



2025

ANNUAL REPORT

BLACK BUSINESS
EDMONTON

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2025 has been a year of significant growth, strategic partnerships, and increased visibility for Black Business Edmonton (BBE). The organization has **successfully advanced** its mandate of **promoting** Black-owned businesses and fostering **economic empowerment** in Edmonton and across Canada.

Key highlights include **impactful collaborations** with government and municipal bodies, **high-profile media exposure**, successful events such as **Voices & Ventures 2025** and the **BBE Trade Fair**, and active participation in **cultural** and **community** initiatives.

INTRODUCTION

BLACK BUSINESS EDMONTON CONTINUES TO SERVE AS A HUB FOR BUSINESS NETWORKING, MENTORSHIP, AND ADVOCACY.

THROUGHOUT 2025, BBE HAS EXPANDED ITS REACH, STRENGTHENED PARTNERSHIPS, AND SHOWCASED THE TALENT AND ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT OF BLACK BUSINESS OWNERS IN EDMONTON.

Ottawa Black History Month Engagements

Liberal Black Caucus Roundtable Discussion

BBE representatives participated in the *Liberal Black Caucus Roundtable*, fostering connections with other ecosystem leaders, policymakers, and business stakeholders. This engagement allowed BBE to share insights on economic development and advocate for increased support for Black entrepreneurs.

Meeting with Minister of Small Business, **Rechie Valdez**

During Ottawa engagements, BBE met with *Minister Rechie Valdez*, discussing the challenges and opportunities for Black-owned businesses and exploring avenues for federal support programs, mentorship, and policy advocacy.



BBE has maintained a strong partnership with the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, collaborating on initiatives such as **policy advocacy, municipal action plans, and business development programs**. This collaboration has strengthened BBE's influence in shaping local economic policy and community engagement.

VOICES & VENTURES 2025



GLOBAL NEWS

BBE secured media coverage with Global News, highlighting the Voices & Ventures initiative, the featured vendors, and the organization's commitment to community and economic development.

EVENT OVERVIEW

Voices & Ventures 2025 was a one-day event that featured networking, workshops, and vendor showcases. The event successfully connected business owners with potential partners, investors, and community members, fostering long-term relationships and business opportunities.

PROMO VIDEOS

Promotional videos showcased selected vendors participating in Voices & Ventures, amplifying visibility for Black-owned businesses and attracting engagement from local consumers and stakeholders.

EVENT REVIEWS

Feedback from participants emphasized the high quality of organization, valuable networking opportunities, and the supportive environment created by BBE. Many attendees reported significant connections that led to collaborations and business growth.

Magazine Features

EDMONTON'S BUSINESS LEADERS.
THEIR STORIES. OUR IMPACT.

Member Feature

At the Edmonton Chamber, we know that every successful business has a story worth sharing. Each month, we highlight Chamber members who are making an impact in our community, showcasing their contributions, innovations, and the goods and services they provide to Edmontonians.

Read their stories and support the local businesses that help our city thrive.



Ibukun Orefuja is the driving force behind Black Business Edmonton (BBE), a digital hub dedicated to promoting Black-owned businesses, startups, services, and events in the Edmonton area. Through networking, advocacy, and visibility, BBE works to empower Black entrepreneurs by connecting them with resources, opportunities, and a broader customer base. As a member of the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, BBE has **expanded its reach, strengthened its network, and gained access to valuable resources**. The Chamber's support has played a key role in fostering meaningful collaborations and increasing opportunities for Black-owned businesses in the community. BBE also drives local impact through entrepreneur programs, networking events, and an annual trade fair. Committed to diversity and economic growth, it **continues to build an inclusive and thriving business community**.



bbedm.ca



The Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) is a non-profit organization dedicated to conserving and stewarding Alberta's natural landscapes. Through partnerships with individuals, businesses, Indigenous Nations, and governments, NCC protects vital ecosystems, ensuring a thriving natural world for future generations.

As a member of the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, NCC **connects with business leaders and organizations that share a commitment to sustainability**. These relationships help advance conservation efforts while demonstrating the link between environmental stewardship and long-term economic success.

NCC's work in Alberta's Capital Conservation Region **protects forests, wetlands, and grasslands that provide clean water, healthy ecosystems, and natural beauty**. Businesses and individuals can support conservation through partnerships, sponsorships, and hands-on initiatives that safeguard Alberta's landscapes for years to come.

natureconservancy.ca/alberta

edmontonchamber.com

CONNECT. ADVOCATE. ENGAGE.

Edmonton Chamber of Commerce — Business in Edmonton

BBE was featured in the "Business in Edmonton" magazine, highlighting its initiatives, success stories, and contributions to the local business ecosystem

Edmonton Edge

The organization received coverage in Edmonton Edge Magazine, showcasing its impact on community development and entrepreneurial support for Black-owned businesses.

