

A nighttime photograph of a city square. The Calgary Tower is illuminated in bright green. In the foreground, a crowd of people is gathered around a large, illuminated sculpture. The background shows various city buildings, some with lights on, and trees without leaves. The overall scene is festive and vibrant.

CreativeCITY:  
Prosperity through the  
Creative Economy

# STRATEGIC GUIDEBOOK



# Land Acknowledgement

These rolling hills. These winding rivers. That sighing wind.

We are only the latest to walk this land's well worn trails. We acknowledge that the land we discuss in this report, sometimes called Calgary, but for a greater time called Mohkínsstsisí, is the ancestral territory of the Siksikaitsitapi—the Blackfoot peoples—comprising the Siksika, Kainai, and Piikani Nations, as well as Treaty 7 signatories, the Tsuut'ina Nation, and the Îyâxe Nakoda Bearspaw, Chiniki, and Wesley First Nations. Today this land is home to the Métis Nation of region 3 as well as many First Nations and Inuit peoples from across Turtle Island.

Brilliant sunshine, silent snow, night's dark shadows—they fall on all of us alike as we make and tell our stories here, as they have for millenia. Art, music, dance, storytelling, creating, and ceremony have been here since time immemorial. We hope our work contributes to the valuing of traditional creative forms as well as greater appreciation of and opportunity for the creative Indigenous talent who walk these lands today.

# Forward from Steering Committee

---

This journey began in the fall of 2020. Despite the incredible impacts of the pandemic on so many creative and cultural sectors, CreativeCITY recognized the economic opportunity tied to Calgary's flourishing creative economy. We began the long labour of developing a strategic guidebook that could help us respond to the pandemic but also guide us post-pandemic into a more resilient, inclusive, and diverse economy.

Initially, we started as a small group of CreativeCITY steering committee members. Eighteen students, consultants, creative talent, public sector, nonprofit and for-profit leaders were asked to dream as big and wide as our prairie skies. At the same time, these dreams were supported by research into Calgary's existing creative economy, civic strategies, and case studies across Canada and the world. Drawing these threads together, we turned our in-depth discussions into a strategic framework with four pillars: embed audacious creativity into our city's DNA, incubate creative collisions, mobilize Calgary's creative capacity, and value the diversity of Calgary's creativity. Our research and the four pillar framework were initially shared with the public in May 2021, published in CreativeCITY: Prosperity through the Creative Economy [Ecosystem Report](#).

As proud as we are of this work, more remains. We know that the strength of this CreativeCITY Strategic

Guidebook depends on the number of voices that help shape and confirm the direction of our strategic framework. We gathered feedback from the creative economy community via three methods. These included small experiments, workshops, and a survey. We made efforts in each case to reach beyond existing networks, include new perspectives, and create space for disagreement and dialogue. With contributions from 500+ Calgarians in the creative economy, we were very pleased to release the CreativeCITY: Prosperity through the Creative Economy [Community Engagement Summary](#), which includes the summary of our three community engagement activities and how they have shaped our four strategic pillars and this final Strategic Guidebook.

If recent years have taught us anything, strategies—even the best researched—need to be adaptive and actionable. We view the CreativeCITY Strategic Guidebook as a living document, responsive to changing circumstances, new research and information, and ongoing feedback from our community. As such, if this document inspires feedback, please visit our CreativeCITY [webpage](#) to find out how you can push the work forward.

We are all part of making Calgary the most livable city in Canada, not only today, but for generations.

# CONTENTS

## INTRODUCTION

2

---

## GUIDEPOSTS

4

---

- 5 Four-Sector Nesta Model
- 6 City Plans and Policies
- 6 Creative Successes
- 7 Emerging Trends in the Creative Economy
- 9 Community Engagement Results

## STRATEGIC ROADMAP

16

---

- 18 Pillar 1: Embed audacious creativity into our city's DNA
- 22 Pillar 2: Incubate creative collisions
- 26 Pillar 3: Mobilize Calgary's creative capacity
- 30 Pillar 4: Value the diversity of Calgary's creativity

## THE WAY FORWARD

34

---

# AT A GLANCE

## THE PROBLEM

Despite its significant economic, social, human, and environmental contributions to our region, Calgary's creative economy is underleveraged and overlooked due to a creative ecosystem that is fragmented and inefficient.

## THE POTENTIAL

### ECONOMIC

2020 Status:

- » 12,000 enterprises
- » 32,000 employees
- » Annual direct impact of \$2.1 billion

Underleveraged areas:

- » A city identity built around creativity
- » Diverse forms of arts and culture
- » Talent acquisition
- » Talent retention
- » Talent development

### HUMAN

- » Higher educational achievement
- » Improved mental health and overall well-being
- » Creativity in the workplace increases workers' sense of value and accomplishment

### SOCIAL

- » Over 49,000 volunteers in arts and culture, totalling nearly 7.3 million hours or 3,670 full-time job equivalents
- » Improves social cohesion and sense of community
- » Increases civic participation
- » Supports urban revitalization and community building

### ENVIRONMENT

- » Acts as an important mechanism for education and awareness-raising about environmental issues, including climate change
- » Improves energy efficiency and emissions reduction through sustainable design
- » Developing creative solutions to environmental problems

## THE VISION

Calgary is Canada's most livable city

## THE MISSION

Calgary's creative economy is recognized as a global leader through a sustained, collaborative commitment to the city's prosperity.

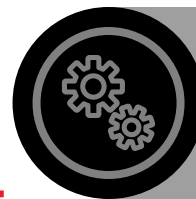
### EMBED AUDACIOUS CREATIVITY INTO OUR CITY'S DNA:

To fully leverage the robust, growing creative economy in Calgary, creativity needs to be at the heart of everything we do as a city.



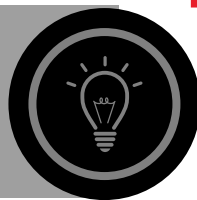
### MOBILIZE CALGARY'S CREATIVE CAPACITY:

To develop and retain Calgary's exceptional creative talent, we must work to ensure creative professionals, new or seasoned, have the knowledge, skills and resources required to succeed.



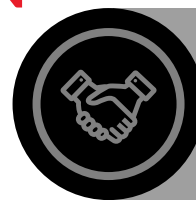
### INCUBATE CREATIVE COLLISIONS:

Unifying our creative economy under one identity requires creating conditions for collaboration, cross-sector partnerships, knowledge transfer, and resource sharing.



### VALUE THE DIVERSITY OF CALGARY'S CREATIVITY:

As an incredibly diverse city, Calgary has an opportunity to tap into the unique perspectives and experiences of our diverse creative class to build something new, authentic, and meaningful for everyone in the city.



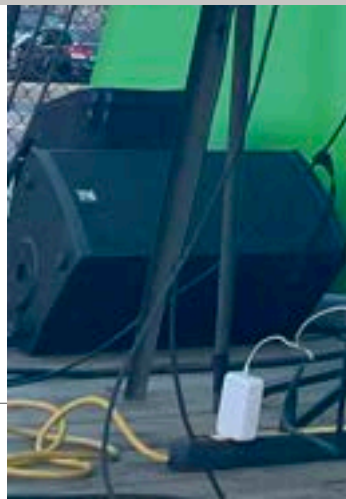
## THE PLAN

# Introduction

CreativeCITY is a collaboration of not-for-profit, for-profit, and public-sector organizations and individuals committed to the flourishing of Calgary's creative economy. We know maximizing the potential of the local creative economy serves the ultimate goal of making Calgary Canada's most livable city.

"The Plan" presented on the opposite page was developed by the CreativeCITY steering committee over several months from 2020 to 2021. The four strategic pillars of this plan were subsequently reviewed, discussed, dissected and tested by 500+ Calgarians in the creative economy over the course of 2022. This document is the culmination of that work, presenting a revised, more detailed, action-oriented plan. With the support of partners, Calgary Arts Development and Calgary Economic Development are the stewards of this plan—supporting the development and engagement process financially, but also championing this work into the future.

This guidebook is meant to be used in conversation with municipal, provincial, and federal partners and by anyone looking to grow Calgary's creative economy. It can also form the basis for new relationships between existing creative economy players—it offers a basis for alignment of intentions, purposes and activities. It provides formal recommendations for actions, policies, and community and industry interventions to support human, environmental, social and economic prosperity through the creative economy. We look forward to seeing these words become action as we all make Calgary Canada's most livable city, not only today, but for generations.



# CreativeCITY Phases

September 2020

## CREATIVE ECONOMY ECOSYSTEM REVIEW

CreativeCITY gathered local creative leaders' insights, identified successes and case studies in other jurisdictions, and reviewed extensive research and data. This provided the foundation for the four pillar strategic framework. This phase ended with the publication of an in-depth [Ecosystem Report](#) that laid out the current status of Calgary's creative economy and introduced the public to the strategic framework.

Phase 1



May 2021

September 2021



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

CreativeCITY engaged 500+ creative economy members on the four pillar strategic framework. Feedback was obtained through four small experiments with radical intent,<sup>1</sup> seven online workshops, and a public survey. While feedback on the initial proposed strategic framework was incredibly supportive, the engagement allowed for critical counterpoints and unique perspectives to arise. Findings and how they impacted the writing of this guidebook are explored in-depth in our Community Engagement Summary.

