



**UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY**  
Hunter Hub for Entrepreneurial Thinking

# ANNUAL REPORT

HUNTER HUB FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL THINKING

# LETTER FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



This past year, we've seen leaders from all sectors showcase their entrepreneurial thinking skills—leading with resiliency, adaptability, creativity, and future vision—during a time of unprecedented global health and economic challenges. The Hunter Hub's vision to improve lives and economies through entrepreneurial

thinking has never seemed more powerful to ensuring Canada's continued prosperity in an era of accelerating change and disruption.

To achieve our vision, we are focused on our mandate of cultivating and supporting changemakers, connecting and building community, and amplifying our innovators' stories and impact. In a remote world removed from the Hunter Hub Collision Space, the past year was focused on refreshing our vision and strategy in consultation with key leaders and broadening the mandate of the External Advisory Board to become the new UCalgary Council for Innovation and Entrepreneurial Leadership (CIEL).

Our top priority was embedding entrepreneurial thinking into diverse curricular, extra-curricular, and experiential education opportunities to reach a broad interdisciplinary audience. The unique Embedded Certificate in Entrepreneurial Thinking was

launched as a key curricular offering across all disciplines, allowing undergraduate students to effect change in any environment. In the co-curricular space and with the help of partners across the university, we expanded our flagship early-stage Launchpad program and launched a new systems-change program called Map the System.

Moving forward, we are focused on connecting talent to the innovation communities across Canada. Launching in June 2021, the Hunter Hub-led \$4M Experience Ventures program will offer 2025 paid entrepreneurial thinking placements for students at 10 post-secondary institutions across the country, from Simon Fraser University out west to Memorial University out east.

Thanks to Academic Director Alice de Koning and the Hunter Hub team for their continued focus on delivering exceptional student experiences, supporting innovators, and building community. With their continued dedication and hard work, we will continue to grow our programming and impact.

Highlighted in this report are our first steps in our ambitious strategy to bring Calgary-led ingenuity to the national stage, and we can't wait for you to see where we go.

**Keri Damen,**  
Executive Director

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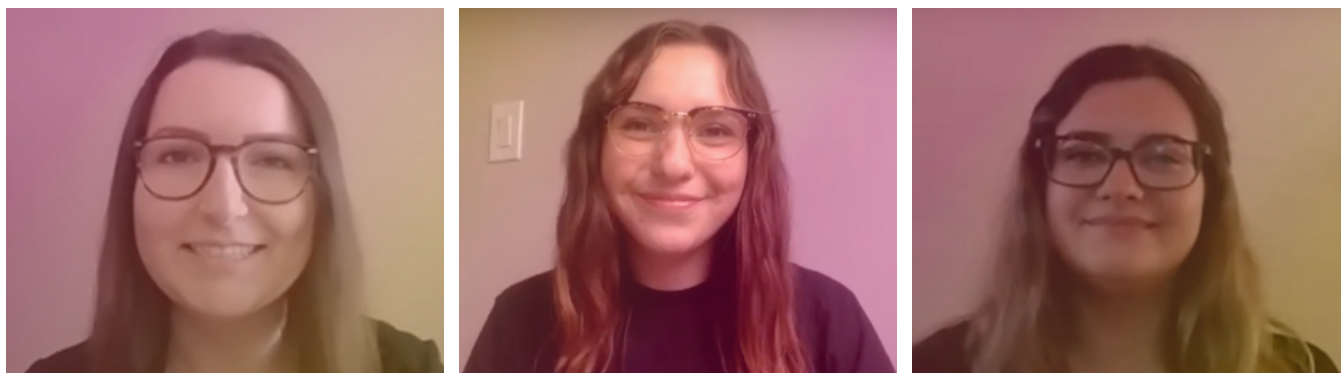
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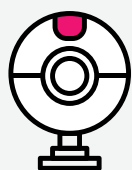
*The winning team, COVID Cruiser, composed of three University of Alberta students—Rachel Stafaniuk, Jade Rosenberger, and Kirsten Webster—aimed to conduct patient testing for COVID-19 in rural and remote communities.*

## COVID-19 INTERVENTION CHALLENGE

Held in May 2020, the COVID-19 Intervention Challenge (CIC) invited post-secondary students from across Canada to address a pressing concern facing healthcare delivery across the globe. As the most successful Calgary Interprofessional Challenge to-date, CIC encouraged a

record number of students across Alberta who feel powerless during the COVID-19 pandemic to be a part of the solution. Recognizing that many students are at home practicing social distancing, this problem-solving event provided an opportunity for them to lend their time, energy, and ideas to improve healthcare delivery during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### UCALGARY VIRTUAL INNOVATION FAIR



During this one-of-a-kind event held in September 2020, students, staff, and faculty learned how innovators in our community are tackling and solving key problems in society, with virtual tables to showcase the innovation programs and organizations from across campus and in the local innovation ecosystem. Paired with a panel discussion to help students identify career aspirations and learn about ideation and research commercialization, the UCalgary Virtual Innovation Fair encouraged students and faculty alike to get involved with entrepreneurial thinking in their own fields of study.

