

ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

APRIL 2021-MARCH 2022



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MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

tail end of the pandemic, and the important building blocks of a functioning tech ecosystem are ramping up again - Outpost efforts are back underway, networking events that create those all-important collisions are taking place, client meetings can happen face-to-face, and client cohorts can be created so they can build their own support systems as they move through their entrepreneurial journey.

In this Annual Report, you'll see the impressive results from the last year, including sources of new funding, engagements and client stats, and how new partnerships with other Regional Innovation Centres and locally with organizations like Invest WindsorEssex have allowed the **WEtech team** to grow exponentially and better serve the client base in the Windsor-Essex and Chatham-Kent region.

It's nice to say that we appear to be on the Looking ahead, there is a strong strategic We can't deny the economic realities we plan in place which ensures alignment are facing with inflation, venture funding with all of the funding, economic realities of the time, and momentum of new and established clients in our region.

The focus remains unwavering:

- » Support innovation and techbased entrepreneurs
- » Support tech talent
- » Support the region's growth into the automobility space
- » Support women entrepreneurs and other underrepresented groups
- » Extend the reach into the corners of our served region

becoming more difficult, and a general sense of economic caution. I'll steal a quote from Stephen MacKenzie, President and **CEO** at **Invest WindsorEssex**, to remind us of the opportunities that lie ahead of us.

"Great companies are born in difficult times. Hewlett-Packard, Microsoft, Airbnb and Uber, are all examples of successful companies that were started during economic downturns. I have no doubt that our region and its entrepreneurs will take full advantage of this opportunity."

Another quote that resonates with the times states, "Luck is when preparation meets opportunity" (Seneca). I believe WEtech is all about preparation. A solid strategic focus, looking far downstream for new opportunities, and investing in

BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND ADVISORS



BARRY **LEAVITT ENWIN** Utilities



AMY MARTIN OpenPhone



KIT **MOORE** BluePrint CPAs



KOSCIELSKI CenterLine (Windsor) Ltd.



HASSAN **FARHAT** AlphaKOR Group



LANDERS Georgian Partners



CLAUDIUS THOMAS Turaco Web

supporting a significant base of clients doing their own preparations to capture this all-important momentum. those opportunities.

The efforts within our region across all economic development agencies and levels of government with a strategic plan centered on the future of mobility, are already gaining significant traction. The new battery plant and the automotive sector retooling for electrification are heavy weight drivers of our economic future and it brings a sense of confidence that this region is the place to launch that next concept in mobility.

I believe the grassroots entrepreneurs that are out there will sense this momentum and contribute to the traction towards the region's strategic plan. This takes time, a certain amount of patience,

our partnerships and networks, all while persistence, and preparation. I believe **WEtech** plays a pivotal role in facilitating

> If **FY22** made one thing clear, it's this: It's the region's time to shine, and it's a privilege to serve on this Board.

> To all outgoing Board of Directors and Advisors, thank you for your time and guidance in helping bring our organization through an extraordinary period. You all have been a driving force to strengthening Windsor-Essex and Chatham-Kent's position on the world's technology map.

> I look forward to seeing this organization continue to grow and thrive under its new board membership and growing team, and to a new year of growth in our region.

> > **Barry Leavitt Board Chair**

WHAT WE DO:

From business advisory services to connections to talent, capital, community and more, WEtech **Alliance** offers a range of services that help technology and innovation companies in Windsor-Essex and Chatham-Kent grow and scale.



HELPING ENTREPRENEURS AND COMPANIES START **AND GROW**



CONNECTING TALENT



BUILDING COMMUNITY



KULVEER VIRK IT Professional



STEPHEN MACKENZIE Invest WindsorFssex



JOE **MARKHAM** Rocket Mortgage Canada



JIM MARSH St. Clair College



WEN **TFOH EPICentre** University of Windsor



PAUL RISER TechTown Detroit



PATRICK THOMPSON DuroByte



SPENCER BRIGUGLIO

University of Windsor

HELPING ENTREPRENEURS AND COMPANIES START AND GROW

WEtech Alliance is an organization with a roster of business acceleration programs and services designed to help bring new ideas to market and scale to the next level.

Every year, WEtech Alliance's Venture Services team works with hundreds of entrepreneurs and companies.

