



Annual Report to Members

Prepared by Brea Lake

APR 2019 - MAR 2020

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Message from Our CEO

In July 2019, we launched our 5-year strategic plan and areas of focus. Additionally, a short time later in October, I was appointed the permanent position of CEO. With a fresh vision set and new strategic priorities, myself and the team hit the ground running. We supported 102 entrepreneurs through our mentorship programs, had 45 companies apply for the 2021 OKGN Angel Summit, and built engaging relationships with our 161 members.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit in March, we were fortunate that our team and mentors (EIRs) seamlessly transitioned to working from home. We knew now more than ever that we had to open our doors even wider to support entrepreneurs. We made efforts to streamline and curate information, connect entrepreneurs to resources through our concierge service, and create opportunities to convene our members needing connection and support during this challenging time.

Last year when we set our 5 Year Strategic Plan, we included a Change Disclaimer which states...

"Thriving startup communities are communities that continually evolve. This evolution can't be controlled and should be embraced. We need to be able to adapt to our founders' needs as our community challenges change. Although we understand the importance of long term planning, we are committed to encouraging new things, people and ideas because we know it is all additive."

This statement could not be more true given this unprecedented time. It reminds us to remain adaptive and give space to reimagine what an innovative, inclusive, and sustainable future looks like for our organization and community.

We believe now more than ever that we need to embrace our areas of focus:

*Engage the willing
Unlock the capital
Coach the leaders*

Amidst challenges brought on by the pandemic, we continue to see demand for more mentorship, programming and resources for entrepreneurs. In the last 5 months, we've co-created a new program for women entrepreneurs, kicked off the second Venture Acceleration Cohort, and partnered with Community Futures of the North Okanagan to open The Vernon Innovation & Entrepreneurship Workspace in downtown Vernon. These new opportunities are just some of the ways we are living into the mission to give entrepreneurs the mentorship, connections, and community they need to build technology-driven ventures.

We are excited by the accomplishments outlined in this report. They're proof of what we have long known: BIG things are happening here. Together we are stronger and I can't wait to be a part of what's next.



Brea Lake

BREA LAKE
CEO, Accelerate Okanagan

Board of Directors

Quinton Pullen

Chairman

Michael Macaulay

Vice Chair

Corie Griffiths

Treasurer

Blair Forrest

Executive Committee

Tanja Halsall

Executive Committee

Doug Gilchrist

Harry Singh

Joshua Fraser

Jason Kryski

Nicole Rustad

Philip Ashman

Scot Speiser

Philip Barker

Strategic Vision

Our Mission

We give entrepreneurs the mentorship, connections, and community they need to build technology-driven ventures.

Our Values

Innovation

We choose boldness, act with agility and learn from failure.

Inclusivity

We are intentional collaborators, creating brave spaces for every voice.

Focus

We are effective in our delivery, accountable for results and clear on our purpose.

Sustainability

We support businesses, balanced founders, and healthy communities.

Areas of Focus

ENGAGE THE WILLING

Through authentic relationship building, we engage the willing, mobilize the masses, and create a strong sense of belonging and a thriving community.

