

# Data Lovers Construct the Future at the Calgary Region Hackathon

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**By Chad Hason, Content Contributor**

On March 5th, 2016 the Calgary Municipal Building played host to the [Calgary Region Hackathon](#).

The three-day competition challenged teams to create software solutions for increased connectivity in the Calgary Region.

A perfect event for [International Open Data Day](#).

In its second year in Calgary, Hackathon 2016 engaged 150 participants and 35 teams.

Close to three times last year's attendance!

The event, open to data enthusiasts of all professional abilities, followed a science fair format.

Teams of two to six competed to find new, engaging and technically savvy ways to share information.

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## Calgary Region Hackathon Winners

The winning teams who took home cash prizes and data bragging rights were:

### 1. CycloConnect: Ellyn DuMont, Linh Duong and Maha Jamil

A crowd-sourced app featuring bicycle routes and bike storage availability around the Calgary Region.



### 2. Plug-In Calgary: Ireti Fakinlede, Jill Langer and Stella Lee

A citizen engagement tool for municipalities to challenge and reward participation in environmental, social and economic programs.

### 3. Transit Krowd: Abhishek Sharma, Alaa Azazi and Teddy Seyed

A near real-time data collection app that communicates current bus capacities as well as information on the condition of buses, trains and transportation shelters within the Region.

## Judging

The event's preliminary judging focused on how unique and innovative the ideas were. It also looked at a team's ability to share the available data in new and thoughtful ways.

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The top six teams presented their ideas before the judges and Hackathon participants in the City of Calgary Council Chambers.



Each team's project was judged on a number of criteria including citizen value: a score assessing the product's ability to show economic, social or environmental benefits to the community.

Teams varied from:

- students that met in a class;
- industry professionals; and
- friends with a passion for creativity and competition

The few teams I interviewed all thoroughly enjoyed the event.

They were pleased to live somewhere that invested time and cash prizes to events focused on culturally relevant topics.

## Regional benefits of data



Jessica Letizia, Regional GIS Coordinator for the Calgary Regional Partnership and co-creator of the event, was ecstatic with the Calgary Region Hackathon.

Both of the event's sponsors, the Calgary Regional Partnership (CRP) and the City of Calgary, were strong driving forces on gathering and sharing regional data with the public.

Shared data means increased municipal transparency and higher engagement with the Region's evolution.

Jessica stated, "This event helped us spread the word about the type of data available on the [Calgary Region Open Data Site](#), and led to the creation of a number of amazing applications with the capabilities to benefit people throughout our Region."

A number of amazing applications were created to benefit people throughout our Region

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Of course, without a strong and dedicated support team, events like these simply wouldn't happen.

***Special thanks goes to event sponsors, organization team, volunteers and judging panel***



For more information about the data collected by the CRP check out the [Open Data Site](#).

See more pictures from this year's Calgary Region Hackathon [on Flickr](#).

*Did you attend this year's Calgary Region Hackathon? What was your experience like? We'd love to hear from you!*

*Chad Hason is a Canadian storyteller and owner of [Candid MarCom](#).*