



# *Accelerate*U

Student Guide

**PLATFORM**  
calgary



MOUNT ROYAL  
UNIVERSITY  
1910



Photo: CMLC

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Photo: Reginato

# Welcome to *AccelerateU*



As the Dean of the Faculty of Business and Communications Studies, one of the most important things I do is to spend time listening to partners in the community. A critical partner are employers. Whether they are global corporations, start-ups, non-profits, or from the public sector, they share one thing, a need for our graduates to hit the ground running.

The transition from being a student to a professional can be challenging. This is not surprising, given many students have spent the better part of two-decades in school. This is why I am excited about the potential of our new pilot program - ***AccelerateU***.

*AccelerateU* is designed to remove the barriers between students and professionals. Immersive experiential learning can be transformative because it challenges you to build on your knowledge and confront problems facing real organizations. *AccelerateU* allows students studying Marketing, Entrepreneurship, or Social Innovation to spend all or part of their senior year taking courses in close proximity to professionals in these fields. This creates increased opportunities for engaging community partners in projects, as guest speakers, or as mentors.

In Winter 2023, our community partner at [Platform Calgary](#) is hosting six *AccelerateU* classes with 130 students at their new [Innovation Centre](#) in downtown Calgary. As a student in this pilot, you will be given unique experiences that few other MRU students will have. But here is the secret. The value of *AccelerateU* to you is directly related to your investment. The more you participate and leverage this experience, the more value you will get from it. I encourage you to make the most of your time being part of *AccelerateU*.

All the best this semester!

**Dr. Kelly Williams-Whitt**

Dean, Faculty of Business and Communication Studies



# Welcome to Platform Calgary



I would like to welcome you to the *Platform Innovation Centre*. We are very excited to be hosting Mount Royal University's **AccelerateU** pilot this winter. We believe this partnership is an important step in building a stronger bridge between Calgary's postsecondary community and its rapidly growing innovation sector.

Platform Calgary is an impact organization whose members are tech companies and supporters, large and small, united in a vision of inclusive, innovation-driven prosperity for Calgary. Our mandate is to bring together the resources of Calgary's tech ecosystem to help start-ups launch and grow at every step of their journey, from ideation through to scale. We believe behind every great innovator is a great community and our new Innovation Centre is home to the innovation community — a single point of access to resources, supports, programming and events to help start-ups successfully launch and grow their business. This includes:

- ✓ Having 100+ tech and innovation partners under one roof
- ✓ Having access to classes, seminars, workshops, and programs for entrepreneurs and industry professionals
- ✓ Having access to businesses, top talent, and expertise from across Canada and beyond for industry meetups, pitch nights, keynotes and collisions between entrepreneurs, investors, and founders
- ✓ Having access to the amenities of East Village, including the new Central Public Library, the National Music Centre, restaurants, coffee shops, and public transit.

Remember, when you walk through the door of Platform, **you will no longer be a student, you are a professional**. As a professional, the Innovation Centre provides you with everything you need to achieve success. Your success supports the prosperity of our city. I encourage you to make the most of AccelerateU this semester and hope this experience will be only the start of working together to transform our city.

Have a great semester at Platform!

**Terry Rock**

President and Chief Executive Officer

Platform Calgary

# Getting to the Innovation Centre

The Innovation Centre is located at **407 9th Ave SE**

*AccelerateU* is more than just a class. Think of it as a professional field school. For this reason, it was designed so you can spend the full day immersed in this professional environment and not have to transition between Mount Royal and downtown. Therefore, it is best if you schedule your classes being taught on campus for another day.

Photo: Trevor Lalonde

## Public Transit

Public transit is your best option for travelling to the Innovation Centre because you have already paid for transit through your **UPass**. The UPass provides full time postsecondary students in Calgary access to the public transit through your student fees. To qualify for the UPass you must have the following:

- ✓ Must have a @mtroyal.ca email address.
- ✓ All eligible students taking 3 courses (minimum of nine credits) in each semester are assessed a fee for the universal bus pass (UPass).
- ✓ Must have a handheld device that supports either Google Play (Android) or App Store (iOS).

For more information on how to access your UPass, click [HERE](#).



## Sample transit route options from campus

NB Sarcee Road @ Richardson Way → 66 City Centre (16 minutes, 18 stops) → Get off at 1st Street @ 8th Ave → Walk to the Innovation Centre (10 minutes)

SB Richardson Way @ Richardson Road → 9 Dalhousie Station (13 minutes, 15 stops) → Get off at EB Bow Trail @ 26 St → Walk to Shaganappi Point Station (3 minutes) → SaddleTowne Train (12 minutes, 7 stops) → Get off at City Hall Station → Walk to the Innovation Centre (4 minutes)

MRU Station (North Bound) → 304 Max Yellow City Centre (16 minutes, 7 stops) → Get off at 5th Ave @ 1st Street → Walk to the Innovation Centre (16 minutes)