Phase 2

August 2022

September 2022

## STRATEGIC GUIDEBOOK

Results from the experiments, workshops and the survey were analyzed, summarized and integrated to complete the engagement summary and update the four pillar strategic framework that is the basis for this strategic guidebook. This phase comes to a tentative close with the publication of this guidebook.

Phase 3



The Future

<sup>1</sup> Dibble, M. (2018). EmcArts. [https://www.artsfwd.org/melissa\\_blog\\_9/](https://www.artsfwd.org/melissa_blog_9/)

# Guideposts

Throughout these phases, CreativeCITY has looked to, followed and relied on a number of helpful “guideposts”, each shaping the final plan in a different way. Details of each are available in the [Ecosystem Report](#) and Community Engagement Summary while the section below offers a shortened description of each.

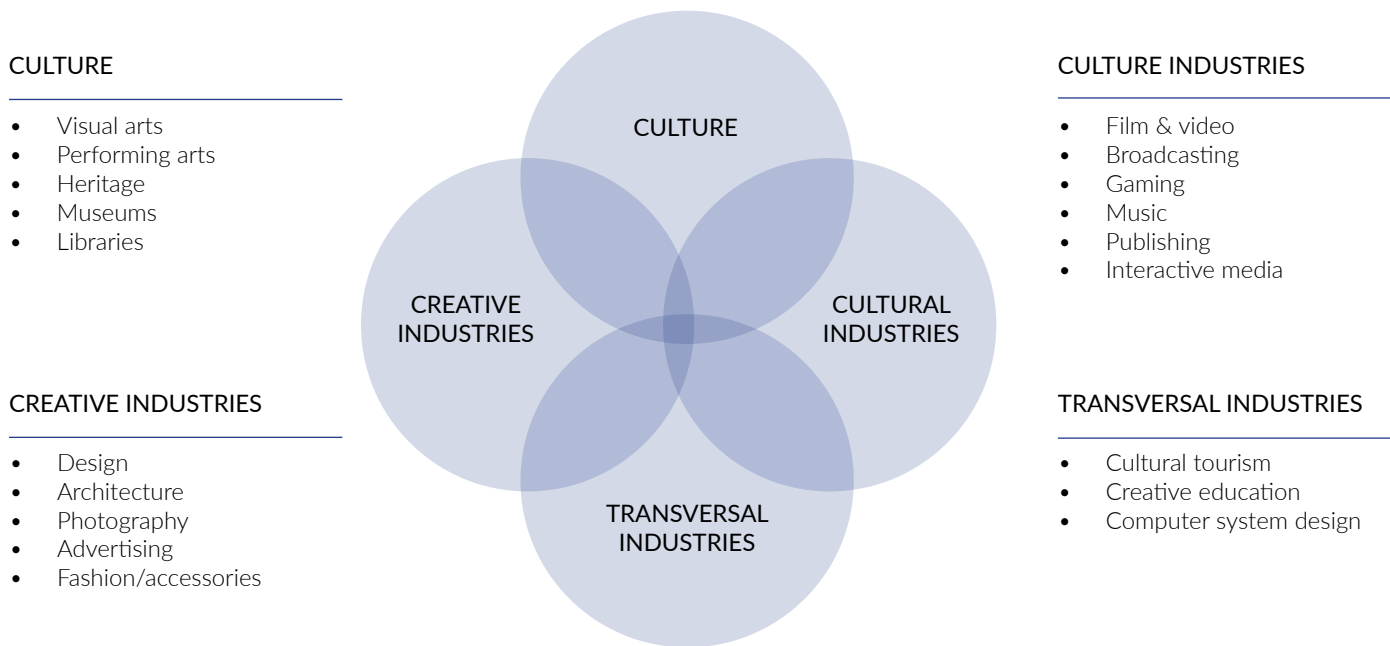




# The Four-Sector Nesta Model

In defining the creative economy, CreativeCITY relies on the Four-Sector Nesta Model.<sup>1</sup> This model maps the creative economy across four economic sectors<sup>2</sup> with a high density of creative occupations and outputs: culture, cultural industries, creative industries and transversal industries. In CreativeCITY documents, references to “creative sectors” or “creative clusters” refer to the four main categories of the Nesta model. By looking at creativity at the occupational level, this model affords an enhanced understanding of the broad economic role creativity plays, permeating every industry.

## The Four-Sector Nesta Model



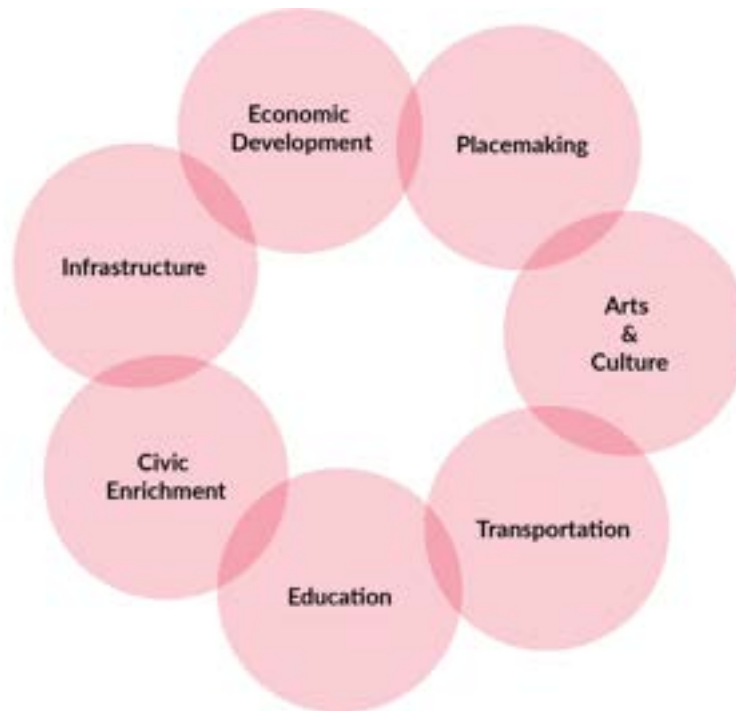
This model influenced how CreativeCITY measured the impact of the creative economy in Calgary. It also defined the sectors for community engagement, with workshops and the survey being targeted at members of the four creative sectors. Finally, it remains important because for those unfamiliar with this model, this guidebook may appear to reach beyond creative confines into culture, technology, history, etcetera. However, in using a Four-Sector Nesta Model, the reach of the creative economy becomes clearer. Creative talent, and the occupations that require their skills, exist outside the traditionally understood contours of creative industries.

<sup>1</sup> Finch, D., Pon, P., Beisiegel, K., Dion, M. and Tran, M. (2020). Exploring Calgary's Creative Economy. Calgary Arts Development and Mount Royal University. <https://calgaryartsdevelopment.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Exploring-Calgarys-Creative-Economy-10.21.20.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Sometimes referred to as “four-cluster” or “four-quadrant”, we have opted to use the term “four-sector” and refer to them as “creative sectors” to avoid confusion with “creative clusters” which has been used in other municipal plans to refer to geographical concentrations of creative activities and businesses and “quadrant” which has particular geographical connotations within Calgary. Colloquial usage of ‘sector’ such as in ‘music sector’ or ‘live entertainment sector’ generally refers to a subdomain of the four overarching Nesta sectors (see the diagram above).

# City Plans and Policies

In creating the four strategic pillar framework, CreativeCITY wished to intentionally align this work with ongoing local strategies, amplifying common goals and filling gaps. Forty-two guiding documents at the municipal level were reviewed,<sup>1</sup> revealing seven key areas of alignment:



On top of building where there is alignment, there was a need to address issues less frequently covered in Calgary plans and policies, but of value to Calgary's creative economy. These include the necessary **digital shifts** that need to be taken for future economic planning (this is looked at in the *City of Calgary Digital Strategy* and the *Tourism Strategic Plan*), **talent retention** (more often plans focused on job creation which is only an aspect of talent retention), and **cross sector collaboration** (*Calgary in the New Economy*, *City of Calgary's SMART Cities Approach*, *Learning City—Learning Our Way Forward*, *City of Calgary's Resilient Calgary Strategy*, and *City of Calgary's Climate Resilience Strategy*, provide cursory indications of the need for cross-sector collaboration within the City and across levels of government). These alignments and gaps informed the creation of the initial four pillar strategic framework and, thereby, the content reviewed in the community engagement process.

## Creative Successes

In reviewing best-in-class creative cities across Canada, the US, and the world, five key themes were identified with which we could align our creative economy policies:

- Driving digital creativity
- Building entrepreneurial capacity
- Investing in creative spaces and places
- Integrating through collaboration
- Embedding creativity into decision-making

<sup>1</sup> See pages 23 and 77 in the [Ecosystem Report](#) for more details. Readers may note the number of guiding documents changes from 43 to 42 in this report. This is because although 43 documents were originally reviewed, only 42 were used to identify the key areas of alignment (the document removed did not address issues at the municipal level).

# Emerging Trends in the Creative Economy

Predicting the future with precision is an impossible task; however, for any movement, macro-level trends and the resulting implications must be considered. Being aware of our global context helps indicate what is reasonably possible.

# 1

## Competition for talent:

Cities will be increasingly defined by their ability to attract and mobilize human capital.

# 2

## Accelerating technological disruption:

The internet and numerous innovations (i.e., social media, mobile devices, big data, etc.) have redefined, and continue to redefine, the way society produces and consumes media.

