

RETURN ON INNOVATION  
OCI ANNUAL REPORT 2022 / 2023

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“Ontario has a long history of innovation that has helped grow the automotive, life sciences and technology sectors, as well as many others. Through the Ontario Centre of Innovation, we continue to build on those successes by helping innovators, entrepreneurs and businesses across the province develop and commercialize innovative, made-in-Ontario products and solutions. Together, we’re building a stronger Ontario with opportunities for people and business today and in the future.”

**HON. VIC FEDELI**  
Minister of Economic Development,  
Job Creation and Trade





FOR MORE THAN 36 YEARS, OCI has been accelerating innovation in Ontario. As an ecosystem connector, OCI catalyzes innovation through commercialization partnerships and connects innovators across the province, with the vision of being at the centre of innovation in Ontario.



OCI

DRIVES

ECONOMIC

GROWTH

AND JOB

CREATION







**OCI IS A KEY DRIVER OF ECONOMIC GROWTH** and job creation through investments in the commercialization and adoption of new technologies. With unique private sector matching, we attract investors to otherwise overlooked companies due to our strong expertise in de-risking innovation.





OCI

CONNECTS

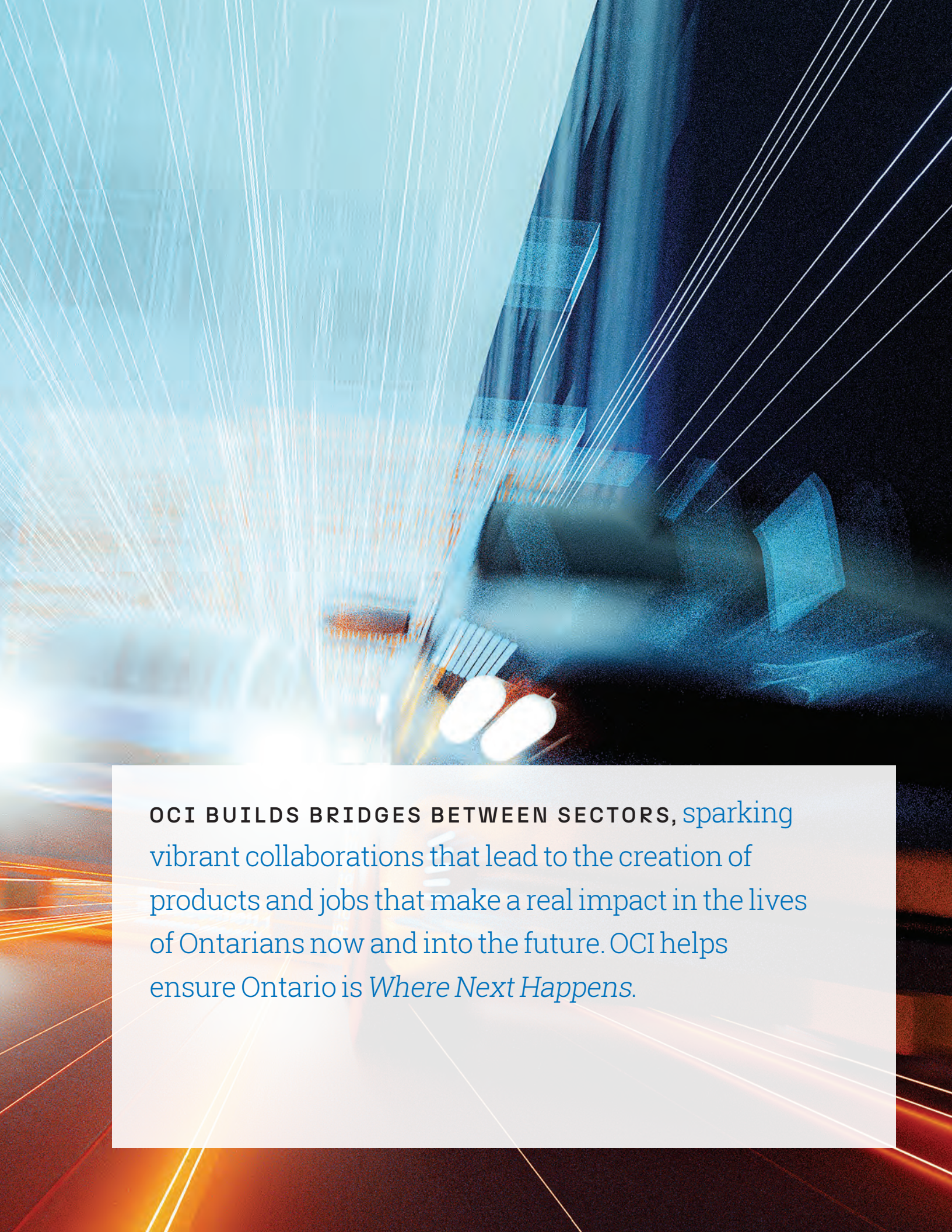
THE

ENTIRE

INNOVATION

ECOSYSTEM





**OCI BUILDS BRIDGES BETWEEN SECTORS,** sparking vibrant collaborations that lead to the creation of products and jobs that make a real impact in the lives of Ontarians now and into the future. OCI helps ensure Ontario is *Where Next Happens.*



# IMPACT

\$ **124M**

Total Investment into technology development, commercialization, and adoption projects

\$ **75M**

Including Co-investment from Industry and Partners

**1.5X**

Leverage



# 513

Ontario Companies Supported

# 6,296

Jobs New & Retained

# \$361M

Incremental Sales Revenues by OCI-supported Companies

# \$717M

Private Sector Follow-on Investment



# WORKING TOGETHER WITH OUR ECOSYSTEM PARTNERS

## MANDATE

Develop and deliver programs that accelerate the development, commercialization, and adoption of advanced technologies to drive job creation.

## VISION

To be at the centre of innovation in Ontario—driving economic growth and job creation through investments in the commercialization and adoption of new technologies.

## MISSION

To bring industry, academic, and government partners together and invest in collaborative R&D, technology development, and commercialization opportunities that will generate the highest return on innovation for Ontarians.

## OUR VALUES

### COLLABORATION

The success of one advances the success of all

### EMPOWERMENT & LEADERSHIP

Lead by example and instill confidence in each other

### COMMUNICATION

Communicate clearly, openly and honestly

### AGILITY

Be responsive and continuously adapt to meet opportunities

### ACCOUNTABILITY

Act with integrity, and own our actions and results

