

A.R.I. Announces Growth Capital Investment in October's Very Own (OVO)

With celebrity-led brands hitting record valuations worldwide, A.R.I. supports OVO's global expansion

NEW YORK CITY, NY, UNITED STATES, January 13, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Applied Real Intelligence \("A.R.I."\)](#), a U.S.-based investment firm specializing in growth financing for category-defining, innovative companies, announced a growth capital investment in October's Very Own (OVO), the globally recognized lifestyle brand founded by Aubrey "Drake" Graham, Oliver El-Khatib, and Noah "40" Shebib.

"There is extraordinary global demand for culturally authentic brands right now and the timing couldn't be better for OVO," said [Dr. Zack Ellison, CFA, CAIA](#), A.R.I.'s Founder and Managing General Partner. "Recently, Human Made, the streetwear brand partially owned by Pharrell Williams, went public at nearly \$500 million and was reportedly 60 times oversubscribed. It's a clear signal that investors see tremendous value in brands that blend creativity, community, and cultural credibility. OVO is uniquely positioned within that movement, combining global influence across fashion, music, sports, and a cultural and lifestyle presence that sets it apart."



Dr. Zack Ellison, Founder and Managing General Partner, Applied Real Intelligence (A.R.I.)

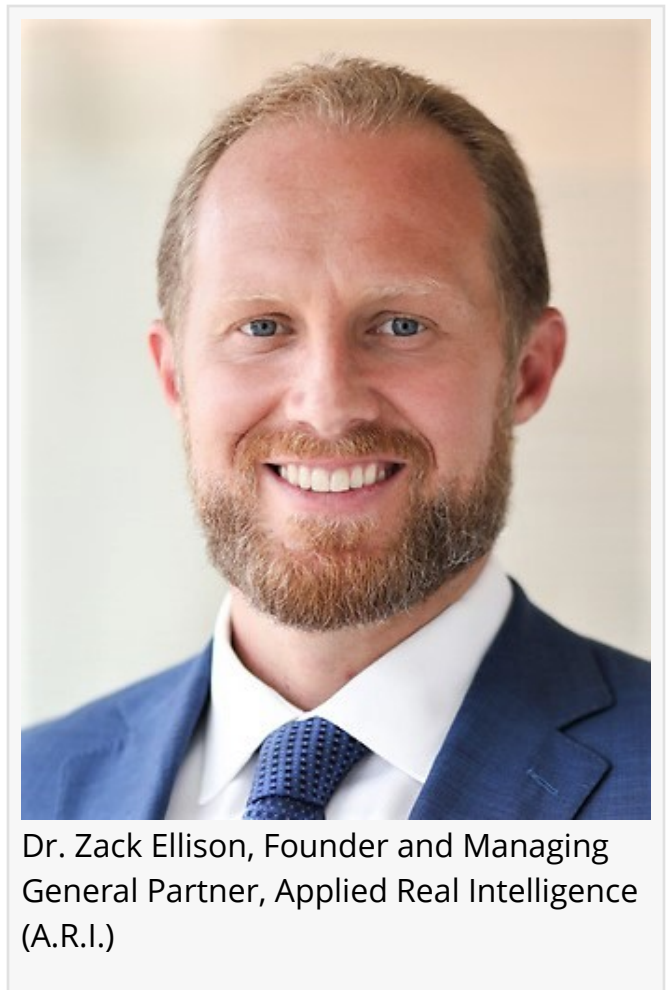


CELEBRATING CANADIAN CREATIVITY ON THE GLOBAL STAGE

Founded in Toronto in 2008, October's Very Own has become one of Canada's most successful cultural exports. What began as a music collective has evolved into a vertically integrated lifestyle company with flagship retail stores across Toronto, Mississauga, Ottawa, Calgary, and British Columbia, along with locations in Los Angeles, New York, Las Vegas, and London.

Under the leadership of CEO Derek "Drex" Jancar — recipient of Billboard Canada's 2025 Impact Award — OVO continues to scale its global e-commerce business, expand premier partnerships, and grow its physical retail footprint, building on the creative foundation established by Drake, Oliver El-Khatib, and Noah "40" Shebib.

"OVO represents the next generation of Canadian entrepreneurship," said Dr. Ellison. "Drake, Oliver, and 40 created something culturally unparalleled, and Drex is now scaling that vision with remarkable discipline and strategic clarity. It's a rare combination, and one that A.R.I. is proud to support."



Dr. Zack Ellison, Founder and Managing General Partner, Applied Real Intelligence (A.R.I.)

“

Just as Drake elevated the visibility of Canadian music worldwide, OVO is elevating Canadian culture in global streetwear.”