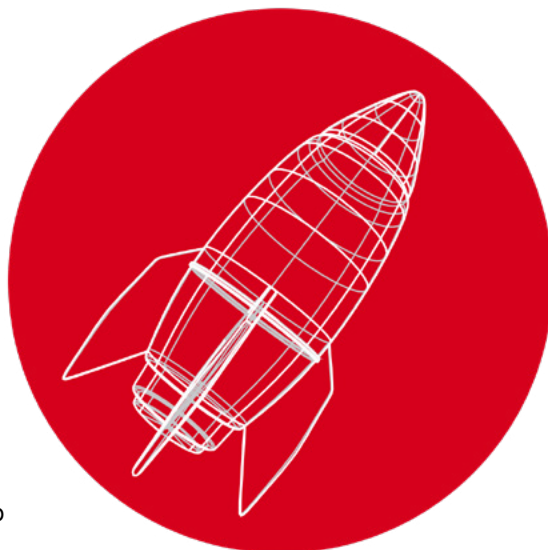
CIC is interdisciplinary, with knowledge being contributed by academics and practitioners from a variety of backgrounds. Over 150 student participants across 11 post-secondary institutions were exposed to new ways of looking at the problems at-hand that will help them better consider the physical space, the patients, the healthcare providers, marginalized communities, crisis management tools, and health delivery during a global pandemic.

56 teams worked on the CIC challenge over four days, creating solutions to the question: “Cities are setting up non-traditional care spaces for COVID-19 patients. How might we improve these spaces?” A group of medical experts reviewed the submissions and awarded the top prize to COVID Cruiser, a remote community solution for COVID testing, created by a team of women from the University of Alberta.

# LAUNCHPAD

Expanded from eight weeks to six months, our flagship co-curricular early-stage entrepreneurship program Launchpad is an experiential learning program offered in partnership with the Schulich School of Engineering. The program is designed to help UCalgary students and post-doctoral fellows learn how to transform an idea into a venture and, in the process, develop in-demand career competencies relating to entrepreneurial thinking.

Participation in this program includes bi-weekly workshops, group learning through D2L, meetings with mentors and coaches, the completion of project assignments, as well as reflective writing to help students grow their entrepreneurial mindset.



## Through active participation across all of Launchpad's activities, students:



Develop an entrepreneurial mindset that can contribute to success in any career.



Acquire essential skills required to take an idea to prototype to product.



Hone critical thinking skills required to redefine problems and consider different perspectives.



Be encouraged to see failure as a learning opportunity to find creative solutions to complex challenges.



### Participating students 84

■ Undergraduate (53) ■ Graduate (30) ■ Post-doctoral (1)

### Faculties represented 8

- |                    |                               |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| ✓ Engineering (47) | ✓ Medicine (2)                |
| ✓ Science (19)     | ✓ Kinesiology (1)             |
| ✓ Business (9)     | ✓ Sustainable Energy Dev. (1) |
| ✓ Arts (6)         | ✓ Education (1)               |

# LAUNCHPAD BY THE NUMBERS

**46** Students who completed the program

**08** Faculties represented

**10** Number of workshops

## LIFTOFF!

## yOIL

**The winning team, yOIL, won \$5,000 with their biological processing solution for canola oil production. The team consists of four students across the faculties of science and engineering.**

The Liftoff! pitch competition was the apex of six months of experiential learning and new venture development. The top eight teams that demonstrated creativity and dedication to developing their entrepreneurial venture were invited to pitch their venture concepts live to a panel of judges for a chance to win a first-place prize of \$5,000. The finale event was designed to encourage the teams to commit to their ventures and connect with relevant supporters who can help them take their next steps.

UCalgary students put their entrepreneurial ideas into action and imagined a different future. For farmers: a tool to monitor seed quality before harvest. For young women: an educational skin-care product. For vulnerable populations: EcoDome housing.