VENTURE SERVICES: IMPACT

How we've helped our portfolio clients (Fiscal Year April 2021-March 2022)

CLIENT PORTFOLIO VALUE







WETECH VALUE







CLIENT IMPACT





NET PROMOTER SCORE:



VENTURE SERVICES: CLIENT BREAKDOWN BY STAGE

WE help entrepreneurs with ideas, create their business reality.

SPARK 37%

WE help innovative new businesses that are ready to sell, launch into market.

BOOST | 45%

WE help established businesses accelerate and scale.



VENTURE SERVICES: CLIENT BREAKDOWN BY SECTOR

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION + TECHNOLOGY = DIGITAL MEDIA/ICT



MANUFACTURING + TECHNOLOGY =
ADVANCED
MANUFACTURING



CULTURE #TOURISM#TECHNOLOGY CULTURE & TOURISM INNOVATION



MEDTECH
MEDTECH



AGRITECH

AGRITECH



EDTECH



FINTECH

FINTECH



ENVIRONMENT + TECHNOLOGY = CLEANTECH



PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT CAN/US POWER PANEL

Building on the success of the **Southwestern Ontario Power Panel Program**, piloted from November - March 2021, the **CAN/U.S. Canada Power Panel** program aimed to expand mentorship and strategic connection opportunities for women-owned technology and innovation companies in Southwestern Ontario. Participating companies had the opportunity to accelerate their skills development and were able to leverage US high powered, influential mentors from outside of their usual networks. This was particularly important for women identifying how to capture growth opportunities in new or adjacent markets as the economy recovers post COVID.









COMPANIES SUPPORTED VIA US/CAN POWER PANELS US/CAN MENTORS
AND EXPERTS
ENGAGED

US/CAN WOMEN CONNECTED VIA VIRTUAL NETWORKING















ionoured to be part of this [-1] Initiative. Thank you @YvonnePilon @WEtechAlliance @usconstoronto
Amazing #women entrepreneurs and co-panelists. Great discussions including on #ip and #ip strategy.

"The Power Panel mentors gave me excellent advice about entering the market in the United States. They even offered to contact several people who could help me carry out a clinical validation, which we are currently searching for."

Itzel Álvarez, Co-founder & Business Development Director, Cardiotrack and Power Panel Participant

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT SCALEUP TECH ACCELERATOR

LOOKING BACK ON THE FIRST FIVE COHORTS OF THE AWARD-WINNING SCALEUP TECH ACCELERATOR PROGRAM

The fifth cohort of **WEtech's award-winning ScaleUP Tech Accelerator Program** went fully virtual again in 2021 and assisted six regional tech and tech-enabled companies in bringing new products to market, adopting new revenue streams and scale back up amid the new realities of the economy.

Since its inception, the program has seen 25 graduates, 130 new products and services to market, \$22 million in generated revenue, nine million users engaged, and 168 jobs created.

Powered by Libro Credit Union, the ScaleUP Tech Accelerator Program takes five selected tech or tech-related businesses from the Windsor-Essex and Chatham-Kent areas and puts them through a four-month sprint that provides growth coaching, expert insight, strategic planning, and financial assistance to help them scale.

With market data pointing to uncertain economic conditions for 2023 and 2024, **ScaleUP** cohort six, in partnership with **Invest WindsorEssex**, will shift the delivery of the program's resources to provide critical insights and tools for preparedness.

"Thinking back to the early days of our business, starting a business is an uphill battle and a journey; many don't realize what is involved," explains MobiStream Solutions CEO and co-founder Nick Scozzaro. "Aside from having a few customers, a proven technology, and the opportunity to scale, there were a lot of gaps in our evolving business."



MobiStream Solutions is a team of global software development professionals who specialize in the mobile sector and have the distinction of participating in the first ever ScaleUP cohort. At the culmination of each cohort, the soon-to-be ScaleUP graduates participate in a final pitch session before members of the Windsor Essex Capital Angel Network (WECAN) and the Regional Alliance of Windsor-Essex for a chance to receive a capital injection to benefit their future forward strategy.

