

The background of the top two-thirds of the page is a photograph of a wind farm. Several large, blue wind turbines are visible, stretching across a flat, green field. The sky is a mix of soft orange, pink, and blue, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The turbines are in various positions, with one particularly large one in the foreground on the right.

Driving the Sustainable Economy in Canada

Impact Report for the TD Sustainable Future Lab at evolvGREEN





"The TD Sustainable Future Program showcases an appetite for innovation that makes a big impact. It is no surprise to us that the next generation of entrepreneurs is focused on areas that align with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. Challenging times, like those brought on by the pandemic, inspire new ideas and embolden entrepreneurs to take the leap. We're proud to be supporting these incredible founders as they change the world with their businesses."

JAY KRISHNAN, CEO, ACCELERATOR CENTRE

The Sustainable Economy in Canada

It's at the front of everyone's mind right now.

How will communities recover from the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on our economy? What does the world look like post-pandemic?

It's clear. The future looks different.

Innovation and entrepreneurship are the backbone of our local economy. And the mindset of entrepreneurs is shifting. Where once innovation hubs like the Accelerator Centre saw interest primarily from enterprise software entrepreneurs, the next generation of startup founders are focused on taking on big problems and impacting global change with their businesses.

While no one could have predicted a global pandemic, or its impact on our communities, as the #1 private business accelerator in Canada, and one of the top 5 such organizations in the world, we saw the early stages of this shift in entrepreneurial interest. Today up to 50% of entrepreneurs in our programs are focused on commercializing businesses that align with sectors like medtech, healthtech, edtech, cleantech, sustainability, smart cities, social innovation, and making the world a better, more prosperous place.

That's why we launched a unique incubation program in 2017, the TD Sustainable Future Lab. The Lab's mission was to support entrepreneurs in their pursuit of commercializing new ideas and IP that support the clean economy. The program has now been expanded to support entrepreneurs in all sectors that align with the achievement of the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

The UN Sustainable Development Goals

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by the UN, provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future.

At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The goals are a call for action to end poverty, improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests.





evolvGREEN

The TD Sustainable Future Lab is currently located in evolvGREEN, a collaborative office space shared by SWR, the Accelerator Centre, the University of Waterloo (UW), and Wilfrid Laurier University (WLU). The space was inspired by the evolv1 Zero Carbon Building project. evolv1 is Canada's first net-positive, multi-tenant office building and is the region's foremost collaborative workspace for entrepreneurs, researchers, and clean economy supporters

Together, we are working to make the vision of a community hub focused on innovation, sustainability, and the clean economy a reality.



evolvGREEN Mission



To Inspire Change

In order to innovate, big thinkers need access to big problems, big research, and big data. To implement change, industry needs access to innovative solutions and talent. evolvGREEN provides a space for those players to meet, work, and inspire each other.

To Lead Innovative Research

Leveraging the evolv1 building, and in partnership with UW and WLU, we conduct research that advances sustainability and wellbeing in close collaboration with community, industry, and government partners.

To Accelerate Commercialization

A natural result of the research and collaboration happening at evolvGREEN is the development of new products and services. Entrepreneurs looking to build companies that support a clean economy have access to startup accelerator programming and mentorship through the Accelerator Centre's specialized clean tech programming.



The TD Sustainable Future Lab

Ontario's only incubation space dedicated to sustainable solutions for creating prosperity in the community and protecting our planet.

Our commitment to sustainability and solving the world's biggest problems aren't new. In 2017, we launched a cleantech program intending to support Waterloo Region's emerging cleantech sector and drive the clean economy. The program, now called the TD Sustainable Future Program, was created in partnership with evolvGREEN and funded by TD Bank and the Ontario Trillium Foundation. In 2019, the program was named a Canada Clean50 Top Project in recognition of its impact on driving the clean economy.

