



# BUILDING A CREATIVE & ENTREPRENEURIAL CANADA

in partnership with

Google SSHRC CRSH

**#CreativeCanada**

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## STARTUP CANADA

Startup Canada is the national rallying community for Canada's 2.3 million entrepreneurs. Through flagship programs, digital platforms, and cross sector partnerships between entrepreneurs, private sector, and government, Startup Canada offers training, resources, and a peer network to give every entrepreneur equal opportunity for success. As members of Startup Canada, entrepreneurs are championed by the community and are given a national voice to media, industry and government. For more information, visit [www.startupcan.ca](http://www.startupcan.ca).

## GOOGLE CANADA

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful. As a global technology leader, Google's innovations in web search and advertising have made its website a top Internet property and its brand one of the most recognized in the world. Google Canada has offices in Waterloo, Toronto, Montreal, and Ottawa with nearly 1,000 'Canoozers' working on teams across Engineering, Sales, Marketing, PR, Policy, and HR.

## SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES RESEARCH COUNCIL

The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council is the Canadian federal agency mandated to promote and support postsecondary-based research and training in the humanities and social sciences. Through its Talent, Insight and Connections programs, SSHRC helps to train the next generation of talented leaders and creative thinkers; build knowledge and understanding about people, cultures and societies; and, drive the innovations that address the challenges of today and tomorrow. For more information, visit [www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca](http://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca).

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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*The views and recommendations expressed herein are solely those of the participants and do not represent those of Startup Canada, Google Canada or the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council.*

## INTRODUCTION

Canada is a nation brimming with creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship. With more than 630,000 jobs and an annual contribution of \$54.6 billion to Canada's GDP, Canada's cultural industries represent one of the country's leading economic sectors. At the same time, Canada boasts 2.3 million entrepreneurs, 1.2 million small businesses and a culture that increasingly embraces risky and creative ideas. As traditional definitions of creators, users, and professionals continue to blur in an increasingly digital economy, never before has there been a stronger opportunity to harness Canada's creative talent to encourage an entrepreneurial culture that promotes greater collaboration, diversity, and inclusion across all sectors. Now is the time for Canada to take a leap forward to fully embrace creativity and innovation as core to its national identity and to empower its citizens to be thriving leaders in this new global economy.

Our nation is embarking on the development of an inclusive Innovation Agenda that may create significant opportunities and advancements in education, innovation and entrepreneurship. Building on the pursuit of an inclusive innovation agenda that harnesses the creativity, diversity and talent of Canadians, [Startup Canada](#), in partnership with [Google Canada](#) and the [Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council](#) (SSHRC), fostered a *National Dialogue on Building a Creative and Entrepreneurial Canada*. This report highlights the key themes and recommended actions that emerged in these discussions.

## METHODOLOGY

Through on-the-ground forums in six cities, a two-month digital consultation and dozens of in-person interviews, this consultation series collected the ideas and recommendations of more than 1,000 Canadian artists, content creators, cultural entrepreneurs and leaders within the innovation, entrepreneurship and academic communities.

# INCLUSIVITY & DIVERSITY IN INNOVATION

With women starting companies at double the rate of men, Indigenous entrepreneurship growing at five times the rate of the general population, and newcomers more likely to start businesses than those born in Canada, our creative and entrepreneurial community is growing and diverse. Rural, remote and small communities are diversifying their economy through entrepreneurship, and while tech often receives the most attention, entrepreneurship is also growing in products and services across sectors including arts, cultural industries, and entertainment. It is therefore imperative that strategies and frameworks to support creativity and entrepreneurialism in the new economy are inclusive and representative of this diversity of Canadians and the businesses they create.