MRU Station (North Bound) → 306 Max Teal Westbrook (13 minutes, 5 stops) → Walk to Westbook LRT Station (1 minute) → Saddletowne train (14 minutes, 8 stops) → Get off at City Hall Station → Walk to the Innovation Centre (4 minutes)

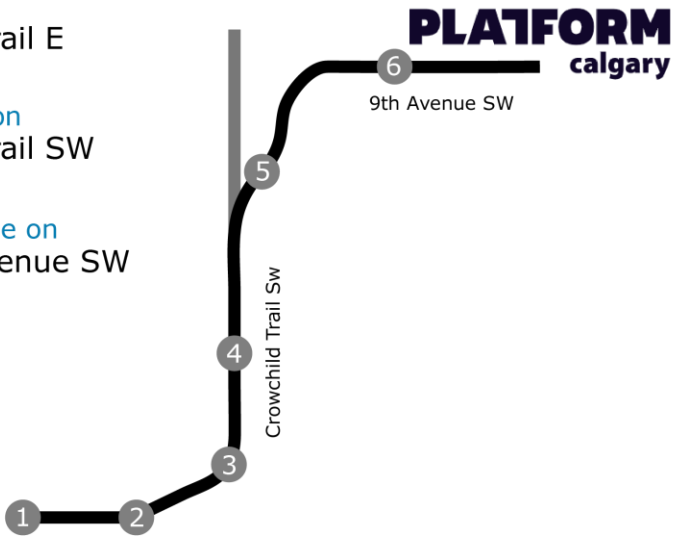
MRU Station (North Bound) → 304 Max Yellow City Centre (16 minutes, 7 stops) → Get off at 5th Ave @ 1st Street → Walk to 1st Street @ 7th Ave (3 minutes) → 307 Max Purple East Hills (2 minutes, 2 stops) → Get off at 9th Ave @ Macleod Trail → Walk to the Innovation Centre (2 minutes)

# Driving From Campus

The driving time between Mount Royal campus and the Innovation Centre is 10-15 minutes. For those driving, consider carpooling. Not only is this best for the environment, but it also allows you to share the cost of parking.

Photo: Trevor Lalonde

- 1 Left on Richard Road SW
- 2 Second right on First roundabout
- 3 First right on Second roundabout
- 4 Merge on Crowchild Trail SW
- 5 Exit on Bow Trail E
- 6 Merge on Bow Trail SW
- 7 Continue on 9th Avenue SW



# Parking Around the Innovation Centre

## Calgary Parking Authority

Parking in Lot 55 (Zone 9055) a **flat \$10** from 6AM-6PM (but with the App only). This lot is a **flat \$2 after 4pm**. You can park on the street for only **\$1.25 per hour** in the East Village. Parking at Platform Calgary is **\$5 per hour**.



Photo: Trevor Lalonde

Regardless of which option you use, encourage you to download the MyParking App at:

**Download:** [iPhone/iPod Touch/iPad](#) OR [Android](#)

## Indigo

There is an indigo lot beside the National Music Centre. This Indigo lot is **\$4 per hour**.



### Parking Spots

- 1 CPA Lot 55
- 2 CPA Street Parking **\$1.25 per hour**
- 3 Fort Calgary Parking
- 4 Platform Parkade **\$5.00 per hour**
- 5 Impark Lot 161
- 6 CPA Lot 24
- 7 Indigo Parking Lot 127

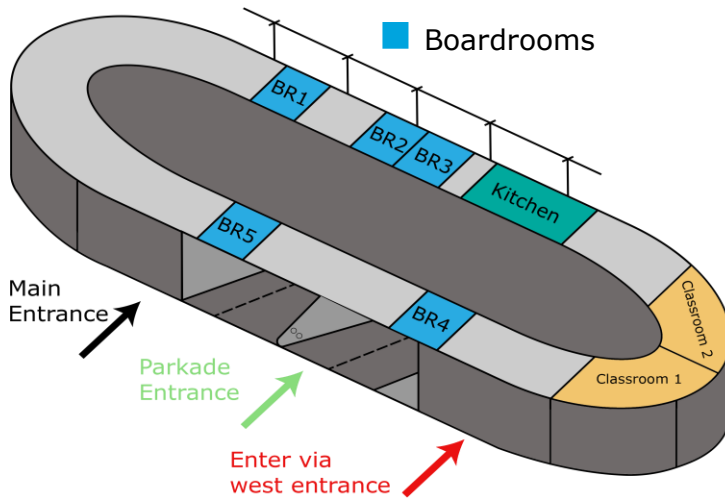


Photo: Elyse Bouvier

Photo: Trevor Lalonde

## Finding Your Classes

Please enter via the **WEST entrance** (off 9th Ave) and the WEST elevators (west of the basketball court on 9th Ave). Classrooms are located on Level 2. Upon exiting the elevator, you will be in a CPA lobby. You will then use your Platform App to unlock the doors. If you have any difficulty, contact your professor. Their contact information will be in your course outline. The location of the classrooms and boardrooms are on the map below.