After a successful pilot, the program was expanded in 2020 to go beyond cleantech and provide support to all companies with solutions that contribute to achieving the UN's 17 Sustainable development goals (SDGs).

The resulting program is the world's most inclusive entrepreneurial program in support of the UN's SDGs.





Dialectic is challenging the traditional form of diversity, equity and inclusion training through the use of their app, Learning Snippets.



Dialectic creates custom e-learning based on science, social scientific tools and research to understand both learners and client needs. They launched their product Learning Snippets in August 2020.

Learning Snippets is the smallest package possible of what Dialectic does really well. It's a learning platform and delivery methodology that sends scenario based learning exercises right to people's [devices]," Aaron Barth, President and Founder of Dialectic said.

Learning Snippets sends users two minute scenario based exercises about diversity, equity and inclusion that is spread out over a ten week period. Barth and his team believe higher order thinking skills and principle based reasoning skills are best taught through simulation and scenario. They also believe that spaced learning – spreading these lessons out – produces better overall results.

"Serving up different simulations of those types of experiences and giving people consequence based feedback is the best way to do that. It basically gives people reps in a safe environment," he said.

Traditionally, diversity, equity and inclusion training is passive. It is most often lecture style training done by a keynote speaker. While this form of training does tap into empathy, it often leaves learners asking "now

what?" when complete. Learning Snippets answers that "now what?" question.

"Empirically, we know that this is not the best way to train these skills," Barth explained. "Listening to people with lived experiences and creating empathy for the experience, is absolutely crucial to getting people to do diversity training. But if you stop there, [people's behaviour will not magically change]."

Dialectic joined the program in June 2020 when, globally, anti-Black racism was the main topic of conversation. The need for corporate diversity, equity and inclusion training was amplified. Learning Snippets launched shortly thereafter.

"Inclusion in the workplace matters because you spend a lot of time [at work] and the people that are affected by oppression and marginalization experience a really negative impact on their lives," Barth said.

"I feel morally responsible to help people get out of that and to lift people up from that."

5 Years of impact



November 2017

Cleantech program pilot launch

October 2018

TD Bank announces funding and creation of the TD Sustainable Future Lab in evolvGREEN through The Ready Commitment

February 2019

TD Sustainable Future Lab opens at evolvGREEN



May 2019

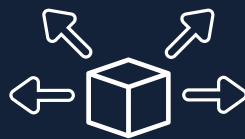
Partnership with SDTC to provide funding to high potential companies

May 2019

First graduate from the program – Nebula Controls

October 2019

TD Sustainable Future Program recognized by Clean50 as a Top Project



November 2020

Expanded UN SDG supports launched

January 2021

4 Part EDI Training Series Launched with participants across Ontario

December 2022

TD Sustainable Future Program awarded a 2022 Global Sustainability Award by GCPIT

Through the TD Sustainable Future Lab, we've...



