive bringing innovative and transformative solutions that use technology for good. TELUS is fundamentally rooted in social purpose with a strong belief that to do well in business we must also support the health and well-being of our communities. We are excited to see these organizations leverage cutting edge technologies to solve some of today’s biggest social challenges making both Alberta, and the world, a brighter place.”

- Blair Miller, Managing Partner, TELUS Pollinator Fund

“ATB Financial is proud to have been [involved with the TELUS CSW Accelerator](#) since its inception. The gathering of its first cohort represents a step forward towards helping uplift the social and economic well-being of Albertans. We’re looking forward to seeing the solutions that this group of 20 will put forward.”

- Stuart McKellar, Chief Legal and Sustainability Officer & Corporate Secretary, ATB Financial.

### **About the TELUS CSW:**

The TELUS Community Safety and Wellness Accelerator ( TELUS CSW) is a first-of-its-kind accelerator focused on addressing the social and safety challenges facing our communities. In partnership with AlchemistX, the Edmonton Police Foundation, and Alberta Innovates and Innovate Edmonton, the CSW Accelerator is bringing proven Silicon Valley acceleration programming to the social impact space in Edmonton, Alberta.

More about the CSW can be found at: <https://cswaccelerator.com/partners/>

**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 Prairies Economic Development Canada (PrairiesCan):**

Prairies Economic Development Canada (PrairiesCan) is the federal department that supports economic growth in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Its programs and services help businesses, not-for-profits and communities grow stronger. Its mandate is to support economic growth and diversification in the Prairie provinces and advance the interests of the region in national economic policy, programs and projects.

**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 program division of Innovate Edmonton.

**About AlchemistX:**

AlchemistX is the Corporate and Government Services division of Alchemist Accelerator, a venture-backed accelerator focused on accelerating the development of seed-stage ventures that monetize from enterprises. 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 founders a structured path to traction, fundraising, mentorship, and community over the course of a time-bound program. 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. Notable Alchemist alumni include LaunchDarkly, Rigetti Quantum Computing, mPharma, Matternet, and Mightyhive.

**About TELUS:**

TELUS (TSX: T, NYSE: TU) is a dynamic, world-leading communications technology company with \$16 billion in annual revenue and 16 million customer connections spanning wireless, data, IP, voice, television, entertainment, video, and security. We leverage our global-leading technology and compassion to enable remarkable human outcomes. Our longstanding commitment to putting our customers first fuels every aspect of our business, making us a distinct leader in customer service excellence and loyalty. In 2020, TELUS was recognized as having the fastest wireless network in the world, reinforcing our commitment to provide Canadians with access to superior technology that connects us to the people, resources and information that make our lives better. TELUS Health is

Canada's leader in digital health technology, improving access to health and wellness services and revolutionizing the flow of health information across the continuum of care. TELUS Agriculture provides innovative digital solutions throughout the agriculture value chain, supporting better food outcomes from improved agri-business data insights and processes. TELUS International (TSX and NYSE: TIXT) is a leading digital customer experience innovator that delivers next-generation AI and content management solutions for global brands across the technology and games, ecommerce and FinTech, communications and media, healthcare, travel and hospitality sectors. TELUS and TELUS International operate in 25+ countries around the world. Together, let's make the future friendly.

Driven by our passionate social purpose to connect all citizens for good, our deeply meaningful and enduring philosophy to give where we live has inspired TELUS, our team members and retirees to contribute more than \$820 million and 1.6 million days of service since 2000. This unprecedented generosity and unparalleled volunteerism have made TELUS the most giving company in the world.

For more information about TELUS, please visit [telus.com](https://telus.com), follow us [@TELUSNews](https://twitter.com/TELUSNews) on Twitter, and [@Darren Entwistle](https://www.instagram.com/Darren_Entwistle) on Instagram.

### **About EPS:**

As a modern police service committed to increasing community safety, EPS balances traditional enforcement with social needs by establishing strong community partnerships, leveraging data-driven evidence and cultivating an innovative workforce reflective of the city it serves.

### **The TELUS Community Safety and Wellness Accelerator powered by AlchemistX First Cohort Start-ups**

Anima-ey (Israel) - <https://anima-ey.com/>  
Areto Labs (Alberta) - <https://www.aretolabs.com/>  
Athena (Canada) - <http://athenacollects.com/>  
Brave Technology Coop (Canada) - <https://www.brave.coop/>  
Budee Solutions (Canada) - [www.budeesolutions.com](http://www.budeesolutions.com)  
Clearhead (New Zealand) - <https://www.clearhead.org.nz/>  
Defynance (United States) - <https://defynance.com>  
Digital Public Square (Canada) - <https://digitalpublicsquare.org/>  
Every Two Minutes (United States) - <https://mysidekickapp.io/>  
Kara Technologies (New Zealand) - <http://www.kara.tech>  
Maslo (United States) - <https://maslo.ai/>  
NavigateIO (Canada) - <https://www.navigateio.com/>  
Nucleos (United States) - <https://nucleos.com/>  
OTTAA (Argentina) - <https://www.ottaaproject.com/home.php>  
PALcares (Alberta) - <https://pal2pqh28bd.site/>  
Pedesting (Alberta) - <https://pedesting.com/>  
Rubicon (Canada) - <https://www.tryrubicon.com/>  
Sightbit (Israel) - <https://sightbit.com/>  
Sober One (Russia) - <https://www.getsober.one/>  
Xena Vision (Turkey) - <https://xena-vision.com>

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Fueled by Artificial Intelligence  
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