



BBE TRADE FAIR 2025 REPORT

AUGUST 23-24, 2025



BLACK BUSINESS
EDMONTON

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE BLACK BUSINESS EDMONTON (BBE) TRADE FAIR 2025 WAS HELD AT THE **UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA BUTTERDOME** ON AUGUST 23–24, 2025. THE THEME WAS “MORE THAN A MARKET; CELEBRATING CULTURE, COMMERCE AND COMMUNITY.”

THE EVENT BROUGHT TOGETHER OVER **100 VENDORS** AND MORE THAN **1,200 ATTENDEES**. IT FEATURED WORKSHOPS ON BUSINESS GROWTH, CULTURAL PERFORMANCES, FAMILY-FRIENDLY PROGRAMMING, AND COUNTLESS OPPORTUNITIES FOR NETWORKING AND COLLABORATION.

WHILE THE TRADE FAIR WAS A STRONG SUCCESS IN IMPACT AND ATTENDANCE, IT CLOSED WITH A FINANCIAL SHORTFALL:

- **TOTAL EXPENSES: \$106,955.19**
- **TOTAL REVENUE: \$92,200**
- **DEFICIT: \$14,755.19**

THIS SHORTFALL DEMONSTRATES A GAP BETWEEN THE TRUE COST OF DELIVERING HIGH-QUALITY, COMMUNITY-BUILDING PROGRAMMING AND THE RESOURCES CURRENTLY AVAILABLE TO US. SPONSORSHIPS & VENDOR FEES ONLY PARTIALLY COVER THE INVESTMENT REQUIRED TO HOST AN EVENT THAT SUPPORTS HUNDREDS OF BLACK-OWNED AND DIVERSE BUSINESSES, CREATES VISIBILITY FOR ENTREPRENEURS, AND STRENGTHENS EDMONTON'S ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ECOSYSTEM.

PURPOSE

VISION

&



THE TRADE FAIR WAS DESIGNED TO:

- **EMPOWER LOCAL ENTREPRENEURS WITH VISIBILITY AND GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES.**
- **FOSTER COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS THROUGH SHARED CULTURE AND COMMERCE.**
- **HIGHLIGHT FUNDING AND PROCUREMENT OPPORTUNITIES WITH INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERS.**
- **CREATE A CELEBRATORY, INCLUSIVE MARKETPLACE WHERE ALL COULD THRIVE.**

DAY 1 TIMELINE HIGHLIGHTS

(SATURDAY, AUG 23, 2025)

[Watch here!](#)

- **7:00 AM – 11:00 AM:** VENDOR SET-UP, SOUND AND TECH CHECKS.
- **10:00 AM:** VENDOR NETWORKING COFFEE WITH HABEESHA CRAVINGS, SPONSORED BY BDC & BBE.
- **11:00 AM:** DOORS OPEN. KIDSZONE LAUNCHED ON THE SECOND FLOOR.
- **12:00 PM:** WELCOME ADDRESS, LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT, AND REMARKS FROM ALBERTA PREMIER DANIELLE SMITH.
- **12:15 PM – 12:35 PM:** REMARKS FROM YUSUF MOHAMMED (ABAC) AND MLA SHARIF HAJI.
- **1:15 PM:** TASTE DISTRICT STAGE OPENS WITH DJ YOMEXX.
- **2:00 PM:** WORKSHOP POWERED BY RBC & FACE COALITION: “FROM SURVIVING TO SCALING.”
- **3:00 PM:** STEEL PAN PERFORMANCE WITH DANIELLE GEORGE.
- **4:00 PM:** DRUM SESSION BY SANGA ACADEMY.
- **5:00 PM:** BBE AWARDS PRESENTATION HONORING RANDY BOISSONNAULT AND DARREN JORDAN.
- **5:30 PM – 6:45 PM:** LIVE MUSIC BY THATGUY TREVA, SEPTIMUS ALEXANDER, AND SENCELOSIA BAND.
- **7:00 PM – 9:00 PM:** CLOSING CELEBRATION WITH DJ PAIGE.
- **9:00 PM:** OFFICIAL CLOSE OF DAY 1.



DAY 2 TIMELINE HIGHLIGHTS (SUNDAY, AUG 24, 2025)

[Watch here!](#)

- **12:00 PM:** DOORS OPEN. KIDSZONE ACTIVITIES BEGIN.
- **2:00 PM:** WORKSHOP POWERED BY BDC & CANADIAN BLACK FARMERS ASSOCIATION: “COLLABORATIONS THAT COUNT.”
- **4:30 PM:** R&B PERFORMANCE BY JANIEART_N_MUSIC.
- **5:00 PM:** DANCEHALL AEROBICS YEG ENERGIZES THE TASTE DISTRICT.
- **5:30 PM:** YEG MARIMBA PERFORMANCE.
- **6:00 PM:** CLOSING REMARKS BY FOUNDER IBUKUN OREFUJA, INCLUDING SPONSOR APPRECIATION AND FUTURE VISION.
- **6:15 PM – 7:00 PM:** CLOSING CELEBRATION WITH DJ PAIGE.
- **7:00 PM:** EVENT OFFICIALLY CLOSES.

