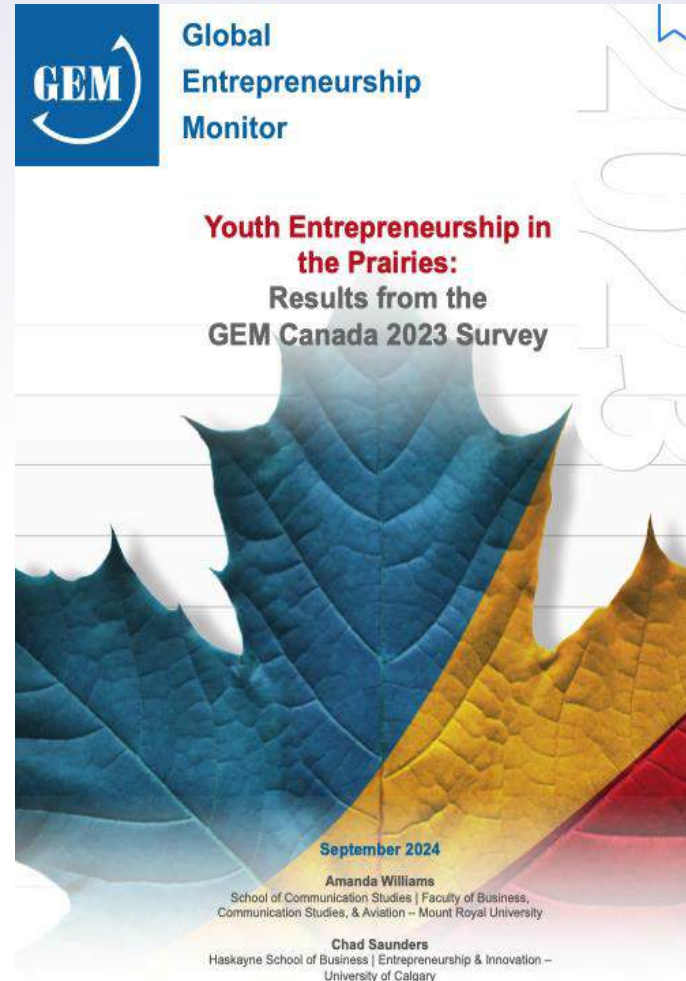


Youth Entrepreneurship in the Prairies: Results from the GEM Canada 2023 Survey

Report Authors

Dr. Amanda Williams
Faculty of Business, Communication Studies & Aviation
Mount Royal University

Dr. Chad Saunders
Haskayne School of Business, University of Calgary



Global
Entrepreneurship
Monitor

**Youth Entrepreneurship in
the Prairies:**
Results from the
GEM Canada 2023 Survey

September 2024

Amanda Williams
School of Communication Studies | Faculty of Business,
Communication Studies, & Aviation – Mount Royal University

Chad Saunders
Haskayne School of Business | Entrepreneurship & Innovation –
University of Calgary

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Follow-Up &
Thanks



Context & Study Design



Why are we here?

- ★ This report targets policymakers, program experts, and researchers to build a foundation of support for young entrepreneurs who play a critical role in driving innovation and economic growth.



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Study Design

- ★ GEM tracks new businesses globally across 100+ economies. Unique because it draws data from entrepreneurs directly and is cross comparative.
- ★ This report uses GEM's 18-34 framework to compare youth with adults aged 35-64 in Canada and across the Prairie provinces.
- ★ Uses GEM data from 2019, 2021, and 2023, spanning pre-pandemic, during, and post-pandemic periods.

Year	Alberta	Manitoba	Saskatchewan	Total Youth Respondents (18-34)	Total Sample Size (18-64)
2019	374	572	547	1,493	7,651
2021	446	457	452	1,355	6,499
2023	438	365	387	1,190	5,047

Attitudes & Behaviors



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Youth Ease in Starting a Business (2019-2023)

Key Trends:

- ★ Alberta: Youth ease dropped **-7.2%** (67.4% → 60.2%).
- ★ Nationally: Decline of **-5.3%** (70.5% → 65.2%).

Level of ease among older adults improved or remained stable, widening the gap in entrepreneurial confidence between age groups.



Youth Knowledge of Entrepreneur (2019-2023)

Key Trends

- ★ Saskatchewan: **+6.9%** (75.7%)
- ★ Alberta: **+4.9%** (74.5%)

Older demographic, awareness fell or remained consistent.

