



**START UP
CANADA™**

2025 IMPACT REPORT

Connecting Canada's Entrepreneurs
Coast to Coast to Coast

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Land Acknowledgement

Startup Canada's head office is located on the unceded, unsurrendered territory of the Algonquin Nation. While our team works remotely across the country, Startup Canada recognizes the inherent and treaty rights of Indigenous peoples; we acknowledge the ancestral and unceded territories of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples across Canada.

Land acknowledgements are one part of an ongoing commitment towards Truth and Reconciliation. Startup Canada strives to contribute to reconciliation through creating meaningful relationships with Indigenous organizations and businesses by creating Indigenous-led partnerships and initiatives to support Indigenous entrepreneurs and Indigenous startup communities in Canada.



Who We Are

Startup Canada is a nationally recognized, award-winning organization that has served as a trusted gateway to Canada's entrepreneurial ecosystem since 2012. We operate at the intersection of community, capital, policy, and opportunity. We connect entrepreneurs to the tools, networks, and support they need to start and scale sustainable businesses.

Our work is national in scale, inclusive by design, and grounded in the lived experience of founders across Canada.

Our Mission

To connect and empower entrepreneurs and foster an ecosystem that drives innovation, inclusion, and economic growth across Canada.

Our Vision

To position Canada as a global leader in entrepreneurship.



Message from Our Board Chair

As I reflect on 2025, I'm reminded of the power of connection and how it enables ideas to become ventures, challenges to turn into opportunities, and founders to grow into strong communities. In my work across AI innovation and coaching early-stage entrepreneurs, I see every day how timely support can unlock meaningful progress.

This year, Startup Canada delivered that impact on a national scale. In 2025, we connected thousands of entrepreneurs in person across Canada through the Startup Canada Tour stops, we ran tailored programs for women founders, created pathways to global markets, provided funding for inspirational entrepreneurs, motivated founders through our Startup Podcast, and helped build the grassroots strength of Startup Communities. Every touchpoint reinforced our commitment to making Canada the best place to start and grow a business.

Our peer-driven model remains our greatest strength. Entrepreneurs know their communities, understand the realities of building a business, and support each other. When one succeeds, they pave the way for the next, creating a ripple effect across the ecosystem.

Canadian entrepreneurship continues to evolve rapidly, from AI and clean tech to social innovation. Founders are not only creating businesses, they're driving economic growth and shaping Canada's global leadership in innovation. That's why our mission to connect entrepreneurs to mentors, partners, programs, and each other remains so essential.

To our partners, team, community leaders, and, most importantly, Canada's entrepreneurs: thank you. Your resilience and ambition drive this work. I remain deeply optimistic about the road ahead. With strong connections and the right support in place, the potential of Canadian founders is limitless.



Ali Taiyeb

Board Chair, Startup Canada
Director, Industry Innovation, Vector Institute

Message from Our Board Vice Chair

For more than two decades, my work across technology, innovation, and entrepreneurship has reinforced one constant truth: founders thrive when supported by strong, connected communities. In 2025, I am proud to say that Startup Canada lived this principle every day.

As Vice Chair, I've seen firsthand how our programs show up for entrepreneurs, whether it's a first-time founder attending their first Tour stop, a woman entrepreneur building her network through Startup Women, or a scaling company exploring new markets through Startup Global. Each connection we create has a multiplier effect: a mentor who guides one founder influences countless others; a single community meetup sparks networks that last for years; a policy conversation amplifies the voices of entrepreneurs across the country.

Throughout my career, I've learned that strong entrepreneurial ecosystems don't happen by accident. They require intention, long-term investment, and a commitment to breaking down barriers. That's why I'm proud of Startup Canada's dedication to inclusive entrepreneurship and our focus on supporting everyone, from women, Indigenous founders, rural and remote entrepreneurs, to newcomers and every founder in between.