# 3

## From consumer to co-creator:

The movement to open innovation encourages the development of partnerships and the leveraging of complementary knowledge for innovation from individuals and enterprises across ecosystems.

# 4

## Changing media consumption:

Technology has transformed how society consumes media, forms opinions, and makes decisions.



Photo Credit: Cary Schatz  
Ouri (2019), courtesy of Sled Island

# 5

## Social justice and change:

Addressing issues such as poverty, representation in leadership, and reconciliation with Indigenous neighbours are concerns shared by many Canadians and Calgarians, impacting policy priorities.

# 6

## The COVID-19 longtail:

The arts and culture sector was particularly vulnerable to the impacts of COVID-19 restrictions, although it is not expected that virtual offerings will remain as the 'new normal'.

# 7

## Sustainability at the centre:

Driven by the effects of climate change, ranging from increasing forest fires to flooding, sustainability is a priority at the federal, provincial, and municipal levels.



Photo Credit: Samantha Mendoza  
Beakerhead 2022

# Community Engagement Results

Primacy of place goes to the knowledge, insights and experiences generously shared by Calgarians in the creative economy. These results are the core of the actions in this guidebook. While feedback on the initial proposed strategic framework was incredibly supportive, the engagement also allowed for critical counterpoints and minority perspectives to arise. Honestly reflecting on and integrating a diversity of perspectives and views was a goal of the CreativeCITY team.

CreativeCITY employed three community engagement methods to solicit feedback on the proposed four pillar strategic framework: small experiments, workshops, and a survey. Given that the target audience was Calgarians within the creative economy, it could reasonably be expected they would support a strategic framework that promotes their livelihoods and passions. This support, however, is significant as it indicates that the four pillar strategic framework resonates across creative sectors and identifies goals and priorities with strong buy-in from the community.

Below, engagement results are summarized by engagement type and then four overarching themes are explored. More detailed findings and how they impacted the writing of this guidebook are explored in-depth in our Community Engagement Summary.

---

## SMALL EXPERIMENTS

Small experiments with radical intent took place in various Calgary creative communities. Each experiment was paired with one of the four strategic pillars.



Photo Credit: Benjamin Laird  
CCMA Off Country Seminars (2022), courtesy of Tourism Calgary

### EXPERIMENT ONE:

Funding a for-profit live entertainment endeavour at the peak of COVID-19 restrictions helped kick-start a successful run of indoor, hotel-based COVID-safe concerts. It provided live entertainment and filled hotel rooms in a time of extreme uncertainty for those industries.

### EXPERIMENT THREE:

AUArts successfully integrated public and private sector perspectives into educational planning to develop impactful continuing education programs that develop career-enhancing skills.

### EXPERIMENT TWO:

A collective of newly minted NFT artists and supporting partners worked to sell their digital art. They faced increased volatility in the market as their experiment launched. This highlighted the potential risks for artists integrating innovative tech into their work (i.e., uncertain return on initial investments), but also showcased the importance of networking and collaborating as they got their work seen across the city at various events.

### EXPERIMENT FOUR:

Applying a disability lens to the concept of an artist residency created a unique and positive career growth experience for three artists for whom traditional pathways to skill and career development are often inaccessible.

# CreativeCITY Workshops

CreativeCITY held seven online workshops. Each targeted a different area of the creative economy, but asked each crowd the same questions. Discussions were transcribed, coded and analyzed to identify common themes as well as unique perspectives and feedback. Based on an analysis of 370 pulled quotes, the eight most common themes arising were:

## APPRECIATE THE IMPACTS OF THE CREATIVE ECONOMY

These quotes share a common thread around getting Calgarians to appreciate both the creative economy's current contributions and its future potential. Some impacts include drawing internal and external visitors into Calgary, driving business and meaningful activities, bringing beauty and a sense of excitement to local neighbourhoods, and developing talent with skills valuable across economic areas.

## AUDIENCE ACTIVATION

Calgary's suburbs are seen as both an untapped market and an underserved population, with better public transit needed to bring participants into the core, and increased infrastructure needed to host performances and programs in the suburbs. Early exposure to creativity is seen as a key step to developing appreciation for creative experiences later in life. A subgroup pointed to ineffective information distribution (e.g., promotion, marketing) as a major barrier to audience engagement.

## CHOOSING ABUNDANCE

This theme title reflects a collection of quotes that extol the positive value of collaborating and sharing. Participants argue that the creative ecosystem has more when information, contacts, tools, and knowledge are shared (especially via mentorship)—creating abundance for all.

## CREATIVE COLLISIONS

A majority of these quotes describe creative hubs as the ideal infrastructure for creative collisions where connection and collaboration can occur organically and spontaneously, not only between creative talent, but also with businesses and the general public.

## CULTIVATING AND RETAINING CREATIVE TALENT

Introducing creativity in schools is a popular suggestion in terms of cultivating creative talent, however, participants also pointed to the importance of informal learning opportunities. Creative skills are described as valuable across many industries. Growth in creative and cultural industries are seen as a boon to talent retention as jobs and opportunity make Calgary a viable option for longterm careers. Two major challenges identified include a lack of affordable space for artists, performers and makers as well as an ongoing failure to address issues of diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility, jeopardizing the cultivation and retention of diverse talent.

## MAKING A LIVING

While careers in film, music, and technology are described as viable, a majority of quotes spoke to the challenges of earning a living as an independent operator in the creative economy (e.g., a lot of time and labour can go unpaid; low pay for creative services, difficult to find grant opportunities or long-term funding sources, etc.).

## EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, ACCESSIBILITY & CREATIVITY

Quotes address various diversities and position creative and cultural programs as catalysts for compassion and understanding as they expose communities to diverse perspectives and stories. Quotes also address how institutions and practices can create barriers for diverse creative talent, calling on organizations and individuals with power and influence to take an active role in creating change.

## PLAYING WELL WITH OTHERS

These quotes focus on how participants see “other” economic areas or partners influencing the creative economy. The top three identified are: food and beverage businesses, the City of Calgary, and technology and innovation. Food and beverage businesses are generally seen as allies, providing venues and important performance opportunities. Municipally, planning (e.g., transit routes and limited hours, lack of performance/event infrastructure) negatively impacts the creative economy. Technology is generally seen as a helpful tool, but a few quotes position technology and innovation within the creative economy, pointing to the creative occupations and skills within the field.

# CreativeCITY Survey

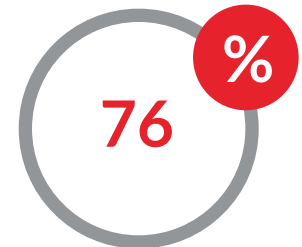
The survey was aimed at anyone connected to Calgary's creative economy. Running from May to August 2022, the survey captured feedback from 300 Calgarians:



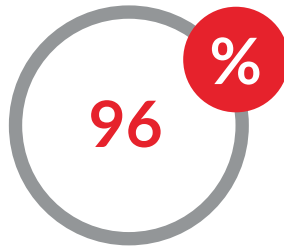
of respondents see themselves and their community reflected (in part or in full) in the priorities identified in the CreativeCITY strategic plan.



of respondents could envision a way that their community could play an active role in making Calgary a more creative, and more livable city by the year 2030.



of respondents "somewhat agree" or "strongly agree" that Calgary is already a thriving creative community.



of respondents "somewhat agree" or "strongly agree" that creativity is an important or essential component of a thriving community.



of respondents "somewhat agree" or "strongly agree" that the City should be investing more to provide increased opportunities for the creative community.





# Overarching Insights

Finally, we found four themes that reached across engagement types and pillars.

## Creativity Leads Us Through the Unknown

Creative talent is needed in organizations and, more broadly, within all economic areas. As Calgarians face changing social circumstances, a push toward sustainable practices, accelerating technological changes, and stiff competition for labour, there is an increased need for individuals who can manoeuvre through the unknown. This ability is at the core of creative talent: “creativity consists in devising an original way of achieving an effect that is not expressed in precise terms” (p. 28).<sup>1</sup> That is, creative talent may know the intended effect, but they work beyond existing directions or instructions. In small experiment one, a creative approach allowed public performances to take place in hotel lobbies and atriums when they were largely shut down across the country owing to COVID-19. Experiment two (i.e., onboarding artists onto blockchain technology) wrestled with the complexities of digital innovation, pointing to the role creative talent can play in burgeoning or changing industries. As various economic industries seek new ways forward, creative talents can support not only identifying the change needed, but how to adapt to and thrive within those transformations.

## Diversity is Foundational

Although all four pillars offer critical areas of focus for growing a thriving creative economy, it is important to emphasize pillar four. This is not to raise it above the other pillars, rather to recognize the reality that the workshop discussions and survey responses communicated: Equality, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility (EDIA) is challenging and often implemented in haphazard and even harmful ways (i.e., tokenism). Whether it is ensuring creative hubs are accessible to all, harnessing digital power in favour of underserved groups, or cultivating the breadth of local talent, it is critical that valuing diversity is not a strategic pillar to be sought after a thriving creative economy is achieved. Rather, EDIA principles must be hammered into the foundation of the future. Calgary’s diversity is a strength that will enhance the impact of creativity across industries.

