

LazFaire

MAGAZINE

Fall 2024 • Issue 89



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Upcoming Dates

25/12

21/01

22/01

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Winter Break Dates

December 25 – December 31 – Christmas holiday period; University buildings closed.

MNP YEGii

12:15 pm – 3:00 pm
Business Building 2-21

Real Estate & Construction Career Cafe

10:00 am – 2:00pm
Carruthers Student Commons

Finance BizSphere

12:30 pm – 2:00 pm
Business Building 4-06

BDO YEGii – CWIL

12:30 pm – 2:00 pm
Business Building 2-21

BMO Apex Startup Challenge

The University of New Brunswick will host the 15th annual BMO Apex Startup Challenge on January 23 and 24, 2025 in Fredericton, New Brunswick!

Taste of Tech & BTM Career Cafe

10:00 am – 2:00 pm
Carruthers Student Commons

Foreword from the Executive Director

Hi everyone; it is my distinct honor to introduce this term's edition of Lazy Faire Magazine, a publication that is close to our hearts and resonates deeply with the values we cherish. My name is Gaurav Dhir, and I have the privilege of serving as Lazy Faire's president this year. As an international student who arrived in Canada in 2022, I have felt the powerful forces of community and connection more vividly than ever before. Moving from one country to another brings countless opportunities and challenges, and it's often the kindness and warmth of new connections that turn a foreign place into a home.

This term's theme, **Community & Global Citizenship**, represents a vision beyond geographic boundaries. Community is not merely proximity; it's a shared value, support of each other's dreams, and mutual upliftment. The notion of global citizenship reminds us that in today's world, we are interdependent. The consequences of our choices and actions resonate across borders, influencing the topography of societies, cultures, and even economies. This especially so in the case of young people and students, whose role is pivotal in creating a future that truly values inclusivity, sustainability, and understanding.

One of the core aspects of this theme is its emphasis on shared responsibility. Global citizenship means recognizing that our actions, however minor, have far-reaching consequences which can bring great change. It beckons us to take thoughtful, courageous

action in whatever we do, from addressing global issues like climate change, to promoting inclusivity in our workplaces and communities. Each article in this issue is a testament to this collaborative, hopeful ethos. As we navigate the complexities of life, let us remember that each connection, each act of kindness, and each moment of understanding builds a stronger and more resilient community. Let this magazine be a reminder of the beautiful diversity present in our community. Thank you for being a part of Lazy Faire and for your commitment to making a difference.

Warmly,
Gaurav Dhir



President, Lazy Faire Magazine

GAURAV
our president **DHIR**



Note from the Editor-in-Chief

Hello! Welcome to the Fall 2024 issue of Lazy Faire Magazine! My name is Zoë, and I'll be your Editor-in-Chief this year. I've been with the magazine for two years now, but this is my first year as EiC. I'm excited to step into a new role and become more involved, creating great content to bring to you, our readers.

Our issue this term is grounded in the themes of community and global citizenship. As another school year begins, we are reminded of the importance of community, and as our world becomes increasingly interdependent, we are called to recognize our roles as global citizens. It is important to consider how our actions at home can affect communities abroad, and how learning about the perspectives of others from different backgrounds can help us become more globally-minded.

In this issue, we've aimed to create articles that explore these themes as they relate to different opportunities and challenges. From socially-responsible investing, to using AI to connect with others around the world, our goal is to showcase what community means in a modern business context, and how we can be active members. Regardless of whether you decide to go on exchange, or join international case competitions, we hope you're inspired to pursue opportunities that place you in unfamiliar contexts and offer deeper perspectives, putting the theory of global citizenship into practice. As our president, Gaurav, so eloquently put it, community is not defined solely by proximity, but by shared values and mutual support. As a result, we've endeavored to explore community issues both within Canadian borders, and beyond. At a local level, we consider the challenges facing Indigenous businesses to be represented in the economy, which has implications for Reconciliation. We also address challenges that arise when local and global communities merge, by analyzing the effects of academic recruitment strategies for international students who intend on building a career in Canada. By opening discourse around these subjects, we aim to highlight how local concerns connect to our commitment as members of an interdependent global community. Make sure to read to the end—we've also curated a playlist with song recommendations from around the



world, any of which could be the perfect addition to your study soundtrack.

Representing the diversity that surrounds us at ASoB within 20 pages is a daunting task, but I hope that within the stories of others, you'll be able to recognize some aspects of yourself. We hope to leave a meaningful impression on you, as you leave one on us through your readership. Thank you for being part of our community; I hope you enjoy the issue!

All the best,
Zoë Kemppi

A handwritten signature of Zoë Kemppi's name, "Zoë Kemppi", in a cursive script.

Editor-in-Chief, Lazy Faire Magazine

Note from the Creative Director

power of Global Citizenship as a pivotal and enriching component of my time in Canada. The community I have found here has been an immense source of kindness, inspiration, and warmth, and I hope this issue brings a similar sense of connection and global insight to your day. Enjoy!

Stay inspired,
Shanessa Fernandes
Creative Director, Lazy Faire Magazine

A handwritten signature of Shanessa Fernandes' name, "Shanessa Fernandes", in a cursive script.

Creative Director, Lazy Faire Magazine



Hey there! My name is Shanessa Fernandes, though most of you know me by Nessa, and it is my privilege to serve as this year's Creative Director. For our 89th issue, highlighting Community & Global Citizenship, I wanted Lazy Faire's playful and energetic visual language to shine through as we explore the vibrant landscape of the business world. Revitalized by Kyle Bigoray in 2023, our brand has come to represent individuality, autonomy, and innovative free-thinking. It's been an honor to help craft this carefully curated issue, which captures the dynamic, thought-provoking perspectives that Lazy Faire Magazine brings to the ASoB.

As a Design major, joining the magazine has been a transformative part of my campus experience, warmly connecting me to the bustling business community. This semester, I've had the incomparable pleasure of leading a team of talented designers, each contributing their unique perspective and lending their creative insights to the issue. In this way, I believe Lazy Faire serves as a bridge, fostering connections among students across and beyond the Faculty of Business.

Finally, as an International student in my final year, this issue holds a special place in my heart. As I approach the end of my university journey, I can attest to the

Faculty in Focus

Mic McCollum

Written By: Nitasha Baig

Designed By: Renaissa Ullah

Lazy Faire recently met with Mic McCollum, the International Programs Coordinator at the Alberta School of Business, to discuss the importance of international programs for business students in an increasingly globalized world.

Can you tell me about yourself and your work at the International Programs Office at the Alberta School of Business?

My title is the International Programs Coordinator, which is vague, but it means that I run the International Exchange Program for the School of Business and manage the partnership programs that we have. Essentially, we bring in students from these partners and send [domestic students] out. These programs also include study tours and short-term Spring/Summer programs, in addition to longer semester exchanges. We also act as a point of contact and source of information for both students and faculty for internationally-related questions.

What steps did you take towards becoming the International Programs Coordinator?