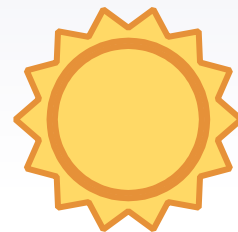
Youth are increasingly connected to entrepreneurial networks, outpacing older adults (by about 25%).



Youth Perceived Opportunities (2019-2023)

Key Trends

- ★ Saskatchewan: **+20.7%** increase (81.3%)
- ★ Manitoba: **+9.5%** increase (78.0%)
- ★ Alberta: **-9.5%** decrease (69.1%)
- ★ Older Adults (35-64): Modest increase in Saskatchewan and Alberta. Slight decline in Manitoba and Canada.



While some regions saw significant growth, Alberta's drop signals a need for targeted support for youth entrepreneurship.

Youth Confidence in Capabilities is Positive (2019–2023)

Key Trends

- ★ Saskatchewan: **+20.9%** (69.8%)
- ★ Manitoba: **+5.3%** (60.2%)
- ★ Alberta: **+5.0%** (59.4%)



Perceptions of capabilities remained flat or slightly declined for older demographic.

Youth are gaining confidence in their entrepreneurial abilities, with Saskatchewan leading the way.

Youth Entrepreneurship Activity (2019–2023)

Autonomous Startups

- ★ Saskatchewan: **+24.2%**
- ★ Manitoba: **+14.9%**
- ★ Alberta: **+8.4%**
- ★ National: **+6.4%**

Business Ownership

- ★ Saskatchewan: **+19.9%**
- ★ Alberta: **+12.7%**
- ★ Manitoba: **+12.4%**
- ★ National: **+9.1%**

Owner-Manager for Employer

- ★ Saskatchewan: **+29%**
- ★ Manitoba: **+15.9%**
- ★ Alberta: **+15%**
- ★ National: **+12%**

Youth-driven entrepreneurial spirit is on the rise, with regional variations.

Youth TEA Growth (2019-2023)

- ★ Significant increases in youth entrepreneurial activity: Saskatchewan **(+19.9%) 36.4%**, Alberta **(+9.9%) 35%**, Manitoba **(+10.4%) 32.3%**.
- ★ Youth entrepreneurship has significantly increased in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba, often surpassing older adults' rates by up to double.

	2019		2021		2023	
	18-34 yrs	35-64 yrs	18-34 yrs	35-64 yrs	18-34 yrs	35-64 yrs
Alberta	25.1	11.3	31.0	14.2	35.0	20.6
Saskatchewan	16.5	12.3	19.2	12.9	36.4	21.1
Manitoba	21.9	12.0	21.5	11.7	32.3	17.2
Canada	28.2	12.8	29.4	14.2	32.3	14.1

Other Highlights

- ★ Youth Established Business (EB) rates stayed stable, with Manitoba rising from 3.8% in 2021 to 9.8% in 2023, while Alberta's youth rate (7.5%) surpassed older adults in 2023.
- ★ Variance between EB and TEA shows **challenges in sustaining and growing businesses** beyond their initial stages.
- ★ Youth are increasingly motivated by **financial goals** and **job scarcity**, while older adults focus more on **impactful work** and **family traditions**.
- ★ Youth business discontinuance and exit rates rose across regions. Common reasons for youth exits include **unprofitability**, **financing issues**, and **opportunities to sell**, with regional differences in causes.