## Our Reputation Matters

There was a tendency in survey responses to rank items that discussed Calgary on the global stage, lower. This may reflect a greater concern for what is happening close to home. As one survey respondent said, “Creative people [...] don’t care if you’re the leading city for anything. What does it feel like to live there? How much effort does it require to attract new business? Is the creative community respected and supported? These are things we care about.” However, how Calgary is perceived locally and abroad influences talent retention and attraction, hence the inclusion of such priorities in the strategy. According to the 2020 Calgary Arts Professional Survey only 37% of respondents describe Calgary’s arts and culture offerings as being of world-class calibre, down from 55% in 2017.<sup>2</sup> In the 2022 Calgary Engagement Survey, fewer and fewer Calgarians see Calgary as more creative or artistic than peer cities across Canada.<sup>3</sup> CreativeCITY’s reputational or branding goals aim to create the perception, based on a hard earned reality, that Calgary is a vibrant place for outside talent and business to come to and where diverse local talent and business can thrive.

## The Creative Economy is Bigger Than You Think

Workshop discussions and survey comments reveal that for some Calgarians the “creative economy” remains a fairly narrow and specific economic field. CreativeCITY and partners need to actively work to dispel this misunderstanding. A narrow view of the creative economy artificially diminishes its impact and role, while a wider view, such as the Four-Sector Nesta Model, shows the breadth of impact thriving creative sectors (and the talented workers within) can have across the entire economy.

<sup>1</sup> Bakhshi, H., Hargreaves, I., & Mateos-Garcia, J. (2013). A Manifesto for the Creative Economy. Nesta. <https://orca.cardiff.ac.uk/id/eprint/49323/1/A-Manifesto-for-the-Creative-Economy-April13.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Calgary Arts Development. (2020). Arts Professionals Survey. <https://calgaryartsdevelopment.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/CalgaryArtsDevelopment-ArtsProfessionalsSurvey-2020.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Calgary Arts Development. (2022). Calgary Engagement Survey [https://calgaryartsdevelopment.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/CADA\\_Citizen-Engagement-Survey-2.pdf](https://calgaryartsdevelopment.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/CADA_Citizen-Engagement-Survey-2.pdf)

# Updated Strategic Framework



## PILLAR 1: Embed audacious creativity into our city's DNA

To fully leverage the robust, growing creative economy in Calgary, creativity needs to be at the heart of everything we do as a city. This includes embedding considerations for the creative economy into our decision-making processes, creating the conditions for success for local creative enterprises, and building a renewed, unified civic identity around creativity.



## PILLAR 2: Incubate creative collisions

Unifying our creative economy under one identity requires creating conditions for collaboration, cross-sector partnerships, knowledge transfer, and resource sharing. This will require a shift in how our creative economy operates by digitizing our ecosystem, utilizing our existing spaces and institutions to facilitate collisions, and identifying, acknowledging and fostering creativity across industries.



## PILLAR 3: Mobilize Calgary's creative capacity

To develop and retain Calgary's exceptional creative talent, we must work to ensure creative professionals, new or seasoned, have the knowledge, skills and resources required to succeed. This means we need to adapt how we educate to create a more dynamic workforce; create opportunities for skill building in areas like business management and marketing; and work in partnership with cultural institutions, private sector leaders, and civic organizations to ensure creative education aligns with the needs of future employers and customers.



## PILLAR 4: Value the diversity of Calgary's creativity

As an incredibly diverse city, Calgary has an opportunity to tap into the unique perspectives and experiences of our diverse creative class to build something new, authentic, and meaningful for everyone in the city. By creating new, unique experiences, and by ensuring every creative, regardless of their backgrounds or identities, has the skills, resources, and sense of value to succeed, Calgary can bring something different to the global creative economy.



Photo Credit: Dana Zuk Photography  
The Starlite Room, Edmonton

An aerial photograph of a winding asphalt road through a dense forest. The road curves from the top left towards the bottom right. Several cars are visible on the road, including a white car at the top, a blue car, and a white car further down. A semi-transparent grey banner is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the text 'Strategic Roadmap'. A thin red vertical line is positioned on the right side of the banner.

# Strategic Roadmap

## How to Navigate the Following Pages

**Pillar #: Name**

Here you'll find a brief description of the pillar, sometimes with extra context based on the community engagement.

**Goal #:** These are our overarching goals that the priorities and actions in the table below serve.

Pillar Name			
<b>Priority #:</b> High level strategic focus related to the pillar.			
Action (alignment or gaps of city plans and policies)	"How to" Recommendations	Indicators of success	Timeline
<p><b>Action(s) pulled from research, based on case studies, or suggested in community engagement that serves the priority above.</b></p> <p><i>(In the introduction we mentioned our review of city plans—see "City Plans and Policies". Here we'll tell you with which of the seven common goals or gaps the above action aligns or addresses)</i></p>	Examples and suggestions of how to make the proposed action(s) happen.	We share indicators or possible methods for measuring success of the proposed action(s).	Aiming for a more creative Calgary in 2030, we've sorted these actions by when they might be conceivably achieved with short-term (by 2025), midterm (by 2027) and long term (by 2030).



---

### **Pillar 1: Embed audacious creativity into our city's DNA**

To fully leverage the robust, growing creative economy in Calgary, creativity needs to be at the heart of everything we do as a city. This includes embedding considerations for the creative economy into our decision-making processes, creating the conditions for success for local creative enterprises, and building a renewed, unified civic identity around creativity.

**Goal 1:** By 2030, Calgary shows its transformation into a creative city via specific achievements and industry growth.

**Goal 2:** By 2030, Calgary will recognize itself for its culture and creativity.

## Pillar 1: Embed audacious creativity into our city's DNA

**Priority 1:** Leverage the existing momentum of Calgary's growing cultural industries to embed creativity into our city's brand and identity.

Action <i>(Alignment or gaps of city plans and policies)</i>	"How to" Recommendations	Indicators of success	Timeline
<p><b>Create opportunities for Calgarians to celebrate, participate in, and experience their creative economy.</b></p> <p><i>(Arts &amp; Culture, Civic Enrichment, Economic Development, Infrastructure, Placemaking, Talent Retention, Transportation)</i></p>	<p>Support the City of Calgary in their priority to develop tools and processes that result in accessible funding to support diverse programming activities (e.g., reduced red tape).</p> <p>Leverage popular, large-scale events to incentivize related activities and promote networking across industries (e.g., post-secondary student competition or hotel and restaurant deals as part of one of local festivals).</p> <p>Encourage and support local programming to fill gaps between major/marquee events.</p>	<p>Increased frequency of cultural industries and creative industries events and their attendance throughout the city centre and city quadrants</p> <p>Enhanced year-round hosting infrastructure</p>	<p><b>2023-2025 short-term</b></p>
<p><b>Support promotion and marketing for local creative talent, organizations and enterprises.</b></p> <p><i>(Cross-sector Collaboration, Digital Shift, Economic Development)</i></p>	<p>Provide guidance and support to small-scale creative economy players on how to seek media coverage for their events or work.</p> <p>Create and maintain a multi-year calendar of upcoming events to identify themes and coordinate marketing efforts across partners. Integrate existing events calendars (i.e. many local organizations host event calendars) to broaden the audience and capitalize on work done.</p> <p>Create a simple and smooth process for individuals and organizations to self-submit events for promotion.</p>	<p>Increased coverage of Calgary's creative economy sectors and events in local media</p> <p>Increased number of events promoted via shared events calendar</p> <p>Number of partners using a shared calendar listing</p> <p>Increased event calendar views</p>	<p><b>2023-2025 short-term</b></p>
<p><b>Reimagine the use of vacant space and connect creative talent with affordable space.</b></p> <p><i>(Civic Enrichment, Cross-sector Collaboration, Economic Development, Infrastructure, Placemaking)</i></p>	<p>Track outcomes of the local Meanwhile Lease Manager Pilot Project. If the pilot proves scalable and sustainable, establish a permanent meanwhile lease manager position for Calgary.</p> <p>Continue to subsidize and encourage the unique use of space (i.e., parking lot activations, community pop-ups).</p> <p>Create quadrant-specific funding pools to move initiatives in specific areas of the city.</p>	<p>Increased access to space across the city for artists and other creative talent within the creative economy</p> <p>Increased diversity of spaces available at various price ranges</p> <p>Greater geographic dispersal of initiatives across the city</p>	<p><b>2022-2026 mid-term</b></p>
<p><b>Host conferences and summits that build Calgary's local and national reputation as a creative city.</b></p> <p><i>(Education, Placemaking, Economic Development, Talent Retention)</i></p>	<p>Calgary will host the Creative City Summit in 2026.</p> <p>Collaborate with festivals that draw visitors from outside Calgary to integrate creative economy industry experiences into their celebrations and events.</p>	<p>Highest attendance rates of any Creative City Summit</p> <p>Establish unique set of pop-up "come and see" events hosted by creative economy industry contributors</p>	<p><b>2023-2026 mid-term</b></p>
<p><b>Embed creative and cultural perspectives into civic decision-making.</b></p> <p><i>(Civic Enrichment, Placemaking)</i></p>	<p>Adopt a quadruple bottom line approach to civic decision-making so that proposed policies, plans or programs must consider the potential social, economic, environmental and cultural impact, both positive and negative.</p>	<p>The Municipal Development Plan is updated to reflect a quadruple bottom line</p>	<p><b>By 2026 mid-term</b></p>