In university, I actually started out in graphic design but switched into international studies after spending a semester in Japan. Afterwards, I volunteered with international students in my home university, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill [UNC-Chapel Hill], for the rest of my degree. Then, I got into the field of international programs. I worked abroad for several years before gaining employment at a university when I returned to North America. Eventually, I ended up here in Edmonton where I continue to facilitate these programs because of how they once benefited me. They still interest me and I still enjoy convincing students to pursue these programs.

What places did you visit as a student in an international program yourself? How did this experience impact you moving forward?

I grew up in rural North Carolina which is not the most

culturally diverse place and quite different from the rest of the world. I find that a lot of North America, especially more rural areas, is fairly homogeneous. So, Japan was very different from the culture that I grew up in. I originally studied on a Rotary International program in high school and did a formal study abroad through UNC-Chapel Hill. I met people from all over the world and was exposed to different ideas. I eventually went back after university to work in Japan, so it did impact my immediate post-graduation career. I also met my wife there! She's from Canada which is why I came here. I credit much of my life now to my initial exchange experience because I wouldn't have met my wife, moved to Canada, nor entered into this field without it.

Why are these programs important for business students specifically?

I think these programs are important for everyone. For business students in particular, there's very little in the field that's not somewhat related to global business, whether you're working with team members from different backgrounds, or supply chains with an international component; in the case of marketing, knowing your audience is also important. It could be someone in rural Alberta, Southeast Asia, or Europe, but you have to have some of those cross-cultural skills in order to market effectively. Globalization is not really something that you can control or stop. I really want to see students with skills that are going to be useful to their company, especially for entrepreneurial students who decide to go out on their own. If you don't have a lot of experience in cultural communication and understanding, you're going to need someone who does.

What misconceptions might students have about these programs?

There are quite a few. It's interesting to see the difference between how international programs are viewed within North America in comparison to the rest of the world. Outside of Canada and the United States, it's very much the norm to study in more than one place as part of a university education. In Europe and Asia,

"If you don't have a lot of experience in cultural communication and understanding, you're going to need someone who does."

it's even mandatory to spend a semester or academic year in another institution, especially for a business degree. Students don't see the benefits of international programs. They think that a semester abroad is going to cost time and delay graduation or add another year into their program. However, most students actually fit it into their degree without missing a beat. You need to do some planning, but most students graduate when they would graduate otherwise. It can be an integral part of the degree without delaying it. Another benefit is price. A great thing about a lot of international programs is that there's a lot of funding available. With formal exchange programs, students are only paying the university tuition or less.

Could you tell me more about what funding/scholarship opportunities are available to students?

With an exchange program at the U of A, you remain eligible for any scholarships or bursaries that you were previously eligible for. There are some additional funding opportunities because you're doing an international program. For example, there's university-wide funding through Central Education Abroad. There are some business-specific options for specific destinations as well. We have a donor who graduated from one of our partners in Vienna and is also part of the Board of Governors here. He's donated some money for students going to that destination. We also have more general opportunities available, such as the Rod and Judith Fraser International Undergraduate Award. Partner institutions, government organizations, and private institutions in the destination country occasionally provide grants. Export Development Canada offers a scholarship every year for business students doing studies abroad. Also, the business faculty itself has committed some funds for every student doing a semester program, so not all funding opportunities are competitive. For the last 15 years, we've been able to give every student who goes on a Fall/Winter term exchange some amount of money. It's not always a huge amount, but every student has received financial help.

How do international programs help create global networks for business students?

Obviously, you're going to meet a lot of people all over the world. For example, when you study in Germany, you don't only meet German students but also students in similar international programs. You end up learning about places besides your destination country. Not only does that help you as a global citizen, but it also provides you with a lot of great resources. These international programs also kind of force you to network and figure things out in a group—where to get groceries, how the educational system works, etc. It definitely helps to facilitate global connections. I'm still in touch with a lot of people that I met during my programs!

Connect with Mic McCollum:

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Phone: (780) 492-4895
Office: 3-21B Business Building

Responses have been edited for clarity and concision.

Business Exchange Association

Written By: Zoë Kemppi
Designed By: Alice Gong

The **Business Exchange Association (BEA)** is a student-led organization at the University of Alberta, dedicated to teaching local students about exchange, and helping incoming exchange students find community during their stay. I spoke to co-presidents, Vrutti Bhandari and Vaishnavi Goboodun, about the work their club does in the business faculty community, and their advice for students interested in exchange.

The BEA supports both outgoing and incoming students on exchange. They host informational sessions and help obtain funding for the former, while welcoming the latter by showing them different cultural experiences and providing opportunities to meet people. The club hosts many social events for their target audiences, such as bar nights, hockey games, and hiking trips. Their Buddy Network program also encourages community between local and visiting students, by showing incoming students what the U of A and Edmonton have to offer.

The value of going on exchange has been corroborated by research, which has shown that students who go on exchange experience benefits such as improved grade point averages¹, increased employability, and greater intercultural understanding². Despite these advantages, exchange participation rates are low, particularly in North America. There are reported individual and institutional barriers to participation, financial barriers and lack of information being the most prevalent, respectively³. The BEA plays an important role in alleviating these barriers to students at the U of A, through their **Travel Awards Program (TAP)** which provides outgoing exchange participants with funding, and informational sessions which help remedy the unfamiliarity with exchange and advertise upcoming opportunities.

Despite these supports, actually applying for exchange can be a long and sometimes confusing process that may discourage students. This is partially because, depending on the partnering institution, the application process will differ, and different institutions may have additional barriers to application outside the U of A's control. That being said, there are suggestions for the University to consider. For example, on the web page that includes exchange opportunities, there could be a section outlining specific application steps for each opportunity. It would also be helpful for students to know who they must contact regarding exchanges. Mic McCollum, the International Program Coordinator, is the primary contact for exchange opportunities exclusively

offered through the Alberta School of Business.

However, the Go-A broad Office, which is open to all university students, also has coordinators that facilitate exchange. Both distinct programs are available to business students; the choice depends on student preference, including where they would like to go on exchange, and the extent to which they would like to focus on business-related studies.

Both co-presidents advocate for the benefits of going on exchange. Vaishnavi herself has done two exchanges over the course of her degree, while Vrutti plans on going on exchange sometime before graduating. I asked what advice they would give to first-year students considering studying abroad at some point in their university career; both emphasized that due to the long process, students should start researching and attending info sessions as early as their first year, even if they don't plan on going abroad until later in their degree. Not all learning takes place in the classroom, so whether it's applying for an exchange or a club, students should take advantage of extracurricular learning opportunities! The BEA represents the value of exploration and community, so its representatives highlight the importance of seeking new experiences and ways to connect with others in the faculty.