One strategy will not serve the needs of every entrepreneur or innovator, but a national vision that inspires every Canadian and provides them with equal opportunity to create and innovate in today's digital world will have a resounding impact on Canada's culture and economy. However, to make strides towards this vision, it is important to **level the playing field through inspiration, connectivity and targeted approaches to empower everyone to contribute to the new innovation economy.**

## STORYTELLING IS KEY.

Stories transform people and lives. They inspire, spark creativity and ignite imagination. Sharing and celebrating both the success and failure stories of Canada's diverse entrepreneur community is a powerful way to inspire others and raise awareness of made in Canada content, products, and services. Telling stories that reflect the diversity of the community will also challenge and broaden traditional definitions of innovation, entrepreneurialism and creativity. In the context of Indigenous entrepreneurship, storytelling is a powerful mechanism to add hope and optimism amid negative narratives that permeate media. The stories of the rebels and misfits who don't fit the mould are most important to ensure every Canadian sees in themselves an opportunity to change the world.

“Hearing what’s not working is important, but hearing what is working is equally important. We derive lessons from both,” **said Shyra Barberstock, President and CEO of Okwaho International Inc. and Community Leader of Startup Kingston.** With large audiences reachable through digital storytelling platforms, the opportunity for collaboration between governments, the private sector, non-profit organizations, and individuals to tell these stories loudly and proudly has never been greater.

“The best way we can engage youth, women and newcomers to start participating as entrepreneurs and leaders is to show them examples of others.... and mirror back all of the different ways we identify ourselves,” **said Shingai Manjengwa, Founder and Director, Fireside Analytics Inc. in Waterloo.** “If you see someone who you relate to, who has managed to do something - that clears a path for you and inspires you to dream bigger.”

#### TOP IDEAS:

- ❑ **I AM Canada** | Launch a national storytelling campaign celebrating and championing Canada’s greatest and emerging entrepreneurs (i.e. Cirque du Soleil co-founder Guy Laliberté, Manitobah Mukluks founder Sean McCormick, SheNative founder Devon Fiddler, etc.) as heroes, leaders and role models through digital and mainstream channels, exhibits and global marketing efforts that reflect the diversity of our people, regions, and industries and in doing so, share the Canadian dream and values. Through the campaign, invite Canadians to share and spread their entrepreneurial stories to inspire others.
- ❑ **#CreativeCanada Ambassadors** | Recruit 1,000 Canadian artists, changemakers and entrepreneurs from all walks of life to be #CreativeCanada Ambassadors with the mandate to tell their stories in schools, on campuses, in communities, in companies and in the media to inspire the nation with stories of ambition, failure, resilience, perseverance and impact.
- ❑ **CANADIANS** | Publish a book and documentary, providing digital copies for free, telling the story of Canadian innovators and entrepreneurs who have risked it all and pursued their passion to build our great nation.
- ❑ **Filmfest and Expo** | Tour a film festival across every province and territory to showcase artists and creators who are telling the stories of Canadian entrepreneurs,

featuring expos showcasing Canada’s digital startups and local organizations that can support those who are inspired to take action on their ideas. Touring films may include: Dream Girl (from Ottawa, ON), Startup Community (from Waterloo, ON), Millennial Dream (from Fredericton, NB) and Innovation Alley (from Winnipeg, MB), etc.

### INTERNET AS A UTILITY. RELIABLE, HIGH-SPEED AND AFFORDABLE INTERNET IS A CRITICAL STEP IN EQUALIZING INNOVATION OPPORTUNITIES.

“Rural Canada is dealing with an aging population, youth outmigration and manufacturing exodus,” said **Peter Smith, Project Director at the Canadian Centre for Rural Creativity**. “How are we going to retain and attract entrepreneurs who want to use technology as a way to express themselves or accomplish the work they do if they are not connected? If they are not connected, they are not going to stay or come...it would be foolish.”

Joining the 21st century begins by being connected. Canadians in rural and remote areas of Canada face challenges as it relates to innovation infrastructure. While 87 per cent of Canadian households have Internet access, connectivity continues to create a digital divide between urban and rural areas (CIRA Factbook 2015). According to the CRTC, 100 per cent of urban households have access to broadband Internet, compared to 84 per cent in rural areas, where the service is also slower, more expensive and unreliable. Without dependable, high-speed and affordable Internet access, rural and remote regions are at a disadvantage when it comes to attracting and retaining creative talent, investment, and empowering community members with the tools to start and scale successful creative, let alone digital, enterprises. The Government of Canada and industry have the opportunity to work with rural and remote communities to provide this service as not the ‘last mile’, but the ‘first mile’ for a more creative and entrepreneurial Canada.