**bAlm:** Provides affordable skin care with a mission to educate young women on skin health, so they can have skin that they are confident in.

**CICLO Technologies Inc.:** Provides clean H2 for energy, transportation and chemicals by virtue of a self-sustaining loop technology energy sector division. This business is for companies looking to expand capacity while reducing carbon emissions.

**EcoDomes:** Provides alternative housing accommodation called EcoDomes, made from aerated concrete, for vulnerable populations based on the needs of the local community. Also provides an employment program for the vulnerable populations to build the housing on-site.

**LunarOPV:** Provides a sustainable power solution for wireless devices which requires no batteries, saving device manufacturers and operators money and helping the environment.

**MyBuild App:** Brings all car enthusiasts under one umbrella, where they can share, ask, and buy anything related to cars.

**RenewCell:** Provides second-life use cases for EV battery packs in the form of stationary storage to integrate more renewables and power more personal electronic devices, resolving the issue of cost for our customers as existing energy storage solutions are expensive.

**Voltiply:** Provides the average user with a professionally designed, fully customizable ebike battery system at an affordable price, requiring little-to-no mechanical experience.

**yOIL:** Revolutionizing seed grading by introducing an automated computer vision solution, providing farmers with quick and accessible information on their harvest quality. This gives them leverage in a competitive marketplace and keeps money in farmers' pockets.



Grand Prize Winner  
**yOIL**



People's Choice  
**bAlm**

Cash prizes awarded

**\$20K+**

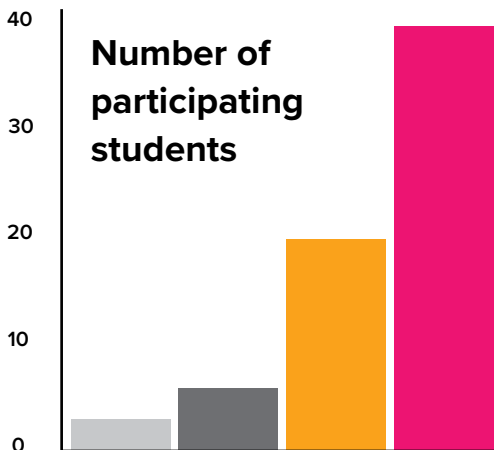
# MAP THE SYSTEM

Social innovation is a rapidly growing area of interest for students at the University of Calgary and beyond. Map the System, a global competition led by the Skoll Centre for Social Entrepreneurship, delivered in partnership with educational institutions around the world, had 12 faculties represented and helped us build out our social innovation co-curricular programming. The program challenges participants to use systems thinking as a guiding approach to understanding some of the most complex issues the world faces today.

Participants delve deep into a social or environmental issue that matters to them and take the time to explore, probe, and research all its connecting elements and factors, later sharing their findings in a way that people can meaningfully understand, share, and learn from.

Map the System isn't a pitch competition, but rather a discovery process for participants of any discipline who have an interest in social and environmental change. It's designed to encourage a learning-first approach to social change, where people take the time to understand and build upon existing efforts before attempting something new.

This year, the University of Calgary offered a co-curricular program that provides students and recent alumni with an opportunity to participate in Map the System 2021. Our campus program provided workshops, resources, an online community space, and coaching to 64 participants from many corners of the university.



- Undergraduate 39
- Graduate 19
- Community organization 4
- Post-doctoral 2

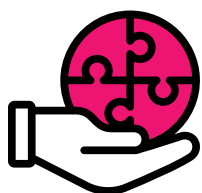
## Faculties represented

- ✓ Science (13)
- ✓ Engineering (12)
- ✓ Arts (11)
- ✓ Education (6)
- ✓ Business (6)
- ✓ Nursing (5)
- ✓ Community participant (4)
- ✓ Medicine (4)
- ✓ Kinesiology (1)
- ✓ Sustainable Energy Development (1)
- ✓ Architecture, Planning, and Landscape (1)
- ✓ Social Work (1)
- ✓ Public Policy (1)

|                       |                     |                |
|-----------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Faculties represented | Number of workshops | Total students |
| 12                    | 05                  | 64             |

# THE EMBEDDED CERTIFICATE IN ENTREPRENEURIAL THINKING

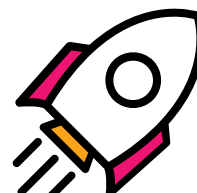
Invaluable innovation skills for students from any discipline



Solve a social problem as a changemaker



Innovate within an existing business as an employee



Create a new venture as a founder

When the Hunter Hub was created, the Embedded Certificate in Entrepreneurial Thinking (ECET) was already being envisioned: a unique, cross-disciplinary, key curricular offering for students from all disciplines at the University of Calgary. Launching this year, ECET will allow any student to effect change in their future career, no matter what field they're in or role they fill.