"Being a part of and winning the first ScaleUP cohort truly was the starting point of our business," praises Scozzaro. "ScaleUP helped us understand all aspects of our operations. Many technologists who start a company with an idea or product often lack some



ScaleUP impact numbers from the 25 graduates of the program, as of April 2022.

of the most important understandings of building a business. We learned the fundamentals of sales, marketing, finance, customer success, legal, and insurance. To be honest, it was a bit overwhelming, but the WEtech team and mentors were with us every step of the way."

Over the course of their four month sprint, the selected participants of **ScaleUP's** upcoming sixth cohort will have the opportunity to leverage **WEtech Alliance's** business acceleration resources and global network of growth coaches, experts and collaborators.

"As a start-up, we thoroughly enjoyed getting the opportunity to first work with the amazing team at WEtech through their ScaleUP Tech Accelerator Program back in 2019," states **Cedar Valley Selections** founder and president Ameen Fadel. "Although we weren't awarded the top prize, we found a ton of value from completing the program, and have been able to continuously work with the WEtech team in many different ways since then."

Cedar Valley Selections, founded by Fadel at 16 years old as a high school project, is a food processor and manufacturer, and graduate of **ScaleUP's** second cohort.

"Through the ScaleUP program, we were able to take a deep dive into every aspect of our business at the very early stages of our company. WEtech brought in and connected us with specific industry advisors and experts who were able to help us further identify key opportunity areas for success, and specific tactics we could implement and utilize to really scale our business in an effective and feasible manner. We also had the opportunity to meet and pitch to multiple potential investors and get incredible feedback on our overall business strategy."

Fadel's products are now available in a wide variety of Canadian grocery stores for all to taste and enjoy.

The success of the **ScaleUP Tech Accelerator Program** is undeniable. More than two dozen local businesses have benefited from its resources and expertise. In 2020, **Libro Credit Union** received the **Concentra's Empower Your Community Award** on behalf of **ScaleUP**, which secured a \$10,000 grant for the program.

"With the resources WEtech Alliance and ScaleUP gave us we were able to build our MVP (minimum viable product) CapacityM platform and connect with hundreds of manufacturing companies around the region and further," explains **Minds On Fire** CEO Marcus Gaughan, who participated in ScaleUP's third cohort.

In all, the in-kind resources made available to businesses that participate in **ScaleUP** are valued at up to \$78,000 per participant, but, additionally, another \$500,000 of available software and technology discounts are available through **WEtech Alliance's** exclusive **Client Perks program**.

StrongerU Senior Fitness founder Emily Johnson says the hands-on help she received through the program from **WEtech Alliance** made the experience enjoyable.

"As a founder, you're always in the thick of it, so ScaleUP was a great opportunity to have someone else take a strategic look at the business and suggest areas where we can make improvements and try new things," explains Johnson, who participated in the latest cohort. "It was also really great to connect with the other founders and learn from what others were going through and work together."

StrongerU Senior Fitness is a "training as a service" model business that virtually educates recreation instructors from all over the world on senior fitness routines.

Johnson says that **ScaleUP** helped her find ways to operate her business faster and better.

"One way was adopting HubSpot for our CRM (customer relationship management). Prior to ScaleUP, I was just using an Excel spreadsheet to keep track of customers and people in my pipeline. Through the program, they showed me how to use HubSpot and that was one of the biggest game-changers for our sales process."

Johnson explains that **HubSpot**, combined with the work they did on the customer and sales journey, has had a continuous effect on the performance of her company.

"It was a fun activity to get the company back out there and meet other entrepreneurs and to hear their stories," says **iDream Interactive** founder and CEO Jacob Duhaime. "The biggest takeaway for us was to go through a process—getting back to those roots of looking at your business and understanding it from the standpoint of 'Is this something that could be successful?"

Duhaime explains that part of the allure during the fourth cohort of **ScaleUP** was meeting other entrepreneurs, after 15 years of hard work and focus, and seeing what the business community is up to.



Members of the Ettractive team took home the \$20,000 top prize after winning the ScaleUP Cohort 5 final pitch.

"It was inspiring to me, just to get back out there and meet new people that I may not have necessarily met," states Duhaime. "It was about sparking that excitement for what you're doing and being inspired by our peers."