Upcoming BEA dates:

March 4th, 2025: Oilers Watch Night (Oilers vs. Ducks)
March 8th, 2025: International Case Competition

Connect with the BEA:

Website: <https://www.uofabea.com/>
Instagram: @beauofa

Additional resources for exchange-related opportunities and inquiries:

ASoB (Outgoing Exchange): <https://www.ualberta.ca/en/business/international/outgoing-exchange/index.html>
U of A International (Go Abroad): <https://www.ualberta.ca/en/international/go-abroad/index.html>
Funding-related queries: eapawards@ualberta.ca
Any other queries: goabroad@ualberta.ca

Find Your Degree at the ASoB

Written By: Camryn Jackson
Designed By: Alice Gong

Keep an eye out in the Fall semester to register and find more information!

New Exchange Destinations: With over **40 universities in 25+ countries**, there's an exchange destination for everyone. The ASoB is continually expanding its exchange partners, which now include:

Universidad de Lima, Lima, Peru: Home to a modern campus nestled in the heart of a historic city, Universidad de Lima offers vibrant student life and rich cultural experiences.

The University of Antwerp, Antwerp, Belgium: Located in the city centre of a gorgeous and lively metropolis, the University of Antwerp is known for its high quality of education and entrepreneurial approach

The ASoB offers something for everyone. These opportunities just might be the perfect fit for you!

Opportunity Resources

Certificate in International Learning (CIL): <https://www.ualberta.ca/en/international/global-education/certificate-international-learning/index.html>

Study Tours:

<https://www.ualberta.ca/en/business/international/study-tours.html>

ULima:

<https://www.ualberta.ca/en/business/international/outgoing-exchange/destinations/ulima.html>

UAntwerp:

<https://www.ualberta.ca/en/business/international/outgoing-exchange/destinations/antwerp.html>

*Student
Trailblazers*

[A dedicated member of
ASoB's student body.]

Omer Syed

Can you introduce yourself to our readers? My name is Omer Syed. I'm currently in my final year of my undergraduate degree, majoring in Business, Technology, & Management [BTM]. Throughout my undergrad, I have been quite involved with the University of Alberta School of Business.

What's your favorite part of being a student at the University of Alberta School of Business? My favorite part about being a student here is the tight-knit community. I've had the opportunity to build close connections with my peers, professors, and faculty members. Everyone here is so kind and welcoming; they're all willing to help you whenever you need it.

Do you mind telling us more about your involvement with the School of Business? I'm in a few clubs, including JDC West, a case competition club, and Enactus, an interdisciplinary entrepreneurship club. At Enactus, I serve as the Vice President of Competitions, helping our students compete and grow their projects that they have with us. I've also been part of the Business Students Association [BSA], serving as Vice President External, helping to build relationships with corporations that work with us. I've also done some case competitions.

In the past six months, I've gone to Thailand and competed there. I've also gone to Norway; I just came back three weeks ago.

Do you mind sharing what prompted you to participate in those international case comps? My biggest motivation was to get out of my comfort zone. Growing up, I was one of the shyest kids in class, and was deathly afraid of public speaking. When I got to the School of Business, I learned that case competitions allow for people to get out of their comfort zones and present their ideas in front of large audiences. I took it upon myself to start putting myself out there; I did a few local ones and I really enjoyed it, so I kept doing them. Then, in my final year, I got the opportunity to pursue that at a larger scale in different countries.

I'm assuming the subject matter of the international case comps would take on a more global perspective. How did that affect your personal perspective? I learned how important culture really is. For example, a solution to a business problem might work in Canada, but not in a different country like Thailand or Norway because of cultural differences.



What was your most memorable experience from the case comps that you've done this year? I have a good story for this one; we were competing in Bergen, Norway and we were chosen to be in the finals out of the 15 teams that were competing. For the finals, they asked us for an intro song to play while we walked on stage.

We picked "The Real Slim Shady" by Eminem. As that song was playing and we were walking on stage, we as a team felt the adrenaline (and the 3 red bulls we chugged) kick in. It was a surreal feeling, because at that moment, you realize that you're in a completely different part of the world, you are having an out-of-body experience, and you are finally showcasing something you have worked so long and hard for. We ended up coming 2nd place, out of 15 teams from across the world. I found that moment to be extremely memorable! An amazing experience!

Shifting back to more local community involvement, do you mind sharing more about your experience with Enactus? I help our projects get exposure in both regional and national competitions. I am also part of one of our projects called Eco-chic, a digital app that teaches users the negative effects of the fast fashion industry on our planet. We are trying to educate people about the effects of the fast fashion industry locally. We're starting at the U of A campus here, and then we hope to branch out to different parts of the city.

How has your involvement with these different student organizations influenced your understanding of what it means to be a global citizen? I've learned about different perspectives. I know it sounds simple, but up until university, I had only been surrounded with the same people so stepping into university and seeing folks from international backgrounds was very new to me. Seeing different perspectives come to life, especially being born and raised in the same place for the last 18 years of my life, was a huge change. It's made me realize how important those different cultural perspectives really are in terms of global issues and global initiatives.

How do you plan on applying the things that you've learned through your academic and professional experiences to your future career? There are two main takeaways that I plan on taking in my future career. The first is the aspect of communication, which is something I've learned through my

experiences. That's something I plan on taking along in my future career: being able to communicate with my new boss, or team members—whoever it may be. The second is the technical skills that I've built throughout my degree; my major is BTM, so I've had the opportunity to take a lot of technology-related courses. A lot of problems nowadays are digitally-focused, so taking those skills and applying them to my future career is something I'll likely do.

Do you have a future career that you envision at this point? I want to be able to talk to people, understand their problems and solve them, but I also want to leverage technology while doing it, because I'm so fascinated by it and because it's moving so rapidly. In terms of the exact place or the exact role, I have no idea. But what I do know is I want to leverage those communication and technical skills.

Do you ever see yourself working abroad? Definitely! I think it's the coolest thing to learn about different backgrounds, cultures, especially in a business context. Going back to the Thailand case competition, I got to learn about business problems in Thailand that you would almost never see in Canada; that really opens up your perspective.

Is there anyone that you look up to personally, who has inspired you to get to this place where you're impacting other people and the community in a socially beneficial way? I'd probably say my parents, because they've taught me the importance of giving back to the community. The amount that you give or that you donate shouldn't matter; it's about the intent. I think impact starts locally, and having my parents instill that in me at a very young age has helped me, because now I get to build on that.

Since you're in your final year, what advice would you give to first year students about getting involved in activities that contribute to their professional growth, but also have that aspect of community impact that we've been discussing? My biggest piece of advice is to get out of your comfort zone. I know how intimidating your first year is, stepping on campus, seeing all these new faces, and they all seem to be friends; it's a very intimidating feeling. But trust me—join clubs, join initiatives—join something that aligns with your interests. That's a good way to get out of your comfort zone, but also enjoy what you're doing. You don't want to be stuck doing a club or an activity that you don't like just because you were told to.

Once someone has established themselves, what would you suggest after they've focused on where they fit in, and they want to see where they can make an impact? Once you've built these experiences locally, I think it's important to branch out. By that I mean getting involved in different projects, like Eco-chic, the application that I'm working on, or international case competitions once you've done local ones. Take the skills that you've learned locally, and apply them at an international level to impact the world globally.