OCI is committed to being an inclusive organization and strongly believes that the diversity of race, gender, ethnicity, demographic, and opinion helps create a more equitable and vibrant innovation ecosystem in Ontario. We actively assess every aspect of our business, as well as our internal and external interactions, to implement changes that ensure that diversity and inclusion are driving our decisions.







A woman with dark hair in braids, wearing a black top and a floral skirt, is looking at a laptop. A man with glasses and a beard is leaning in, looking at the laptop. The background is a blurred office environment.

ONTARIO  
BUSINESSES  
ARE AT THE  
CORNERSTONE  
OF WHAT  
WE DO.



## A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR



It has been my privilege to take on the role of Board Chair at OCI, where I continue to be impressed by the connectivity that the organization brings to the Ontario innovation sector.

Having been a member of OCI's Board for nearly 7 years, I have seen first-hand how OCI continues to support the high-potential companies that are the future of Ontario's economy. OCI has developed a strong foundation of supporting the province's innovators, and is well-poised to continue bolstering the next generation of transformative technologies and services.

With more than 35 years experience in the telecommunications industry, I am no stranger to how important research, development, and an innovative mindset are to building a sustainable economy. Ontario is home to a diverse and talented entrepreneurial workforce, and OCI is proud to work closely with the provincial government to help catalyze the ingenuity and passion of the province's innovators.

A sincere thank you to the Government of Ontario for their ongoing support of the work that OCI does across the province.

Thank you also to my Board of Director colleagues and to President & CEO Claudia Krywiak for the experienced strategic vision that they bring to the table, and to the entire OCI team for helping bring that vision to life.

MARK HENDERSON  
BOARD CHAIR  
OCI

## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO



As I reflect on the past year, 'Where Next' is what comes to mind. An innovation mindset has been at the forefront as innovators and entrepreneurs take lessons learned amid the COVID-19 global pandemic and look to develop what is new and next. Ontario's innovation sector has played an important role in that. OCI is proud to be '*Where Next Happens.*'

While 'Where Next Happens' is OCI's tagline, 'Next' isn't just a buzzword here, it is something we've invested in for some time and strive for always. It is my belief that innovation is going to drive prosperity, create jobs, and contribute to the bright future of Ontario's economy. And beyond that, help change the world for the better.

This past year has made it clear that Made-in-Ontario innovation is a dynamic, collaborative driving force behind next-generation products and solutions. I'm proud to say that this past fiscal year, OCI supported over 500 companies with nearly 6,300 jobs created and retained. OCI-supported companies generated \$360 million in incremental sales revenues as well as attracted \$717 million in private sector follow-on investment.