Adam Castle, Director of **Venture Services** at **WEtech Alliance**, says before planning the scale up every year, the **WEtech** team sits down to look at the data from their portfolio, client roundtables, annual survey, and the micro and macro trends affecting business in our region. From there, they identify the business needs they're best suited to assist with and build a plan accordingly.

"This year's theme is all about resilience. The strongest and most innovative companies find ways to thrive during times of economic uncertainty because they plan for it," Castle adds. "We want to give this year's cohort all of the tools necessary to chart a sustainable course through even the most turbulent of waters."

Learn more at: www.wetech-alliance.com/scaleup

CONNECTING TALENT

WEtech works with industry, academia, and community partners to connect talent with high-growth companies, skills development, and community.





BORDERHACKS

WEtech was once again a proud partner on the second iteration of this cross-border hackathon, held September 25-26, 2021. BorderHacks inspired regional tech talent to get involved in our technology community, ultimately contributing to unlocking the potential of our future programmers, hackers, and designers with a focus on mobility and cross-border issues such as healthcare, logistics, and cybersecurity.

WINHACKS

WEtech has been a proud partner of **WinHacks** since 2019, when a small group of students began to plan the University of Windsor's first ever **hackathon**, and the Windsor region's second MLH event, which was held in March 2020. The third annual WinHacks was held March 25-27, 2022 and featured challenge streams focused on mobility, cybersecurity, entrepreneurship, and healthcare.

BORDERHACKS IN NUMBERS



1000+ **Participants**



\$20K+ In Prizes



30+ Volunteers



Submissions



100+ Teams

WINHACKS IN NUMBERS



475+





In Prizes



125+

Teams







40+ Volunteers.

Organizers, and Judges



WINDSOR-ESSEX **FIRST ROBOTICS**



WINDSOR-ESSEX FIRST ROBOTICS

FIRST[®] inspires young people to be science and technology leaders and innovators by engaging them in exciting mentor-based programs that build science, engineering, and technology skills, that inspire innovation, and that foster well-rounded life capabilities including self-confidence. communication, and leadership. **WEtech** is a proud founding member of **Windsor-Essex** *FIRST* **Robotics**, an organization dedicated to growing **FIRST** programs in Windsor-Essex.



MASSEYHACKS

MasseyHacks is Canada's oldest high school hackathon. where 200+ students of all backgrounds can come together to create, learn, and build their skills. WEtech was once again a proud partner of this year's 7th annual event, a 7 Week MasseyHacks Challenge, held from April 24 to June 16, 2021.

MASSEYHACKS IN NUMBERS



230

Participants



156 **Projects**

66% Male



31% Female

3%

Other

BUILDING COMMUNITY

WEtech knows that storytelling and planned and chance encounters can lead to meaningful collaborations, and ultimately, a stronger community. That is why we work hard to host events and activities that inspire, onramp, and accelerate new and existing entrepreneurs.





FOUNDERS WEEK YQG (BETA)

Founders Week YQG (beta) – a collaboration between WEtech Alliance, WindsorEssex Small Business and Entrepreneurship Centre, EPICentre and Genesis Entrepreneurship Centre – was a free, week-long celebration that brought together entrepreneurs, startups, innovators, changemakers, entrepreneurial support organizations, local leaders, and community to celebrate, educate, connect and build momentum and opportunity around our region's startup community.

The inaugural Founders Week YQG featured 30+ events and 60+ speakers during Global Entrepreneurship Week.

FOUNDERS WEEK YQG IN NUMBERS



253 Attendees



32 Events



9 Partners



TECK WEEK YQG

The largest regional technology festival dedicated to tech, talent, and community, our annual **TeCK Week YQG** returned with a fully digital edition in March of this year. This year's events (virtually) brought together tech leaders, founders, talent, researchers, investors, and the broader community for a series of events that gave unique access to experts and thought-leaders who shared their knowledge on subjects such as emerging technologies, cybersecurity, mobility, and community innovation.

TECK WEEK YQG IN NUMBERS







6 Events



Partners













SPOTLIGHT: TECH AWARDS

The **Tech Awards** are a fun, informal way of recognizing technology innovators of all stages for their achievement and success in our community. The Tech Awards provide a fantastic opportunity to showcase the impactful leaders in the regional tech sector and to strengthen networks within the community.