SUPPORTED
87 founders



CREATED
198 jobs



INCUBATED
61 companies



DEVELOPED
76 new products



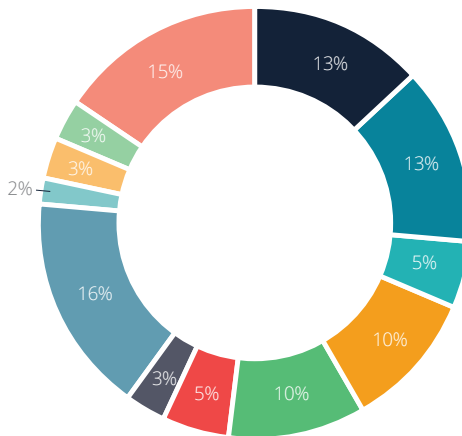
TRAINED
259 people



RAISED
\$36.8 million

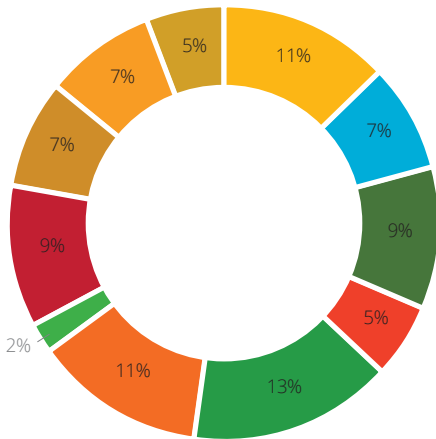


GENERATED
\$42.6 million in revenue



INDUSTRY BREAKDOWN

- Advanced Materials
- Agri-tech
- Diversity & Inclusion
- Education
- Energy
- Energy Management
- Green Manufacturing
- Health Tech
- Smart Cities
- Transportation
- Water
- Other



SDG BREAKDOWN

- Affordable & Clean Energy
- Clean Water & Sanitation
- Climate Action
- Gender Equality
- Good Health & Well-being
- Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure
- Life on Land
- Quality Education
- Responsible Consumption & Production
- Sustainable Cities & Communities
- Zero Hunger



Elocity is successfully solving a problem many EV drivers face – charging without headache.



“We started Elocity to bring together an EV charging ecosystem,” Sanjeev Singh, Founder and CEO of Elocity said.

“Ultimately, EV drivers should find it easy and cost effective to charge. One of the key things we are solving is how to bring different charges together so that they work together.”

As EVs become more popular, the lack of collaboration is becoming a barrier. Singh explained that the biggest problem with new sectors is how everything works together. With EV's, charging stations can be manufacturer specific, utility companies can be left in the dark, home installation can be costly, data privacy can be compromised – the list goes on.

Elocity aims to make this process more collaborative by working with all these external factors, while also placing a high importance on data privacy. They connect fuel suppliers to EV drivers, as that connection was originally missing. By bringing them together, the negative impact of EV charging on the grid can be reduced. Elocity creates a participatory ecosystem for EV drivers, creating opportunities to be cost effective.

“There have been silos built in the EV charging space as the vehicles have come online,” Mike Elwood, Executive Vice President of Elocity said. “When we talk about an ecosystem, or the opportunity to create an ecosystem, that ecosystem communicates across multiple charging hardware and the software that we have allows people to get an electric vehicle charged very simply. It makes for a very good driver experience.”

Since joining the program in 2018, Elocity has obtained contracts in Germany, Saudi Arabia, Spain, India, Thailand, Australia and the U.S, to name a few. Their company is scaling rapidly, and their plan is to keep doing so.

“In order to have everyone drive an EV, we have to make sure that the utilities are [managed] and everyone is working together to get that done. That's the tricky part,” Elwood said. “The charging experience at home should be very simplified.

Fostering a culture of sustainability through entrepreneurship

In addition to running specialized programming for entrepreneurs out of the TD Sustainable Future Lab, we're committed to fostering a culture of sustainability through entrepreneurship. In the past several years, we've launched several community initiatives focused on inspiring founders to build business that support a better, more prosperous world.



EDI training

Over 100 local community members participated in a 4-part training series intended to help entrepreneurs and small business owners across the region integrate the principals of equity, diversity and inclusion into their business to create more equitable employment opportunities.



The future of education

Shortly after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, we hosted a panel discussion with Mike Silagadze (then CEO of one of Canada's top edtech scaleups, Top Hat) to discuss the future of education and inspire entrepreneurs to pursue innovation in the education sector.



Medtech regulatory events

Waterloo Region is home to Canada's most rapidly growing medtech ecosystem. As such, we hosted 6 in depth workshops with industry experts that walked entrepreneurs through the opportunities and challenges of working in the sector, including in depth training on regulatory considerations that medtech founders need to be aware of as they innovate in the space.



Lighttouch Technologies is set out to teach children and parents the importance of emotional intelligence through their app Touli's World.