Behind every number in this report is a real story of connection and momentum: a founder finding their co-founder, a business securing its first major contract, or an entrepreneur seeing themselves represented and taking the leap into entrepreneurship. These moments are the heart of our impact.

Thank you to our team, board, partners, and most importantly, to the entrepreneurs whose creativity, courage, and resilience drive Canada forward. The future of Canadian entrepreneurship is bright, and Startup Canada will continue to be the connector, convener, and trusted partner that Canadian founders can rely on.



Brenda Beckedorf

Board Vice Chair, Startup Canada
Co-Founder, Society 5.0
Vice Chair, Alberta Women Entrepreneurs

2025 Impact | National Snapshot

Reach & Scale

156,878

participants across all programs

46

events and webinars delivered

400+

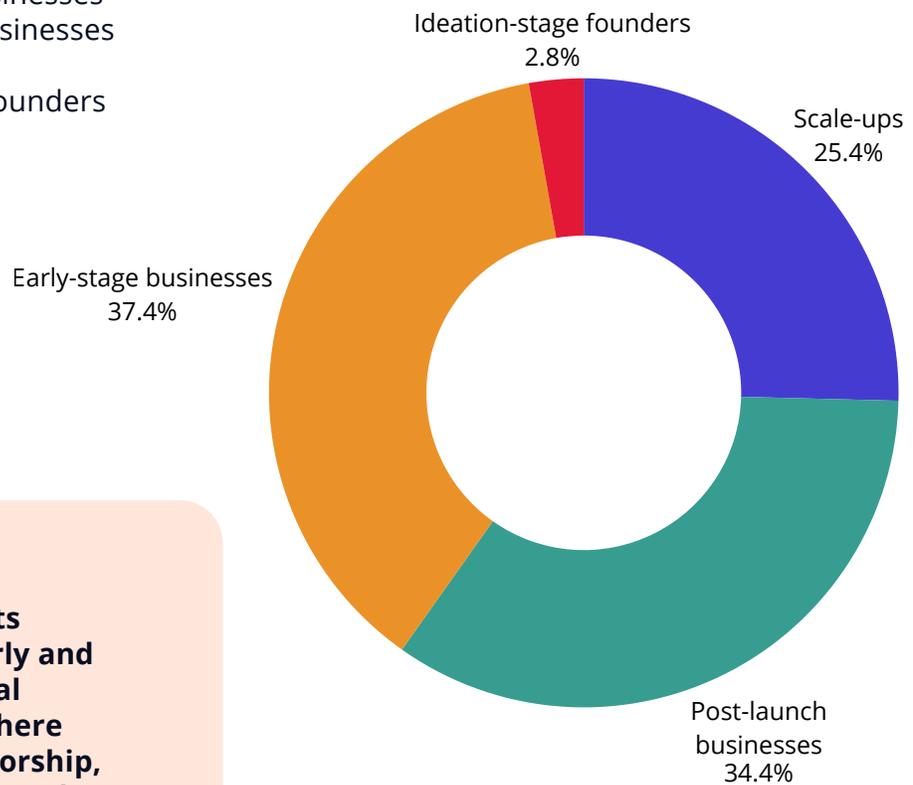
cities reached across all provinces and territories

2025 Founder Profile

To inform program design, and policy advocacy, Startup Canada received data from 2,300+ entrepreneurs across Canada through our national programming in 2025, providing a representative snapshot of the founders we serve.

Stages of Business

- 37.4% Early-stage businesses
- 34.4% Post-launch businesses
- 25.4% Scale-ups
- 2.8% Ideation-stage founders