#### TOP IDEAS:

- ❑ **The First Mile** | The Government of Canada should work with major telecom providers to aggressively connect all of Canada through high speed, affordable and quality Internet access, seeing rural communities not as the last mile, but as the first



mile. To connect Canadians to the stories and to give them access to means of expression, innovation, communication and opportunity, every community and every Canadian should have access to this key service.

## ONE CANADA. COLLABORATION IS THE WAY FORWARD FOR INCLUSIVE CREATIVITY & INNOVATION.

Good investors know that strength lies in diverse and distributed portfolios. Now is the time to break down silos between entrepreneurs, governments, industries, non-profits, regions, people, tech, non-tech, slow-growth and high-growth to come together as 'One Canada' that celebrates our differences as one of our greatest strengths. Not everyone can be an entrepreneur, but everyone can be *entrepreneurial*. Ensuring the inclusion of everyone in the digital knowledge economy requires us to build a fully integrated ecosystem that incentivizes and reinforces the value of collaboration in every respect. By bringing people with common interests and diverse skillsets together, partnerships present opportunities for social innovation, storytelling and inclusive progress.

According to **Kerlande Mibel, the Montreal-based Founder and President of the International Black Economic Forum**, governments can lead by example by embracing and promoting entrepreneurship as intrapreneurs. "For Canada to be creative, politicians and policy makers have to step up. They have to be bold in creating policies that create an environment and culture for entrepreneurs to succeed."

While efforts to unite Canada's entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystem are improving connectivity and awareness of programs nationally and in startup communities locally, competition for funding resources continue to prevent collaboration. To bridge this gap and to eradicate siloes caused by competing for funding, funding institutions across government and the private sector are well positioned to create funding that requires collaboration.

## TOP IDEAS:

- ❑ **Canada.ca 2.0** | Improve the user interface, search-ability, and usability of Government of Canada websites to better inform, serve and engage citizens, providing citizen-centred services just in time.
- ❑ **Collaboration Clause** | Every disbursement of public funds in terms of grants, bursaries, transfer payments, RFPs, etc. should include a 'Collaboration Clause' requiring recipients of public funds to undertake programming and project delivery in partnership with local entrepreneurs, creators, small businesses and end users, as well as cross sector players and other organizations, to maximize the design, delivery and impact of projects and programs.
- ❑ **Entrepreneurship Leader and Innovation Sandboxes** | Appoint a National Entrepreneurship Leader for the Government of Canada to build a network of Entrepreneurs-in-Residence and Innovation Sandboxes across every government department and agency to challenge groupthink, promote innovation and inspire and cultivate entrepreneurial and creative talent within government, while connecting all departments and agencies to build innovative capacity and culture across government.

## UNLEASHING THE DIVERSITY OF CANADA TO GROW INNOVATION.

With the growing propensity of women, newcomers, Indigenous Canadians and millennials to be creative innovators and entrepreneurs, targeted programming, policies and services are required to meet the unique barriers and needs of these and other groups to ensure they can contribute and thrive in the new economy.

Newcomers to Canada are more likely to start a business than those born here, and since 2015 Canada has welcomed 320,000 potential entrepreneurs. In pursuit of a model of inclusive innovation, Canada is well positioned to support a new generation of thriving immigrant entrepreneurs and innovators by connecting these newcomers with business and digital skills training, support networks, startup resources and seed funding. Canadian governments, private companies and non-profit organizations must work together to connect newcomers with these

resources upon arrival and to integrate creative entrepreneurial opportunities as well as cultural and social connections into their settlement efforts.

