

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Canada's 2SLGBTQI+ Chamber of Commerce Announces Recipients of the Ecosystem Fund and Knowledge Hub under the 2SLGBTQI+ Entrepreneurship Program

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Canada's 2SLGBTQI+ Chamber of Commerce (CGLCC) is thrilled to announce the recipients of two key initiatives under the 2SLGBTQI+ Entrepreneurship Program: The Ecosystem Fund and the 2SLGBTQI+ Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub. Funded by a \$25 million contribution from the Government of Canada, these initiatives represent significant strides in fostering diversity, inclusivity, and breaking down barriers for 2SLGBTQI+ entrepreneurs across Canada.

The Ecosystem Fund, an \$8 million investment, supports non-profit organizations that champion 2SLGBTQI+ entrepreneurs, particularly within small and medium-sized enterprises. The Fund, which will run until March 2026, aims to enhance capacity-building, offer programs and resources, raise awareness of challenges, and foster a cohesive network of 2SLGBTQI+ entrepreneurs and ecosystem organizations.

Our distinguished recipients include:

- 2 Spirits in Motion Society | National
- Access Alliance Multicultural Health and Community Services, in partnership with Uplift Black | ON
- Alberta LGBTQ+ Chamber of Commerce | AB
- Banff Pride Society, in partnership with Bow Valley Chamber of Commerce | AB
- Chroma NB, in partnership with Fusion Saint John and Envision Saint John | NB
- Comité FrancoQueer de l'Ouest, in partnership with Société de développement économique de la Colombie-Britannique, Parallèle Alberta, Chambre de commerce LGBT du Québec, and Les Chevronné.e.s | Western Canada
- Community Futures Development Association of British Columbia, in partnership with MyCEO | BC
- Evol Financement, in partnership with Fondation Émergence | QC
- FrancoQueer, in partnership with Groupe Impact ON and Fédération des aîné.e.s et retraité.e.s francophones de l'Ontario | ON
- Les Chevronné.e.s | QC
- Pictou County Partnership, in partnership with Pictou County Pride | NS

- QueerTech | National
- SASKQUEER Entrepreneurs & Professionals | SK
- Social Entrepreneurship Enclave | MB
- Sovereign Seeds | National
- Spindle Films Foundation | National
- The Old School House Arts Centre, in partnership with Creative Coast BC, 4VI, and The Aunty Collective | BC

In tandem with the Ecosystem Fund announcement, CGLCC is proud to unveil the recipient of the \$3 million 2SLGBTQI+ Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub funding: The Fyrefly Institute for Gender and Sexual Diversity, in partnership with the eHUB Entrepreneurship Centre at the University of Alberta. This initiative will create a national network dedicated to conducting quantitative and qualitative research to fill knowledge gaps, consolidate resources, and develop tools tailored to benefit 2SLGBTQI+ entrepreneurs.

Darrell Schuurman, CEO of CGLCC, shared his excitement, stating, “These announcements mark a significant milestone in our commitment to empowering 2SLGBTQI+ entrepreneurs. The Ecosystem Fund and the Knowledge Hub are not just about financial support; they are about creating the infrastructure and knowledge base that our community needs to thrive. There are still many barriers that challenge 2SLGBTQI+ owned businesses to fully participate in the economy. The 2SLGBTQI+ Entrepreneurship Program aims to address these obstacles by building a strong and sustainable ecosystem and by developing and providing resources to enable 2SLGBTQI+ businesses to grow and succeed.”

Glynnis Lieb, Executive Director of the Fyrefly Institute, added, “The University of Alberta is uniquely positioned to lead the 2SLGBTQI+ Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub alongside our national collaborators. We are grateful for the support from the Government of Canada and CGLCC in driving this transformative work that will pave the way for a more inclusive and supportive entrepreneurial landscape.”

The Honourable Rechie Valdez, Minister of Small Business, emphasized the importance of these initiatives by stating, “When our government created the 2SLGBTQI+ Entrepreneurship Program, we ensured the program was co-developed with the community, administered by the community, for the community. That is exactly why we chose CGLCC to lead this work. Today's announcement marks another step in our

government's steadfast commitment to the 2SLGBTQI+ community, because when 2SLGBTQI+ entrepreneurs succeed, Canada succeeds.”

CGLCC extends its gratitude to the Government of Canada for its unwavering support in advancing 2SLGBTQI+ diversity and entrepreneurship nationwide.

For more information on the 2SLGBTQI+ Entrepreneurship Program, visit:

www.cglcc.ca/2slgbtqi-entrepreneurship.

This project is funded by the Government of Canada.

Canada's 2SLGBTQI+ Chamber of Commerce (CGLCC) links 2SLGBTQI+ businesses in Canada to the wider business and corporate community. It fosters economic growth by supporting and nurturing 2SLGBTQI+ businesses, entrepreneurs, students, and allies, and by helping Canada's corporate world connect with the 2SLGBTQI+ business community. For more information, visit www.cglcc.ca.

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