My sincere thanks to the OCI staff whose hard work and dedication makes much of this possible, our Board of Directors, and in particular the leadership of Mark Henderson who took on the role of Board Chair this past year.

Ontario businesses are at the cornerstone of what we do, and OCI is proud to have been a part of helping take those companies and the innovation ecosystem to the next level this past year and over the last three decades. I look forward to seeing how this community continues to be a catalyst for *What's Next.*

CLAUDIA KRYWIAK  
PRESIDENT & CEO  
OCI



COLLABORATE 2  
COMMERCIALIZE (C2C)

DIGITALIZATION  
COMPETENCE CENTRE (DCC)

LIFE SCIENCES INNOVATION  
FUND (LSIF)

READY 4 MARKET  
(R4M)

ONTARIO VEHICLE  
INNOVATION NETWORK  
(OVIN)

PROOGE





RAMS



## COLLABORATE 2 COMMERCIALIZE

The province's C2C program supports R&D collaborations between Ontario companies and the province's post-secondary institutions to solve industry challenges and drive the commercialization of Intellectual Property (IP). Companies can leverage unique skills and specialized infrastructure to drive innovations and commercialization. This results in targeted training of the next generation of talent and direct engagement with industry to work on commercially viable solutions.

## SUCCESS STORY



**“C2C helped us develop a deep partnership with Hamilton Health Service's CREATE team and through funding for a collaborative software development project to really reinvent how women are managed through the lifecycle of pelvic health.”**

**DEREK SHAM**  
FOUNDER & CEO  
COSM MEDICAL

### COSM MEDICAL

#### A FIRST OF-ITS-KIND MEDICAL DEVICE FOR FEMALE PELVIC DISORDERS

Cosm is a medical device startup using AI and 3D printing to modernize vaginal devices for unique bodies and needs. Its first product will be the world's first personalized gynecological prosthetic for pelvic floor disorders, such as prolapse and incontinence, which affect around 50 percent of the female population. Cosm is on its way to improving over one million lives by 2030 by creating a new product category of customized gynecological devices.

Through C2C, Cosm is developing an AI-powered app that supports patient engagement and data collection related to its medical device. Over the last year, Cosm has received nearly \$7 million in financing, most recently securing \$1.9 million from INOVAIT, a network for image-guided therapy that is led by Sunnybrook Research Institute and supported by the Government of Canada's Strategic Innovation Fund.

### RETURN ON INNOVATION

**09**

JOBS NEW AND  
RETAINED

**\$4.8M**

FINANCING  
RAISED

**04**

PATENTS  
SUBMITTED



## INVESTMENT

# \$15M

TOTAL INVESTMENT

# \$6.6M

INCLUDING CO-INVESTMENT  
FROM INDUSTRY AND PARTNERS

## OUTCOMES 2022/23

# \$35.7M

INCREMENTAL SALES

# \$99.9M

PRIVATE SECTOR FOLLOW-ON  
INVESTMENT

# 268

ONTARIO COMPANIES  
SUPPORTED

# 623

JOBS NEW AND RETAINED

## SUCCESS STORY



**“C2C helped us prove that more than one customer can benefit from a storage program like the Cecil project. Not only can the customer use the Powerwall to manage energy use in their home, the local utility can help manage electricity distribution in neighbourhoods.”**

**ANNETTE VERSCHUREN**  
CHAIR & CEO  
NRSTOR INC.

### NRSTOR

#### FINDING NEW WAYS TO CHARGE ELECTRIC VEHICLES AND HOMES

As EVs become increasingly popular, the need for charging infrastructure grows. The Government of Canada has proposed targets that would see 100 percent of the new cars sold to be zero emissions vehicles by 2035. But EVs can't exist without the creation of a vast charging infrastructure that makes it easy and accessible to charge vehicles.

NRStor's solution is helping people use existing infrastructure better by charging EVs and allowing homes to store energy for later use. With support from C2C, NRStor is working with partners to launch the first major residential battery rental program in Canada, called Cecil. Partners in Cecil include Enbridge, Tesla Energy, Toronto Hydro, the University of Waterloo, and Tesla Powerwall installer MPOWER. The NRStor project installs a fleet of Powerwall batteries in various homes in a certain geographic location that are then connected to a street substation to act as a decentralized battery.