While Indigenous Canadians represent the fastest growing segment of entrepreneurs in Canada, they face unique barriers when it comes to starting and growing companies, and being trained with the creative skills necessary to succeed in a fiercely competitive, digital economy. On reserves, a lack of ownership of land and collateral makes it difficult to acquire business loans. Poverty and poor quality of life on some reserves contribute to startling education dropout rates. Legislative changes are desperately needed to support Indigenous Canadians in the pursuit of entrepreneurial and creative endeavours, and to strengthen economic development and creative empowerment in these communities.

#### TOP IDEAS:

- ❑ **Newcomer Startup Services** | Partner with local business organizations and diaspora groups to provide startup information and support to newcomers and entrepreneurship education as part of settlement service offerings across Canada.
- ❑ **Access to Capital for Indigenous Entrepreneurs** | Work with financial institutions and implement the necessary regulatory changes to allow for business loans for Indigenous entrepreneurs who do not have access to land title ownership.

# TALENT DEVELOPMENT

To support Canadian content creators, entrepreneurs and innovators to stand out in the digital economy, education institutions at all levels must re-imagine what skills are taught and how. According to the World Economic Forum, by 2020, one-third of all jobs will require complex problem solving skills. Critical thinking, analytical, digital data and interpersonal skills will also be core requirements. A 2016 LinkedIn Survey identifies that even today, critical thinking, creativity, and adaptability are among the top soft skills sought by employers. To prepare today's students for a job environment wherein they can thrive, urgent attention is needed by each of the private, public and academic sectors.

## CREATIVE, ENTREPRENEURIAL AND DIGITAL SKILLS FOR EVERY CANADIAN STUDENT.

For Canada's future workforce to thrive, the aforementioned skills should be taught as core subjects and held with the same level of importance as math, science, English and French from Kindergarten onward. Fostering intrapreneurship and rebranding computer science as digital literacy is also an opportunity to combat the gender gap between young men and women who express interest in these skills. While education is not federally mandated, the Government of Canada is well positioned to work with its provincial and territorial counterparts, national non-profits and startup communities, to devise a national action plan to support entrepreneurial, innovative, and digital literacy training and testing.

### TOP IDEAS:

- ❑ **Entrepreneurs in Residence** | Equip K-12 schools with resources to appoint an Entrepreneur-in-Residence to foster entrepreneurial awareness, competencies and opportunities for students of all ages. This individual will support in-class and experiential programming, bring the business community into the school and the students out of the school, and will build school-wide programming and capacity to encourage students to bring their ideas and passions to life in a supportive environment.

- ❑ **K-12 Entrepreneurial Curriculum** | Embed mandatory entrepreneurship, financial and digital literacy training and global language courses into curriculum at progressive levels from grades K-12. Encourage critical thinking, taking risks, learning from failure, lean startup and design thinking, peer-to-peer mentorship and student-led learning to shift the learning paradigm in schools, focusing on experiential learning whenever possible.
- ❑ **Digital Skills** | Work with provinces, industry, and non-profits to encourage early access to computer science education for all youth - both inside and outside the formal school system - by encouraging inclusion of computer science and computational thinking in curriculum and building the capacity of organizations that promote these skills via workshops, camps and clubs.
- ❑ **Career Counsellor Entrepreneur and Startup Kit** | Equip every guidance counsellor with the information, training and resources they require to identify entrepreneurial students and to foster awareness of entrepreneurship as a viable career option, providing pathways for young people to see if entrepreneurship is right for them and to pursue educational and experiential routes to step into a successful entrepreneurial career.

## BREAKING DOWN SILOS WITHIN ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS.

Participants identified the need to promote inclusivity in on-campus startup communities as well. On many campuses, students studying outside of business faculties have little exposure to entrepreneurial and innovative training, which is often confined to business degrees. This inhibits students in the social sciences and humanities, for example, who possess strong critical thinking, analytical, and communications skills and are naturally creative but largely unaware of the entrepreneurial applications of their skills, or of networks they can tap into to grow and leverage their skills.