Demographic Dimensions



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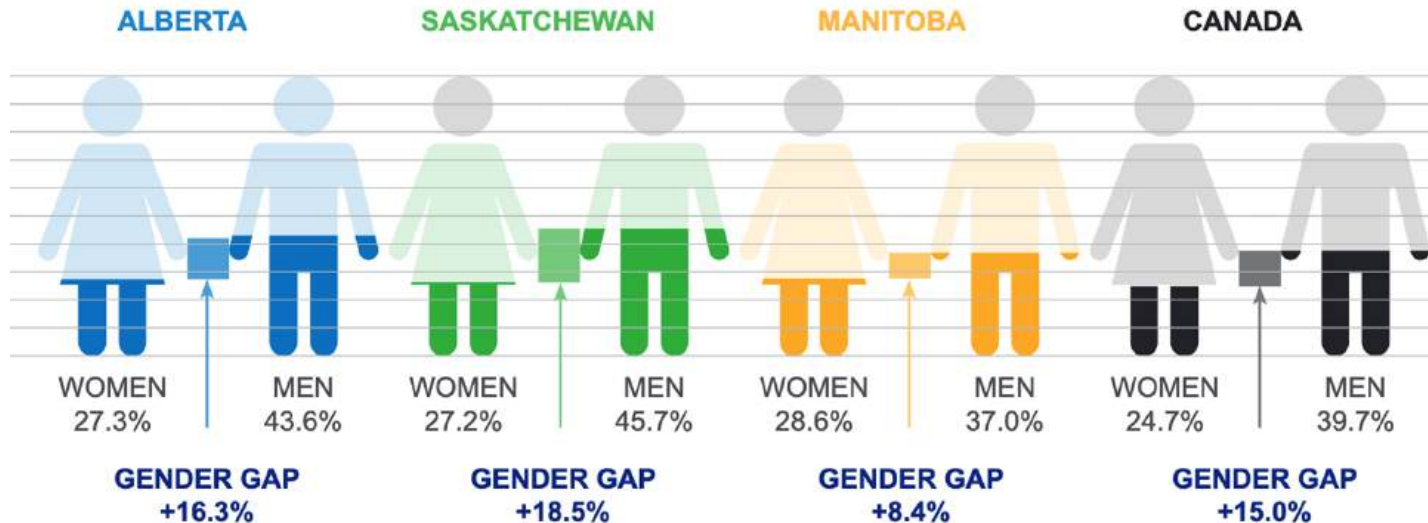
Youth Education (2019-2023)

- ★ Over **65%** of youth in the Prairie provinces and Canada have higher education levels (2023).
- ★ Youth entrepreneurship education trends from 2019-2023 **show increased high school completion**, with varied post-secondary changes—Saskatchewan saw an increase in graduate experience, while Manitoba saw a decline.
- ★ Individuals aged **35-64 engaged in TEA** generally have **higher post-secondary education levels** than those aged 18-34 due to more time in education and careers.



Gender Gaps and TEA (2019- 2023)

- ★ The gender gap in TEA rates has widened over the years.
- ★ In 2023, young men in Alberta and Saskatchewan have significantly higher TEA rates than women.
- ★ Addressing this disparity is essential for promoting a more balanced and inclusive entrepreneurial environment.



Youth Gender & Attitudes (2019-2023)

Knowledge of Entrepreneurs

- ★ **Saskatchewan: +10.8%** for women (75.0%), near parity with men (75.9%), 0.9% gender gap.
- ★ **Manitoba: +5.7%** for women (71.9%) vs. men (73.8%), 1.9% gender gap.
- ★ **Alberta: +12.2%** for men (79.5%) vs. -2.0% for women (69.9%), **9.6% gender gap.**
- ★ **Canada: +3.0%** for men (75.1%) vs. -2.1% for women (64.4%), **10.7% gender gap.**

Perceived Opportunities

- ★ **Saskatchewan: +19.1%** for women (76.7%) vs. **+21.4% for men** (84.8%), **8.1% gender gap.**
- ★ **Manitoba: +10.5%** for women (75.9%) vs. **+8.8%** for men (80.1%), 4.2% gender gap.
- ★ **Alberta: +5.3%** for men (78.0%) vs. +3.9% for women (59.9%), **18.1% gender gap.**
- ★ **Canada: -1.3%** for women (68.6%) vs. -2.3% for men (76.0%), **7.4% gender gap.**

Youth Gender & Attitudes (2019-2023)

Perceived Capabilities

- ★ **Saskatchewan: +20.3%** for women (60.3%) vs. **+21.9%** for men (79.3%), **19.0% gender gap.**
- ★ **Manitoba: +7.8%** for women (53.3%) vs. **+6.4%** for men (70.4%), **17.1% gender gap.**
- ★ **Alberta: +8.2%** for women (50.6%) vs. **+0.9%** for men (68.7%), **18.1% gender gap.**
- ★ **Canada: +2.7%** for women (49.5%) vs. **+2.1%** for men (70.9%), **21.4% gender gap.**

Fear of Failure

- ★ **Saskatchewan: +5.1%** for women (65.1%) vs. **+1.6%** for men (57.3%), **7.8% gender gap.**
- ★ **Manitoba: +5.5%** for women (62.0%) vs. **+2.9%** for men (58.8%), **3.2% gender gap.**
- ★ **Alberta: -4.5%** for women (55.3%) vs. **-2.5%** for men (54.0%), **1.3% gender gap.**
- ★ **Canada: +4.0%** for women (57.7%) vs. **+8.7%** for men (59.3%), **1.6% gender gap.**

Youth Sectoral Involvement (2019-2023)

Alberta

- ★ **Consumer Services:** Increased by **+16.8%** to **56.3%** in 2023, the largest sector for youth entrepreneurs.
- ★ **Transforming Sector:** Grew by **+5.9%** to **24.3%**.
- ★ **Business Services:** Declined sharply by **-19.6%** to **14.6%**.