Is there anything else that you want to say to our lovely readers? Good luck with finals—I know those are coming up. Don't be too hard on yourself, because you'll most likely look back in a few years and think, "Man, why did I put myself through all that?" So don't be hard on yourself! Make the most of your university experience!

Responses have been edited for clarity and concision.

Connect with Omer
😊

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Instagram: @omersye.d

Interview By: Zoë Kemppi
Written By: Feven Worede
Designed By: Ayomide Popoola

An Introduction to Socially Responsible Investing

Written By: Khushal Sheth

Designed By: Hafsa Mohummed

Socially Responsible Investing (SRI) is an investment framework that not only aims to satisfy financial needs and build a profitable portfolio, but also focuses on promoting investments that align with societal needs. Through this approach, investors seek companies that perform for the betterment of society rather than investing blindly, disregarding the company's motives. For example, although tobacco companies are lucrative, socially responsible investors will not include such companies in their portfolios as the impact of these firms is considered to be socially detrimental. Conversely, a green energy company with lesser growth potential becomes a much more favorable investment for these investors as such companies work to prevent air pollution and promote a healthier living environment. Overall, the primary function of SRI is to incorporate ethical consideration into an investor's portfolio by funding companies that provide value and benefits to society.¹

Before pursuing this variation of investing, it is important to compare its performance with traditional methods. ENVESTNET PMC, an investment and portfolio-based consulting company, conducted an analysis to compare the distribution of SRI and non-SRI investment returns². After studying the performance distribution, they concluded that SRI funds below the median-

performing range provide better returns than non-SRI funds below the median. To simplify, it explains that low-performing SRI funds offer better returns than low-performing non-SRI funds. However, when the trend reverses, high-performing non-SRI funds are far better than high-performing SRI funds. This imbalance conveys that SRI investments provide better returns than conventional investments in a declining market but tend to underperform in rising markets. They also concluded that SRI is less risky and stable during a market fall than non-SRI investments, providing a safety net for investors. Therefore, if investors are seeking above-average returns with a more secure investment, SRI could be a perfect fit.

One of the most prominent ways to adopt SRIs is to invest in specialized Exchange-Traded Funds (ETFs). They are a diversified basket of different collections of stocks, bonds, and other assets that track the performance of specific indexes and industries, making them an excellent way for beginners, including students, to start investing. An entire sector can be represented by investing in multiple ETFs without being required to purchase shares from every company. Major institutions like BlackRock, Vanguard, and Inveco provide particular ETFs representing SRIs, such as iShares ESG Aware MSCI USA ETF (ESGU), Vanguard ESG

U.S. Stock ETF (ESGV), and Invesco MSCI Global Climate 500 ETF (KLMT). These ETFs have, respectively, **\$13.54B**, **\$9.67B**, and **\$1.72B** in assets under management.³ These massive 'assets under management' numbers prove the significance of ETFs in the current market. If students open a trading account with a broker, they can immediately begin participating in SRI by targeting such ETFs.

If a student is just beginning to enter the investing world, it is highly recommended that they gain the prerequisite financial knowledge before making investment decisions. Failing to do so can result in substantial financial losses, potentially impacting an individual's economic health. The primary focus for a student to invest should be minimal risk because, in the beginning, conserving capital is far more vital than making a profit, especially for investors with low starting capital. Therefore, students should first understand their risk-taking abilities and how much money they can put aside for investments. Nonetheless, investing in socially responsible ETFs may be a better choice

than conventional methods as they are safer in low markets while still being profitable. Above all, SRIs strive to support environmental sustainability, enhance social equity, and promote ethical governance practices, creating a more resilient and healthy planet for future generations.



The Next Stage of Colonization

A Critical Examination of the Procurement Strategy for Indigenous Business

Written By: Feven Worede

Designed By: Hafsa Mohummed

The Government of Canada aims to strengthen its economic relationship with Indigenous entrepreneurs through the Procurement Strategy for Indigenous Business (PSIB), an initiative vital for advancing reconciliation by increasing Indigenous participation in federal procurement. Federal procurement is when a government department or public sector agency purchases goods and services from an organization for themselves or taxpayers. It plays a critical role in a country's economy, as governments are often the largest buyers of goods and services². While the PSIB is designed to provide Indigenous businesses with greater economic opportunities, concerns have arisen among Indigenous leaders about some companies lacking genuine ties to Indigenous communities.³

Natan Obed, the president of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, argues that the government's failure to verify the legitimacy of Indigenous businesses allows "ineligible, non-Indigenous interlopers,"⁴ to exploit the PSIB, labeling the situation as the "next stage of colonization."

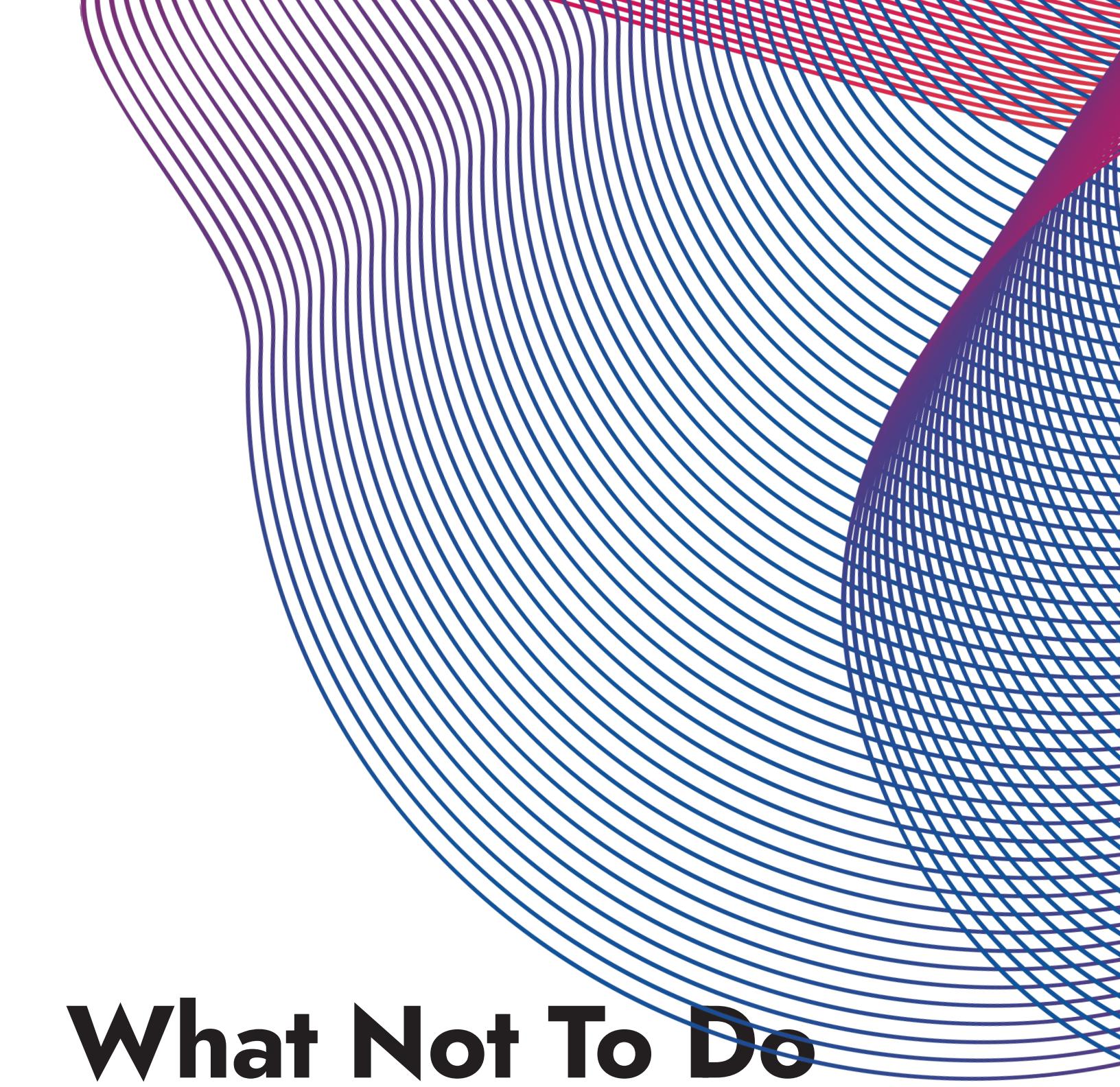
⁵ Similarly, Cindy Woodhouse, the National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, highlights that non-Indigenous individuals claiming Indigenous identity undermine the rights and recognition that Indigenous communities have fought for, given their history of colonial oppression.⁶