The winners of the 2022 **Tech Awards** powered by **TekSavvy Solutions Inc.** were revealed throughout the week of **TeCK Week YQG** through a series of **Tech Awards** podcasts, hosted by Sarah Haefling, owner of **Elevate Podcast Co.** and host of the **Made it Happen** podcast.







2022 TECH PROFESSIONAL PHILLIP OLLA



2022 TECH WOMAN
MAXINE EBEGBUZIE SHELTON



2022 TECH COMPANS ALPHAKOR GROUP



2022 TECH MENTOR DOUG SARTORI



BRIAN ASPINALL



2022 TECH ADOPTION ART GALLERY OF WINDSOR



REEL OUTLINE



TECH STUDENT NWANNEKA BARAKA



2022 TECH TEAM ST CLAIR COLLEGE I.T.



2022 WETECH CHOICE ROCKET MORTGAGE CANADA

FORMALLY EDISON FINANCIAL

THANK YOU, PARTNERS

WEtech Alliance's public-private funding model means we have a lot of people for whom we are ever grateful.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of our portfolio companies, our sponsors, partners and investors who helped make the past year a success. As well, thanks to the **Government of Canada**, the **Province of Ontario**, and our local economic development agencies for your ongoing support. It's your commitment and enthusiasm that allows us to do what we do. And for that, we say THANK YOU!



We acknowledge the support of the Government of Canada through the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario.

Nous reconnaissons l'appui du gouvernement du Canada à travers l'Agence fédérale de développement économique pour le Sud de l'Ontario