Saskatchewan

- ★ **Consumer Services:** Increased by **+17.5%** to **61.0%**.
- ★ **Transforming Sector:** Declined by **-20.2%** to **14.6%**.

Manitoba

- ★ **Transforming Sector:** Increased by **+15.1%** to **27.6%**.
- ★ **Business Services:** Grew by **+7.1%** to **23.8%**.
- ★ **Extractive Sector:** Declined by **-14.8%** to **1.9%**.
- ★ **Consumer Services:** Decreased by **-7.5%** to **46.7%**.

Sector diversity and changes and overall, youth are predominantly found in consumer services

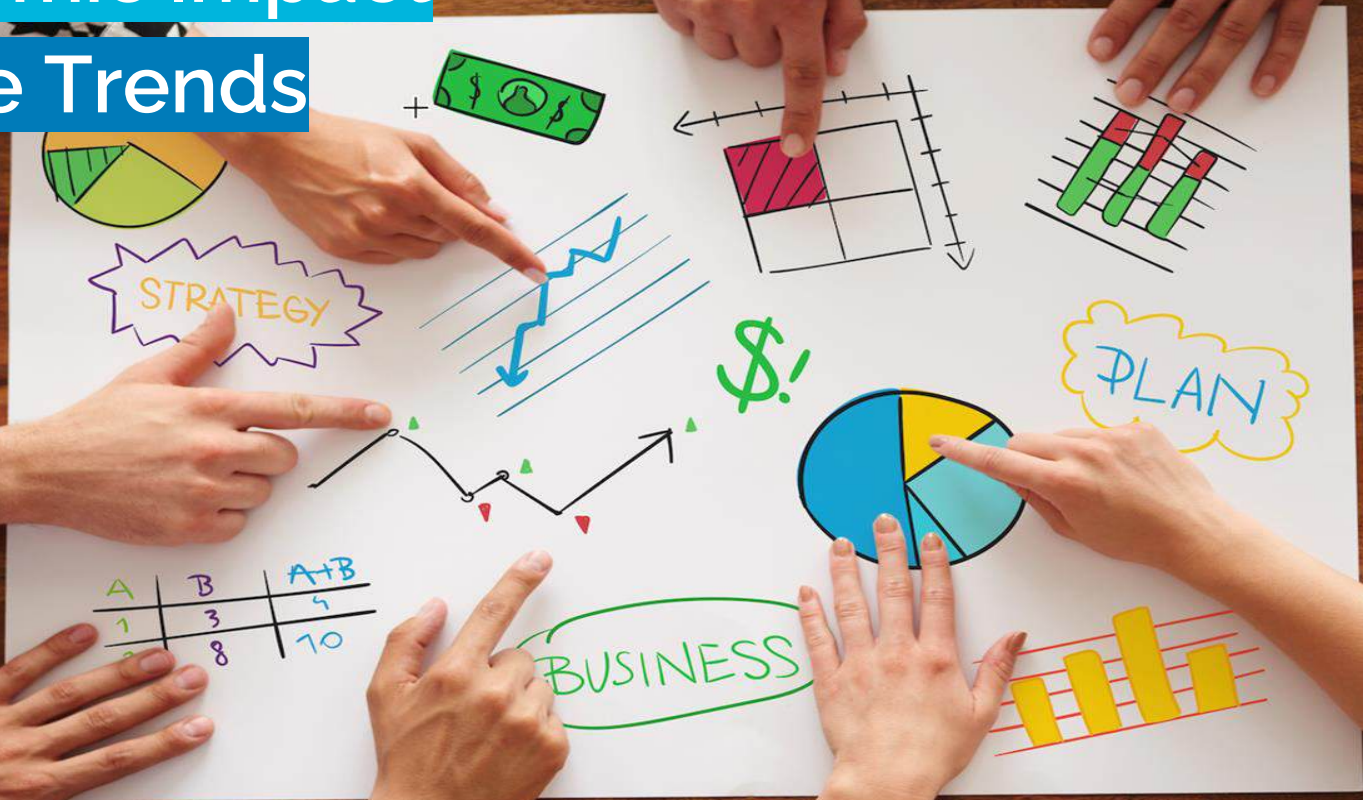
Equity Rates (2023)