#### RETURN ON INNOVATION

# 02

JOBS NEW AND  
RETAINED

# \$2.4M

INCREMENTAL  
SALES REVENUE

# 02

NEW CANADIAN  
CUSTOMERS



## DIGITALIZATION COMPETENCE CENTRE

The DCC is Ontario's knowledge centre focused on driving the digital modernization of Ontario SMEs. It is a Government of Ontario initiative led by OCI that was launched in the fall of 2022. The DCC supports digital literacy through education, coaching, and training to help SMEs understand the benefits of digital adoption. Through DCC, Ontario is placing its SMEs at the forefront of digital transformation, supporting them to adapt and thrive from this digital evolution.

## SUCCESS STORY



**“The DCC program was instrumental in helping CT Bakery select the right technology solution for digital transformation. Its funding and roster of vetted consultants made the technology selection process much faster and easier.”**

**PATRICK MAGNIEN**  
CHIEF DIGITAL INNOVATION  
CT BAKERY

### CT BAKERY

#### ARTISANAL DONUT MAKER USES AUTOMATION TO SCALE BUSINESS

CT Bakery started as a small donut shop with 5 employees in 2004. Now, it is a global provider of handcrafted, artisanal donuts. The Toronto company's donuts are distributed globally and to around 60 retailers across Canada, including Metro, No Frills, Sobeys, McDonalds, and Walmart.

CT Bakery's mission is to create moments of joy through decadent, bakery-fresh experiences. Every single donut is handcrafted, hand-finished and bakery-fresh. The company employs around 106 full-time employees and 250 to 300 seasonal and contract workers. With a global reach, it produces between 500,000 to 1 million donuts daily. CT Bakery also focuses on sustainable practices from recyclable packaging to a lean manufacturing process.

With the DCC Digital Modernization and Adoption Plan (DMAP) program, CT Bakery is working to take its business administration from manual to automated, which will help scale its business into even more retailers and regions.



## PROGRAM STREAMS

DIGITAL  
MODERNIZATION AND  
ADOPTION PLAN  
(DMAP)

TECHNOLOGY  
DEMONSTRATION  
PROGRAM

## SUCCESS STORY



**“This investment is not just accelerating our timeline; it’s amplifying our impact and allowing us to embrace the pace of digitization, and positioning us to make an even more significant contribution to a sustainable and waste-free future.”**

**BRADLEY CREPEAU**  
CEO  
FOOD CYCLE SCIENCE

### FOOD CYCLE SCIENCE REVOLUTIONIZING HOW AT-HOME FOOD WASTE IS MANAGED

In Canada, nearly 60 percent of food produced is thrown away every year. Much of it is avoidable. Eliminating food waste can help address hunger problems and reduce negative impacts on our planet.

Food Cycle Science is revolutionizing the way people manage their at-home food waste with a portable device that turns food scraps into fertilizer. The device can help people reduce the weight and volume of their at-home food waste by 90 percent.

With the DCC DMAP program, Food Cycle Science is applying innovative solutions to its operational needs. Food Cycle Science is implementing IoT and AI across its day-to-day operations in order to scale the business. The project will increase Food Cycle Science’s potential to work with Ontario municipalities and households to autonomously track their greenhouse gas diversion. This would also allow Food Cycle Science to expand its offerings to larger commercial businesses as well as remote communities.



## LIFE SCIENCES INNOVATION FUND

LSIF was launched in the fall of 2022 and is Ontario's early-stage co-investment fund that supports companies in Life Sciences and Healthcare Technologies sectors. The fund is aimed at addressing the unique challenges faced by life sciences entrepreneurs moving novel and capital-intensive innovations from a conceptual stage through to commercialization. Through the fund, OCI co-invests up to \$500,000 in seed financing alongside angel and other investors to help de-risk the opportunity, assisting startups in becoming investor and customer ready and allowing them to attract follow-on investment.

## SUCCESS STORY



**“OCI’s financial investment has been pivotal for Gotcare’s growth. The backing provided us with the essential resources needed to scale our operations into more rural communities across the province, invest in critical areas of our business, and further our mission to make in-home healthcare more accessible to Ontarians.”**

**CHENNY XIA**  
CO-FOUNDER & CEO  
GOTCARE

### GOTCARE

#### HELPING CARE WORKERS IMPROVE HEALTH OUTCOMES AT HOME

Gotcare is delivering health services at homes that were traditionally unreachable. With one of Canada's largest networks of care workers, Gotcare matches clients living at home with qualified care workers.

Gotcare's solution reduces the burden on hospital care systems by addressing low-acuity health needs for older adults, people living with disabilities, and people in rehabilitation right in the home setting. This is helping to address Canada's need for health workers, which has been recognized as one of the greatest challenges facing the country's healthcare system.