Below are two video tours that will help you become familiar with the facility.

**Video 1:** [AccelerateU x Platform tour 9th avenue entrance](#)

**Video 2:** [AccelerateU x Platform tour west elevator entrance](#)

## Working at the Innovation Centre

Platform is a community and Mount Royal University (and you) are part of this community. You are welcome to come early and stay late. It is a funky space with ping pong, air hockey, couches, and lots of space to work. With the Platform App you will be able to access the Innovation Centre during the week.

# 100,000

Number of Mount Royal University alumni

# 300,000

Number of hours of community service students provided while participating in Community Service-Learning projects

# 79%

Percentage of Mount Royal graduates working in a position related to the program from which they graduated within a year of completing their program.



# The Platform Calgary Member Portal

The Platform Calgary Member Portal connects you to Calgary's startup and innovation community. The app provides access to membership benefits including exclusive events and information and booking space at the Platform Innovation Centre. Most importantly, the app is your key to ALL doors at the Innovation Centre. Please follow the steps below BEFORE you first class.

**Step 1:** Please download the Platform Calgary App (Member Portal) onto your phone, from your App Store.

**Step 2:** You will receive a "welcome email" from Platform Calgary. Open the App, put in your email address, and the temporary password from the Welcome email. It will then prompt you to create a new password and then voila! You will have access to the portal.

**Step 3:** On the App home page, click the three dots on the bottom right. Go to "My Profile" and under "Personal information" add your last name.

**Step 4:** On the App home page, click the three dots on the bottom right. Go to "My Activity", "Integrations", "Brivo: Manage Mobile Pass" and activate. Our system will take about an hour to sync with Brivo (our building access key on your phone). Once it syncs, you will receive a "Platform Access Code" email with a code in it. Enter the code to enable Brivo on your phone. If this is successful, you will be able to see a list of doors you can open using the app. Scroll down and turn off "Always attempt to open the nearest accessible lock." Go back to the home screen and confirm that the "Unlock Door" icon is displayed. Click the "Unlock Door" icon to display the doors you can open.

## AccelerateU Classes

In the Fall 2022 semester, we piloted two sections of Marketing-Driven Strategy (MKTG 4858) at the Innovation Centre. In Winter 2023, we are expanding the pilot to six sections of senior Marketing and Entrepreneurship at the Innovation Centre on Tuesday and Wednesday. In addition, one Social Innovation course is being hosted downtown at another location on Thursday.

If you see a class that interests you, and you have the required prerequisites, see if there is still space available.

### Tuesday

10am - 1250pm      [Business Plan Development \(ENTR 4433\)](#)

1pm - 350pm      [Marketing-Driven Strategy \(MKTG 4858\)](#)

4pm - 7pm      [Marketing-Driven Strategy \(MKTG 4858\)](#)

### Wednesday

830am-1120am      [Professional Brand Studio \(MKTG 4850\)](#)

10am-1250pm      [Corporate Innovation & Entrepreneurship \(ENTR 4344\)](#)

230pm-520pm      [DNA of Selling, Sales and Business Development \(ENTR 4420\)](#)

### Thursday

230pm-520pm      [Civic Innovation \(SINV 4401\)](#) hosted at [J5 Design](#)

# AccelerateU Professors

This winter we have five Mount Royal professor's teaching **AccelerateU** courses.



## **Dr. AnneMarie Dorland**

AnneMarie Dorland is an Assistant Professor in the Bissett School of Business at Mount Royal University where she brings together her background as a graphic designer, brand strategist and qualitative researcher to develop innovative, creative and design-oriented undergraduate learning experiences. Her research explores creativity and creative problem-solving practices such as designed approaches to thinking in sectors ranging from oil and gas to healthcare, and she is obsessively curious about the role of designed approaches to thinking in undergraduate teaching and learning.

Dr. Dorland is a contributor to several international publications on design thinking and creative research practice, and she is relentlessly optimistic about the ways that the designed approaches to problem solving can help us create new and innovative ideas in marketing, branding and learning.

**AccelerateU course:** Professional Brand Studio (MKTG 4850)



## **Dr. David Finch**

David Finch's professional background reflects a commitment to the convergence of theory and practice. David possesses a PhD in management and is an active educator, scholar and practitioner. Dr Finch holds several academic appointments including Professor at Mount Royal University, Senior Fellow at the Institute for Community Prosperity, and a Visiting Scholar at the Henley Business School in the United Kingdom.

Dr Finch is the Director of the CityXLab. The CityXLab explores the intersection between a city's learning, creative and active experiences; community prosperity; and its ability to attract, develop and retain human capital. David has authored over 50 scholarly papers and published in journals such as the Journal of Business Ethics, Academy of Management Learning & Education, Journal of Marketing Management, Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences, Higher Education, the Journal of Marketing Education, the Corporate Reputation Review and the International Journal of Management Education.