## Pillar 1: Embed audacious creativity into our city's DNA

<p><b>Include and leverage Calgary's creative sectors in Calgary's branding activities.</b></p> <p><i>(Arts &amp; Culture, Placemaking, Cross-sector Collaboration)</i></p>	<p>Update the City's brand and identity to reflect Calgary's creative economy.</p> <p>Support, advocate and fund the branding of creative and cultural districts in Calgary (e.g., Music Mile, Chinatown, Innovation District, City Centre Arts District, etc.).</p> <p>Include Calgary's creative economy professionals and success stories in national showcase opportunities (e.g., trade missions, conventions, etc.).</p>	<p>Increased recognition locally and nationally for Calgary's contribution to the creative economy as an economic driver</p> <p>Clear messaging shared by all civic partners highlighting and including Calgary's creative economy</p> <p>Civic surveys show improving perspectives on Calgary's vibrancy and creative sectors</p> <p>Amount of times "creative", "creativity" or "creative industries" are mentioned in relation to Calgary in news</p>	<p><b>2023-2027 mid-term</b></p>
---	--	--	----------------------------------

**Priority 2:** Model the success of Calgary's film industry and extend it to music and other creative economy sectors.

Action <i>(alignment or gaps of city plans and policies)</i>	"How to" Recommendations	Indicators of success	Timeline
<p><b>Complete Calgary's Music City Strategy and implement quick wins.</b></p> <p><i>(Arts &amp; Culture, Economic Development, Talent Retention)</i></p>	<p>Support the completion of the Music City Strategy for the City of Calgary.</p>	<p>Implement quick win opportunities from initial 2020 ecosystem study</p>	<p><b>2023-2025 short-term</b></p>
<p><b>Harness the rising tide of Calgary's Film, Television and Digital Media &amp; Entertainment industry to inspire and propel other creative sectors.</b></p> <p><i>(Cross-sector Collaboration, Economic Development, Education, Infrastructure, Talent Retention)</i></p>	<p>Map the systemic success of Calgary's film industry and, where applicable, adapt successful policies and practices for use in other creative sectors.</p> <p>Continue cross-sector opportunities to connect and share information and key learnings.</p> <p>Identify film industry needs and support strategic growth to increase Calgary's local capacity to address those areas (e.g., more jobs in production of film props, costume design and production, etc.).</p>	<p>Calgary leads Canada in number of film shoots per capita</p> <p>Increased number of creative economy workers attracted to live and work in Calgary</p> <p>Re-establishment of a form of tax credit supporting Alberta's interactive digital media.</p> <p>More supports available for local studios transitioning to newer technology</p>	<p><b>2023-2027 mid-term</b></p>
<p><b>Calgary's Music City Strategy setup for implementation and long-term growth.</b></p> <p><i>(Arts &amp; Culture, Civic Enrichment, Economic Development, Placemaking, Talent Retention)</i></p>	<p>Move from quick wins to strategy implementation.</p> <p>Establish an accountability body to actively track and monitor the on-going success of the music city strategy.</p> <p>Explore the creation of a Night Time Economy Strategy.</p>	<p>Calgary is designated a 'City of Music' by Canadian Commission for UNESCO</p> <p>Year over year measures of success to track industry health over time (e.g. number of musicians, industry workers, and economic impact)</p>	<p><b>2025-2030 long-term</b></p>

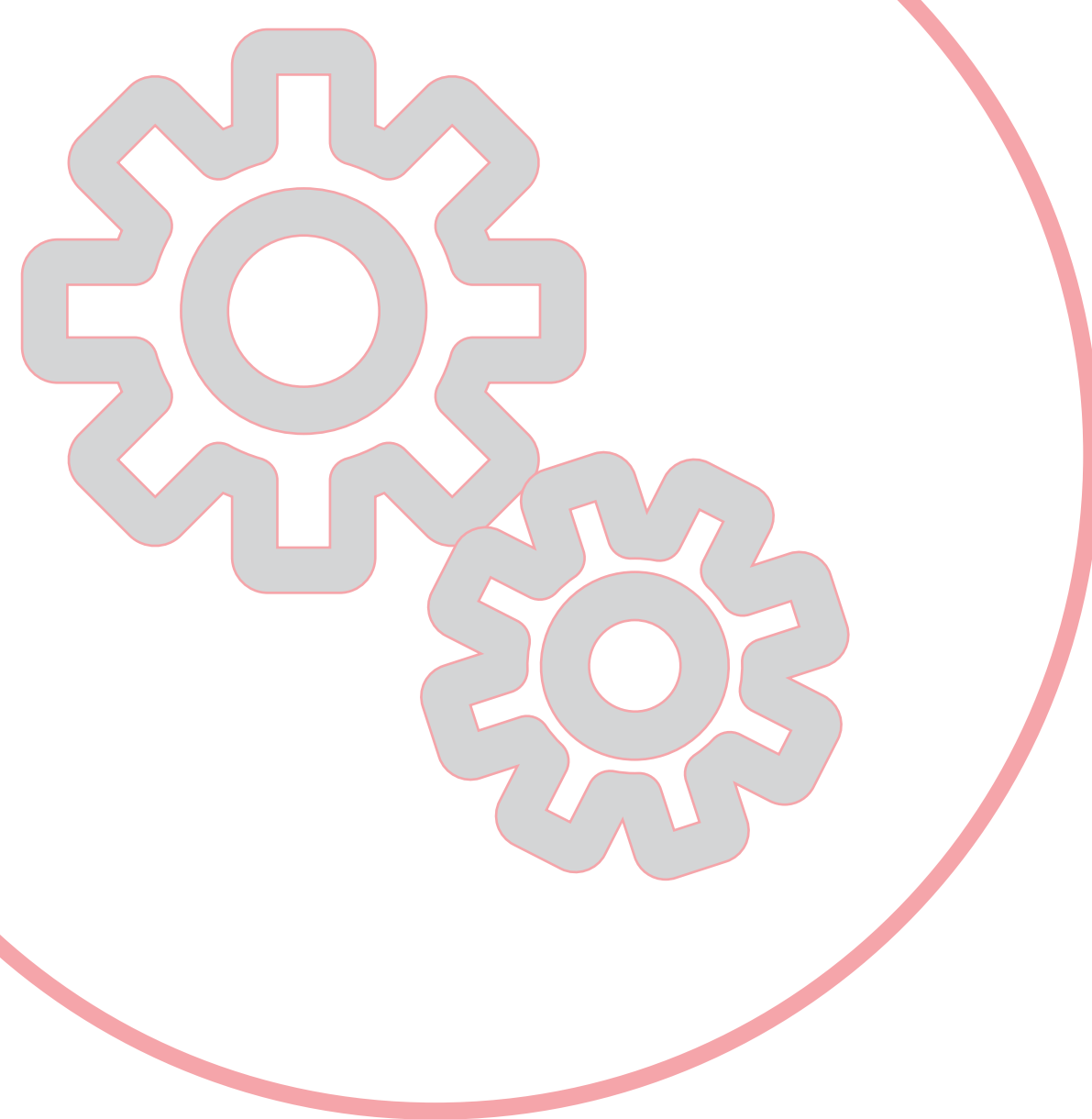
### Desired Outcomes:

- Calgary is known around the world as a hub for creativity.
- Calgary has a unified sense of identity.
- Calgary is a more vibrant and resilient city.
- The creative economy drives Calgary's economy.
- Entrepreneurship is celebrated and rewarded.
- Calgarians are engaged in and celebrate creative experiences.





Photo Credit: Motif Photography  
CCMA Off Country Performance at the Calgary Central Library



---

## **Pillar 2: Incubate creative collisions**

Unifying our creative economy under one identity requires creating conditions for collaboration, cross-sector partnerships, knowledge transfer, and resource sharing. This will require a shift in how our creative economy operates by digitizing our ecosystem, utilizing our existing spaces and institutions to facilitate collisions, and identifying, acknowledging and fostering creativity across industries.

Based on engagement feedback to date, Calgarians in the creative economy agree that collisions rely on collaboration. They specified that valuable collaboration includes transparent sharing of information and resources, connections of reciprocity and trust, and an inclusive approach that welcomes diverse people and diverse talents.

**Goal 1:** By 2030, Calgary will lead Canada in creative economy businesses per capita.

**Goal 2:** By 2030, Calgary is recognized as a global leader for the high level of collaboration between its creative sectors and other economic sectors.