In 2021, Gotcare raised \$1.2 million in pre-seed funding from SheEO, the TELUS Pollinator Fund for Good, and Red Thread Ventures. With a network of over 35,000 qualified community care workers, Gotcare services more than 100 remote communities across Canada. With support from LSIF, Gotcare is expanding its team and operations to reach more customers, as well as use automation to manage its operations.



## INVESTMENT

# \$12.5M

TOTAL INVESTMENT

# \$9.5M

INCLUDING CO-INVESTMENT FROM  
PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTORS

## SUCCESS STORY



**“Getting funding from OCI helps us in many ways, not just being able to buy equipment and hire people, but also to signal to the market that we’re a company that the government believes is worth investing in. It is extremely important for us.”**

**SABRINA FIORELLINO**  
CEO & CO-FOUNDER  
FERO INTERNATIONAL

### **FERO INTERNATIONAL HELPING MAKE HEALTHCARE AND DISASTER RELIEF EASIER**

Fero International develops modular infrastructure that supports healthcare needs and disaster relief. The Stoney Creek-based startup creates hard-shell pressurized mobile medical units. These units are prefabricated, require minimal site preparation, and are operational within hours of being delivered.

Fero International's mission is to bring cutting edge, sustainable, and cost-effective modular solutions to the most vulnerable or remote populations around the world. The units are primarily intended for healthcare by creating facilities for hospitals, laboratories, mining sites, military remote communities, and long-term care homes, as well as for crises such as natural disaster and war.

With support from LSIF, Fero International is completing prototypes and building more modular structures to be placed in healthcare sites across Canada. The startup has customers that span Toronto, Winnipeg, and Calgary.



## READY 4 MARKET

R4M is Ontario's leading pre-seed co-investment fund. Through the fund, OCI co-invests with angel and other investors in early-stage Ontario-based startups with competitive IP in order to commercialize transformative technologies to support growth into scalable businesses. This investment de-risks the opportunity, helps the startup become investor and customer ready, and attracts private sector co-investment and follow-on investment.

## SUCCESS STORY



**“OCI has been the cornerstone of Ontario’s innovation and technology landscape, fostering an ecosystem where groundbreaking ideas transform into globally leading businesses. The mentorship, guidance, and financial support provided by OCI have been instrumental in guiding Brickeye.”**

**HAMID ALEMOHAMMAD**  
CO-FOUNDER & COO  
BRICKEYE

### BRICKEYE

#### HELPING MONITOR PIPELINES AND OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS

Brickeye’s industrial IoT and data analytics helps construction and infrastructure companies mitigate risk. Many industries globally rely on sensors for real-time performance monitoring, intelligent process control, and asset monitoring in harsh environments. In such environments, the failure of sensors is a common problem and can cost companies significant operating expenses, high insurance premiums, loss of credibility, and in some cases catastrophic events.

Brickeye’s powerful technologies provide accurate, high-fidelity, and reliable measurement of data when it is paramount. Brickeye products are used for soil and ground water monitoring in the environmental remediation industry. They can also detect the failure of high-performance coatings of pipelines and monitor electricity distribution assets. With support from R4M, Brickeye is expanding its reach to a global set of customers.

### RETURN ON INNOVATION

**37**

JOBS NEW AND  
RETAINED

**\$1.7M**

INCREMENTAL SALES  
VALUE

**02**

TRADEMARKS  
GRANTED



## INVESTMENT

# \$18M

TOTAL INVESTMENT

# \$13.4M

INCLUDING CO-INVESTMENT FROM  
PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTORS

## OUTCOMES 2022/23

# \$121M

INCREMENTAL SALES REVENUES

# \$168M

PRIVATE SECTOR FOLLOW-ON  
INVESTMENT

# 1,741

JOBS NEW AND RETAINED

# 117

ONTARIO COMPANIES  
SUPPORTED

## SUCCESS STORY



**“Our pre-seed round was an essential step that enabled us to scale our team and complete demonstration activities over the last year, including being the first ever company to send deep learning AI to the moon. Without OCI’s funds and the funds of the other investors, we wouldn’t have been able to be on that mission to the moon.”**

**EWAN REID**  
FOUNDER & CEO  
MISSION CONTROL

### MISSION CONTROL FIRST USE OF DEEP-LEARNING AI IN LUNAR ORBIT

Mission Control’s software and AI makes costly and cumbersome space exploration easier and more accessible. Its robotic and mission operations software works in harsh and remote environments, like Mars, the Moon, and Earth. In December 2022, Mission Control became the first organization in the world to deploy deep-learning AI in lunar orbit. This came as part of the SpaceX Falcon 9 mission, which launched from NASA’s Kennedy Space Center carrying Mission Control’s AI technology, MoonNet.