Dr. Finch held progressively senior roles in areas of corporate strategy in Canada, the U.S. and the U.K. In this role as a senior fellow at the Institute for Community Prosperity,.

**AccelerateU course:** Marketing-Driven Strategy (MKTG 4858)



## **Dr. Catherine Pearl**

Prior to joining academia, Dr. Pearl spent almost twenty years in the private sector; in corporate planning, finance and marketing. She has worked for a number of multinational and national firms honing her management expertise. She also spent considerable time in the not for profit sector as a volunteer, a consultant and as President and CEO of a registered charity, which operated a social enterprise.

Catherine has been active in the Mount Royal community and has served as a member of MRU's Professional Development and Library Selections committees in addition to sitting on the Faculty of Business and Communication Studies' Research Committee. Catherine also serves as Career Services Liaison for Co-operative student placement opportunities in social innovation. Dr. Pearl was a founding board member of the Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations (CCVO), and has also served on the board of a number of community organizations including: Propellus, YWCA Calgary, Lycee Louis Pasteur, Developmental Disabilities Resource Centre, and Lunchbox Theatre. Catherine also serves as a Board Governor for the Association of Nonprofit and Social Economy Research (ANSER).

***AccelerateU* course:** [Civic Innovation \(SINV 4401\)](#) hosted at [J5 Design](#)



## **Dr. Simon Raby**

Simon Raby is a 'pracademic' working as a Professor of Innovation and Entrepreneurship at Mount Royal University and Co-Founder of Business Improvement and Growth (BIG) Associates Ltd. BIG identifies the drivers of growth, challenges convention and offers practical ways for ambitious business owners and their organizations to achieve sustained growth and performance.

Simon's research program is focused on uncovering the strategies, practices and methods of support that enable business growth, leadership transitions and people performance. Most recently, Simon delivered a program of research on the growth of Alberta's Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) to understand the drivers of growth, innovation and diversification for these firms. This research has since led to the creation of The Leader's Growth Mindset.

Simon completed his Masters and Ph.D. part-time while working as a private sector consultant and is an accredited and practicing coach and facilitator. Simon continues to write for academic and practitioner audiences. Co-author of The ten characteristics of successful SMEs, Simon has researched thousands of growth-oriented organizations and has distilled this into an accessible, applicable and practical guide, downloaded over 11,000 times and internationally recognized for its quality and value for business innovation and growth.

***AccelerateU* courses:** [Corporate Innovation & Entrepreneurship \(ENTR 4344\)](#); [DNA of Selling, Sales and Business Development \(ENTR 4420\)](#)



## **Dr. Amir Bahman Radnejad**

Dr. Amir Bahman Radnejad is an entrepreneur, innovation consultant and scholar with more than a decade of experience in start-ups, business development and innovation research in Canada, United Kingdom and United State of America. Currently, Bahman is an Associate Professor of Innovation and Entrepreneurship at Bissett School of Business, Mount Royal University, and president of 1388 consulting, helping individuals and corporations to develop Design Thinking and innovation leadership competencies. Prior to Mount Royal, Bahman was a business faculty member at State University of New York at Brockport and Susquehanna University in the USA. Bahman has published research articles, conference proceedings and book chapters on Design Thinking, Open Innovation, Innovation Management, and Sustainable Energy Development. Bahman has been actively involved in several start-ups in the energy, food, IT, and fashion industry. He also teaches courses as an adjunct faculty at University of Calgary and State University of New York.

Bahman has a PhD in Strategy, Energy and Environmental Specialization, from University of Calgary, Masters in Innovation and Entrepreneurship from University of Manchester, and a BSc in Chemical Engineering from University of Tehran. He has also received Design Thinking certification from Harvard Business School Online.

**AccelerateU course:** [Business Plan Development \(ENTR 4433\)](#)

# 300,000

Number of hours of community service students provided while participating in Community Service Learning projects

# 8 of 10

Estimated proportion of jobs linked to networking.

# Amenities

This is one of the advantages of working downtown. There are an endless number of places to eat and drink within a close walk of the Innovation Centre. Below is a map of the area with some of the amenities. Below is a full list of the options all within a ten minute walk of the Innovation Centre. Refer to the map on the following page.