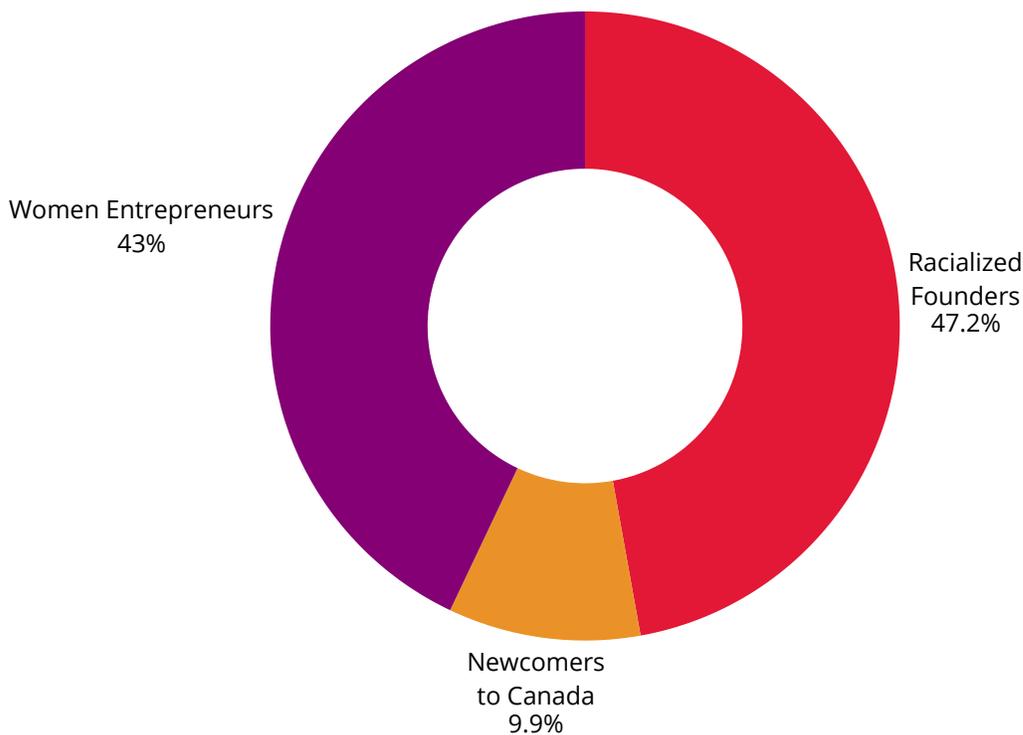


Startup Canada supports founders during the early and scale-up stages; a critical intervention window where targeted support, mentorship, and access to capital have the highest potential for long-term economic impact.

Founder Demographics

- 44.8% Women entrepreneurs
- 49.2% Racialized founders
- 10.3% Newcomers to Canada

These demographics point to Startup Canada's impact in delivering tailored, meaningful support to founders from equity-deserving groups, ensuring access to resources, mentorship, and opportunities that have historically been limited or unavailable.



Community, Digital & Media Reach

Startup Canada's digital and media presence reflects a large, engaged national community that turns to us for credible guidance and practical resources. This reach helps us amplify entrepreneurship stories at scale and connect more Canadians to opportunities they can act on.

698,670

website visits

302,000+

total social media followers

1.1M+

total social impressions

142,000+

Startup Canada Podcast listens

120+

organic national media mentions

Voices from Our Community

The voices below, from founders, partners, and thought leaders, capture the texture of entrepreneurship in Canada and the ecosystem that invests in their innovative journey.

Entrepreneur Testimonials

"Ever walked into a room and instantly felt the energy of hundreds of dreamers building the future? That's exactly what it felt like at the Startup Canada Tour, where startup founders, company CEOs, and thought leaders gathered to fuel innovation and drive growth."

"I met so many like-minded builders, and had real conversations with organizations that offer fantastic resources. It felt like a live map of what's possible."

"Startup Canada connected me to mentors who helped me navigate the early stages of my business. I wouldn't be where I am without them."

"Being part of Startup Women gave me confidence, connections, and clarity on the next steps for my business growth."

"The funding I received through Equal Slice allowed me to hire my first employee and expand my operations. It was transformative."

Program & Thought Leadership Insights

"Asking the right questions, even when they feel vulnerable, is the key to entrepreneurship."
– Dallas Barnes, Founder of Reya Health.

