

EDMONTON UNLIMITED MEDIA BACKGROUNDER

Since our official launch in December 2020 as the municipal innovation authority, we have operated under a placeholder name, Innovate Edmonton. With a mandate from City Council to champion inclusion and increase innovation in Edmonton, we launched with a bold vision to position Edmonton as an inclusive global innovation capital, with local solutions to the world's critical challenges, such as the climate emergency, public health, food security, digital inclusion, social justice, and Reconciliation, to name a few.

Now, we are set to embark on the next phase of our growth, launching an enduring name and identity. The formal process ran from December 2021 to September 2022. With invaluable insights from innovators across Edmonton, partners, Board Directors and Innovation Growth Council members, as well as the City's branding and communication teams, it is time to shed past associations with earlier economic development ventures, to bridge and galvanize Edmonton's diverse innovation communities, and chart a course for an inspiring common purpose – all under a new umbrella name and identity.

Edmonton Unlimited was ultimately selected after creative modelling and a thorough legal review (for trademarks and URLs) of 49 short-listed names. This new name:

- Reflects and appeals to the city's diverse and interdisciplinary innovation landscape; a broad array of innovators of all stripes and at all stages of growth;
- Becomes a beacon for public awareness, highlighting Edmonton's ingenuity;
- Distinguishes the organization from a former, unrelated entity of the same name;
- Stands out in a cluttered marketplace of branded innovation entities, such as Alberta Innovates and Edmonton Regional Innovation Network (ERIN);
- Will appear in lights on top of our new downtown destination; and
- Positions Edmonton as an inclusive global innovation capital.

Edmonton Unlimited

Now is the time for us, Edmonton's innovators, and our city.

When we think about innovation in Edmonton, the potential is endless. From the sticky problems that Edmontonian's solve to the brilliant people who solve them, Edmonton has always been a place that sees opportunity instead of barriers, that supports and encourages one another, and a place where people come to do big things. We are a city of people solving the biggest problems, offering solutions that international markets demand and where enlightened investors want to put their capital.



Our new name, *Edmonton Unlimited*, harnesses the power of possibility and brings the best of Edmonton to the world. It is welcoming, inclusive and unconstrained by traditional definitions of innovation, business and entrepreneurship.

Our new tagline, *Innovation from here for the world*, completes our offering as a place and an organization committed to meeting global challenges with homegrown ingenuity. It supports the audacity and the aspirations of our city's innovators while also being clear, direct and purpose-driven. It includes the word "innovation," ensuring that we maintain our distinct place in the sphere of economic development, and as Edmonton's innovation authority.

Edmonton is Delivering

With an educated population, outstanding quality of life, and low cost of living, Edmonton is a magnet for young talent, new startups, and global positioning as an innovation capital. Our local ecosystem is anchored by renowned post-secondary institutions and acclaimed for strengths in artificial intelligence, big data, analytics and life sciences. Edmonton is also home to twenty startup support organizations and accelerators, including Edmonton Unlimited.

In 2021, CBRE Scoring Tech Talent Report named Edmonton as the fastest growing tech ecosystem in North America with 50% growth in talent pool over five years (2015-2020).

The 2022 Global Startup Ecosystem Report (GSER) by Startup Genome highlights the following stats about Edmonton's tech innovation ecosystem:

- Ecosystem value increased by 236% since 2020: currently \$641 million, up from \$191 million in the 2020 report and \$435 million in the 2021 report;
- #4 North American ecosystem in affordable talent, measured by ability to hire tech talent
- Top 25 North American emerging ecosystem in funding, measured by innovation through early-stage funding and investor activity;
 - Early-stage funding increased 50%: from \$89 million in the 2021 report to the current \$134 million;
 - Median seed round increased 47%: from \$400K in the 2021 report to a current \$588K;
- Skilled talent and affordability are cited as reasons a startup should move to Edmonton; and
- Artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML), big data and analytics, and life sciences sectors are highlighted for their density of talent, support resources and startup activity.

External Advertising and Media Campaign

With unanimous approval from City Council as our sole shareholder, the legal name change became official on September 19, 2022. The operating name transition and public release took place on September 28, with the launch of our new website and redesign of our social media channels; and our positioning with Explore Edmonton and Edmonton Global on the main stage at Forward/Slash to demonstrate our collaborative work in building a strong, sustainable, and prosperous future for our city and region.

Next week, the advertising and media campaign begins, showcasing six local innovators whose work amplifies Edmonton on a global stage. We are pleased to have these local innovators participate in our external marketing campaign, putting their companies, names, and faces to our name and identity. All innovators are available for interviews, by contacting them at the information below:

Kevin Mpunga, CEO, and Jean Bruce Koua, COO of Elev

Living the experience first-hand, Kevin and Jean knew there had to be a better way for post-secondary students to find living arrangements that worked for them. Seeing this need, they sprang into action and created Elev — a platform that provides a stress-free renting experience to both students based on their school, budget, and preferences.

Read [Kevin and Jean's story](#) on the current Edmonton Unlimited website.

Contact: kevin@elevhomes.ca

Lana Cuthbertson, Co-Founder & CEO of Areto Labs

Through her work leading Areto Labs, Lana and her team make the internet a less hateful place. During a recent election, Areto launched ParityBot to counter hateful and discriminatory content aimed at women candidates.

Read [Lana's story](#) on the current Edmonton Unlimited website.

Contact: lane@aretolabs.com

Shelvie Fernan and Victoria Celi, Co-Founders of Fly and Fetch

Fly and Fetch is a modern shipping provider that taps travelers to provide transport packages for faster and friendlier service, and fosters a shipping community of travelers and shippers through human connection.

Read [Shelvie and Victoria's story](#) on the Edmonton Unlimited website.

Contact: shelvie@flyandfetch.com

Ashif Mawji, Angel Investor, Venture Capitalist and Serial Social Entrepreneur

As a successful Edmonton entrepreneur, Ashif has invested in more than 110 companies around the world and is a venture partner with Silicon Valley's Rising Tide, a venture capital firm funding entrepreneurs that help carry the founders' visions. He also serves as managing director for ScaleGood Fund LP, a social impact venture company that seeks great financial results and measurable social impact outcomes.

Read more about [Ashif's story](#) on the Edmonton Unlimited website.

Contact: 780.707.0999

About Catherine Warren, CEO, Edmonton Unlimited

Living and working in Canada, the US, UK and Europe, Warren has served as a C-suite executive for publicly-traded companies, academic institutions and government-business enterprises. Most recently, as Chief Executive Officer of Vancouver Economic Commission, she led the team in attracting \$3B in foreign direct investment to the region, with a portfolio including the Vancouver Film Commission, the world's largest animation and visual effects sector, smart cities technologies such as AI, 5G and quantum computing, and the green and impact economies.

In more than two decades as a tech advisor, Warren's track-record includes mergers and acquisitions for digital distribution and digital IP, raising capital and liquidity events for tech companies, consulting to national media funds, hedge funds, crowdfunds, and coaching executives on strategic growth and monetization.

Earlier in her career, she was the start-up COO of a broadcast software company that she and her partners took to the Nasdaq and grew to a \$300M market cap. Warren has a bachelor's degree in physics from Reed College in Portland, Oregon, with a focus on climate change; and a master's degree from the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism in New York, where she did her original thesis work onsite at MIT covering the launch of its digital Media Lab.

Interview Requests

Contact: Executive Assistant to the CEO, Seanna Baxter at sbaxter@innovateedmonton.com or 780-221-2662.