## Beverages

- [Good Earth City Hall](#) - 2 minute walk
- [Tim Hortons East Village](#) - 3 minute walk
- [Good Earth East Village](#) - 6 minute walk
- [Mr. Sun Tea \(Bubble Tea\)](#) - 6 minute walk
- [Phil & Sebastian Coffee Roasters](#) - 9 minute walk

## Food

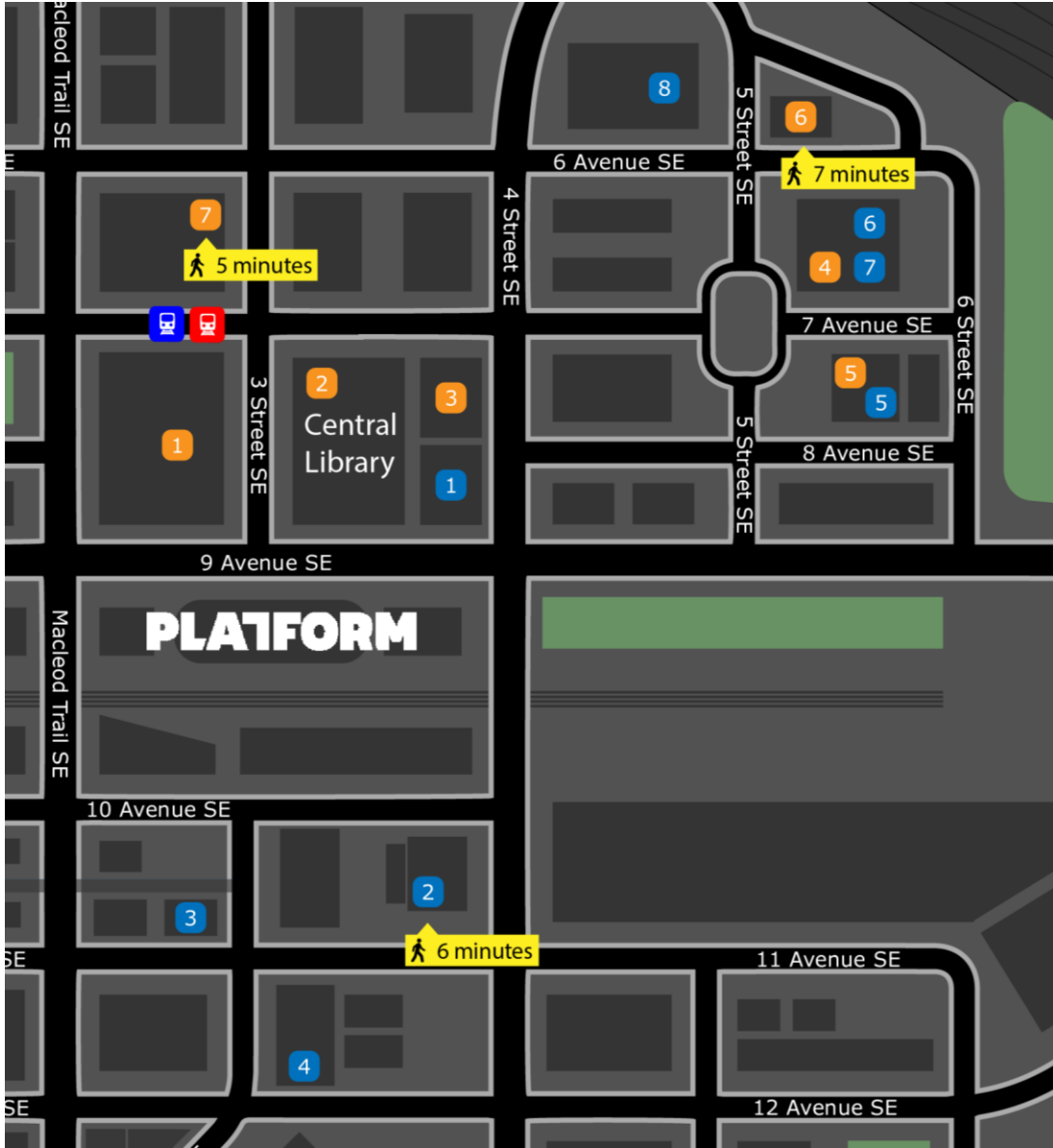
- [King Eddy Bar](#) - 2 minute walk
- [Tim Hortons East Village](#) - 3 minute walk
- [Village Ice Cream](#) - 4 minute walk
- [Lotus Vietnamese Noodle House](#) - 6 minute walk
- [Good Earth East Village](#) - 6 minute walk
- [ZCREW Cafe](#) - 7 minute walk
- [Holysht Ice Cream](#) - 7 minute walk
- [Soleil Bistro & Bar](#) - 7 minute walk
- [8 Cakes Bake Shoppe & Cafe](#) - 8 minute walk
- [Panago Pizza](#) - 8 minute walk
- [Parlour Ice Cream](#) - 8 minute walk
- [Phil & Sebastian Coffee Roasters](#) - Simmons Building Cafe - 9 minute walk
- [Sidewalk Citizen Bakery](#) - 9 minute walk
- [Chix Eggshop](#) - 9 minutes walk

## Activities

### East Village Event Calendar

- [Studio Bell](#) - 2 minute walk
- [The Bounce Outdoor Basketball Court](#) - 2 minute walk
- [Calgary Library](#) - 4 minute walk
- [Riverwalk Plaza](#) - 9 minute walk





