

Mission Critical

By Liza Agrba

Innovative, tech-driven companies are embracing the risk that comes with any entrepreneurial endeavour. They're also attracting CPAs who find that helping these firms navigate the ups and downs of business is its own reward.

Karla Connolly, CPA and interim president and CEO of Genesis in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador

When CPA Karla Connolly started working at Genesis, a St. John's-based non-profit tech incubator, she found herself genuinely looking forward to Monday mornings. Initially serving as the company's director of finance and operations, and now as its interim president and CEO, Connolly's financial and strategic expertise helps bring innovative ideas from a suite of boundary-pushing tech companies to the fore. "We're working together to try to shape the future of tech here in Newfoundland and Labrador, and actively contributing to this transformative period in our province's history is incredibly motivating," she says.

Connolly is one of many CPAs who lend their skills to innovative companies that prioritize fresh perspectives and dynamic problem-solving over a rigid focus on quarterly earnings. Since even the best ideas flounder without sober financial guidance, their work is indispensable—and for CPAs in this field, a rock-solid sense of purpose is a major perk. But mitigating financial risk in largely unknown territory is a formidable challenge.

Innovation-minded companies distinguish themselves through a relentless focus on creativity, improvement and a proactive approach to change. Unlike their more traditional counterparts, these companies generally prioritize research and development, invest heavily in new technologies and foster a culture that encourages experimentation and calculated risk-taking.