The Embedded Certificate in Entrepreneurial Thinking, developed in partnership with the Haskayne School of Business, provides undergraduate students from degree paths across UCalgary with an entrepreneurial thinking toolkit.

## Upon completion of the Embedded Certificate in Entrepreneurial Thinking, students will:

- ✓ Understand of entrepreneurial thinking through experiential activities and projects
- ✓ Apply methods or approaches to creatively generate ideas, problems, solutions, and opportunities
- ✓ Mobilize resources, build teams and networks to execute on ideas, solutions, and opportunities in the Applied Capstone Project course
- ✓ Explain how entrepreneurial thinking can make changes in society
- ✓ Explore the ways entrepreneurial thinking can increase the impact of their ideas, solutions, and opportunities by taking a global and interdisciplinary perspectives

Students enrolled in the Embedded Certificate for Entrepreneurial Thinking receive capstone project support from the Hunter Hub that includes startup funding to cover eligible expenses, such as prototyping and communications materials, and dedicated coaching to support idea development.



## EXPERIENCE VENTURES

Seeing a gap between post-secondary talent and the local ecosystem, the Hunter Hub used entrepreneurial thinking to work with post-secondary incubators across Canada to create a new innovative work-integrated learning program for startups to access bright, eager talent. Working with 10 post-secondary institutions across the country, the Hunter Hub has developed a number of impactful opportunities, allowing students to gain invaluable career skills with flexible placements to reach a more diverse range of students.

The program, Experience Ventures, aims to create a talent funnel from post-secondary institutions to local innovation ecosystems. It enables college and university students to make an impact alongside real-world innovators through entrepreneurial thinking placements, such as hack-a-thons, project-based and interdisciplinary work-integrated learning placements, student-in-residence placements, challenges, and more.

### Become future ready

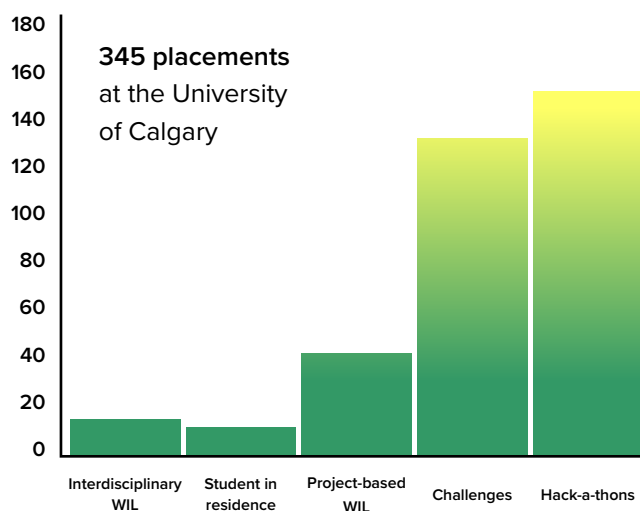
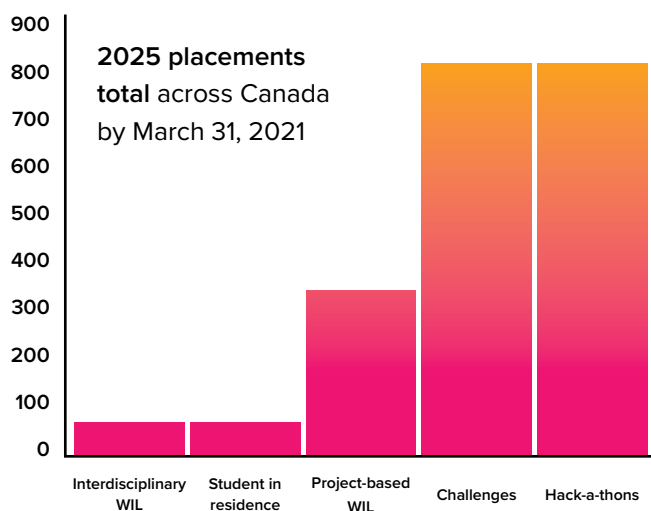
Hone entrepreneurial thinking skills, working alongside real-world innovators. Experience and contribute to new technologies. Gain and apply digital skills.