While some post-secondary institutions in Canada provide opportunities for collisions between the private, public, and academic sectors, these best practice examples need to become more common on Canadian campuses. To break down silos between creative disciplines and the entrepreneur community, private and the public sectors can work together with post-secondary institutions to increase connectivity between creative students and the entrepreneurship and

innovation ecosystem. Opportunities to do this include the implementation of creative common spaces to bring together different talents. Participants also recommended academic institutions increase opportunities for students to take entrepreneurship courses as they pursue their main field of study.

### RE-ENGINEER EDUCATION THROUGH EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING.

Consultation participants reinforced the importance of not just the skills that are taught, but innovation in processes used to teach these skills. Design thinking, problem solving and digital literacy skills are most effectively taught via hands-on experiential learning, not textbooks. To provide these opportunities, participants recommended the academic community, private sector and the public sector must work together to provide real-world problems for students to tackle and exercise creative problem solving. To ensure these relationships are established and nurtured effectively, liaisons may assist in making the connections and serving a first point of contact for businesses, institutions and organizations interested in offering these opportunities.

“Academic institutions need partners with real problems to work with and mentor students,” said **Richard Smith, Director of the Centre for Digital Media**. “This experiential learning is not simply a curriculum change, it’s an evolution in the way we teach. It requires partners who are there for the long term and who have skin in the game.”

The Government of Canada is well positioned to incentivize private industry to invest time and money in these experiential learning opportunities, and to support academic institutions in establishing liaisons to support these partnerships.

## TOP IDEAS:

- ❑ **Entrepreneurial Rankings and Awards** | Partner with an independent body to clearly define the determinants of an entrepreneurial college, university or learning institution and undertake annual audits and rankings, published publicly to assist students in selecting an institution that meets their needs as well as to incent institutions to prioritize building more entrepreneurial, innovative and creative campuses.
- ❑ **Enterprise Bootcamps** | Roll out Enterprise Bootcamps across Canadian campuses to provide students in the social sciences, arts and humanities with targeted inspiration, training and experiential learning opportunities to develop sustainable enterprises out of their studies and passions, with exposure to entrepreneurs from their fields.
- ❑ **#CreativeCanada Co-ops and Summer Company Programs** | Support co-op programs for social science, arts and humanities students that provide them with the capital, community and mentorship to start-up a company in lieu of a work placement. Similarly, roll out the Ontario Summer Company Program across every Canadian province and territory to provide young Canadians with the opportunity to try their hand at starting a company over the summer break.
- ❑ **Startup Campuses** | Support a national network of student-led entrepreneurship clubs at colleges and universities across Canada (similar to the the National Association of College and University Entrepreneurs in the UK), providing a national platform for student enterprises across all disciplines with regional and national conferences, competitions and opportunities to engage the private sector and startup community in student-led programming and incubators on campuses.
- ❑ **Global Mobility Opportunities** | Provide more opportunities for young Canadians to go abroad for study and internship exchanges so that they can gain exposure to global markets, opening their minds to the global growth possibilities for the future.

## CREATIVE STARTUP COMMUNITIES

Inclusivity and diversity are common themes that emerged throughout the consultation series. Innovation is not exclusive to technological industries. Innovation is taking place across sectors, and if we are to succeed in the new economy, startup communities and innovation clusters must be welcoming to all.

### BUILDING AN INTEGRATED ECOSYSTEM BY BREAKING DOWN SILOS.

“There is a pervasive divide between arts and business,” said **Meredith Powell, Co-Founder of the Next Big Thing based in Vancouver**. “Technology is lumped in with business... but it should be a lens through which we can see the arts. It’s a language and the more we can all speak it, the more powerful we will be.”

By promoting inclusivity within support networks, Canada can become a best practice model in integrating science, technology, engineering, arts, math, entrepreneurship and design. These creative Startup Communities are much-needed spaces and networks to connect digital content creators and artisans with business skills training, inspiration, and opportunities to grow.

Partnerships bringing together Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities also provide opportunities to create safe spaces for Indigenous entrepreneurs and creatives in urban areas to get together, share ideas, create new things, and showcase and celebrate their work. Canadian governments, private companies, and non-profit organizations are well positioned to both promote this narrative of collaboration in innovation, and to become active participants in it.