"Rooted in Indigenous epistemology, the information belongs to the family and not the organization." – Andrew Karesa, CEO of Bluebell Village

"If you don't have a good story, your product is going nowhere."
– Maria Halfyard, Founder of Mernini Rain Coats

"Equity in entrepreneurship isn't just about access to funding — it's about creating an ecosystem where every founder can thrive and contribute to economic growth."
– Kayla Isabelle, CEO, Startup Canada

"Less than 3% of women get funded, less than 3% of Black founders get funded, and queer and Indigenous founders get under half a percent. That needs to change."

– Mandy Potter, Misfit Ventures

Partner Testimonials

“Events like this remind us why Startup Canada is such a cornerstone of the ecosystem. A huge thank you for creating an inspiring space for connection and collaboration.”

“We continue to appreciate being part of the Startup Canada Tour. The organization, logistics, and pre-event communications were excellent.”

“Partnering with Startup Canada has amplified our reach and connected us directly with founders we could help grow.”

“The team at Startup Canada is professional, organized, and deeply committed to supporting entrepreneurs. It’s inspiring to work alongside them.”

2025 Programs at a Glance

Startup Canada Tour

In-person and virtual convenings connecting founders with ecosystem partners, mentors, and service providers.

Startup Global

Support for founders exploring international markets and export readiness.

Startup Gov

Policy advocacy and closed-door roundtables amplifying entrepreneur voices in government.

Startup Women

Programming and mentorship supporting women-identifying and non-binary entrepreneurs.

Equal Slice Program

Education and direct funding for underserved entrepreneurs.

Startup Canada Podcast

National storytelling platform sharing founder insights and lived experience.

2025 Founder Funding

In 2025, Startup Canada delivered **\$170,000** in direct, non-dilutive funding to Canadian entrepreneurs.

- **\$70,000** awarded through Startup Global Pitch Competitions
- **\$100,000** awarded through the Equal Slice Program
- **19** entrepreneurs received funding across in-person and virtual competitions

Funding was intentionally directed toward both entrepreneurs belonging to equity-seeking communities, and scale-up founders ready to grow internationally. Funding provided through the Equal Slice and the Startup Global programs helped unlock next-stage growth, market expansion, and job creation for winning businesses.



2025 Policy & Advocacy Impact

Startup Canada convenes entrepreneurs and decision-makers to ensure public policy reflects real-world founder needs.

- **5** closed-door policy roundtables
- **158** entrepreneur participants
- Engagement with federal and provincial ministers, MPs, and senior government offices

Priority themes included access to capital, interprovincial trade, AI and innovation policy, and SME competitiveness, reinforcing Startup Canada's role as a trusted intermediary between entrepreneurs and government.

Our Partners

Startup Canada's impact is only possible through collaborations and support of leading organizations, ecosystem supporters, and community partners.

Presenting Partners

Our presenting partners provide foundational support across our programs, enabling us to deliver high-quality programming on a national scale.

- **UPS** - Startup Canada Tour, Startup Women, Startup Global
- **Pizza Hut** - Startup Canada Tour, Equal Slice Program, Business Owners Toolbox
- **Scotiabank** - Startup Women, Startup Canada Tour
- **Export Development Canada (EDC)** - Startup Global
- **Amazon** - Startup Gov
- **Mastercard** - Startup Canada Podcast
- **Constant Contact** - Startup Canada Podcast



Program Partners

- Competition Bureau
- RBC
- TD Bank
- The Hunter Hub
- University of Calgary

Event Partners

- Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC)
- Constant Contact
- Futurpreneur
- IDEA Mississauga
- Lane Two
- Mastercard
- Southeast Regional Services Commission
- The Grant Sherpa
- Visit Mississauga
- Wagepoint
- Women's Enterprise Organizations of Canada (WEOC)