**Amenities (Beverages)**

- 1 Good Earth City Hall
- 2 Luke’s Central Library
- 3 Tim Horton’s East Village
- 4 Good Earth East Village
- 5 Mr. Sun Bubble Tea
- 6 Phil & Sebastian Coffee Roasters
- 7 Tim Horton’s City Hall

**Amenities (Food)**

- 1 King Eddy Bar
- 2 Village Ice Cream
- 3 Lotus Vietnamese Noodle House
- 4 ZCREW Cafe
- 5 Holysht Ice Cream
- 6 Soleil Bistro & Bar
- 7 Panago Pizza East Village
- 8 8 Cakes Bake Shoppe & Cafe

# Professional Networking and AccelerateU

For people networking can either sound exciting or like the last thing you want to do. Regardless of where you fall, networking is an essential professional skill at all stages of your career.

Providing you both formal and informal access to Calgary professionals is one of the core goals of **AccelerateU**. Frankly, the professionals who will kick-start your career are likely not sitting in Wyckham House or at Mount Royal's library. Instead, they are likely sitting in their office, coffee shop, or professional hubs like the Innovation Centre.

But here is a secret. There are over 100 diverse member organizations at the Innovation Centre. Plus, the Innovation Centre hosts dozens of events each month bringing hundreds of professionals into the building you are studying at. But remember, they are not there to meet you. In fact, more do not even know you are there. So *AccelerateU* is designed to create the conditions for you to professionally network, whether they are your class clients, guest speakers, or happen to work out of the Innovation Centre. What you do with this opportunity is up to you.

In this section we are going to review the basics of networking. What is it? What are the benefits? How do I do it?

## What is professional networking?

If you have ever met new people and built relationships that helped you learn something or achieve a goal—you have networked!

Networking simply means connecting with people and cultivating a mutually beneficial relationship. That time you wanted to join a club on campus, so you met students who were in the club, became friendly, and eventually joined the club? Networking. It is something that does not need to be scary, and you have most likely networked before.

## What are the benefits of professional networking?

As you grow as a professional, networking will play a significant role in how you find new jobs and expand your professional opportunities. The people in your network can give you career advice, insight into a new role or industry, or connect you to someone at an employer you want to work for. There are five key benefits to networking well:

1. Exposure to knowledge and ideas
2. Exposure to new opportunities
3. Career growth and professional development
4. Mentorship
5. Forming forever relationships





Photo: Elyse Bouvier

### **Exposure to knowledge and ideas**

As you connect with new professionals, you expose yourself to innovative ideas. Your network will have experiences you have not, and they can share that information and knowledge with you to affect the way you think and approach different situations.

### **Exposure to new opportunities**

Not only will you be exposed to new ways of thinking, but you will also be exposed to new and exciting opportunities. This is the major benefit of expanding your network. They expose you to spaces you could not get to on your own, or that you didn't even know you needed to be. The best part is that your network will make sure that the door is already open when you get there.

### **Career growth and professional development**

You are at the very beginning of your career. As you continue to grow and find your way, you will be led by a network who has already done what you are hoping to do and can remove some of the obstacles along your journey. The advice you will receive from your network will be invaluable to your professional development.

### **Mentorship**

Not everyone in your network will be a mentor and they do not have to be. But within your network, you need to be aware of the individuals who are particularly keen and eager to see you succeed. These are the ones who will become mentors. They are the ones who will not just guide you but will take your hand and make sure you get to where you need to go.

### **Forming forever relationships**

The thing about building your network is that you are actually forming lifelong partnerships and possibly even friendships. The longer you stay connected to someone, the more that relationship changes and the closer your connection becomes. What starts off as a relationship based on professional value can transform into a true bond.

# 2.2 M

Number of  
postsecondary students  
in Canada.

# 1st

Alberta's rank among all  
provinces in earnings at  
every level of education  
among the provinces



# Networking 101

## It starts with intentional curiosity

Curiosity can be your superpower. But it's not just being curious, it's being intentionally curious. Intentionally curious people are humble enough to recognize they don't know it all. When you were five years old, you were full of questions, and you didn't care that you didn't know everything. How could you? Great networkers have never lost that. How could you know everything even now? Humility creates a hunger that can only be fed by answers.

Photo: Trevor Lalonde

Intentionally curious people look at the world (and their place in it) and see big questions: How do things work together? How do these pieces connect? How can I influence things? How can I improve things? You'll need to develop this intentional curiosity as you become the product manager of you.

Throughout your career, but especially when you are starting out, go out of your way to meet new people. Do not discount a new acquaintance because they do not have a connection to an employer or role you want. The more people you meet and share your career goals with the better.

And remember, networking is an "always on" activity, meaning you should seek out new connections and nurture your network even when you are not looking for a job. As long as you are in the workforce, you should be building professional relationships.

