

### Program for Black Youth

At the Experiential Learning in Innovation, Technology, and Entrepreneurship (ELITE) Program for Black youth, our goal is to help Black youth build capacity to pursue successful careers in STEMM and explore entrepreneurship.

In 2023, we continued our mission to provide holistic, work-integrated, hands-on experiential learning experiences for Black Youth in STEMM, supporting our largest cohort of students since inception. We welcomed one-of-a-kind projects from new and returning internship hosts and connected with new community partners, cementing ourselves as an innovative, community focused, and sustainable program.

This report captures the highlights of another memorable year of operation for the ELITE Program for Black Youth.



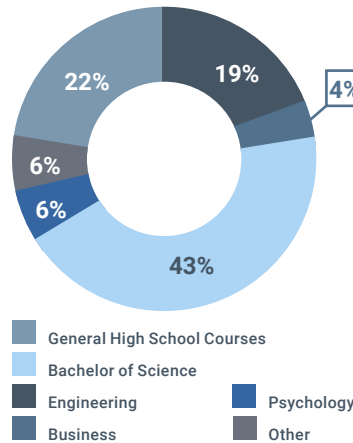
ELITE Program interns after the 2023 Final Technical Presentation Workshop

### ELITE Program 2023 Interns

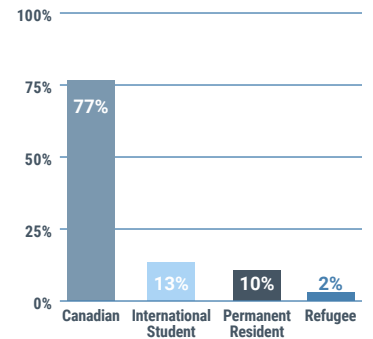
**Total Number of Interns: 53**

In 2023, the ELITE Program supported a large and diverse cohort of students. Most notably, this group featured our largest contingent of Francophone students to date. Approximately one-third of the cohort was composed of returning interns. Additionally, for a second year, the ELITE Program partnered with Carleton University to host undergraduate interns from their Faculty of Engineering and Design.

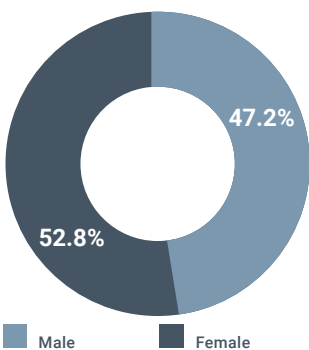
Areas of Study



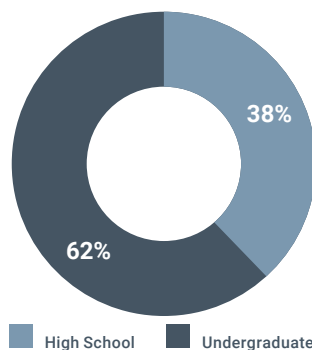
Citizenship Status



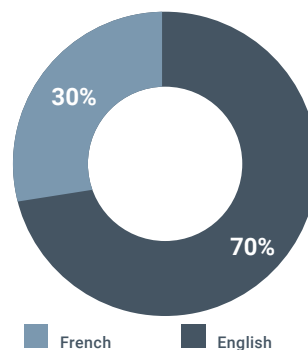
Gender



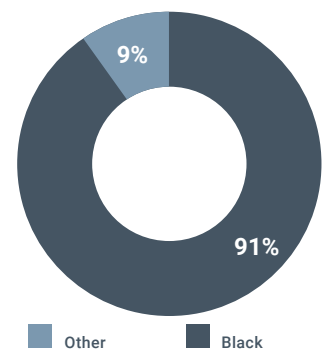
Academic Level



Language Demographics



Ethnicity



## The ELITE Impact

- » From a program survey conducted by the Black Business Ventures Association, we know that for many interns, this internship was their first practical work experience.
- » Out of the participants in the Entrepreneurship Design Series, 21 reported starting new entrepreneurial or business ventures since completing the ELITE Program.
- » The Wellness and Coaching team was accepted to participate in the Canadian Counseling and Psychotherapy Association's 2023 Conference.
- » Madison Dabbs-Petty, the Wellness Coordinator for the Wellness and Coaching series, attended the Canadian Psychological Association's (CPA) 2023 Conference to present a poster based on ELITE Program research.
- » Upon completion of the Wellness and Coaching program, both high school and undergraduate interns saw significant increases in their ability to manage microaggressions and anti-Black racism, cope with stress, and identify and communicate their emotions among other wellness goals set in the program.