## PILLAR 2: Incubate creative collisions

**Priority 1:** Leverage our digital capacity to connect and strengthen Calgary's creative economy.

Action <i>(alignment or gaps of city plans and policies)</i>	"How to" Recommendations	Indicators of success	Timeline
<b>Create digital channels for partners in the creative economy to continue to inform this strategic framework.</b>  <i>(Civic Enrichment, Cross-sector Collaboration, Education)</i>	Resource maintenance and updating of the CreativeCITY Strategic Guidebook to ensure it remains relevant leading to 2030.  Create and promote opportunities for multi-member participation in completing strategic actions.	Feedback from an additional 150 Calgarians each year	<b>2023-2025 short-term</b>
<b>Establish an incubator program for creative economy start-ups.</b>  <i>(Economic Development, Talent Retention)</i>	Support Platform Calgary's expansion of their start-up programs for the Music Economy into other sectors of the creative economy.	Increasing number of start-ups that identify as part of the creative economy  Increased longevity of creative economy start-ups	<b>2023-2027 mid-term</b>
<b>Increase digital literacy and support for creative organizations and talent.</b>  <i>(Civic Enrichment, Digital Shift, Economic Development, Education)</i>	Create an online digital resource centre connecting creative talent and creative organizations to pertinent digital tools and resources.  Provide digital educational support and guidance to maximize resource centre impact (e.g., onboarding into new digital spaces, digital distribution methods, how to obtain streaming royalties, etc.)	Number of creative talent and organizations accessing the resource centre and reported benefits	<b>2023-2030 long-term</b>

**Priority 2:** Purposefully facilitate and encourage the collaboration of the creative economy across creative sectors.

Action <i>(alignment or gaps of city plans and policies)</i>	"How to" Recommendations	Indicators of success	Timeline
<b>Actively expand the CreativeCITY network by supporting and funding collaborations aimed at achieving actions in this guidebook.</b>  <i>(Civic Enrichment, Cross-sector Collaboration)</i>	Host CreativeCITY network events across the city.  Define meaningful collaboration within CE partnerships and then determine and pursue effective strategies for collaborators to connect (e.g., partner "catalogues").	Number of collaborations established to move strategic guidebook initiatives forward  Number of additional creative economy networking events hosted	<b>2023-2025 short-term</b>
<b>Promote stronger connections across Calgary's creative ecosystem.</b>  <i>(Cross-sector Collaboration, Economic Development)</i>	Model successes in the local technology and innovation sector.  Create and share a centralized and accessible list of Calgary-based creative meetups.  Build and share criteria for funding programs that incentivize collaborations.	Increased number of collaborations between sectors  Decreased silos and increased sense of belonging	<b>2023-2030 long-term</b>

## PILLAR 2: Incubate creative collisions

**Priority 3:** Establish an implementing body to oversee the coordination and implementation of a creative economy strategy.

Action <i>(Alignment or gaps of city plans and policies)</i>	"How to" Recommendations	Indicators of success	Timeline
<b>Implement short-term goals of this guidebook with the identified participants</b>  <i>(ALL)</i>	Invest in collective commitment across partners to coordinate partners, track success, and adapt the strategy as needed.	Number of completed recommendations in the specified timelines qualified by this engagement with committed partners with clear actions.	<b>2023 immediate</b>
<b>Continue a cross-sector collaborative approach stewarded by multiple members across the creative economy.</b>  <i>(Cross-sector Collaboration, Placemaking, Digital Shift)</i>	CED and CADA continue to steward CreativeCITY in collaboration with partners across the creative economy.  Create a central place to list and promote resources for people to learn more about the creative economy, access educational experiences, funding and other resources (on digital platform recommended in Pillar 1).  Build the story of collaborative success into marketing and branding initiatives of the City of Calgary (Pillar 1).	Increased partners to CreativeCITY  Increased commitment across partners to fund and advance the strategic actions they lead	<b>2023-2025 short-term</b>
<b>Ensure Calgary's creative infrastructure supports the growth of creative companies</b>	Business retention, attraction & expansion strategies.  Review existing infrastructure to reveal underserved gaps & development opportunities.  Catalyzing partnerships to support the development of infrastructure to service strategic needs.	Identify spaces that are suitable for the growth of creative companies and increase utilization.  Identify enterprises suitable for growth in the creative economy short term (identify) develop (long term)	<b>2023-2030 long-term</b>



Photo Credit: Sebastian Buzzalino  
After Hours - A Tribe Called Red

**Priority 4:** Encourage play and exploration without fear of failure.

Action <i>(Alignment or gaps of city plans and policies)</i>	"How to" Recommendations	Indicators of success	Timeline
<b>Address issues of low and unfair remuneration for creative services.</b>  <i>(Arts &amp; Culture, Cross-sector Collaboration, Economic Development, Talent Retention)</i>	Follow-up and support key actions in the implementation plan for the Arts Professions Recognition Act (not yet released).  Identify solutions for insurance and retirement savings plans for self-employed creative economy workers.	Improved perceptions of career viability in the creative economy in related municipal level surveys (e.g., Calgary Arts Professionals Survey)  Increasing pay for creative economy workers	<b>2023-2025 short-term</b>
<b>Establish an impact investment fund and explore regenerative funding options.</b>  <i>(Cross-sector Collaboration, Economic Development, Talent Retention)</i>	Build on the funding programs explored in the CreativeCITY engagement process (i.e., small experiments with radical intent) as well as learnings from <a href="#">Opportunity Calgary Investment Fund</a> .  Work with start-up incubators and creative business associations to identify creative economy businesses and start-ups that are investment ready.	Number of start-ups or small experiments funded to advance the creative economy  Key learnings, successes and adjustments added to the creative economy strategy based on ongoing experiment learnings	<b>2023-2027 mid-term</b>
<b>Advocate for a continuum of investments from funding bodies.</b>  <i>(Cross-sector Collaboration, Economic Development, Talent Retention)</i>	Audit existing funding programs (short- and long-term) to determine where funding excludes or misses out on creative economy players.  Advocate for changes that include creative economy players.  List and actively share funding opportunities across the creative economy.	Increased completed applications to existing funding programs  New funding opportunities emerge where gaps are identified  Measurable and predetermined ROI (qualitative and quantitative) on funding programs, dependent on size and scope of projects funded.	<b>2023-2030 long-term</b>

**Desired Outcomes:**

- Sectors, industries, and occupations solve problems together.
- Occupations growing in demand make up most of Calgary's workforce.
- Calgary is resilient and future-proof.
- Calgary is no longer a pure energy town.
- Creative industries have well-established connections with other industries.
- Top talent from around the world moves to Calgary.





---

### **Pillar 3: Mobilize Calgary's creative capacity**

To develop and retain Calgary's exceptional creative talent, we must work to ensure creative professionals, new or seasoned, have the knowledge, skills and resources required to succeed. This means we need to adapt how we educate to create a more dynamic workforce; create opportunities for skill building in areas like business management and marketing; and work in partnership with cultural institutions, private sector leaders, and civic organizations to ensure creative education aligns with the needs of future employers and customers.

**Goal 1:** By 2030, the Calgary region leads Canada in the integration of arts and experiential learning into our K-12 classrooms.

**Goal 2:** By 2030, Calgary's post-secondary creative programs have the highest graduate employment rates in Canada.

**Goal 3:** By 2030, Calgary leads Canada in the number of creative economy workers per capita.

## PILLAR 3: Mobilize Calgary's creative capacity

**Priority 1:** Adapt educational programs to create a more dynamic workforce.

Action <i>(Alignment or gaps of city plans and policies)</i>	"How to" Recommendations	Indicators of success	Timeline
<p><b>Ensure Calgary's creative infrastructure supports creative talent's growth across all career stages.</b></p> <p><i>(Economic Development, Education, Infrastructure, Placemaking, Talent Retention)</i></p>	<p>Review existing infrastructure to reveal underutilized resources, gaps, and development opportunities.</p> <p>Ensure creative skill and experience development is integrated with other city wide learning and talent initiatives.</p>	<p>Increase space available for creative talent development and learning.</p> <p>Prevalence of creative talent city wide learning and talent partnerships accessing identified resources</p> <p>An interactive map of "open house" or introductory opportunities for people new to the creative economy to network and explore career options</p>	<p><b>2023-2024 short-term</b></p>
<p><b>Partner and collaborative with post-secondary institutions in developing strategies to attract students to study and work in Calgary's creative economy.</b></p> <p><i>(Cross-sector Collaboration, Economic Development, Education, Talent Retention)</i></p>	<p>Promote and push for post secondary institutions to collaborate on addressing student needs (e.g., mentorship opportunities, greater connection to industry and job opportunities post graduation, networking during programs, etc.).</p>	<p>Number of students enrolled in creative courses/fields</p> <p>Tracking and increasing the number of new graduates and employment level in Calgary after graduation in their field</p> <p>New graduates feel they have sufficient connection to existing industry to successful seek jobs and find guidance and mentorship as needed</p>	<p><b>2023-2028 long-term</b></p>
<p><b>Advocate for adequate funding to educational programs that support entrance into the creative economy at all levels in formal and informal education.</b></p> <p><i>(Economic Development, Education, Talent Retention)</i></p>	<p>Work with local primary and secondary school boards to identify collaborations and leverage existing creative economy programs targeting children and youth</p> <p>Work with post-secondary institutions and industry experts to identify and address program gaps.</p> <p>Identify opportunities for increasing system-wide collaboration and programming between employers and educational institutions.</p>	<p>Increase of elective courses offered in secondary schools that support the creative economy</p> <p>Increased investment and dedicated course time that support primary education introduction to creative and cultural industries</p> <p>Student satisfaction in current curriculum and feelings of preparedness to enter the workforce</p> <p>Number of programs offered to support entrance or transition to the creative economy</p>	<p><b>2023-2030 long-term</b></p>

**Priority 2:** Foster creativity by building programs in a way that layers career knowledge, skills building, and access to opportunities in a scaffolded approach.

