



Lina Ismail

Strategic Advisor

Throughout her career, Lina has been focused on working with founders who lead startups at various stages of growth. As an entrepreneur herself, Lina understands the challenges of building and scaling a business. Working with Fortune 500 companies, large enterprises, and innovative startups, Lina has launched and led new business lines and defined the strategic direction of notable brands. Passionate about helping entrepreneurs build industry leading businesses, Lina works with founders to balance entrepreneurial vision and creativity, with strong business fundamentals and rigorous preparation to help their businesses be the leaders of tomorrow. With her leadership and focus on developing the right teams and culture, Lina has helped transform and expand businesses into new markets while achieving exponential growth.

Lina is the CEO and Co-Founder of The Catherine Wheel, a consulting and advisory firm that helps small to midsize businesses in financial services and retail transform their businesses through sustainable and company-wide change. As a seasoned innovation and growth practitioner, Lina understands the challenges that entrepreneurs face and is dedicated to working with founders and their teams to create innovative solutions that drive growth. Lina is currently a strategic advisor with MT>Ventures and Holt Accelerator, and is also an Angel Investor and advisor to startups in the B2B fintech space.

Prior to founding The Catherine Wheel, Lina was a Managing Partner of thinki3, a consulting and advisory services firm that focuses on transformation and innovation within large scale enterprises and in the process connecting them with startups to accelerate growth. Her executive leadership positions include serving as Chief Commercial Officer at Optimiz, Head of Product, Innovation and Marketing at Fundserv Inc., and Vice President of Products and Marketing and later Vice President of Client Relationship Management at Citigroup Fund Services. Lina also served in leadership roles in Larsen & Toubro Infotech Ltd and International Financial Data Services (IFDS) (in Europe known as State Street Bank).

Lina has spoken at conferences across Canada, speaking to founders and the start-up community on topics including how to pitch, raise capital, and scale their business, building resilient teams, commercialization, product and design, and customer experience. Outside of her work, Lina sits on the

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advisory council for UNHCR Canada where she advocates for the continued support of refugees. Lina also spends time mentoring students at The Knowledge Society and supports the education of students in conflict zones around the world.