- ★ **Alberta:** 36.3% of young entrepreneurs identify as minorities, above the national average of 20.7%, the highest among Prairie provinces.
- ★ **Manitoba:** 24.6% of young entrepreneurs identify as Indigenous, exceeding the national average of 21.0%.
- ★ **Saskatchewan:** 20.0% of young entrepreneurs have disabilities, slightly below the national average of 20.7%, but the highest in the region. Lower new immigrant levels.

These variations highlight the diverse backgrounds of young entrepreneurs.

Economic Impact

Future Trends



Current Job Creation (2019-2023)

Alberta

- ★ **No jobs: -9.2%** (20.0% in 2019 to 10.8% in 2023).

Saskatchewan

- ★ **20+ jobs: +40.8%** (from 16.0% in 2019 to 56.8% in 2023).
- ★ **1-5 jobs: -20.6%** (from 24.0% in 2019 to 3.4% in 2023).

Manitoba

- ★ **20+ jobs: +20.0%** (from 18.9% in 2019 to 38.9% in 2023).
- ★ **1-5 jobs: -11.6%** (from 48.6% in 2019 to 37.0% in 2023).

Canada (National Trends)

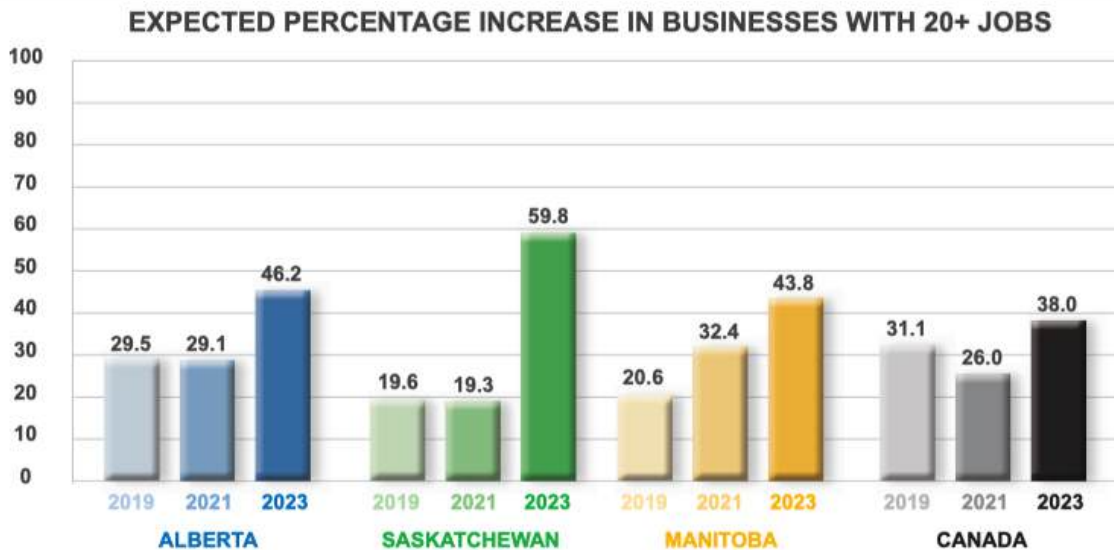
- ★ 1-5 jobs: **-9.8%** (from 43.4% in 2019 to 33.6% in 2023).

Significant growth in businesses creating 20+ jobs, especially in Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

All regions saw decreases in 1-5 job creation.

Expected Percentage Increase in Businesses with 20+ Jobs (2019–2023)

- ★ Youth in the Prairies are increasingly aspiring to create larger businesses, with Alberta (+16.7%), Saskatchewan (+40.2%), and Manitoba (+23.2%) all seeing significant growth in plans for **20+ job ventures** since 2019.
- ★ This trend reflects a shift away from smaller-scale operations, highlighting a focus on large-scale job creation and impactful enterprises.



Innovation in Youth Entrepreneurship (2019-2023)

- ★ In 2023, most youth entrepreneurs across the provinces falls within the **not a new product/service** (43.5% to 54.4%). Some movement.