Action <i>(Alignment or gaps of city plans and policies)</i>	"How to" Recommendations	Indicators of success	Timeline
<p><b>Advocate for extension programs for graduates and community members that supplement formal education or experience with sector relevant skills to level up.</b></p> <p><i>(Civic Enrichment, Digital Shift, Economic Development, Education)</i></p>	<p>Create a database of all creative economy professional development opportunities.</p> <p>Actively share job opportunities across CreativeCITY networks.</p>	<p>Number of extension programs available that support creative economy skills</p> <p>Participation rates in extension programs</p> <p>Number of upskilled workers transitioning to the creative economy from other fields</p> <p>Participant satisfaction</p>	<p><b>2023-2026 short-term</b></p>

## PILLAR 3: Mobilize Calgary's creative capacity

<p><b>Support upcoming creative talent in making the jump from student to professional.</b></p> <p><i>(Arts &amp; Culture, Civic Enrichment, Economic Development, Education, Talent Retention)</i></p>	<p>Build capacity in respective communities/sectors to establish funded internships opportunities in high growth areas (e.g., film and music).</p> <p>Promote and facilitate work site visits with a network of organizations within the creative economy.</p> <p>Implement actions proposed<sup>1</sup> in the <i>Work to Live: Alberta youth mobility</i> report to attract and retain youth in the province.</p> <p>List and share creative businesses, organizations and spaces in Calgary that are open to or currently create introductory or "open house" events.</p>	<p>Number of new graduates and employment levels after graduation (in their field)</p> <p>Number of new graduates who stay and work in Calgary's creative economy vs. moving elsewhere</p> <p>Positive net in-migration of youth to Alberta</p>	<p><b>2023-2028 mid-term</b></p>
<p><b>Build community capacity to offer micro-credentials across the creative economy ecosystem.</b></p> <p><i>(Cross-sector Collaboration, Economic Development, Education)</i></p>	<p>Audit Calgary's creative education system to find programming gaps, identify opportunities for collaboration, and determine sustainability of funding.</p>	<p>Number of people accessing micro-credentialing programs related to the creative economy</p>	<p><b>2023-2028 mid-term</b></p>
<p><b>Promote, develop and support mentorship and practicum programs.</b></p> <p><i>(Civic Enrichment, Economic Development, Education)</i></p>	<p>Identify gaps in creative economy mentorship opportunities across Calgary.</p> <p>Work with and through existing organizations and businesses to develop a pool of mentors within the creative economy addressing identified gaps.</p> <p>Coordinate and supplement existing mentorship programs.</p> <p>Provide resource information to employers to offset the costs of training and provide worthwhile work-experience opportunities.</p>	<p>Number of students who participate in work integrated learning opportunity within the creative economy</p> <p>Employment rate of these candidates who transition to full or part-time employment within the organization they complete a work-experience program with</p>	<p><b>2024-2028 mid-term</b></p>
<p><b>Priority 3:</b> Embed experiential learning and arts into formal and informal curricula.</p>			
<p><b>Action</b> <i>(Alignment or gaps of city plans and policies)</i></p>	<p><b>"How to" Recommendations</b></p>	<p><b>Indicators of success</b></p>	<p><b>Timeline</b></p>
<p><b>Support the increase of all-ages experiences and events across the creative economy.</b></p> <p><i>(Arts &amp; Culture, Civic Enrichment, Cross-sector Collaboration, Education, Economic Development, Talent Retention)</i></p>	<p>Reduce red-tape to accommodate all-ages events that allow organizers to maximize profits (beer gardens, etc.) while safely including youth and young families.</p>	<p>Increase in all-ages offerings across city quadrants.</p>	<p><b>2023-2025 short-term</b></p>

1 Lane, J., Laverty, S., & Finch, D. (2022, March). Work to Live Alberta youth mobility. Canada West Foundation. Retrieved from: <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5b8748eb-372b96145e73af65/t/6324ded884b11457b551bad3/1663360729239/Final+Work+to+Live+Report+3.17.22.pdf>



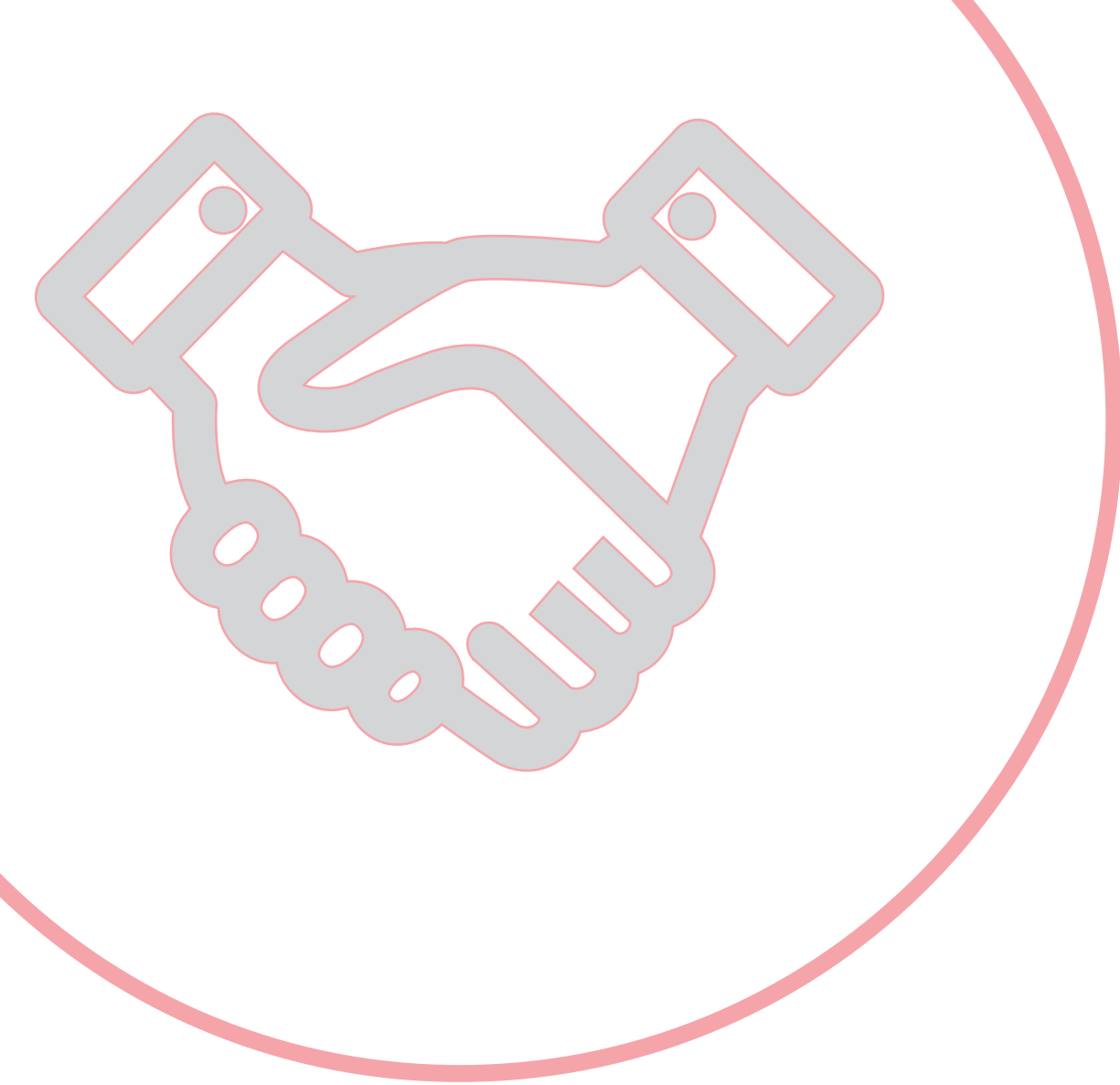
## PILLAR 3: Mobilize Calgary's creative capacity

<p><b>Make K-12 interactive opportunities accessible to explore creative economy career opportunities.</b></p> <p><i>(Arts &amp; Culture, Civic Enrichment, Cross-sector Collaboration, Education, Economic Development, Talent Retention)</i></p>	<p>Develop a catalogue of resources for creative experiential learning opportunities available to K-12 teachers and schools.</p> <p>Encourage organizations within the creative economy to develop low-cost K-12 experiences to introduce students to various careers in the creative economy.</p> <p>Advocate the province and municipality for funding to support/offset the costs of creative experiential opportunities.</p> <p>Expand artist-in-residence programs in Calgary's K-12 schools.</p>	<p>Increased percentage of access to these experiences for students K-12</p> <p>Impact of experiences (pre-post surveys)</p>	<p><b>2024-2028 mid-term</b></p>
--	--	--	----------------------------------

**Desired Outcomes:**

- Successful post-graduation outcomes are achieved by considering both public and private sector human resource needs in education, from primary to post-secondary.
- Arts education is accessible to all.
- Creative thinking and cultural experiences are essential components of Alberta's education system.
- Calgarians are equipped with the resources, skills and knowledge to thrive in the creative economy.
- New graduate employment rates are the highest in the country.





---

#### **Pillar 4: Value the diversity of Calgary's creativity**

As an incredibly diverse city, Calgary has an opportunity to tap into the unique perspectives and experiences of our diverse creative class to build something new, authentic, and meaningful for everyone in the city. By creating new, unique experiences, and by ensuring every creative, regardless of their background or identity, has the skills, resources, and sense of value to succeed, Calgary can bring something different to the global creative economy.

**Goal 1:** By 2030, the make-up of Calgary's creative economy workforce is at minimum representative of the city's population.

**Goal 2:** By 2030, equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility are prioritized and embedded into creative economy workplaces and programming.

**Goal 3:** By 2030, creative economy enterprises and organizations celebrate their board-level diversity with pride and encourage other organizations to follow suit.

