

5 Reasons to Choose Calgary for your next AI/Tech/Energy Event

From its natural resources to its young, entrepreneurial and vibrant population, [Calgary](#) is a city bursting with energy. Home to 1,700 energy businesses with local, provincial, national and international operations, Calgary is firmly on the world stage when it comes to energy, entrepreneurship and innovation.

With a pioneering spirit at its core, it's no surprise that Calgary is also fast developing into a hub for Artificial Intelligence (AI) and machine learning innovation through cutting edge research and development.

There's no better time to choose Calgary for your next tech, AI or energy event, and here's why:

1. Investment

In the last 15 years, Alberta has invested over \$40 million towards AI and machine learning within the province (source: Alberta Advanced Education), and in February 2019, the Alberta Government announced targeted [funding of \\$100 million and a five-year plan](#) to launch new programs to build machine intelligence capabilities in business and support a diversified economy.

It's believed the provincial funding will net 5,600 high-skill jobs, more than 100 new companies and dozens of multi-national offices and labs across Alberta. An initial investment of \$27 million in the Alberta Machine Intelligence Institute (Amii) will see the non-profit set up a new program to support companies looking to build up their in-house AI capacity, and will also allow Edmonton-based Amii to establish a new Calgary office.

Government tax credits and funding services are also available to accelerate business growth through innovation and technology.

2. Ahead of the Game: world-class talent, research & innovation

Alberta is home to a number of world-class AI researchers including [Dr. Richard Sutton](#), the pioneer of Deep Reinforcement Learning (DRL) and author of the textbook *Deep Reinforcement Learning*. A professor at University of Alberta, Dr. Sutton seeks to identify general computational principles underlying what is meant by intelligence and goal-directed behaviour. In 2017, he co-founded the Alberta satellite laboratory for Google's DeepMind Technologies.

The Alberta Machine Intelligence Institute (Amii), affiliated with the University of Alberta, is ranked third in the world for artificial intelligence and machine learning (source: CSRankings *Computer Science Rankings*), and a number of companies including Google Brain, Google Research, Microsoft Research, IBM Research, and Volkswagen Data Lab conduct collaborative research through the lab.

Other companies including the Royal Bank of Canada and Mitsubishi also use Alberta research facilities for world-class AI innovation.

3. University of Calgary: advanced post-secondary & research capabilities

The [Department of Computer Science](#) at the University of Calgary has a strong international reputation as a leading research and teaching institution, and conducts advanced research and development in the field of AI and machine learning across all sectors.

It was a geography research project at the [University of Calgary](#), which led to the development of MyHEAT, using urban thermal remote sensing technology to detect heat loss in homes across Canada. MyHEAT won the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's (MIT) grant prize for global climate change solutions.

4. A history of notable AI events

Last spring saw big names like Amazon, Apple and Facebook among a notable group of industry leaders in signal processing attend the [IEEE](#) International Conference on Acoustics, Speech and Signal Processing (ICASSP) held at CTCC. The conference featured sessions on technology trends from AI to Cyber security, and introduced new developments in computer vision, speech recognition, speech synthesis and other technologies underlying our digital lives.

In summer 2018, the [Inventures](#) conference, also held at CTCC featured more than 150 speakers and industry leaders in big data, lean start-up and global research. An initiative of Alberta Innovates, the province's largest research and innovation agency, Inventures provided high-profile keynote speakers, opportunities to connect one-on-one and collaborate with like-minded influencers and also played host to live pitch events. The event was so successful, it will be coming back in to the CTCC in June 2019.

And in autumn 2018, experts from across the globe attended the '2018 Gairdner International Symposium, Big Data for Health: Expectation', hosted by the O'Brien Institute for Public Health at the University of Calgary, to talk big data, AI, and what it all means for health research.

5. Bright Young Calgarians

In October 2018, Claire Du and Gerry Lu, both Grade 11 students at University of Calgary, organized an event called [AI4 Youth Canada](#) Conference.

Polling their fellow students at schools, the pair found most teens didn't know what kind of AI technology they encounter on a daily basis. So they wanted not just to demystify the sector for high school students, but provide the resources to learn more and ultimately empower youth to proactively become game-changers in our AI-integrated world. "AI is going to be changing our lives as the next generation," says Du, "so, it's going to be very useful in the future for us to change AI as well."