"Touli's World is a mobile app built to engage with children and teach emotional intelligence. The game's main character, Touli, is an explorer who moves through different worlds. The game aims to show that our world is interconnected by drawing parallels between nature, society and the individual.

While the game offers basic entertainment through memory games, puzzles, colour games and more, children are asked to make decisions as Touli moves through the various worlds. It's these decisions that measure the child's emotional intelligence. Information on the child's responses is gathered and then a behaviour report is delivered to their parents on how the child responded to various scenarios – is the child helpful? Do they laugh at others' misfortune?

Information about the child's decisions, as well as other informative content for parents about how to build and improve emotional intelligence or manage behavioural issues, is all available through Lighttouch's online portal.

"We are targeting social skills and emotional intelligence, per se, but I think it goes far beyond that," Zanatelli said. "We need to start with empathy and self-regulation. That's where we start, but it goes beyond that. We are teaching children a new way of thinking."

During the COVID-19 pandemic, more and more parents were simply just getting through the day.

Between working from home, homeschooling and just basic survival, parenting – for some – became more passive. Screen time for children went up.

"We use technology to enter the families and show them that there's much more to it than just quality screen time," Zanatelli said.

Zanatelli and her team believe that teaching children from a young age about emotional intelligence will propel them in a positive direction as they get older.

"Social skills dictate your success ... [A high percentage] of dismissals and termination are not because employees lack intellectual skills or knowledge, it's because of the lack of social skills," she said.

Lighttouch joined the program in March 2020. Touli's World launched in the spring of 2021, and since then, Zanatelli's dream of teaching the importance of emotional intelligence is becoming a reality.

"Lighttouch is just the beginning of a much bigger movement that I want to create in the world."



"Since we launched the TD Sustainable Future Lab, we've had a front row seat to Canadian innovation and the passion that so many entrepreneurs have for solutions for a better world. Its inspiring to see the tenacity and grit of our founders as they continue to thrive and build the next generation of globally impactful businesses."

LEANNE HENDERSON, DIRECTOR OF PROGRAM AND CLIENT EXPERIENCE



The Owl Solutions is tackling an issue that has been magnified with the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic – supply chain management.



“We are the Google analytics of supply chains. We are a company that specializes in helping manufacturers and distributors understand the performance of their supply chain through the eyes of the data,” Hugo Fuentes, co-founder and CEO of The Owl Solutions said.

Fuentes, who has been working in supply chain management well before the pandemic, as well before The Owl Solutions launched in mid-2020, explained that 70% of organizations use excel spreadsheets to manage supply chain analytics. The Owl Solutions believes this is a waste of time and money; decision making can be compromised because of small mistakes like the spreadsheet not being updated or someone making an error.

“Typically when there is a lot of complexity and data, companies miss the targets many times. We help them avoid situations that could result in losses or frustrations,” Fuentes said.

The level of awareness about the fragility of supply chains has increased dramatically due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Because of this heightened awareness, Fuentes anticipates the need to scale in order to capture that opportunity.

“Two years ago, you had to spend a lot of time explaining what supply chain is,” he said. “We are in front of a massive opportunity ... I think many organizations have realized that they need to modernize their operation and modernize their supply chains.”

Ultimately, The Owl Solutions aims to reduce wasted time and money for their clients.

Since joining the program in 2019, The Owl Solutions has obtained many large clients such as Jamieson Wellness and Canada Goose. The program helped Fuentes become an entrepreneur, as he learned new skills in sales and customer success. As supply chain issues are becoming more and more magnified, The Owl Solutions will continue to scale in order to offer companies a better tool to organize their data, boosting their supply chain performance.



Looking Ahead

Our new vision and strategic roadmap is putting founders first and prioritizing big ideas. Supporting sustainable innovation is a community effort. As we continue to see growth in sectors that align with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, we will continue to adapt our programs and services to ensure founders have the support they need to impact global change.

Thank you to our TD Sustainable Future Lab partners.





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