Saskatchewan

- ★ Decreased **not new** by **-22.7%** (66.2% to 43.5%).
- ★ Increased **new to this area** by **(+15.1%)** to 41.7% in 2023 show a growing focus on broader markets.

Manitoba

- ★ Growth in products **new to the country** (19.3%, **+8.2%**), indicating a shift toward regional and national impact.

- ★ In 2023, most youth entrepreneurs across all provinces fall within the **not a new technology/procedure"** (36.8% to 58.4%). More movement.

Alberta

- ★ **New to this area** adoption declined by **-6.9** (30.8% to 23.9%).

Saskatchewan

- ★ **Not new** declined by **-28%** (64.8% to 36.8%) while **new to this area** increased significantly by **+26.2%** (15.5% to 41.7%).

Manitoba

- ★ **New to the country grew** by **+11.9%** (11.3% to 23.2%) **not new** declined by **-28.0%** (57.7% to 42.4%)

Canada

- ★ **Not new** increased **+10.7%** (47.7% to 58.4%), **new to area** decline by **-9.7%** (32.4% to 22.7%)

Youth Export (2019-2013)

- ★ In 2023, most youth entrepreneurs focused on local markets, with "none" for export intensity ranging from 56% to 74.4%.

Saskatchewan

- ★ **"25 to 75%"** exports increased by **+6.3%** to 16%.

Manitoba

- ★ **"25 to 75%"** exports decreased by **-9.0%** to 10%.
- ★ **"Under 25%"** exports decreased by **-5.8%** to 8.5%.
- ★ **"None"** exports increased by **+10.4%** to 72.3%.

Canada

- ★ **"More than 75%"** exports decreased by **-9.0%** to 7.8%.

These shifts highlight reduced international engagement in favour of local markets.

Youth Start Up Expectations (2019-2013)

- ★ **Alberta:** Youth up from 28.9% to 42.0% (**+13.1%**), older adults up from 17.3% to 23.2% (**+5.9%**).
- ★ **Saskatchewan:** Youth up from 24.6% to 49.1% (**+24.5%**), older adults up from 14.5% to 27.9% (**+13.4%**).
- ★ **Manitoba:** Youth up from 30.0% to 44.8% (**+14.8%**), older adults up from 15.0% to 20.5% (**+5.5%**).
- ★ **Canada:** Youth up from 32.3% to 41.2% (+8.9%), older adults down from 15.6% to 17.0% (**-33.8%**).

Youth entrepreneurial expectations increased significantly across Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba, with Saskatchewan showing the highest growth, while older adult expectations saw moderate increases or a decline, particularly in Canada.

Digital Technology Use Plans (2023)

- ★ In 2023, younger entrepreneurs in Canada are more likely to adopt digital technology than older counterparts.
- ★ In Saskatchewan, 60.6% of younger entrepreneurs plan to increase tech use, compared to 53.8% of older entrepreneurs (**6.8% gap**).
- ★ Nationally, 62.1% of younger entrepreneurs plan to adopt more technology, compared to 47.2% of older individuals (**14.9% gap**).



Policy

Recommendations



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Expand Entrepreneurship Education Programs

- ★ Increase funding for programs like Alberta Innovates' Institutional Support of Entrepreneurship Education.
- ★ Offer more hands-on experiences through internships, simulations, and competitions.

Create a Prairie-wide Youth Innovation Fund

- ★ Establish a fund for youth-led startups, offering seed capital, matched grants, and low-interest loans.
- ★ Focus on emerging sectors and underrepresented groups, to support innovation and job creation.

Develop a Regional Entrepreneurial Hub Network

- ★ Build entrepreneurial hubs across the Prairie provinces to offer co-working spaces, advanced tech, and networking events.
- ★ Digital platforms could connect these hubs to promote collaboration and innovation.

Enhance Futurpreneur Canada's Prairie Presence

- ★ Expand Futurpreneur Canada's mentorship programs in the Prairie provinces.
- ★ Tailor support to local economic conditions and collaborate with regional leaders to provide industry-specific guidance to youth entrepreneurs.

SPONSOR RECOGNITION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Thank you

Any questions? Contact:

- ▶ Dr. Amanda Williams (Mount Royal University)

awilliams2@mtroyal.ca

- ▶ Peter Josty (Executive Director, The Centre for Innovation Studies-THECIS)

p.josty@thecis.ca





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