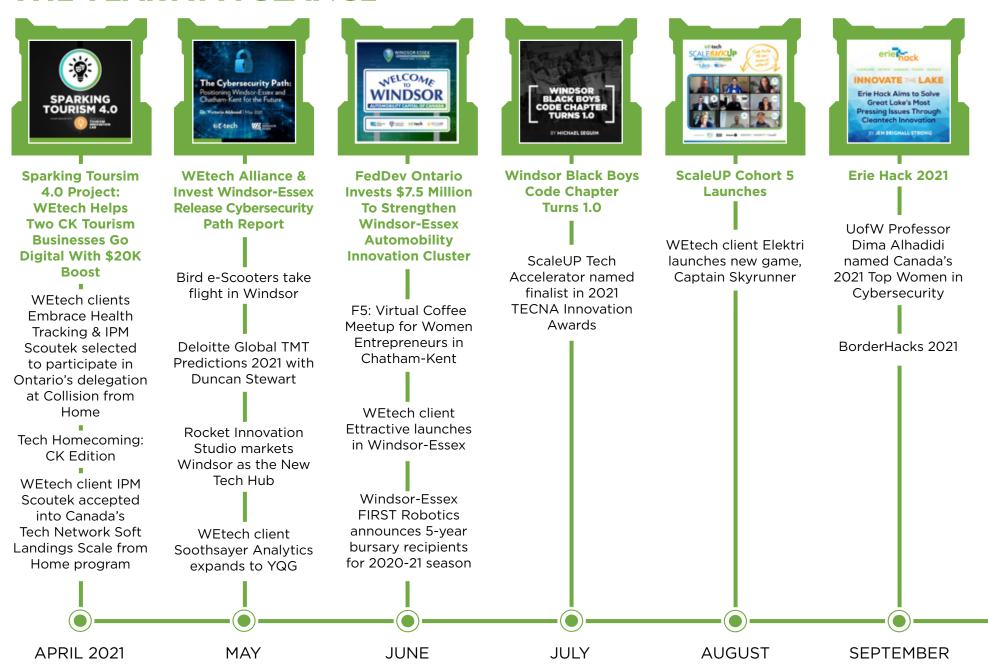


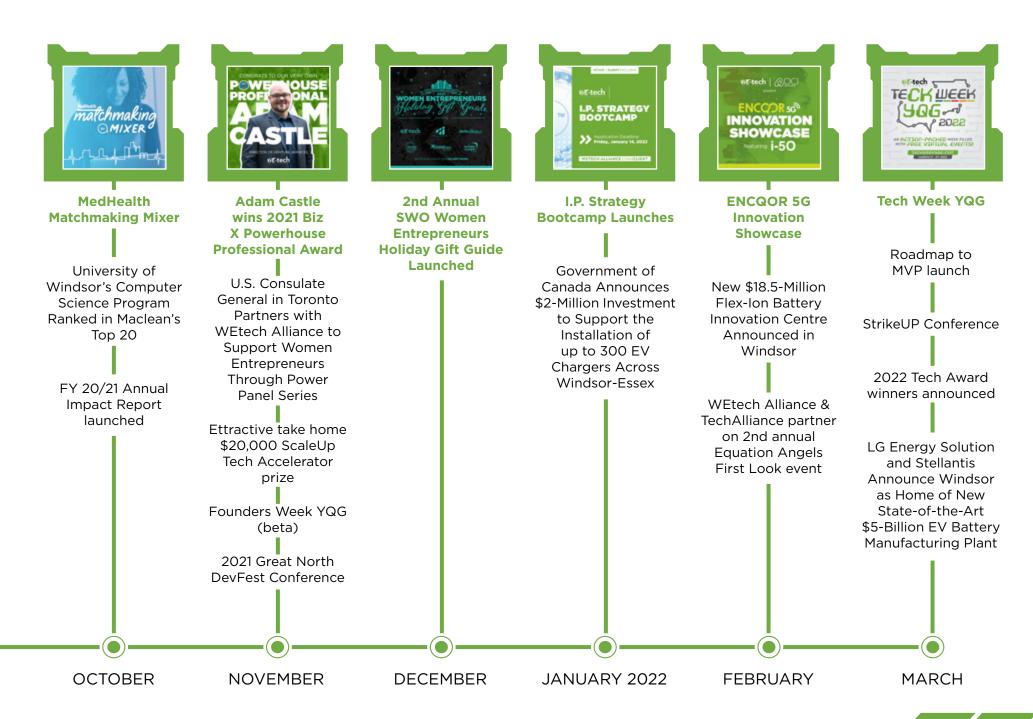






THE YEAR AT A GLANCE





WHAT'S NEXT: 2022 AND BEYOND

WEtech Alliance is working hard to focus our resources to respond to the changing needs of our clients, community, and society.

As we look ahead to 2022 and beyond, we have a new set of annual strategic priorities that were developed in consultation with clients, community and in collaboration with **WEtech Alliance's** Board of Directors, Advisors, and operational team. Over the coming year, these priorities will operate like a North Star and are designed to keep us focused and hold us accountable.





REGIONAL REACH

It's about growing access to entrepreneurship across the Windsor-Essex and Chatham-Kent regions.

COMING FY22-23

INNOVATION OUTPOSTS



ACTIVATE THE EXPERTS

It's about pulling on our regional, national and global networks to bring leaders to Windsor-Essex and Chatham-Kent that have skills we lack.

COMING FY22-23

NEW GUEST BLOGS, SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS, PODCASTS + SPEAKERS



KEY SECTOR SPECIALIZATION

It's about building on regional assets and clusters to support the growth and diversification of regional entrepreneurs and companies.

COMING FY22-23

LAUNCH OF AUTOMOBILITY, INNOVATION & ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROJECT



ACCESS TO CAPITAL

It's about unlocking the capital needed to support entrepreneurs & companies of all types and at every stage of growth.

COMING FY22-23

I.D.E.A. FUND



TALENT PIPELINE

It's about engaging industry and mobilizing talent within and outside the region to support tech talent pipeline development, retention, and attraction.

COMING FY22-23

TECH CONNECT + ACTIVITIES

OUR REACH

Marketing & Communications Impact (FY21-FY22)



FOLLOWERS:

17,236







IMPRESSIONS:

2,28M

VISITORS: PAGEVIEWS:

33,682 70,837



SENT: OPEN RATE: **30,889 34.8%**

OUR TEAM



The WEtech Alliance team at the conclusion of Failure Night, held Friday, November 12, 2022 as part of Founders Week YQG (beta).

From left to right: John-Marc Vachon, Adam Castle, Michelle Teno-Wachter, Janelle Abela (past team member), Adam Frye, Shriaa Sheth (past team member) and Yvonne Pilon. Not pictured Kate Tomen (past team member).

