Posts

From Tech to Entrepreneurship: How Ibukun Orefuja Built Black Business Edmonton

© Catherine Hallin | March 28, 2025 | 0



Magazine Features



Roundtable Recap: Building a Stronger Canadian Economy with Minister Eleanor Olszewski / Compte rendu de la table ronde : Renforcer l'économie canadienne avec la ministre Eleanor Olszewski

The discussion brought together over 20 business leaders from across Edmonton's innovation, energy, construction, Indigenous, and manufacturing sectors.

The Philanthropist Journal

How one Alberta non-profit is flipping the script on philanthropy and advancing economic justice.



K-DAYS PARTICIPATION



BBE's presence at K-Days allowed 45 vendors to reach a broader audience, engage with the community, and increase brand recognition. The participation reinforced BBE's commitment to economic empowerment through visibility and access to high-traffic events.

BBE supported the Afro-Caribbean & Indigenous Food Bank, participating in initiatives honoring community members and celebrating milestones, including the tribute to Ibukun Orefuja's father. These efforts strengthened BBE's community engagement and cultural advocacy.



AFRO-CARIBBEAN & INDIGENOUS FOOD BANK SUPPORT



Partnerships Overview

Throughout 2025, BBE maintained and expanded partnerships with municipal bodies, businesses, cultural centers, and community organizations.

Notable collaborations include Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, City of Edmonton, BDC, FACE, RBC, Business Link, TELUS and various stakeholders.

Partnership in Action

City of Edmonton — Purchase with Purpose

BBE promoted sustainable procurement practices through the City of Edmonton's Purchase with Purpose initiative, encouraging local support for Black-owned businesses.

Edmonton Chamber Partnership (Expanded)

Policy Committee Membership — **Ibukun Orefuja**

Ibukun Orefuja joined the [Edmonton Chamber of Commerce Policy Committee](#), contributing expertise and advocating for policies that support equitable business growth.

Municipal Action Plan Focus Group

BBE participated in focus groups for the [Chamber's Municipal Action Plan](#), providing input on strategies that promote diversity, economic inclusion, and sustainable growth.

CRL and Downtown Action Plan Advocacy

BBE lent its voice in support of the [Capital Region Local \(CRL\)](#) and [Downtown Action Plan](#), ensuring that the perspectives of Black entrepreneurs were included in city planning and investment decisions.

City of Edmonton Sustainable Procurement Committee

BBE, through **Ibukun Orefuja**, engaged in discussions on sustainable procurement, emphasizing the inclusion of minority-owned businesses and promoting responsible economic development.

Africa Centre — Support for the AMCC Project

BBE supported the [Africa Centre's Multicultural Centre AMCC Project](#), lending its platform and advocacy to enhance cultural and business programming for diverse communities.



BBE Updates

BBE Resource Page Launch

BBE launched a comprehensive [Resource Page](#) to provide members with access to business development tools, funding opportunities, mentorship resources, and networking channels.

BBE Trade Fair 2025 Development

[The BBE Trade Fair 2025](#) served as a 2-day platform for Black and diverse entrepreneurs to showcase products and services. The fair included workshops, networking opportunities, and live demonstrations, drawing attendees from across Edmonton.

Mental Health Video

IBK created a [video](#) to address the stigma around mental wellbeing



BBE Documentary Project

BBE produced a documentary featuring in studio interviews with members, highlighting their journeys, challenges, and successes. The documentary served as a promotional and educational tool to inspire aspiring entrepreneurs.



Supporting The Community

Sponsored Business Link — Small Business Week

BBE sponsored Business Link during Small Business Week, providing resources and exposure for Black entrepreneurs and reinforcing its commitment to business development.

Chrismyla Product Launch Support

BBE supported the launch of Chrismyla products, offering promotional assistance, event support, and media coverage to amplify brand awareness.





AWARDS

Crown Award

Business Leadership and Innovation Award

BBE founder, **Ibukun Orefuja**, received the Crown Award for Business Leadership and Innovation, recognizing contributions to entrepreneurship, advocacy, and community impact.

YEG Arts Fair

Award Presented to IBK

IBK was also recognized at the YEG Arts Fair, celebrating leadership and contribution to the local arts and business community.

Alberta Blue Cross Faces of Wellness 2025

IBK was a finalist.



Conclusion and Future Outlook

BBE concludes 2025 with **strong momentum, expanded partnerships,** and **measurable impact** on the business ecosystem.

Looking ahead, the organization will continue to **grow** its initiatives, **enhance** member services, and **advocate** for policies that support **equitable economic growth and empowerment** for Black entrepreneurs in Edmonton and beyond.

Thank you!

