

OUR LATEST MEDIA RELEASE



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OCIF supports innovation in Calgary's construction and manufacturing sectors with investment in SAIT's Alternative Construction Technologies hub

(Calgary, Alta.) – The Opportunity Calgary Investment Fund (OCIF) will invest \$996,000 over three years into Southern Alberta Institute of Technology's (SAIT) Alternative Construction Technologies (ACT) hub to accelerate the development of new construction and manufacturing materials and processes.

As part of the Centre for Innovation and Research in Advanced Manufacturing and Materials (CIRAMM), which is one of four specialized centres of SAIT's Applied Research and Innovation Services, the ACT Hub is expected to support 36 Calgary companies and train 24 individuals from 2024 to 2027.

"With the type of population growth Calgary is experiencing, the construction sector is critical in delivery of housing," said Calgary Mayor Jyoti Gondek. "OCIF's investment in the ACT Hub will ensure the construction and manufacturing sector can see long-term growth based on emerging technology, adding to Calgary's momentum of building a resilient city and diverse economy."

The support from OCIF's investment will foster opportunities for local small-and-medium-sized-enterprises (SMEs) to present their challenges to researchers and students who develop, test and validate new solutions that can be directly applied in the industry. By utilizing the space and technology at the ACT hub, this collaboration will spur innovative solutions for the construction industry to develop cutting-edge manufacturing technologies and materials science.

The ACT hub will fuel innovations such as robotic technologies in the prefabrication of houses, automated modular construction, 3D printing of structures and the development of carbon-negative building products. Additionally, the ACT hub will focus on upcycling construction materials and creating new green composite materials for various construction applications.

"OCIF's mandate is to help Find, Fuel and Foster Innovation in our city and through this investment we will see even greater ties between industry, our post-secondary institutions and more importantly will allow students to gain hands on experiences while building the technologies of the future," said Brad Parry, CEO, Opportunity Investment Fund and President and CEO, Calgary Economic Development.

"OCIF is one of the most effective tools Calgary has to help ensure our economy is diversified and resilient and by championing collaboration among Calgary's bright minds, the ACT hub will amplify innovative industry-driven solutions for our construction and manufacturing industries."

As Calgary continues to experience rapid growth, advancements in these fields will create resources for manufacturing companies, developers and construction materials suppliers to meet the city's emerging infrastructure demands. This aligns with the priority in Calgary's economic action plan, [Uplook](#), to advance innovation through the real-world application of new

solutions. This strategic investment aims to enhance construction projects efficiency, resulting in quicker completion times, improved quality, reduced cost and minimized environmental impact.

To aid in the adoption of these technologies, the hub will provide opportunities for students to work with state-of-the-art equipment, develop new technical skills and collaborate with industry.

"This funding will provide Calgary's construction sector valuable access to manufacturing and materials expertise, as well as specialized research facilities," said Vis Naidoo, Associate Vice President, Continuing Education and Professional Studies, SAIT. "As one of Canada's top research colleges, SAIT is well-positioned to partner with the construction industry as they enhance their efficiency, sustainability and production."

OCIF joins PrairiesCan, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) and Alberta Innovates as key funders of the ACT hub.

To date, OCIF has allocated nearly \$84 million to 30 projects, which has created or retained over 3,000 jobs, created or scaled over 800 companies, attracted \$34 million in additional funding from government partners and generated almost \$900 million in economic activity – a 10 times return on funds committed.

Learn how the [Opportunity Calgary Investment Fund](#) is helping diversify Calgary's economic future.

ABOUT OPPORTUNITY CALGARY INVESTMENT FUND

Opportunity Calgary Investment Fund ("OCIF") was created as a wholly owned subsidiary of The City of Calgary in 2018 to support catalytic investments within the city to help diversify and transform the economy. The fund is administered by Calgary Economic Development and has a volunteer Board of Directors. It is vital tool to achieve the goals of the economic strategy and diversify Calgary's economic future.

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ABOUT SAIT

Established in 1916, SAIT was the first of its kind, publicly funded technical school in North America. As a global leader in applied education and research — serving nearly 40,000 students annually — SAIT offers certificate, diploma, post diploma, apprenticeship and applied degree programs, baccalaureate degrees, corporate training and more than 1,000 continuing education courses, along with four dedicated, award-winning areas of research and capacity for

new and emerging research. Curriculum and research priorities are developed through industry partnerships to ensure graduates have the skills and knowledge required to fulfill the demand for talent. SAIT is honoured to be recognized by Mediacorp Canada Inc. as one of Alberta's Top Employers for 2024, and to be ranked sixth by Research Infosource Inc. in the Top 50 Research Colleges in Canada for 2023. CEOWORLD Magazine ranked the SAIT School of Business #49 on the list of Best Business Schools in the World for 2024, and the School of Hospitality and Tourism placed #14 on their list of Best Hospitality and Hotel Management Schools in the World for 2024.

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