Mission Control’s technology helps increase the safety, efficiency, and return of robotics missions to space. Mission Control has worked with space industry juggernauts like NASA, MDA, and Canada’s Department of National Defence. Through support from R4M, Mission Control is streamlining its development and operations for robotic space missions. In 2023, Mission Control raised \$2.4 million in seed financing.

### RETURN ON INNOVATION

# 40

JOBS NEW AND  
RETAINED

# \$1.1M

INCREMENTAL  
SALES REVENUE

# \$10.5M

RAISED  
TOTAL



## ONTARIO VEHICLE INNOVATION NETWORK

OVIN is an initiative of the Government of Ontario, led by OCI, designed to reinforce Ontario's position as a North American leader in advanced automotive technology and smart mobility solutions. OVIN helps Ontario-made automotive and mobility technology SMEs to thrive and drive the future of cleaner and safer transportation, such as connected, autonomous, electric, and low-emission vehicle technologies.

## SUCCESS STORY



**“OVIN has been pivotal in helping Alchemy recruit quality STEM talent to fuel execution of critical growth initiatives. Thanks to the support from OVIN, we have been able to make significant progress on expanding the longevity of our ExoShield GT3 windshield protection film and have launched our heavy-duty ExoShield ULTRA kits for the Jeep Wrangler/Ford Bronco communities.”**

**KHANJAN DESAI**  
CEO & CO-FOUNDER  
ALCHEMY

### ALCHEMY

#### NANOTECHNOLOGY PROTECTING CRITICAL AUTONOMOUS VEHICLE SENSORS

Alchemy has developed next-generation coatings powered by nanotechnology that protects vehicles. The coatings can prevent stone chips, improve visibility, block UV radiation, prevent frost, and reduce cabin heating. Alchemy's technology is also being used to develop camouflage materials for military detection devices.

Through OVIN's TalentEdge Internship Program, Alchemy is adapting its nanocoating technology to effectively prevent autonomous vehicle sensor blindness in harsh weather conditions. TIP helps current and recently graduated post-secondary students work on R&D projects related to automotive and smart mobility. Alchemy's nanotechnology coatings can protect optical sensors, which are devices used when developing and training autonomous vehicles. Alchemy helps vehicle owners save on replacement costs and helps insurance companies reduce claim severity and frequency.

#### RETURN ON INNOVATION

**\$222,000**

INCREMENTAL  
SALES REVENUE

**40**

NEW  
CUSTOMERS

**\$2.98M**

FOLLOW-ON  
INVESTMENT



## INVESTMENT

**\$42M**

TOTAL INVESTMENT

**\$26.5M**

INCLUDING CO-INVESTMENT  
FROM INDUSTRY AND PARTNERS

## OUTCOMES 2022/23

**\$62.2M**

INCREMENTAL SALES REVENUE

**\$235M**

PRIVATE SECTOR FOLLOW-ON  
INVESTMENT

**1,660**

JOBS NEW AND RETAINED

**80**

ONTARIO COMPANIES  
SUPPORTED

## SUCCESS STORY



**“With support from OVIN, we created a sensor technology that was for a snow plow project but we’re applying it to our own generic product, so it has a broad scope. That specific sensor technology allows us to perceive objects in all kinds of weather conditions, so that support from OVIN was fundamental.”**

**JEREMY JAMES**  
PRESIDENT & CTO  
FOUR DROBOTICS

### FOUR DROBOTICS MAKING MANNED VEHICLES UNMANNED AND AUTONOMOUS

Four DRobotics has developed what it calls autonomous vehicles as-a-service, software that allows it to make regular vehicles autonomous. The company uses AI to turn industrial vehicles, like snowplows, into autonomous ones. The idea is that these vehicles can operate non-stop in all weather conditions, 365 days a year, where humans might not be able to. Four DRobotics aims to automate labour intensive and dangerous activities such as physical security, surveillance, and remediation.

With support from OVIN, Four DRobotics partnered with Algonquin College and the City of Ottawa to develop and demonstrate a sensor prototype that can be installed in the cabin of snowplows to assist with manned operation and eventually shift to autonomous.