*"It's [the ELITE Program] a really good opportunity for motivated Black youth to just find a way in, because, no matter how much motivation you have, if there are no doors open, how can you get somewhere."*

**Hamidat Bello**  
1<sup>st</sup> year Computer Science Student

Hamidat Bello in the Rehabilitation Robotics Lab



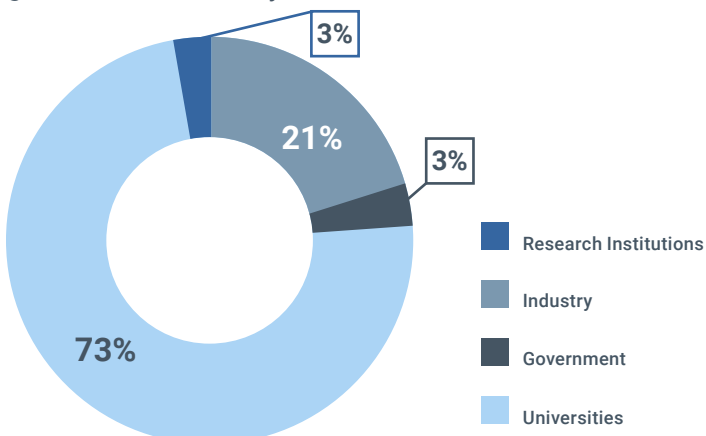
Samuel Yoma, Dr. André McDonald, Wisdom Sanouvi-Awoga and Efrain Djewoe at the final presentation workshop

*"The ELITE Program has been one of the best experiences of my life. It has given me the chance to work on a meaningful project, learn from amazing mentors, meet inspiring peers and alumni, and discover new opportunities."*

**Jesugbenga Omoniwa**  
3<sup>rd</sup> year Computer Science student

## The Internship Hosts

We welcomed several new internship hosts from industry this year, including Clavis Studio and Neo Juicery, and had numerous returning internship hosts. In total, we had over 30 unique internship hosts across government, industry, and academia.



ELITE Program interns from the Rehab Robotics Lab

*"The ELITE Program itself, it's a feeder. You give students this opportunity and it encourages more Black students to apply for university, encourages more Black students to get into research."*

**Emily Armstrong**  
Rehab Robotics Lab

## Community Partners

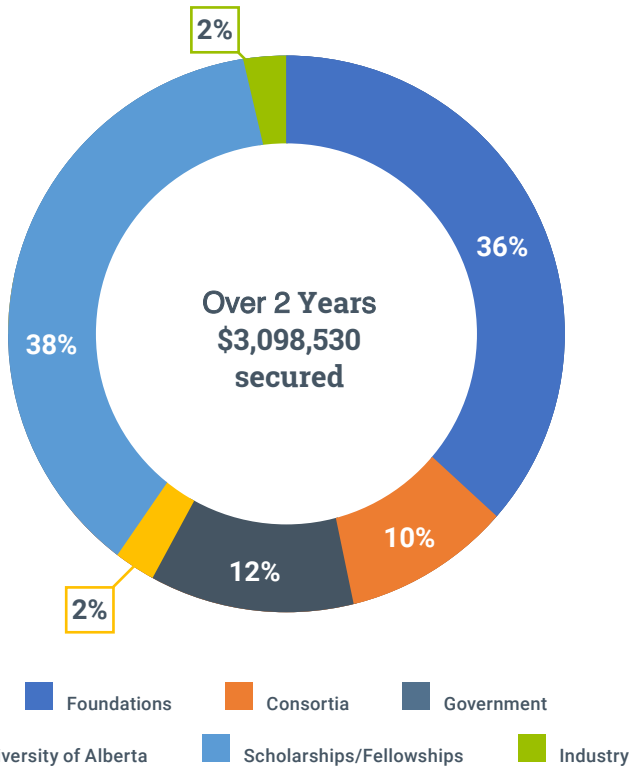
The ELITE Program is made possible through the support of various community partners. This year, the Black Business Ventures Association along with Edmonton Unlimited were integral in the development and delivery of the Entrepreneurship Design Series.



National Black Coalition of Canada Society  
SUPPORTING ALL BLACKS IN THE EDMONTON COMMUNITY



BLACK BUSINESS VENTURES ASSOCIATION



## Our 2023 sponsors include:

- RBC Foundation Future Launch Program
- The Counselling Foundation of Canada
- Future Skills Centre
- Edmonton Regional Innovation Network
- University of Alberta
- Carleton University
- Government of Canada Summer Jobs Program
- MITACS
- Alberta Innovates Institutional Support of Entrepreneurship Education Program
- Enbridge Inc.
- Stantec

### To Learn More About the ELITE Program for Black Youth:

Visit us at [www.eliteprogram.ca](http://www.eliteprogram.ca)

Follow us on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [LinkedIn](#)

Contact us at [elite@ualberta.ca](mailto:elite@ualberta.ca)

## Funding

The ELITE Program for Black Youth has had generous financial support from not-for-profit organizations, foundations, industry, and government over the past three cohorts since inception in January 2021. During that period, we have received \$1,488,530 in cash contributions, and have already secured \$450,000 for the upcoming three-year cycle which begins in 2024. We also secured \$440,000 in scholarship opportunities over the past three years for high school and undergraduate students and \$720,000 for fellowships for Black graduate students in Engineering and Science at the University of Alberta.

New to the 2023 year, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) of Canada offered \$72,000 in funding to students in STEM through their [Undergraduate Student Research Awards Program](#). A total of 12 undergraduate interns from the ELITE Program received funding from the program.

Additionally, we were also grateful to receive a gift from Stantec of \$12,000 toward our program operations and secured \$5,000 in funding from the Edmonton Regional Innovation Network (ERIN) for the Entrepreneurship Design Series. We remain open to engagements around funding opportunities to support the next three years of ELITE Program work-integrated internships and training.



ELITE Program interns at Edmonton Unlimited