While Indigenous leaders emphasize significant failures in the federal procurement processes, others maintain that such discourse overshadows the successes of the PSIB. Philip Ducharme, vice-president of entrepreneurship and procurement with the Canadian Council for Indigenous Business, contends that emphasizing a "few bad actors"⁷ detracts from the PSIB's positive impact on Indigenous communities. He warns that framing the narrative around exploitation undermines the legitimacy of existing policies designed to support Indigenous enterprises, and casts doubt on the capabilities and contributions of authentic Indigenous businesses.⁸

Media coverage surrounding the ArriveCAN app scandal exemplifies this issue, disproportionately highlighting the few Indigenous enterprises that received contracts. Initially projected to cost Canadians \$80,000, the app underwent 177 updates and ultimately accumulated expenses of at least \$59.5 million in federal contracts over less than ten years.⁹ According to the Auditor General's report, only four of the 32 contractors are Indigenous, accounting for less than 13% of the total spending. This selective scrutiny not only undermines the credibility of Indigenous businesses, but also diverts attention from systemic challenges within the federal procurement process, leading some to call for the elimination of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion policies.¹⁰

To address the challenges, it is important to highlight positive stories of Indigenous business innovation to counter negative narratives that question their competence and legitimacy, which often dominate media coverage. Additionally, reforming the procurement process is equally essential. The Government of Canada should collaborate with Indigenous communities to strengthen the procurement process. Indigenous identity recognition must be led by Indigenous peoples to ensure legitimacy and validity. This partnership would empower Indigenous communities to reassess the eligibility criteria, improve oversight, and ensure their voices are central to discussions about reform. By prioritizing Indigenous perspectives, accountability and fairness in governmental and corporate practices can be improved.¹¹

Indigenous businesses are integral to Canada's economic landscape; accurately portraying Indigenous entrepreneurship involves balancing the recognition of the PSIB's success with its accountability to the Indigenous communities it aims to serve. The solution lies not in punishing those for whom the policy is designed but in strengthening the policy itself.



What Not To Do

Diversity Equity & Inclusion in the Workplace

Written By: Nitasha Baig
Designed By: Alice Gong

As more studies illuminate the difficulty companies face when attempting to incorporate inclusion and diversity into the workplace, businesses are realizing that corporate inequity is not easy to solve. In fact, a FinanceBuzz survey found that 46% of respondents still feel isolated in their workplace, despite increasing diversity.¹ As Lily Zheng, the author of DEI Deconstructed notes, most of these current initiatives fail because they lack ideological changes and long-term employee support.² So, what specific diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) measures do companies need to take?

Readers might question the tangible effects of DEI practices on businesses. However, companies without effective DEI initiatives typically incur higher training expenses because of low employment retention. The Corporate Leavers Survey (2007) from the Level Playing Field Institute found that 34% of respondents would not have left their jobs if their company had created a more inclusive environment.³ The same survey estimated that American businesses lose \$6 billion annually as a result of these employment losses. These numbers have only increased, with a report from Accenture (2020) raising the estimate of lost revenue to \$1.05 trillion. From a profit-centric perspective, DEI initiatives encourage employee loyalty, preventing the economic burden of high turnover rates.

Even if employees don't leave, a study from the Xavier Institute of Management shows that performance tends to decrease in exclusionary work environments.⁴ Conversely, workers are more psychologically comfortable in corporate cultures that accommodate their personal needs. The attention given to employees' general well-being and job satisfaction results in more active work engagement which leads to better work ethic. In workplaces with less emphasis on DEI, the lack of focus and concern for individuals creates employees who are less motivated and lack self-assurance.

Why, then, are some DEI initiatives failing? Remember that the benefits above are tied to the psychological comfort of employees. For employees from marginalized communities, these needs demand an understanding of cultural differences and a complete deconstruction of unconscious biases. A fellow coworker might avoid saying slurs or claim to be a "feminist", but still feel that diversity hires are given unfair advantages. In this case, the absence of explicit prejudice does not mean that employees from social minorities aren't subject to implicit prejudices, which may be directed against their position within the company.

Despite the impact of these underlying biases, most DEI programs still use superficial measures to target prejudice. According to Frank Dobbin and Alexandra Kalev from the Harvard Business Review (2016), companies may frame diversity training as remedial, which can be to the program's disadvantage⁵. Remedial, in this sense, refers to equity meetings that are done because of an individual's actions or a specific event. Subsequently, the person "at fault" resents the implication that they are particularly prejudiced and resists change.

Instead, more regular diversity meetings would better facilitate discussions surrounding inequality in the workplace. Dobbin and Kalev suggest that voluntary training might be a more effective solution, but it would lose the advantage of having a wide reach. In contrast, presenting on regular occasions would mitigate the perception of adversarial equity training without sacrificing its audience. Meetings would then focus on the specific barriers that marginalized workers might face and how to address these challenges.