VENDOR MARKETPLACE

OVER **100** VENDORS SHOWCASED PRODUCTS ACROSS CATEGORIES INCLUDING:

- **FOOD AND BEVERAGES**
- **FASHION AND ACCESSORIES**
- **TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION**
- **HEALTH AND WELLNESS**
- **ARTS AND CRAFTS**

PROMOTIONS AND VENDOR SPECIALS WERE ANNOUNCED THROUGHOUT THE EVENT, HELPING MANY VENDORS ACHIEVE **SOLD-OUT** SALES AND BUILD NEW COLLABORATIONS.



THE TASTE DISTRICT SERVED AS THE HUB OF CULTURE AND ENTERTAINMENT. HOSTED BY TANYA THOMPSON-OGWANG, ESTHER JOHNSON AND DANNY BAY, IT FEATURED:

- **AFROBEATS, REGGAE, R&B, CARIBBEAN STEEL PAN, AND JAZZ PERFORMANCES.**
- **FOOD AND BEVERAGE TASTINGS THAT REFLECTED GLOBAL BLACK CUISINE.**
- **A LIVELY ENVIRONMENT THAT BLENDED COMMERCE WITH CELEBRATION.**

TASTE DISTRICT



KIDSZONE



**THE KIDSZONE
CREATED AN
INCLUSIVE, FAMILY-
FRIENDLY
ATMOSPHERE!**

- STORYTELLING AND MASK-MAKING.
- DRUMMING WORKSHOPS AND CULTURAL EDUCATION.
- FUN CRAFTS AND GAMES CONNECTING CHILDREN TO HERITAGE.



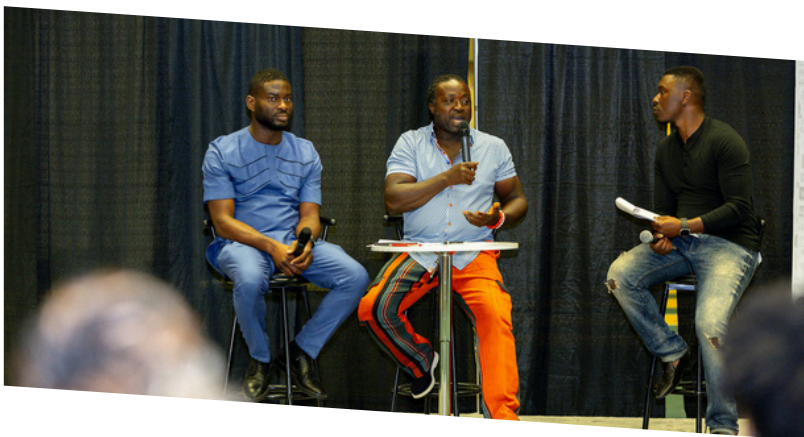
WORKSHOPS & PANELS

TWO HIGH-IMPACT WORKSHOPS ANCHORED THE TRADE FAIR

RBC & FACE COALITION: “FROM SURVIVING TO SCALING” – PRACTICAL ADVICE ON FUNDING AND GROWTH.



BDC & CANADIAN BLACK FARMERS ASSOCIATION: “COLLABORATIONS THAT COUNT” – FOSTERING BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS.



THESE SESSIONS EQUIPPED ENTREPRENEURS WITH TOOLS AND KNOWLEDGE TO GROW SUSTAINABLY.

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

TWO COMMUNITY LEADERS WERE HONORED

Randy Boissonnault
Recognized for
contributions to
workforce
development and
entrepreneurship.



Darren Jordan
Celebrated for
advancing arts and
culture through “5
Artists 1 Love.”

SPONSORS & PARTNERS

**LEGACY SPONSOR
GOVERNMENT OF CANADA**

Funded by the
Government
of Canada

Financé par le
gouvernement
du Canada

Canada



BRIDGING INNOVATION

POWERED BY



**TASTE DISTRICT SPONSOR
EDMONTON RIN**

**MARKETPLACE DISTRICT SPONSOR
RBC**



**GROWTH SPONSORS
TELUS, BDC**



**Community Partners
AMA, Lloyd Sadd, Compassion Medical Wellness,
and, others**



LloydSadd



MEDIA COVERAGE

YouTube Playlist of the BBE Trade Fair 2025



B Rolls Promo Playlist for the BBE Trade Fair 2025

**CBC Radio Active with Jessica Ng,
ft. Ibukun Orefuja (IBK), the Founder
and CEO of Black Business Edmonton &
OG Jonah, the marketing and media
director.**