UNLOCK THE CAPITAL

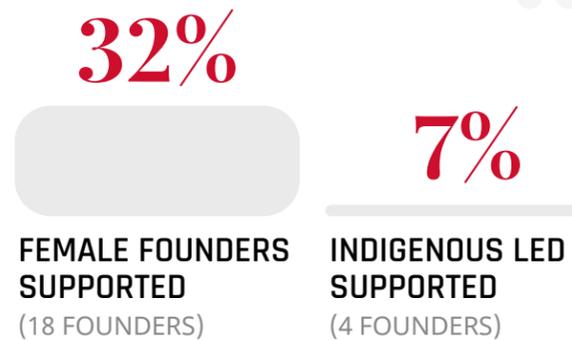
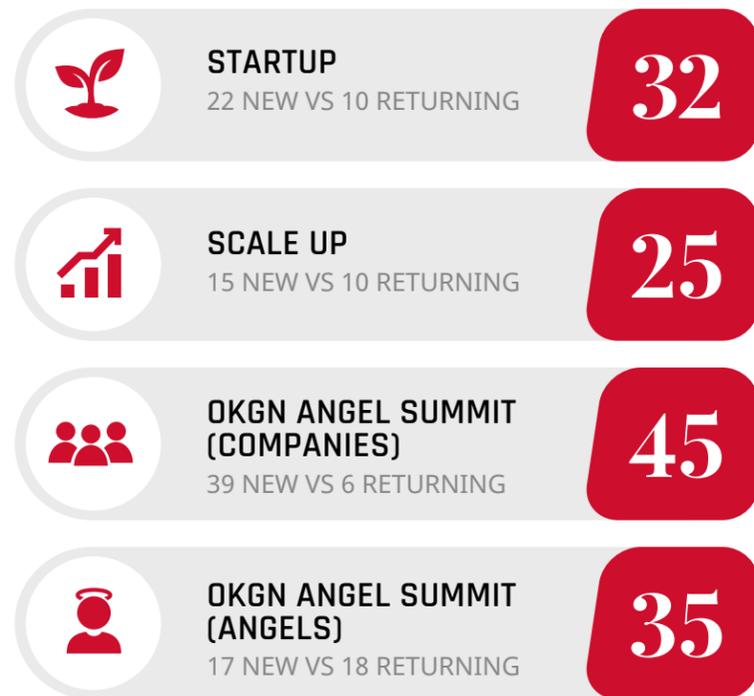
Through collaboration and network building, we unlock the capital needed to support founders & companies of all types and at every stage of growth.

COACH THE LEADERS

Through strong mentorship, we coach leaders who are inspired to drive innovation, propel the economy, and ultimately build successful anchor companies in our region.

Programs by the Numbers

Program Clients



Economic Impact of Program Clients

86.5
Jobs Created

REVENUE
\$28,541,322

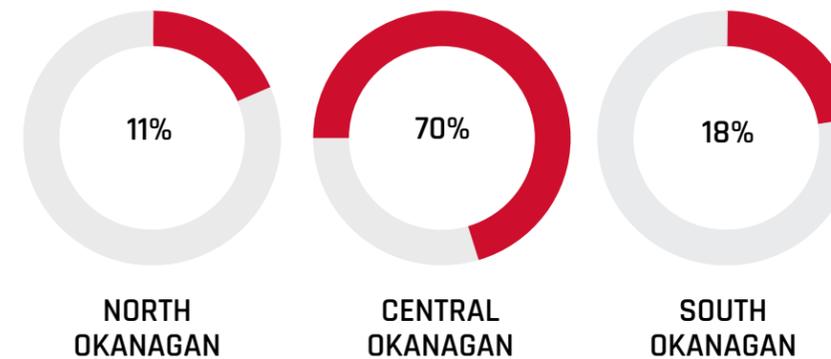
INVESTMENT
\$5,369,850

PAYROLL
\$13,256,632

RECEIVED IN GOVERNMENT FUNDING
\$561,636

Location

*does not equal 100% as one client is located outside of the Okanagan



Net Promoter Score

Annual Average

78 Startup
62 Scale Up

Program Highlights





PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

OKGN Angel Summit Supports Companies from Across the Province

This year, 35 investors participated, creating a \$155K investment fund. Over the course of a month and half, the investors reviewed, evaluated, and did due diligence with the 45 participating companies.

CHEQUE IT OUT >>



These 35 investors faced a really difficult challenge in choosing a winner at this year's summit. All 6 finalists were strong candidates with varying business models but only one company could take home the \$155K investment.



THUY TRAN
Accelerate Okanagan



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Venture Acceleration Program Launches First Cohort

VAP is an initiative of Innovate BC and stands apart from other programs offered by Accelerate Okanagan because of its unique cohort model. Along with one-on-one mentorship, participating entrepreneurs will build life-long relationships with their peers as they work together through the startup process.