At the same time, DEI initiatives can effectively involve voluntary committees of employees who are passionate about such issues; there are precedents of employees forming Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) or DEI councils in order to address these problems more thoroughly. However, they soon become disillusioned by the lack of corporate support that they are given.⁶ Many plans to support cross-cultural communities, such as participating in recruiting events and mentorship programs, require continuous engagement from higher management to proceed. Although a recent survey by the World 50 Group found that 72% of Canadian businesses are increasing their DEI investments, 22% of business leaders reported the slow progress of their initiatives.⁷ When employees feel a lack of support and enthusiasm from managers, they eventually become burnt-out and disengaged from their work.

In the long run, diversity has proven to aid companies economically, but firms need to be prepared for the commitment that these objectives require. After all, these programs require shifting mindsets and corporate culture. Measures such as regular training programs, ERGs, and mentorship programs are only effective when accompanied by continuous corporate support and funding.

Oversaturated Markets & Underserved Sectors

Addressing Canada's Imbalance in International Student Recruitment

Written By: Prerna Sumesh

Designed By: Hafsa Mohammed

In recent years, Canada has become an increasingly popular destination for international students seeking higher education. As universities open their doors to a diverse array of students, enrollment numbers have skyrocketed, contributing significantly to the country's economy.¹ However, recruitment has tilted strongly towards business programs while doing little to meet the demand for workers in health care and skilled trades. This imbalance emphasizes the significant gap between academic offerings and the country's labor demands, where business students face an oversaturated job market and vital sectors remain understaffed. This disproportionate recruitment

of international students diminishes students' roles as engaged global citizens capable of addressing various global challenges through meaningful careers. When international students are primarily directed into business programs, it restricts their exposure to a broader range of disciplines such as healthcare, technology or environmental sciences, which have the potential to address pressing worldwide issues. This narrowed focus reduces students' opportunities to make meaningful contributions to society.

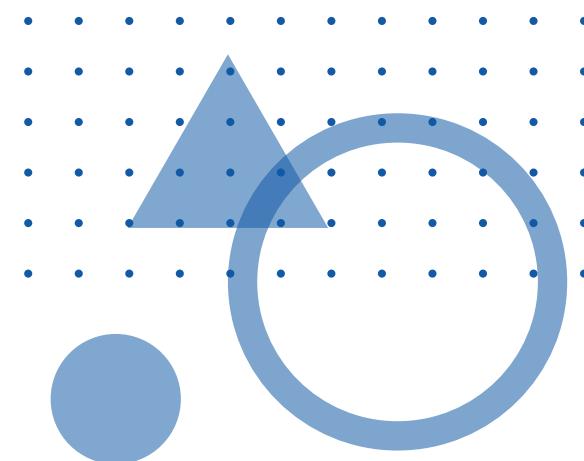
The figures obtained from Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), paint a picture of skewed priorities in higher education. Business-related programs snagged **27%** of study permits, while health sciences and trades lagged at just **6%** and **1.25%**, respectively.² Many international students are drawn to business programs because the field is often associated with broader career opportunities and higher earning potential. Fields such as finance, marketing, and management are viewed as having diverse job prospects, appealing to students who aspire to have paying careers in global markets. Many institutions aggressively market their business programs by highlighting the success stories of their alumni in successful positions, potentially leading students to believe that a business degree guarantees a perfect career.

The need for healthcare services is rising in Canada due to an aging population, yet there aren't enough qualified experts to supply this demand because of low program enrollment.³ This scarcity has resulted in longer wait times, overburdened staff, and lower quality care. Without more personnel entering the healthcare industry, as the population ages, the demand for healthcare services will only increase putting an excessive amount of pressure on an already understaffed industry. Similarly, there is a severe labor shortage in the skilled trades sector, which is essential to the development of infrastructure. Since few new workers are being trained and many workers are retiring, Canada runs the risk of experiencing delays in crucial projects that could jeopardize its long-term economic stability. International students continue to avoid these important fields in the absence of a well-rounded recruitment plan, which further contributes to the shortages.

The Canadian Bureau for International Education reported that **70%** of international students plan to apply for a postgraduate work permit, and **57%** of international students plan to apply for permanent residence in Canada.⁴ These statistics indicate that a large proportion of international students are not just temporary visitors but instead intend to join Canadian society and contribute to its economy in the long term. International students will fill gaps in the labor market, contribute to tax revenue, and increase demand for goods and services. However, if most students are streamlined into business programs, not only will other critical sectors remain understaffed, the economy risks an oversupply of business professionals. The trend of a high number of students gravitating towards business programs resulting in fierce competition in an increasingly saturated job market. With so many graduates competing for similar roles, it becomes challenging for each graduate to secure positions that fully utilize their developed skill set⁵. This leads to graduates being forced to accept jobs that do not match their qualifications or aspirations. Underutilization of essential skills reduces overall productivity in the economy and increases job dissatisfaction.

Hence, the disproportionate recruitment of international students into business programs not only limits their

career prospects but also threatens the very fabric of Canada's economy and community. Critical sectors like healthcare and skilled trades, which are the backbone of thriving communities, remain understaffed, while business graduates face an oversaturated job market. This imbalance undermines students' potential to become engaged global citizens and contribute to solving challenging real-world problems. Canada must rethink its recruitment strategies and highlight the diverse range of opportunities across fields such as healthcare, skilled trades and environmental sciences, which offer international students the chance to make impactful contributions and address critical issues in Canada's workforce.



AI-Powered Collaboration

Microsoft's Copilot Pages is Revolutionizing Global Workspace

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is revolutionizing how modern office spaces operate, helping businesses run more efficiently¹, and reducing operational costs.² Connected workspace apps can boost productivity by integrating project and task management, knowledge bases, document repositories, communications, and collaboration tools into one interface.³ This results in productivity gains, such as reducing time spent switching between applications.⁴

Microsoft recently launched **Copilot Pages** in September 2024; it was announced as a "dynamic, persistent workspace"⁵ designed to make collaboration smoother by embedding AI within shared documents. It transforms AI-generated content into reusable, editable resources that can be shared among teams, creating an innovative multiplayer collaboration environment. Microsoft sees Copilot Pages as a new pattern of work that includes humans and AI input in a single shared digital canvas.⁶ The process begins with a user prompting the Copilot chatbot, which generates a response based on data, files, and web information. The response is then pulled into a new page where the user can refine and expand on the content, personalizing it to their needs. Copilot Pages can be shared with a link, allowing colleagues to review, edit, and contribute in real time, much like a shared Word document.⁷ This cycle promotes fluid and interactive collaboration, merging AI generated insights with team input for content creation.

Copilot Pages make it easier for teams that are spread out across the world to work together in real time. Team members can work on the same project simultaneously and view each other's progress regardless of where they are situated, allowing them to stay constantly updated and make more efficient progress. The software has features that pull all the information into one place, giving access to the same essential data, making teamwork smoother and faster.⁸ By contrast, traditional co-working spaces consist of a physical location where

people come together to share ideas and execute projects face-to-face. These spaces are great for brainstorming; however, they are limited by the need for everyone to be in the same physical place. That's where Copilot comes into play, acting as a digital version of a co-working space. It allows people to collaborate, brainstorm, and communicate just as effectively as an in-person meeting and acts as a digital equivalent of fostering global interaction.