## It's work

Do your homework. A good starting point is to explore the members of Platform Calgary (including employees) on LinkedIn. Who are they? What do they do? What is their background? Are there any that went to Mount Royal? Do not underestimate the power of alumni. They have been where you have been before. They are willing to support you BUT they need to be asked.

Once you have done your homework and found a few people you would like to connect with, it is time to reach out to them. If you can find an email, start there. If not, reach out to them on LinkedIn with a request to connect. Be intentional about mentioning you are studying at the *Innovation Centre* this semester and you'd like to learn more about them. To cut through this clutter you should consider the following tips:

- 1. Recognize their value.** Show you did your homework, and you are reaching out to them because there is something special about them. Real flattery is very persuasive. For example, "You took such a unique career path by starting at X and going to company Y. I am considering a similar path and would value your advice."
- 2. Be clear on your ask.** To waffle. Be direct. For example, "I am considering a career in X and would like to have 30 minutes of your time to ask you about how you progressed in your career." This does two things; it puts a clear constraint on the request (30 minutes), and it reinforces that the time together is about them (not you). We all like to think we are special, so reinforce how their knowledge is important and valuable to you.
- 3. Be persistent and keep asking.** You are a low priority, so you may have to send a couple of reminders. Be polite and persistent and if they say no, ask them for anyone else that they could suggest. This will ensure you will have a return on your effort.
- 4. Make it easy for them.** Offer to work to their schedule and meet them at the Innovation Centre, their office or anywhere they'd like to meet. Don't be surprised if the scheduled time is a month or more out. Professionals are busy people!
- 5. It is not ALL about You.** Networking is not just about meeting people who can help you. The most successful professional relationships are between two people that are interested in learning about and supporting each other. So always consider, so what is in it for them? How can you help them?

## Show you care

People care about people, who care about them. Your job is to actually show you care about developing a genuine relationship with a professional.

**Build rapport:** People like to know you have taken an interest in them, so do your homework. Are they alumni of your school? What do you have in common with them? Do they like sports? The arts? Building rapport is about building a minimum-level of trust and empathy to help a much deeper conversation. Part of building rapport is about being authentically interested in what they have to say. Enthusiasm can go a long way toward showing someone that you care and are interested in what they have to say.

**Keep it simple:** The KISS rule (keep it simple, stupid) may be easy to say, but it's really difficult to do. You will want to talk about a lot of things, but networking should be organic. To get the most from networking, consider these three tips:

**Start with broad questions** and then move into more specific questions later. For example, you may want to ask them what made them decide to become a \_\_\_\_\_.

**Start with topics that the professional would find familiar.** Most people like to show others how smart they are, so let the professional talk about his/her ability.

**Start with open-ended questions and only use close-ended questions if needed.** For example, asking a question such as, "Tell me why you became an accountant" is open-ended, allowing the respondent to talk. In contrast, a close-ended question may be, "Did you decide you wanted to be an accountant before you started university?" The risk of a close-ended question is getting a simple yes or no response with minimal value. Your goal is to stimulate their engagement and keep him/her talking.

**Listen.** In networking, it is common to be so focused on the process and the next question that we don't actually listen very well. Great networking builds on what the other person says, which is impossible if you are not actually listening. So, absorb what they say. If you do, they will sense you are engaged, and the time will be much more rewarding for both of you.

**Probe:** Probing is intentional curiosity in real-time. When you respond to a comment by asking them a more specific question, you're probing. For example, if they tell you that the best decision they ever made was to do a co-op degree, don't just leave it at that. Ask them, "Why was the co-op so important to you?" Then you may ask about their specific co-op experience and the skills they developed.

**Be respectful:** You are not only networking; you're also building your personal brand and network. This professional has given you their valuable time. If you find that the given time is naturally going longer, ask if they would be able to extend the time. If they have time and are enjoying the discussion, they will almost certainly say yes.

**Invest in the future:** Ideally, your time is not simply a one-off. A core goal of this process is for you to build your professional network and find other networking opportunities. Following your time together, ensure you send a note thanking them for their time. Personalizing the note by showing some key themes they highlighted shows your engagement and reinforces the value of the time they spent with you. In your note, ask if they'd be open to keeping in touch so you can get in touch with any additional questions.



## Be Safe

- ✓ Platform Calgary's Innovation Centre is located in a high traffic area of downtown Calgary. We encourage you to be safe at all times. The City of Calgary recommends the following tips:
- ✓ Walk with others, or in well-populated areas.
- ✓ Stay in well-lit areas with clear visibility for others.
- ✓ Be aware of your surroundings – limit the use of devices that would prohibit your awareness.
- ✓ Limit the number of belongings that you are carrying in your arms to reduce your vulnerability.
- ✓ In case of emergency when you are at the Innovation Centre contact the 24/7 security:
  - [403-537-7006](tel:403-537-7006)
  - [security@calgaryparking.com](mailto:security@calgaryparking.com)
- ✓ The building is equipped with a fire alarm system. If there is a fire; or an evacuation ordered, the muster point is **across 9 Ave SE** in front of the Central Library. Please leave the building in a calm and orderly manner using your nearest exit and **DO NOT** use the elevators.
- ✓ If you ever feel threatened at anytime, the City of Calgary recommends the following:
  - Create noise to attract attention.
  - Do not try to keep hold of your possessions or valuables.
  - Pay attention to physical attributes of the person or persons and what they are wearing.
  - Call 9-1-1 immediately.