*Dr. Zack Ellison, Founder,
Applied Real Intelligence
(A.R.I.)*

DEFINING THE CELEBRITY-LED BRAND CATEGORY

OVO's growth places it among the most influential celebrity-led brands in the world, a select category that includes SKIMS (Kim Kardashian), Fenty (Rihanna), and Rhode (Hailey Bieber). These companies represent a powerful new generation of consumer brands where cultural credibility, celebrity influence, and disciplined execution converge to produce outsized results.

Recent market activity — including SKIMS' \$5 billion

valuation in a Goldman Sachs-led round joined by BDT & MSD Partners, and e.l.f. Beauty's \$1 billion acquisition of Rhode at five times trailing revenue — shows the surging demand for authentic, celebrity-led brands.

“A critical part of A.R.I.’s investment process is evaluating staying power,” Dr. Ellison said. “OVO isn’t a moment; it’s a long-term movement. Very few brands have sustained OVO’s level of credibility and consistency across both creative and commercial dimensions. It is extraordinary and it’s exactly the profile we seek in our investments.”

PARTNERED WITH THE WORLD'S BEST AND CANADA'S OWN

OVO’s cultural capital is underscored by an unmatched history of collaborations that bridge fashion, sports, and entertainment – including Nike (Jordan Brand), Timberland, the NBA, NFL, MLB, NHL, Fanatics, Disney, Warner Bros. (Looney Tunes), and The Simpsons, among others.

In Canada, the brand’s influence runs deep. Its partnership with the Toronto Raptors led to the renaming of the team’s practice facility as the OVO Athletic Centre. Drake, OVO, and the Raptors also joined forces to launch the Welcome Toronto initiative, which donated millions to refurbish community basketball courts across the city and to support Canada Basketball.

OVO’s Canadian collaborations – with the Toronto Blue Jays, Canadian Football League (CFL), Canada Skateboard, Canada Goose, Roots, Wayne Gretzky, William Nylander, and Georges St-Pierre, among others – underscore its homegrown authenticity and national pride while driving international appeal.

Recent partnerships with PlayStation, Chelsea Football Club, Red Bull Racing, Callaway, and Vessel Golf Bags showcase OVO’s continued expansion into sport, lifestyle, and performance categories.

OVO'S DISTINCT PLACE IN GLOBAL STREETWEAR

Within the broader streetwear landscape, OVO is often compared to brands such as Supreme, KITH, Stüssy, Off-White, Human Made, and BAPE – companies known for combining exclusivity, artistry, and cultural credibility.

“OVO has become a symbol of Canadian creativity and excellence,” said Dr. Ellison. “Just as Drake elevated the visibility of Canadian music worldwide, OVO is elevating Canadian culture in global streetwear.”

Dr. Ellison added: “Having worked at premier Canadian institutions including Thomson Reuters, Scotiabank, and Sun Life Financial, I’ve developed a deep appreciation for the professionalism, creativity, and integrity that define Canadian business culture. I’ve come to feel like an honorary Canadian, and it’s deeply gratifying to support OVO as it brings Canadian excellence to a global audience.”

Information is solely from public sources. Trademarks belong to their respective owners and are used for identification only, without implying endorsement.

ABOUT OCTOBER'S VERY OWN (OVO)

October's Very Own (OVO) is a Canadian lifestyle brand led by CEO Drex Jancar and founded by Aubrey "Drake" Graham, Oliver El-Khatib, and Noah "40" Shebib. OVO offers premium apparel and accessories and is known for its distinctive owl logo and black-and-gold aesthetic. The brand has grown into a globally recognized enterprise with 12 flagship stores and a worldwide e-commerce presence.

ABOUT APPLIED REAL INTELLIGENCE (A.R.I.)

Applied Real Intelligence (A.R.I.) is a U.S.-based investment manager providing growth capital to innovation-driven companies in sectors including AI, software, technology, clean energy, consumer brands, sports, media, and entertainment. A.R.I.'s disciplined, safety-first approach helps companies scale efficiently while protecting investor capital. Learn more at www.arivc.com

[Dr. Zack Ellison, MBA, MS, CFA, CAIA](#), Founder & Managing General Partner of A.R.I., has over 20 years of cross-border credit and investment experience at firms such as Thomson Reuters, Scotiabank, Deutsche Bank, and Sun Life Financial. He holds an MBA from the University of Chicago Booth School of Business, an MS in Risk Management from NYU Stern, and a Doctorate in Business Administration from the University of Florida.

A.R.I. Investor and Media Relations

Applied Real Intelligence ("A.R.I.")

+1 310-881-3893

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[LinkedIn](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/882705817>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2026 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.