## PILLAR 4: Value the diversity of Calgary's creativity

**Priority 1:** Develop and adopt programs and policies to ensure diverse individuals have the knowledge, skills and tools to succeed.

Action <i>(Alignment or gaps of city plans and policies)</i>	"How to" Recommendations	Indicators of success	Timeline
<p><b>Encourage small and medium-sized employers (SMEs) to hire and retain more diverse creative talent.</b></p> <p><i>(Civic Enrichment, Economic Development, Talent Retention)</i></p>	<p>Identify and share resources to empower organizations and SMEs in bringing EDIA into their work and processes.</p>	<p>Level of representation across the creative economy</p> <p>Number of creative economy organizations who implement EDIA programs and processes</p>	<p><b>2023-2026 mid-term</b></p>
<p><b>Encourage start-up incubators and creative economy funders to review their EDIA policies and ensure they are welcoming to diverse Calgarians.</b></p> <p><i>(Civic Enrichment, Economic Development, Talent Retention)</i></p>	<p>Build capacity of funding organizations in EDIA to improve accessibility to diverse Calgarians.</p> <p>Actively promote funding to and investment in marginalized communities to address additional barriers (e.g., translation services, in-person townhalls, etc.).</p>	<p>Increased representation across the funding process within the creative economy (e.g., greater representation among those receiving, awarding and providing funding)</p>	<p><b>2023-2026 mid-term</b></p>

**Priority 2:** Embed principles of equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility into the creative economy strategy.

Action <i>(Alignment or gaps of city plans and policies)</i>	"How to" Recommendations	Indicators of success	Timeline
<p><b>Ensure the growth of Calgary's creative sectors are mutually beneficial to all.</b></p> <p><i>(Civic Enrichment, Cross-sector collaboration, Economic Development, Education)</i></p>	<p>Highlight and support organizations and enterprises that uplift diverse creative talent.</p> <p>Recognizing that the expansion of Calgary's film industry includes a great deal of work with local Indigenous communities, work to ensure this industry growth is mutually beneficial to Calgary and Indigenous partners through intentional engagement and inclusion of Indigenous perspectives in film strategies.</p> <p>Support creative industry accelerator programs that prioritize diverse talent.</p>	<p>Number of diverse groups and organizations leading or participating in the actions of the CreativeCITY Guidebook</p> <p>Advocate and Increase supports for Indigenous-led productions</p> <p>Inclusion of Indigenous communities in the implementation of the CreativeCITY Strategic Guidebook</p>	<p><b>2023-2026 mid-term</b></p>
<p><b>Develop a CreativeCITY Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility (EDIA) statement and terms of reference for CreativeCITY and contributing partners.</b></p> <p><i>(Civic Enrichment, Cross-sector collaboration)</i></p>	<p>Template an EDIA toolkit and resource list for all partners.</p> <p>Model the EDIA principles and processes of exemplar organizations to share across networks.</p>	<p>Acceptance and adoption of EDIA statement and processes across CreativeCITY partners</p> <p>Wide adoption of the terms of reference across contributing partners</p>	<p><b>2023-2030 long-term</b></p>

## PILLAR 4: Value the diversity of Calgary's creativity

**Priority 3:** Choose new faces and new voices to lead change.

Action <i>(Alignment or gaps of city plans and policies)</i>	"How to" Recommendations	Indicators of success	Timeline
<p><b>Increase the visibility and prominence of Indigenous and minority leaders within the creative economy and amplify and celebrate their influence on Calgary's creative economy.</b></p> <p><i>(Civic Enrichment, Cross-sector collaboration, Education, Placemaking)</i></p>	<p>Highlight Indigenous and equity deserving group-led creative economy enterprises and projects.</p> <p>Work towards ensuring Indigenous representation at all stages of implementation of this strategic guidebook.</p>	<p>Representation of all Calgarians and all Indigenous communities from Treaty 7 Territory across the strategic framework</p> <p>Increased respect for and knowledge of protocols</p>	<p><b>2023-2026</b> <b>mid-term</b></p>
<p><b>Support diverse representation in board appointments and leadership positions within the creative economy.</b></p> <p><i>(Civic Enrichment, Economic development, Talent Retention)</i></p>	<p>Emphasize sharing of knowledge and networks to support connections of diverse skilled workers with training, mentorship, job, and leadership opportunities.</p>	<p>Ratio of BIPOC, 2SLGBTQI+, woman-identifying and people with disabilities on boards and in leadership positions within the creative economy (at minimum reflective of current makeup of Calgary)</p>	<p><b>2024-2028</b> <b>mid-term</b></p>
<p><b>Share and work in light of the (ongoing) colonial history of Mohkinstis, and action reconciliation as treaty people who honour the influence and stewardship of Indigenous peoples.</b></p> <p><i>(Civic Enrichment, Cross-sector collaboration, Education)</i></p>	<p>Promote and support cultural events led by Indigenous organizations and encourage widespread participation.</p> <p>Support meaningful relationships with Indigenous leaders and communities so that actions or tools in support of reconciliation are well-informed and purposeful.</p>	<p>Widespread adoption and meaningful inclusion of land acknowledgements/welcomes and other protocols where appropriate across partner initiatives and events.</p> <p>Creative organizations and enterprises moving from establishing decolonial practices to establishing meaningful relationships.</p>	<p><b>2024-2028</b> <b>mid-term</b></p>

### Desired Outcomes:

- Diversity is the creative economy's greatest asset.
- Calgary attracts creative talent from all over the world.
- Calgary is known world-wide for its uniqueness and authenticity.
- Diverse creative talent have the tools, resources, and platforms needed to succeed.
- Calgary's creative economy is steered by more voices and is more representative of the community.
- All Calgarians feel a collective sense of pride, value, and empowerment in our city.



Photo Credit: Chris Savage  
Artist in Residence 2019 at Calgary Allied Arts Foundation

# The Way Forward



Photo Credit: Neil Zeller  
Chinook Blast (2023), courtesy of Tourism Calgary

---

This work is not new. Our community engagement made it abundantly clear that Calgarians in and across creative sectors are working for change and greatly desire sustainable growth and long-term development of the creative economy. This is a living strategy. We prioritize ongoing feedback so that creative talent, organizations and enterprises stimulating growth and innovation across the creative economy, and other economic sectors, can continue to breathe new life into this strategy.

**Our next steps include:**

1

**Keep Talking, Keep Listening.**

This guidebook is a living strategy that is intended to grow and develop over time. We'll develop various feedback mechanisms and opportunities (see our webpage for updates: <https://www.birdcreatives.com/creative-city>).

2

**Get a Measuring Stick.**

Our small experiments posed the challenge of finding meaningful measures with incredibly unique, small scale experiments. A similar challenge arises when we look at tracking impact or outcomes of strategy contributors across all sectors of the creative economy. At this juncture, we need to agree upon and refine the measures of impact and outcomes that make the most sense for strategy contributors. This will allow us to collectively track goals over time while building the case for ongoing commitment and investment in Calgary's creative economy. Our stewards, CED and CADA, are natural leaders for this task.

3

**All hands on deck!**

In the current guidebook, we have focused a number of actions on film and music because of the momentum building in those areas. The overall goal is to fortify the whole creative economy by leveraging the lessons and successes of growing industries for other areas. However, as we continue to talk and listen, we expect that success in these goals will inspire strategic actions in other creative areas. This plan needs to impact folks across the creative economy. Recalling our survey, 93% of respondents (from all four sectors of the Nesta model) saw themselves and their community reflected in the priorities identified in the strategic framework. Similarly, 93% of respondents could envision a way that their community could play an active role in making Calgary a more creative and more livable city by the year 2030. We hope to see this plan expand over time, reflecting multiple growing areas within Calgary's creative economy.

4

**Collaborative Responsibility**

It is important to have champions of any good strategy, partners who make the case for funding or make funding available—roles CED and CADA have taken on as stewards. However, no few partners can carry this forward to be a successful strategy. As specific measures are identified, CreativeCITY imagines collaborations rising among local partners who see their work moving the needle on the proposed actions and measures. CreativeCITY needs co-conspirators! We can all take responsibility for making a creative Calgary reality. We'll be reaching out, but if you see something that you want to contribute to, reach out to us!

# Credits

## Steering Committee

Patti Pon – *Calgary Arts Development*

Dr. David Finch – *Mount Royal University*

Luke Azevedo – *Calgary Economic Development*

Kaley Beisiegel – *Bird Creatives*

Dr. Daniel Doz – *Alberta University of the Arts*

Lisa Jacobs – *Musician, Certified Music Therapist*

Russell Broom – *Producer, Composer, Musician*

Alice Lam – *Vollyapp.com*

Alex Sarian – *Arts Commons*

Evan Hu – *AltoSante, Digital Health Venture Studio*

Maria Elena Hoover – *MakeFashion, Fuse33 Makerspace*

Dr. AnneMarie Dorland – *Mount Royal University*

Michelyn Dion – *Bird Creatives*

Marc Tran – *Mount Royal University*

Haider Ali – *University of Calgary*

Leah Naicken – *Alberta University of the Arts*

Cowboy Smithx – *Eccentricus Imagery*

Scott Gravelle – *Attabotics Inc*

Project by:



Kaley Beisiegel, Principal Consultant  
Elyse Borlé, Project Manager  
Leah Naicken, Research Assistant  
Matthew Ngo, Research Assistant  
Laura Huculak, Layout and Design