## Safewalk Program

Safewalk looks to ensure a strong sense of security among those visiting, studying, and working at the Innovation Centre. For this reason, they have introduced a Safewalk program, where a security representative will escort visitors, students, and employees to their car or public transit.

To access the Safewalk program, simply call **403-537-7006** about fifteen minutes before you want to leave. Please supply the dispatcher your name, location, and destination. A security representative will come and meet you.



# Appendix - Networking Questions

Think of this like a shopping list of questions; you'll never get the opportunity to ask maybe three of four questions in 30 minutes so decide which questions are most important for you and are aligned to the expertise of a professional.

## Exploring their Career

Photo: Trevor Lalonde

1. How long have you been in your current job?
2. How long have you been with your current company?
3. What does your current role entail? What does a typical day look like?
4. Do you manage other people in your role?
5. What kind of decisions or issues are you often faced with in your job?
6. What type of training or education prepared you for your current role?
7. What is the toughest situation you've ever been faced with professionally?
8. What other groups or departments do you interact with in your current role?
9. Do you interact directly with customers?
10. Does your job involve regular hours, or can they vary?
11. What is the best part of your current role?
12. What is your least favourite part of your current role?
13. What type of education do you recommend for your job? Would you recommend graduate school (e.g., MBA, MSc) for this role?
14. When you reflect on your career so far, what would you do more of? What would you do less of?

## Exploring their Career Preparation

1. When you were at my stage, how much planning did you do for your career/life?
2. How does your career relate to your formal education?
3. Is your formal education essential to your career?
4. What courses at school best prepared you for your career?
5. If you could go back to school and start all over again, would you do anything differently?
6. How important are grades for getting into your field?
7. What are the best university/college programs in your field?
8. Did you do a co-op or internship in college/university? Would you recommend this? Why?
9. Did you work part-time when you went to school? Would you recommend this? Why?
10. Are there specific extracurricular activities that might help me prepare for a career in this area?

11. What jobs and experiences have led you to your present position?
12. What kinds of things did you do before you entered this occupation?
13. Which aspects of your background are most helpful?
14. What other jobs can you get with the same background?
15. Based on our discussion, what other field or industries would you suggest I consider?
16. Would you recommend anyone in your network I should reach out to for a discussion?
17. Which professional journals and publications should I be reading to learn about this career?
18. Are there any professional or industry associations I should consider joining?
19. Are there volunteer activities I should consider that would support my entry into this field/industry?
20. What would you recommend I do to keep up to date on trends in this field/industry?
21. Do you have any written job descriptions of positions in this field/company?
22. Would you take a short look at my resume/LinkedIn profile and make any recommendations on how I could improve it to be better positioned for success in your field/industry?
23. Are you willing to answer more questions, by phone, email or in person, if I need additional advice in the future?

## Exploring Their Professional Field or Industry

1. What are the diverse types of careers in this field/industry?
  2. Is this field changing? If so, what is driving this change?
  3. Is the field growing? Why? Why not?
  4. In what industries is this field growing the fastest?
  5. In what cities is this field growing the fastest?
  6. What type of education do they require in this industry?
  7. What are the most important skills demanded today in this field?
  8. What is the starting salary in this field?
  9. What is the best thing about working in this field?
  10. Do people stay in this field for their career, or do they tend to leave?
  11. If they leave, what are the common reasons?
  12. What do the common entry-level positions in this field generally entail?
  13. When you look at people who have succeeded in this field, what characteristics do they tend to have?
  14. What would you suggest is the most important thing someone entering this field should know?
  15. If you were going to do it all over again, would you enter this field again?
  16. To progress in this field, are moving cities required?
  17. What international opportunities exist in this field?
  18. What do you wish you'd known before you entered this field?
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## Exploring Their Non-Professional Life

1. How do you define success?
2. How do you balance your professional and life goals?
3. Have you ever had to decide to pursue financial gain in your career at the cost of other elements of your life? If so, what compromises did you have to make?
4. Have you ever had to move to advance your career? Was this a difficult decision?
5. Do you find you've been able to balance friends and family with your professional goals? At any time, did you have to sacrifice one or the other?
6. What are your hobbies or interests? Does your job relate at all to these interests?
7. Have you found stress in your career? If so, what do you do to manage this stress?

Photo: Trevor Lalonde



Photo: Pejay Owor