### RETURN ON INNOVATION

**09**

JOBS NEW AND  
RETAINED

**\$1.2M**

INCREMENTAL SALES  
REVENUE

**\$3.8M**

FOLLOW-ON  
INVESTMENT





OVIN IS  
ACCELERATING  
TECHNOLOGY  
DEVELOPMENT  
AND  
COMMERCIALIZATION  
ACROSS ONTARIO'S  
INNOVATION  
ECOSYSTEM.



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# ONTARIO VEHICLE INNOVATION NETWORK

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## OVIN SKILLS & TALENT STRATEGY FOR THE AUTOMOTIVE & MOBILITY SECTOR

One of the initiatives OVIN launched this past year was the Regional Future Workforce (RFW) Program, a pilot designed to encourage students of all ages, across all regions of Ontario, to pursue careers in the automotive and mobility sector.

The RFW Program provides over \$6 million to 14 automotive and mobility-focused programs delivered by non-profit organizations, postsecondary institutions, and school boards across Ontario. These programs aim to connect students from kindergarten through postsecondary to careers in the sector, with the goal of strengthening the Province's talent pipeline and leadership of this rapidly evolving economic segment.

### THE RFW PROJECTS ACROSS ONTARIO SPAN:

<a href="#">North Bay</a>	<a href="#">York Region</a>
<a href="#">Ottawa Region</a>	<a href="#">Peel Region</a>
<a href="#">Elliot Lake</a>	<a href="#">Thunder Bay</a>
<a href="#">Hamilton</a>	<a href="#">Sarnia</a>
<a href="#">Durham Region</a>	<a href="#">Huron Region</a>
<a href="#">Kingston Region</a>	<a href="#">and more...</a>
<a href="#">Barrie</a>	
<a href="#">Waterloo Region</a>	
<a href="#">Toronto</a>	

## OVIN REGIONAL TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT SITES

OVIN is accelerating technology development and commercialization across Ontario's innovation ecosystem. With Regional Technology Development Sites (RTDS) located in Waterloo, Ottawa, Hamilton, Durham, Windsor-Essex, Toronto, and Northern Ontario, OVIN is bringing together innovators in key regions of the automotive supply chain to support the development, testing, and prototyping of advanced automotive technologies and mobility solutions.

The sites are uniquely positioned as regional accelerators, with strong links to small-to-medium-sized enterprises, postsecondary institutions, incubators, municipal and regional resources, innovation centres, and other regional collaborators. Through this network of physical sites across Ontario, automotive and mobility innovators can access specialized equipment, business and technical advisory services, and opportunities to test and pilot new technologies—each one powered by regional strengths and resources, and focused on a unique aspect of the sector.

By bringing together the seven RTDS sites, OVIN is harnessing the breadth of Ontario's automotive and mobility capabilities—from the critical mineral supply in Northern Ontario, to the long-standing automotive manufacturing strength of Southern Ontario, and the province's leading-edge technology hubs—to build the cars of the future, at full speed and power.



## HELPING COMPANIES SCALE

OneEleven remains Canada's leading innovation hub for post-seed companies. By providing focused programming, OneEleven has established itself as the pre-eminent hub for upskilling tech talent. With a focus on helping companies grow and scale, the hub has an ever-expanding membership of 42 companies.

OneEleven's talent upskilling programming has flourished and led to the launch of additional supports that help companies get the most out of their talent. Last year, OneEleven created the learning management platform and strengthened its mentorship program in partnership with Mindframe Connect to help tech companies. Showing the value of bringing together community, OneEleven also partnered with Together (a OneEleven company) to provide a mentorship platform for improved mentor-mentee engagements.

Showcasing its role as a pillar of the Toronto innovation community, OneEleven continues to host major events such as the Spring Showcase, TechTO, and Flick Up Nights. This year's Spring Showcase was a landmark moment, spotlighting the hub's largest cohort of 10 companies that pitched to a crowd of esteemed experts, strategic corporate partners, and investors.

## STARTUP ACCELERATOR

The Toronto Business Development Centre (TBDC) is Toronto's first startup accelerator and designated entity under Canada's Start-up Visa Program that serves as an ecosystem for immigrant entrepreneurs looking to establish a footprint in Ontario. OCI works with TBDC to offer a Soft-Landing Program to assist high-potential startups and scale-ups. Since the launch of the program, 247 international entrepreneurs have been approved and the companies have generated more than \$2.4 million in revenue.