BETTER TOGETHER >>



VAP gave me the opportunity to meet a lot of people and make connections that would have taken me years to make. I also really appreciated how well-matched with my mentor I was. We created a relationship where I can reach out to them whenever I need help.



MARA WAUGH
Skin Care Literature

Pushor Mitchell is excited for the latest cohort of entrepreneurs as they embark on their journey through the Venture Accelerate program. From unique 3D printing offerings to ‘Shopify for the tourism space, our tech industry never ceases to impress!



BRIAN STEPHENSON
Pushor Mitchell LLP



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

RevUP Expands to Scale Up Established Businesses

—

This year RevUP, one of Accelerate Okanagan's Scale Up programs, helped more than 25 tech-enabled businesses, from mental health measurement software in Toronto, Ontario to wineries using farming innovation in Oliver, BC. In addition, Columbia Basin Trust in the Kootenays has licensed RevUP to support more than 15 non-tech businesses in the Columbia Basin. The program helps businesses that are poised for growth by connecting business owners and leadership teams with experienced mentors and provides customized growth plans, coaching, training and engagement with peers.

SCALE UP >>



We're blessed to be able to work with our EIR at this stage. He has helped immensely with our structured sales process and guidance on Health Canada opportunity. The mentorship has been excellent and the accountability provided by the program is very beneficial. It is hands down the best program and mentorship for technology startups to take advantage of in the Okanagan.



MIKE LERNER
Greenspace Health



We are
[OKGN]
TECH

We are OKGNtech is a showcase of Okanagan tech entrepreneurs, partners, supporters, and cheerleaders designed to fuel more connection, more growth, and more excitement. Here is a look at the people we've profiled this year.



Nika Pidskalny
Bananatag
General Counsel

MEET NIKA >>



Daryl Chymko
Automatic
Code Wrangler

MEET DARYL >>



Richard Takai
Grant Thornton LLP
Business Development

MEET RICHARD >>



Larry Smith
Accelerate Okanagan
Mentor

MEET LARRY >>



AdVenture Capitalist
Hyper Hippo Games
Mascot

MEET MR. CAPATALIST >>

We are not afraid
to dream big.



**Tasha
Da Silva**

Infuse I.T.
Founder and CEO

MEET TASHA >>



**Simon
Hason**

SHD Games
Owner

MEET SIMON >>



**Fraser
Johnston**

Watch & Ride Virtual
Snowboard Inc.
Founder
Accelerate Okanagan
Scale-Up Program
Lead

MEET FRASER >>



**Dan
Rondeau**

925 Freelancing.
CEO

MEET DAN >>



**Kathleen
MacKinnon**

Nine Rising
Founder

MEET KATHLEEN >>



**Carrie
Mayhew**

Graphic Design &
Brand Manager
Jillian Harris Design Inc

MEET CARRIE >>



**Ross
Ladell**

RFG Software
*Chief Executive
Officer*

MEET ROSS >>



We are in this
together.



**Rocky
Ozaki**

Now of Work Inc.
Founder

MEET ROCKY >>



**Gina
Cherkowski**

STEM Learning Labs
Founder
EdgeMakers
Chief Innovation Officer

MEET GINA >>



**Monika
Brenner**

Graphic Designer

MEET MONIKA >>



**Marissa
Young**

Wildflower
Healing Arts
Founder

MEET MARISSA >>



**John
Sechrest**

Seattle Angel
Conference
Founder

MEET JOHN >>



**Jason
Lotoski**

Tonit
Founder

MEET JASON >>



**Jamie
Wood**

Sanga Living
Founder

MEET JAMIE >>



**Josh
Fraser**

Estated
Founder & CEO

MEET JOSH >>



**Evan
McIntosh**

Estated
Engineering Manager

MEET EVAN >>



**Erica
Pretorius**

Deloitte
Partner

MEET ERICA >>



**Jamil
Karim**

Innovate BC
*Marketing &
Communications
Manager*

MEET JAMIL >>



**Chloe
Popove**

Another Room
CEO & Founder

MEET CHLOE >>



**James
Schlosser**

Senior Manager of Business
Developments & Contracts
BC Cancer Agency

MEET JAMES >>



We are
the makers
of things.