### CREATIVE RISK CAPITAL IS NEEDED TO SUPPORT DIGITAL CONTENT CREATORS.

While many entrepreneurs struggle to attract funding to start and scale their companies, it is particularly hard within the creative industries for digital content creators. While funding programs exist for film and television production, similar programs to support digital content creation are scarce.



“Our funding streams should be as creative as our creators,” said **Shyra Barberstock, Founder of Okwaho International Inc.** Consultation participants recommended the development of funds for creative entrepreneurs similar to those created at provincial and federal levels for clean technology and life sciences. How can we ensure that there is a continuum of access to funding available for digital creators and creative entrepreneurs as they scale their projects into thriving businesses? Tax breaks and mechanisms for innovative companies to invest in R&D and innovation should be extended and promoted to entrepreneurs in the creative industries.

#### TOP IDEAS:

- ❑ **Rise of the Rest through Inclusive Startup Communities** | Continue to grow and scale Startup Communities across every Canadian community, ensuring an inclusive atmosphere with a focus on providing every entrepreneur with business skills, financial and digital literacy training, and support with marketing, sales and business modeling. Startup Communities can additionally provide programming specific to creative entrepreneurs in their communities and mixers to connect the business and arts community more seamlessly, with targeted programming for women, newcomers, youth and Indigenous entrepreneurs.
- ❑ **Mentorship and Training** | Support the development of a national mentorship platform for entrepreneurs from all backgrounds to find and connect with mentors from across Canada and with various areas of expertise for group and one-one-one in-person and virtual mentorship, ensuring engagement of all sectors. Promote the mentorship and business skills training through funding and granting programs for artists to maximize the impact of resource allocations and to build capacity in the sector.
- ❑ **Leading with Diversity** | Educate, incent and support the private sector, startups and small businesses to build more inclusive and diverse enterprises.
- ❑ **Creative Capital** | Develop a map of funding and programs available for digital and creative entrepreneurs and make it accessible to the entrepreneurs themselves. Any gaps uncovered through the mapping should form the basis of a plan to find creative approaches to fill funding gaps.

## STANDING OUT ONLINE IN CANADIAN AND GLOBAL MARKETS

Throughout the consultations, participants championed diversity and multiculturalism as the nation's greatest asset, and articulated the need to promote this diversity in innovation through digital platforms. The digital economy has made it easier than ever for creators, entrepreneurs and innovators to reach national and international audiences, but has also exposed them to fierce competition. To support Canada's diverse community of creators to stand out online and extend their reach, Canada must take a fresh look at its branding, storytelling, and procurement initiatives.

### REFLECT OUR CREATIVITY, INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURIALISM IN OUR NATIONAL BRAND.

Canadian values are rooted in peace, order and good governance, but a lesser-told story is the reality that Canada is also brimming with creators, innovators and risk-takers. To instill confidence and pride in Canadian-made content, products and services, now is the time to augment Canada's brand to reflect these core values. Doing so will inspire the creation of more successful enterprises and will build a strong market for Canadian content. Canadian governments, the private sector, nonprofits and individuals must work together to create this narrative.

### ENCOURAGE USE OF .CA & MADE IN CANADA BRANDING.

A renewed *Made in Canada* branding strategy that distinctly identifies Canadian content would be well positioned to raise awareness of, celebrate, and connect Canadian content to customers. Similar to a previous federal campaign that shipped "Made in Canada" tags to retail shops, Canadian governments, businesses and support organizations can work together to update this strategy for today's digital marketplace and platforms. For example, by encouraging the use of .CA domain names and Canadian branded social media profiles, Canadian content will become more easily recognizable.

A collaborative branding exercise such as this is also an opportunity to tell creative and entrepreneurial stories, and to leverage partnerships between online influencers and champions to grow audiences and consumer bases for new-entry entrepreneurs and content creators.