TBDC

TORONTO BUSINESS  
DEVELOPMENT CENTRE





## SUCCESS STORY



**“The OneEleven space is an amazing drop-in solution for Sampler’s 50-person team. During the pandemic our team went fully remote but many of us were missing some of the benefits of in-person interactions. My favorite part though is the programming, the networking opportunities, and the natural ‘run-ins’ that my team can expect while working from OneEleven.”**

**MARIE CHEVRIER SCHWARTZ**  
CEO & FOUNDER  
SAMPLER

### SAMPLER REVOLUTIONIZING DIGITAL PRODUCT SAMPLING

In today’s ever-evolving digital landscape, reaching target consumers has become both a challenge and an opportunity. Enter Sampler, a pioneering digital platform designed specifically for product sampling, bridging the gap between brands and their ideal consumers.

Unlike traditional sampling methods, which often miss the mark by distributing products to uninterested parties, Sampler employs advanced targeting techniques. With its innovative platform, brands can offer samples to a curated audience, ensuring that products land in the hands of consumers most likely to engage with and purchase them in the future.

Sampler’s reputation in the industry is solidified by its notable partnerships with global giants such as Unilever, Target, and L’Oreal. OneEleven has allowed Sampler to provide office space to its staff after 3 years of remote work, in addition to programming and networking opportunities.

### RETURN ON INNOVATION

**\$11.1M**

RAISED TOTAL

**70**

JOBS NEW AND  
RETAINED

**02**

ACQUISITIONS



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# 2022 M2M WINNER GENECIS BIOINDUSTRIES

**OCI's Mind to Market (M2M) Award celebrates** the best OCI-supported research collaboration between the business and research communities resulting in effective commercialization of leading-edge ideas and solutions. Award recipients exemplify the success that is possible when the brightest minds in industry and research collaborate to address today's most critical issues. M2M is presented each year at OCI's Annual General Meeting.



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**“Genecis Bioindustries’ work is vital right now as it addresses urgent environmental challenges, reduces plastic pollution, tackles food waste, promotes sustainability and resource efficiency, drives the transition to a circular economy, and meets the rising demand for sustainable solutions.”**

**LUNA YU**  
FOUNDER & CEO  
GENECIS BIOINDUSTRIES

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## GENECIS BIOINDUSTRIES

Genecis Bioindustries is a startup with a big vision – plastic without pollution. The biotechnology startup converts organic waste into a biodegradable, compostable, and non-toxic polymer that can replace a variety of traditional plastics. Congratulations to Genecis Founder and CEO Luna Yu for being last year’s award winner!

Genecis is both diverting organic waste from landfills and creating plastic alternatives that are better for the environment. In the last year, Genecis has raised more than \$10 million USD from notable industry leaders that include Amazon’s Climate Pledge Fund and BDC Capital’s Cleantech Practice. Over the last year, Genecis has secured customers from across North America and Europe. It also has a pilot program in a London, Ontario biogas plant, and is gearing up to launch its own products this year using its bioplastics.

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# OUR EMPLOYEES THE ENGINE THAT DRIVES OCI

**Our employees are the engine that drives OCI's ability** to be an ecosystem connector. It is their constant hard work that allows OCI to play a key role in the Ontario innovation ecosystem. Our on-the-ground, experienced business development (BD) team and leaders help build collaborations to commercialize innovation and support high-potential companies in adopting emerging technologies.



“Ontario benefits from a comprehensive post-secondary institutional network **that supports the training of highly skilled talent. This same network is also a technical resource that can further support the development and commercialization of Made-in-Ontario solutions that enable the competitive edge that our companies require.**”

**Jeff Van Heumen**  
Assistant Vice-President  
Business Development



“The high-level variety and breadth of innovation occurring across the province is phenomenal, **Ontario and its companies truly are a powerhouse for innovation. It is exciting to be able to work with industry large and small, government, academia and the full ecosystem to help drive this innovation through the development, commercialization and adoption of new technologies and witness first hand the resultant economic growth for the companies and Ontario.**”

**Philippa King**  
Assistant Vice-President  
Strategic Programs



“The innovation we are driving is unlocking a multitude of opportunities **and positive impacts here in Ontario. Through OVIN specifically, we are introducing ground-breaking technologies and services, solving critical challenges faced by societies, and driving economic growth and solutions for improving quality of life. Innovation is a catalyst for progress, and it's so exciting to be part of this transformation.**”

**Mona Eghanian**  
Assistant Vice-President  
OVIN





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HAPPENS







## OCI GOVERNANCE & EXECUTIVE TEAM

**OCI is a not-for-profit organization governed by an independent Board of Directors that includes observers from the provincial government. OCI is funded by the Government of Ontario and also receives funding from the Government of Canada.**

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