PHOTO GALLERY

Explore the highlights and memories



view the full photo gallery
from the BBE Trade Fair 2025



showcasing our
vendors, cultural
performances,
workshops, and
community connections.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- **Afrocentric cultural performances and workshops.**
- **Financil and collaboration workshops.**
- **Family programming designed to include all ages.**
- **Volunteer Impact with over 50 volunteers who supported the event.**
- **Key roles: registration, vendor coordination, Kids Zone facilitation, stage management.**

VENDOR SUCCESS STORIES

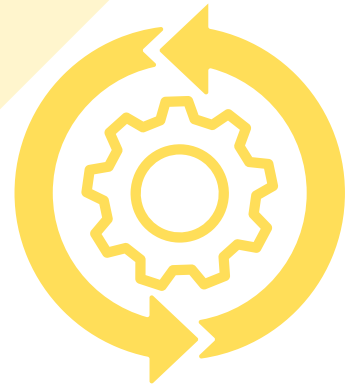
- **Many vendors sold out inventory.**
- **Others secured follow-up contracts and business collaborations.**
- **Access to resources through RBC, BDC, and government connections created long-term value.**

FEEDBACK

“EXCELLENT, VERY ORGANIZED AND WE WILL DEFINITELY PARTICIPATE ON ANY UPCOMING EVENTS THIS ORGANIZATION MAY HOLD.”

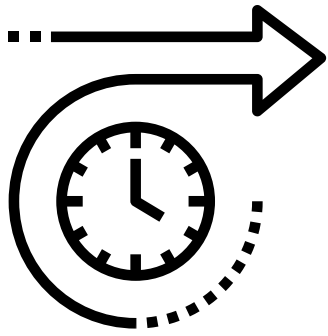
“I APPRECIATED THE EFFORT AND COMMUNITY SPIRIT BEHIND THE FAIR, AND EVERYTHING WAS WELL ORGANIZED ON THE DAY.”

CHALLENGES & LESSONS LEARNED



- **Funding Delays & Shortfalls:** Despite confirmed funding commitments, delays in disbursement and overall shortfalls placed strain on event operations. This contributed to a \$14,755.19 deficit, highlighting the gap between the resources required to deliver large-scale programming and the funds available to grassroots organizations like BBE.
- **Venue Logistics:** Hosting at the University of Alberta Butterdome provided visibility but required significant coordination in areas such as layout, parking, and traffic flow. With increased funding, BBE can strengthen venue management, logistics staffing, and vendor/attendee services to enhance future experiences.
- **Demand Exceeding Capacity:** Interest in the Trade Fair surpassed booth availability, leading to waitlists for vendors who wanted to participate. With additional support, BBE can expand booth capacity, create more exhibitor spaces, and ensure more entrepreneurs benefit from this economic and cultural platform.
- **Sound & Technology Management:** Performances, workshops, and presentations required tighter scheduling and improved tech coordination. Increased funding would enable BBE to invest in dedicated technical teams and upgraded equipment to meet the growing scale of programming.

LOOKING AHEAD



TO 2026

Building on the momentum of the 2025 Trade Fair, Black Business Edmonton (BBE) is preparing for an even more impactful 2026 edition. Our focus is not only on expanding the scale of the event but also on deepening its value for entrepreneurs, investors, and the wider community.

Planned Enhancements for 2026:

- **Shift to B2B–B2C Model:** Create a dual structure that fosters both business-to-business (B2B) deals and direct-to-consumer (B2C) sales, ensuring vendors maximize market opportunities.
- **Attract Investors:** Introduce dedicated sessions for venture capitalists, angel investors, and financial institutions to connect directly with Black and diverse entrepreneurs.
- **Cultural & International Partnerships:** Expand partnerships with cultural associations and international trade groups to showcase global opportunities and foster cross-border collaborations.
- **Vendor–Sponsor Matchmaking:** Implement a structured matchmaking program where sponsors can directly engage with vendors, helping to secure supply chain contracts, mentorship, and long-term partnerships.
- **Media Partnerships:** Strengthen collaborations with local and national media outlets to amplify the Trade Fair’s visibility, elevate vendor stories, and extend the event’s reach to broader audiences.

Our Goal for 2026 is clear: to make the Trade Fair not only a marketplace, but a premier hub for culture, commerce, investment, and collaboration—cementing Edmonton as a leader in supporting Black and diverse entrepreneurship across Canada and beyond.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS & THANK YOU

Special appreciation goes to:

Ibukun Orefuja, Founder of BBE

**The BBE Planning Team and
Volunteers**

Sponsors and Partners

Vendors and Performers

**The Edmonton community for its
incredible support!**

Thank You



www.bbedm.ca

Website

<https://linktr.ee/blackbusinessedmonton>

All social media handles



**BLACK BUSINESS
EDMONTON**