Expanding on its vision of interconnected working spaces, Microsoft recently introduced a new feature called AI Companion, which was released as part of the ongoing updates to the Copilot tools.⁹ AI Companion is designed to provide a more personalized and intuitive user experience. This tool functions as an AI assistant, learning from the users' actions, and offering tailored experiences. It personalizes the user experience by learning about individual workflows, preferences, and habits. As users interact with the software, the tool adapts and offers more relevant suggestions tailored to the users' preferences.¹⁰ Hence, the companion acts as a central hub for enhanced and aligned with the broader goals of the team. This creates a stronger sense of connection within digital teams, fostering collaboration across various diverse locations.

AI tools are helping bridge gaps between professional environments by allowing employees to collaborate seamlessly across different regions and industries. In a global work environment, AI, with its real-time data processing and collaborative functions, enables geographically-dispersed teams to work together efficiently. AI's role extends beyond improving workflows—it has the potential to create a global community by uniting individuals through shared goals and collective knowledge.¹¹ It can create virtual co-working spaces where ideas, insights, and data can flow freely among team members, regardless of where they are located.

Written by Prerna Sumesh
Designed by Shanessa Fernandes



Microsoft 365 Copilot



Image Credits: Microsoft. "Microsoft Copilot." Microsoft Adoption Resources, Microsoft, <https://adoption.microsoft.com/en-us/copilot/>.

"AI tools are transforming how we work, bridging gaps across regions and industries to create virtual co-working spaces where ideas and insights flow freely, uniting teams through shared goals and collective knowledge."

While AI offers enormous benefits, it also raises ethical concerns that need to be addressed to ensure responsible use. Privacy is a major challenge, as there have been several concerns regarding how, where, and why the data is used, particularly when it involves sensitive business information.¹² Nevertheless, Microsoft's innovations represent a new era of AI-driven collaboration. These tools enhance business efficiency by providing real-time insights and enabling cross-collaboration. They are not just about increasing productivity, but also

creating a more connected and collaborative digitized world of business. This new era of AI will continue to shape how businesses operate, creating a world where technology starts to represent unity in workplace environments.

Playlist

Cultural Soundscapes

Written By: Camryn Jackson
Designed By: Hafsa Mohummed

What better way to build community than through a language we can all understand—music! We asked our Editorial team to share their favourite songs from around the globe. Here's what they had to say!

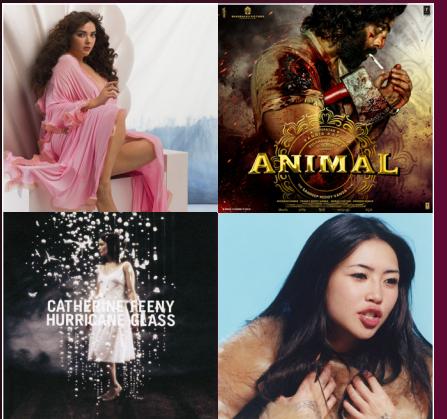


Camryn Jackson, Guest Writer, recommends:

1. **Gyöngyhajú lány** by **Omega**: You might recognize this song's iconic instrumentals from Jonah Hill's Mid 90's movie. Directly translating to "That Girl With Pearls In Her Hair," Omega's Hungarian vocals give main-character vibes.
2. **Les filles désir** by **Vendredi sur Mer**: A smooth yet dramatic sonic experience, this song sounds like it belongs in an indie film or in the background of a sad TikTok edit.
3. **Amour Plastique** by **Videoclub**: I discovered Amour Plastique in Grade 8 French Class and loved the relaxed, smooth feel of the French lyrics mixed with a lo-fi pop beat.
4. **Судно (Борис Рыжий)** by Molchat Doma: One of my most listened-to songs of 2020 after I discovered it from TikTok, Судно's melancholy melody is perfect for cold winter nights.
5. **Yugoslavskiy Groove** by **Soft Blade**: Another dark and mysterious track that feels like walking through a cityscape during heavy rainfall from its gritty, lo-fi sound.
6. **Мой мармеладный, я не права** by Katya Lel: A playful, catchy, and trendy song with an upbeat melody. You'll want to sing along, even if you have zero Russian language skills.

Feven Worede, Writer, recommends:

1. **hi grace** by **Dominic Fike**: I am a long-time fan of Dominic Fike. I like how weird the production is, the repetitiveness of the chorus' lyrics, and the Bob Dylan-esque vocal delivery. I also love the beat switch, where Fike switches his flow. It's a really dynamic song.
2. **Ever Seen** by **beabadoobee**: I chose this song because I really appreciate the nostalgic early 2000s vibe it has. It transports me to my childhood. I also really like the production on this song. I love how the light strumming of the guitar into a heavy buildup, which contrasts the breathy vocal delivery. The entire listening experience is a journey in and of itself!



Cultural Soundscapes



Prena Sumesh, Writer, recommends:

1. **La Vie en Rose** by **Edith Piaf**: I picked this classic French song for its timeless, romantic vibe. The song emits a sense of warmth and comfort that reminds you of your loved ones.
2. **Jai Ho** by **AR Rahman**: I chose this well-recognized track amongst Indians for its high energy yet melodically rich fusion of Indian classical and Western pop.



Nitasha Baig, Writer, recommends:

1. **Tum Jab Paas** by **Prateek Kuhad**: I found Tum Jab Paas while searching for some non-Bollywood Desi music and ended up really enjoying this song's indie pop vibes.
2. **Mr. Blue** by **Catherine Feeny**: Mr. Blue was actually featured in the last scene of Bojack Horseman and I love how the singer tries to console the melancholic "Mr. Blue". Definitely a comfort song!
3. **The South** by **John Louis**: I enjoyed the story in this song, specifically the dynamic between the singer who wants to escape and his lover who hesitates to do the same. The indie rock melodies suit it really well!



Zoë Kemppi, Editor-in-Chief, recommends:

1. **O.M.G** by **Grizzly**: I listened to this song a lot last fall during midterms. The relaxed acoustic melody and the bittersweet lyrics make it sound nostalgic, even if you're listening for the first time.
2. **Cherry Flavoured** by **The Neighbourhood**: I listened to this song a lot in my first semester of university. The lyrics are more melancholy than O.M.G, but the melody sounds similar and makes it a good studying song.
3. **Mai** by **Videoclub**: Listening to music in French makes learning the language more enjoyable. I love the chill energy of this song and the wistful lyrics, which give it a contemplative feeling.