Events & Collaborations



COLLABORATIONS

Hacking Health Inspires Human-Centered Solutions

Hacking Health was born out of the idea that bringing together a group of innovative, out-of-the-box thinkers, driven to shape the future of health would likely generate new and exciting solutions in the healthcare space.

This hackathon was hosted at the Innovation Centre on October 17 and consisted of a full day of facilitated hacking led by Rocky Ozaki and his team from the NoW of Work. It was not about coding or app development. It was about using collaboration and diversity as tools to inspire innovative ideas and human-centered solutions.

Connections were made, ideas were hatched, and the results exceeded our wildest expectations.

CREATE & INNOVATE >>



Hacking Health was a great opportunity to participate and innovate within the Healthcare space. Meeting participants with various domain backgrounds really helped in coming up with new and creative solutions.



BARRETT SHARPE
QHR Technologies

COLLABORATIONS

FUTURE OF HEALTH

Forum Focused on Cancer Care

Improvements across complex health-care systems are established through building a culture of innovation and a community of collaboration. With this in mind, Accelerate Okanagan, BC Cancer, Interior Health, and The University of British Columbia joined forces to host the inaugural Future of Health Forum. On October 18th 2019, health researchers, clinicians, innovators, entrepreneurs, and members of the public met to explore the current state of cancer care in BC and discuss the ground-breaking research shaping the future of health in our province.

[EXPLORE THE FORUM >>](#)



The inaugural Future of Health forum was focused on the cancer challenge ahead. The growth in cancer and rapid evolution of cancer care, drive the need to transform cancer services in BC's Interior. As the leader responsible for planning the cancer system in the interior, it was a thrill to see the birth of partnerships and collaboration at the forum.



DR. ROSS HALPERIN
BC Cancer

COLLABORATIONS

NYKO
2020

9th Annual New Year Kick Off

On January 9th, 2020 we celebrated the beginning of a new year, and a bright future for the #OKGNtech industry. This Ultra-Canadian Chalet Soiree played host to over 450 OKGNtech entrepreneurs, investors, supporters, and cheerleaders. Good times were had, memories were made, and our team was reminded that not only is the OKGNtech community brimming with dreamers and risk-takers committed to building the future, it is also a collective of fun-loving, dance machines.

Can you think of a better way to celebrate the new year than with a #OKGNtech Canadian Chalet Soiree?!

OH CANADA >>



This was my first year attending NYKO and all I can say is that AO knows how to host an event. It was great to see a lot of existing clients as well as had some great introductions to some new faces. The OKGNtech community is truly amazing!



MADELEINE DUPUIS
RBC

COLLABORATIONS

Tech Alley Shines at Okanagan College Business Expo & Career Fair

On February 5th, 2020, the Expo featured an exciting new focus on innovation with the introduction of Tech Alley. An entire section of the expo devoted to tech sector employers, from start-ups to larger anchor companies. The goal was to shine a light on the booming tech sector we are so fortunate to have in the Okanagan.

Better yet, the cost for tech companies to participate was subsidised by the Okanagan Innovation Fund; a fund set up by Okanagan College and Accelerate Okanagan to support innovative, collaborative projects.

COMMITTED COLLABORATORS >>



Tech Alley was a great way to get connected with great candidates with a focused interest, as well as with local businesses. I look forward to participating again next year and meeting with more eager and talented candidates.



LOUIS-PHILIPPE LAVOIE
Refresh Financial



We are
the architects
of tomorrow.

We rise by
lifting others.



Supporters

CO-FUNDERS



PARTNERS



PATRONS



161
Members

400+
Jobs Posted

Contact

Accelerate Okanagan thanks its sponsors, members and partners for their ongoing support and contributions throughout this year and we look forward to working together to improve and expand our activities and programs over the next fiscal year.

Questions or comments regarding this report should be directed to:

Brea Lake, CEO

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**ACCELERATE
OKANAGAN**