Ecosystem Partners

- Alberta Women Entrepreneurs
- Canadian Queer Chamber of Commerce (CQCC)
- Constant Contact
- Encore
- Forum for International Trade Training (FITT)
- Google
- League of Innovators (LOi)
- Mammoth Agency
- Mastercard
- Powerpay by Dayforce
- Riipen
- Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT)
- Supplier Diversity Alliance Canada (SDAC)
- The Forum
- The Peak
- WeBC
- Zensurance

Community Partners

- Canadian Small Business Women
- Canadian Women Chamber of Commerce (CanWCC)
- Centre for Women in Business
- Communitech
- Coralus
- Information and Communications Technology Council (ICTC)
- Revolution HER
- Startup Fest
- Startup Sault Ste Marie
- YWCA



Looking Ahead to 2026

In 2026, Startup Canada will increase funding support and expand access to meaningful resources for founders across the country. We will grow our national reach through in-person events that bring entrepreneurs and ecosystem builders together, while strengthening pathways to funding and support that make entrepreneurship more inclusive and attainable. We will also deepen public-private collaboration and advance founder-informed policy advocacy so the realities of building a business are reflected in the decisions that shape Canada's economy.

Startup Canada remains committed to measurable impact, accountability, and growth that is guided by the evolving needs of the nation's entrepreneurs, because when founders are equipped to build and to lead, they don't just grow companies, they help shape a stronger, more innovative Canada.

Final Message from Our Interim CEO

As I reflect on the past year with Startup Canada, I'm continually inspired by the entrepreneurs we serve, the dedication of our team, and the strength of our partnerships. Startup Canada exists to support Canadian founders who drive our economy forward, and 2025 demonstrated our unwavering commitment to that mission across every program, event, and connection we facilitated.

2025 showed us what is possible when we show up for entrepreneurs consistently and authentically, amplifying their voices, and providing access to the right resources at the right time. Behind every number in this report is a real person taking a real risk to build something meaningful, and our privilege is to be there when they need us most.

In 2026, our priority is to evolve and expand our reach to meet the needs of Canada's entrepreneurs. We will expand our national scope and funding, scale our programs, and champion the needs of founders with our public and private sector partners. I am grateful for the leadership and vision Kayla Isabelle has instilled in us, and honoured to serve as interim CEO during this next chapter.

To every entrepreneur we have served, thank you for trusting us with your journey. To our team, partners, and community, thank you for rolling up your sleeves and doing this work alongside us. Together, we are making Canada the best place in the world to start and scale a business.



Jenn Juby,
Interim CEO & Managing Director,
Startup Canada

Thank You

To Our Entrepreneurs

Thank you for your courage, creativity, and resilience. You inspire us every day with your determination to build businesses that matter. Your success is our success.

To Our Team

Your dedication, entrepreneurial spirit, and commitment to our mission powers everything we do. You go above and beyond to serve entrepreneurs one at a time.

To Our Partners

Your investment in Canadian entrepreneurship, whether financial, in-kind, or through collaboration, makes our work possible. Together, we're building an ecosystem where entrepreneurs can thrive.

To Our Community Leaders & Volunteers

The heart of Startup Canada beats in local communities because of you. Thank you for organizing events, creating connections, and building vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystems in your regions.

To Our Mentors, Advisors, and Speakers

Your willingness to share your time, expertise, and networks helps entrepreneurs navigate challenges and seize opportunities. Your impact extends far beyond what you see.

To Our Board of Directors

Thank you for your governance, strategic guidance, and unwavering commitment to our vision.

2025 Startup Canada Board of Directors

- Ali Taiyeb, Board Chair
- Brenda Beckedorf, Board Vice Chair
- Paula Kwan, Governance & Nominations Committee Chair
- Carleen Dehaney, Finance Committee Chair
- Mandy Potter
- Brenda Halloran

Since 2012, Startup Canada has been on a mission to champion an entrepreneurial culture in Canada, one where innovative achievement is encouraged, entrepreneurship is celebrated and supported, and valuable experience is derived from both success and failure.

Get ready. We're scaling for impact.