### CANADA NEEDS TO INSPIRE A CULTURE OF FIRST ADOPTION AND PROCUREMENT.

A Canadian branding strategy will add legitimacy to innovators as they extend beyond Canadian markets, but a strategy to generate demand for Canadian products in Canada is also needed to support them as they go global.

“We need to make sure Canadians know the value of Canadian content, have them look for it and ensure it becomes part of their decision in terms of what they spend their attention on,” said **Rory Capern, Managing Director of Twitter Canada**. To do so, consultation participants also called upon the Canadian public, governments, and businesses to become first adopters of Canadian content by procuring from them first. By making Canadian content a norm in business development and in public spaces, Canadian creators are given an advantage as they go global.

#### TOP IDEAS:

- ❑ **Brand Canada Globally** | Undertake a global digital and mainstream campaign to brand Canada as an international powerhouse for innovation, creativity and prosperity to attract the best entrepreneurs, investors and businesses. Celebrating the diversity of our innovation nation, we can empower every entrepreneur and business to brand their company as Canadian-based through grassroots campaigns, while undertaking a more robust marketing campaign in international airports in targeted nations and cities; working with Canadian photographers, directors, producers and content creators to market Canada, its people and businesses to the world.
- ❑ **First Adopter Nation** | Israel may have already taken the lead as the world’s ‘Startup Nation’; but, Canada has the opportunity to be the pre-eminent global ‘First Adopter Nation’. Through intentional, bold and ambitious reforms to procurement and the opening up of public and private sector first adopter sandboxes to rapidly test and provide feedback on early stage technologies in environments where failure is an

option, Canada can intentionally build a culture of rapid prototyping, testing, pivoting, iterating and launching world-class innovations.

- ❑ **Creative Procurement** | Learning from Italy and Finland, governments and the private sector can procure more content, art and engage artists to bring culture into the workplace, inspiring staff and connecting work more closely to Canadian culture and Canadians.
- ❑ **Foster Global Orientation and Opportunities** | Develop programs for the startup community to encourage entrepreneurs to go global and provide them with resources, a directory and training to get started. Many entrepreneurs are not aware of excellent services like the Trade Commissioner Services. There is an opportunity to develop a 'Go Global Startup Kit' and disperse it throughout the ecosystem through digital and physical copies. For those interested in going global, host virtual information sessions on a regular basis as soft landing training and provide travel subsidies or tax incentives for global business development missions and visits to incent global growth.

## FINAL REFLECTIONS

“A creative and entrepreneurial Canada starts with embracing the risks and challenges associated with starting new ventures from small business to big business, from social enterprise to the non-profits and through the public sector sector, Canadians of all walks of life need to break free of the fear of failure holding us back as a country. Making an entrepreneurial and creative Canada a reality starts with encouraging young Canadians to pave their own path in any walk of life they choose to pursue. Our nation's greatest strength and greatest weakness is our humility. It is time to start celebrating our great successes and entrepreneurs and holding them up as role models for young Canadians everywhere.” -

**Anthony Lacavera, Founder and Chairman at Globalive Holdings**

Canada requires a bold vision and a call to action for everyone to help to realize that vision through their own unique approaches, leveraging education, innovation, entrepreneurship and creativity. As growing connectivity to the Internet has democratized content creation for many Canadians, it is only natural that Canada will see a rise in digital entrepreneurship amongst creative industries. To support content creators, digital innovators and entrepreneurs, Canada must take an inclusive approach that levels the playing field for every Canadian to become active participants in the new economy. It must also innovate education at all levels to provide every Canadian with the digital and creative skills necessary to thrive in this environment. It must connect creators with effective business and communications skills, mentorship, and a collaborative and supportive community; and, finally to stand out in a fiercely competitive digital marketplace, it must boldly tell stories of Canadian creators, build demand for Canadian content globally, and innovate funding programs for digital content creators. This culture of inclusion in innovation, collaboration for mutual success, risk-taking and thinking outside the box for success, will make Canada a truly creative and entrepreneurial nation in the new economy.