### Make an impact

Design the future through work on cutting-edge projects. Energize new companies with the next generation of talent. Innovate across disciplines to amplify impact.

### Build innovation networks

Cultivate multi-dimensional innovation networks. Promote creativity and collaboration in the workplace with multi-disciplinary talent. Build the bridge between school and the new world of work.



Funded in part by the Government of Canada's Innovative Work-Integrated Learning Initiative

# PARTNERSHIPS

We aim to support like-minded organizations that encourage entrepreneurial growth and ingenuity in every sector.

## Praxis Ideation Challenge

The Hunter Hub is proud to be the Alberta partner of University of Toronto's Praxis SCI Ideation Challenge, a national competition for Canada's top research-based universities, to promote ideation and support innovators from across the country to bring solutions to spinal cord injuries.

The challenge is a six-month staged global design challenge to develop ideas that can improve the lives of people living with spinal cord injuries. It is open to the public and backed by leading Canadian institutions, advisors, and advocates. In teams or as a solo participant, students can enter one of two parts of the challenge, explore their ideas through invaluable internships, and attend a series of innovation workshops.

Spinal cord injuries affect the body in many ways. Given the wide range of secondary conditions, there are endless innovative solutions to explore for numerous related conditions as part of this challenge, for people from any background, sector, and level of experience.

## YYC DataCon

A new, exciting virtual conference with content for all stakeholders in the data governance landscape, YYC DataCon is propelling the growth of data science in Calgary by offering students, engineers, founders, and executives a two-day virtual event with 25 speakers sharing knowledge, strategies, and insight on data science, machine learning, and more.

The Hunter Hub supported this initiative by giving away 25+ tickets to interested UCalgary students, to foster creation and networking in data science.

## Student Entrepreneurship Sprint

An initiative led by Platform Calgary, with the Hunter Hub and Mount Royal University as partners, the Student Entrepreneurship Sprint is an entrepreneurial work-integrated learning (E-WIL) experience that allows early-stage student entrepreneurs, who have new ideas, to gain knowledge and the mindsets required to pursue and validate those ideas.

This innovative new model of a WIL entrepreneurship experience allows outreach to students across Alberta who don't have access to entrepreneurship programs, and is attractive to female entrepreneurs, who have a 63% participation rate in the experience. By contributing the \$500 work-integrated learning stipend, the Hunter Hub helped the Student Entrepreneurship Sprint offer these opportunities to a diverse array of students.

The Hunter Hub was proud to support both the fall and winter programs: five-week paid sprints that introduce students to startups and the entrepreneurial community, equipping them with the foundation to not only successfully validate ideas, but bring innovative mentalities into future careers and workplaces.

| 2020 SPRINTS         | Fall | Winter |
|----------------------|------|--------|
| Student Applications | 50+  | 50+    |
| Participants         | 33   | 27     |
| Female Founders      | 20%  | 63%    |



**Keri Damen**  
Executive Director



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**Eric Skali**  
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Communications



**Leo Mui**  
Startup Coach



**Marielle Voksepp**  
Startup Coach

# UCALGARY COUNCIL ON INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURIAL LEADERSHIP

UCalgary CIEL members advise and advance UCalgary's innovation strategy to achieve its vision to be the most entrepreneurial university in Canada.



**Derrick Hunter**  
President & CEO, Bluesky  
Equities  
*Co-Chair*



**Dr. William Ghali**  
Vice-President Research,  
University of Calgary  
*Co-Chair*



**Douglas Hunter**  
Trustee of the Hunter Family  
Foundation and Chairman of  
Bluesky Equities Ltd.



**Cameron Walker**  
VP/GM, North America,  
Icebreaker



**Cara Wolf**  
Founder & CEO, Ammolite  
Analytx



**Dr. T. Chen Fong**  
Professor Emeritus, Faculty of  
Medicine, University of Calgary



**Deborah Yedlin**  
Chancellor, University of  
Calgary



**Don Archibald**  
President, Cypress Capital



**George "Buzz" Kenney**  
Co-founder & President,  
EntraTympanic LLC



**Laura Buhler**  
Executive Director, C100



**Leighton Healey**  
CEO & Co-Founder, KnowHow



**Mark Blackwell**  
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**Dr. Sarah Lubik**  
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**Stewart McTavish**  
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**Valerie Fox**  
Chief Innovation Consultant,  
Pivotal Point



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