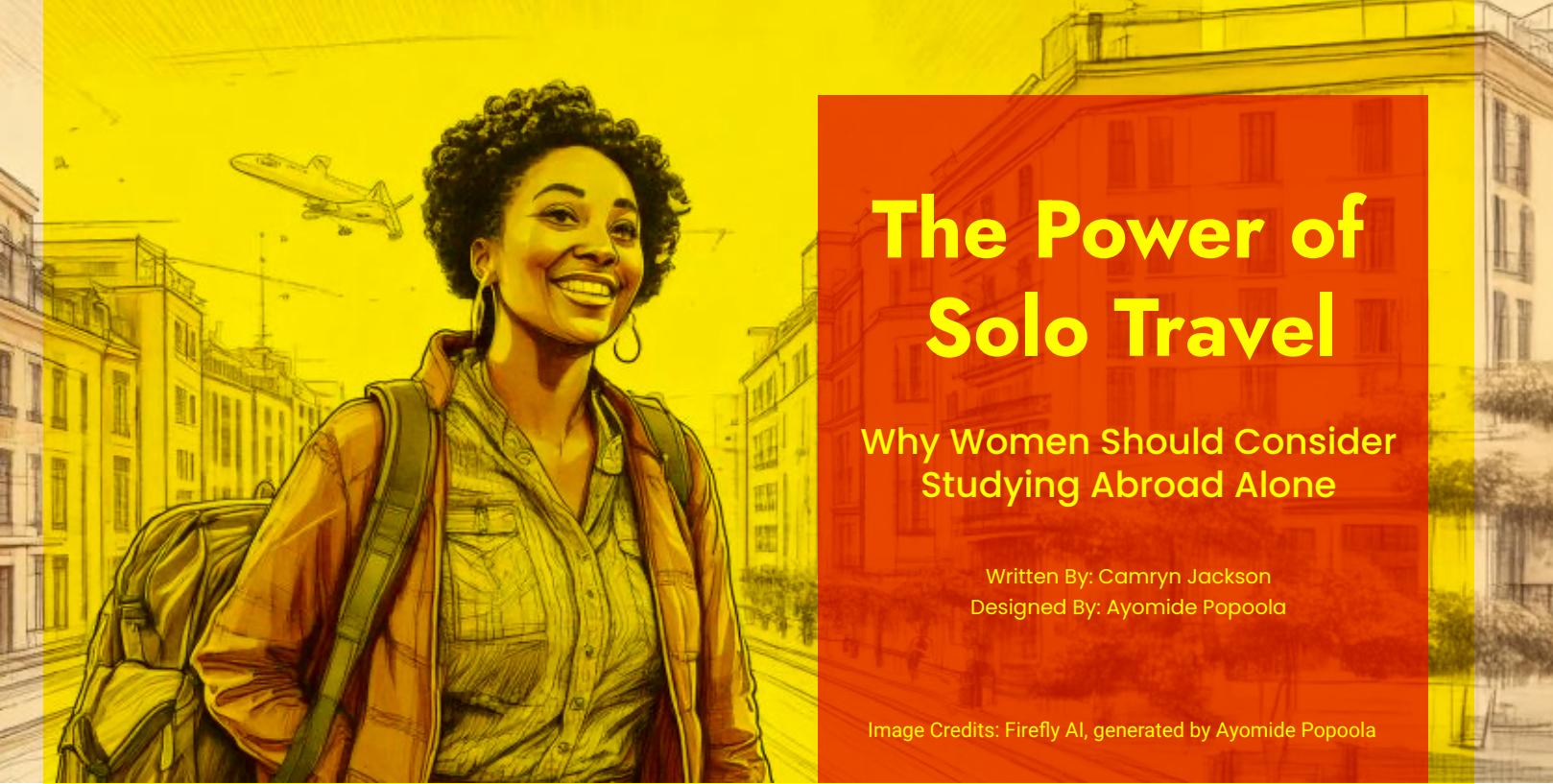
Khushal Sheth, Research Editor, recommends:

1. **Ma Belle** by **AP Dhillon**: I love this song because it describes a sense of belonging and attachment with your loved one.
2. **Pehle Bhi Main** by **Vishal Mishra**: The gentle music of this song gives me the calmness I need after a long and busy day.



Natalie Zanatta, Editor, recommends:

1. **No Wahala** by **Ida Banton**: My friend's one-year-old loves to dance to this song; it has the best energy.
2. **Lara (feat Clairo)** by **Sassy 009**: In my opinion, this is Clairo's best song. The production is simple, but the progression is so good.



The Power of Solo Travel

Why Women Should Consider Studying Abroad Alone

Written By: Camryn Jackson

Designed By: Ayomide Popoola

Image Credits: Firefly AI, generated by Ayomide Popoola

When I moved 150km away from my hometown to Edmonton, I felt incredibly vulnerable and unsure. Now, I'm getting ready to move 7,750km away from Edmonton to Vienna, Austria for a 5-month semester abroad—something I never would have thought I'd be capable of attempting alone. This transition represents more than just distance; it symbolizes a major shift in my journey of independence, personal growth, and international learning.

Having spent two years adjusting to life on my own, I feel confident and equipped to take this leap. I'm tired of hearing the same clichés from those who've studied abroad ("Highlight of my undergrad!" "Best decision ever!" or, my personal favourite, "Truly had the time of my life!"), and I've finally decided to pave my own path and see what it's really like to leave everything behind and move across the world.

Before committing to my decision, I tried and failed to convince friends to come with me. Most women I knew who had gone abroad didn't go alone—they usually opted for the safety and familiarity of traveling in pairs. Realizing I wouldn't have the same luxury, I almost became disheartened.

But here's the truth: traveling solo as a woman is one of the most empowering decisions I've ever made, and I haven't even left yet! As my apprehension fades into anticipation, I'm excited to leave my comfort zone behind once again. In my first year, this jump revealed the difference between who I thought I was and who I truly am. My small-town, sheltered background led me to believe I was an introvert, but I was really just a product of my closed environment.

In reality, my extrovertedness is a core part of my identity—I just needed to be around a different set of people. Turns out I'm a yapper—who knew?

During the past couple of years, I've uncovered pieces of myself that I would have been too afraid to reveal in the comfort of my previous environment. That's what excites me most about going away by myself: what new facets of my identity will emerge in a place where I have to fend for myself, learn a new routine, and immerse myself in an entirely different culture?

Moving away from home to a place where I know no one isn't new for me. When I arrived at my Lister dorm two years ago, my worst fear was not finding a community or a sense of home. Looking back, it was the best decision I've ever made! My best friends are here at the UofA, and I truly feel that I've finally found the community I was searching for; so I feel more confident that I can replicate this sense of belonging in a foreign country while adapting to its way of life. However, what excites me most about this leap isn't the certainty of finding something similar—it's the possibility of discovering the unknown. Change is a driving force for growth, and that's what fascinates me most going forward.

Stepping out of my boundaries has always kept me on my toes and fostered personal growth. Traveling solo as a woman sounds like a terrifying experience, and that's how I know it's going to be great!

So, dare to dream and take the leap. Travel solo and go abroad. Your future self (and mine, I hope) will thank you.

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The background image shows a modern lounge or study area. In the foreground, a man sits on a light-colored sofa, looking at his phone. Behind him, several other people are working on laptops or studying. The room has a warm color palette with wooden walls and a large window in the background.

LAZY FAIR

MAGAZINE