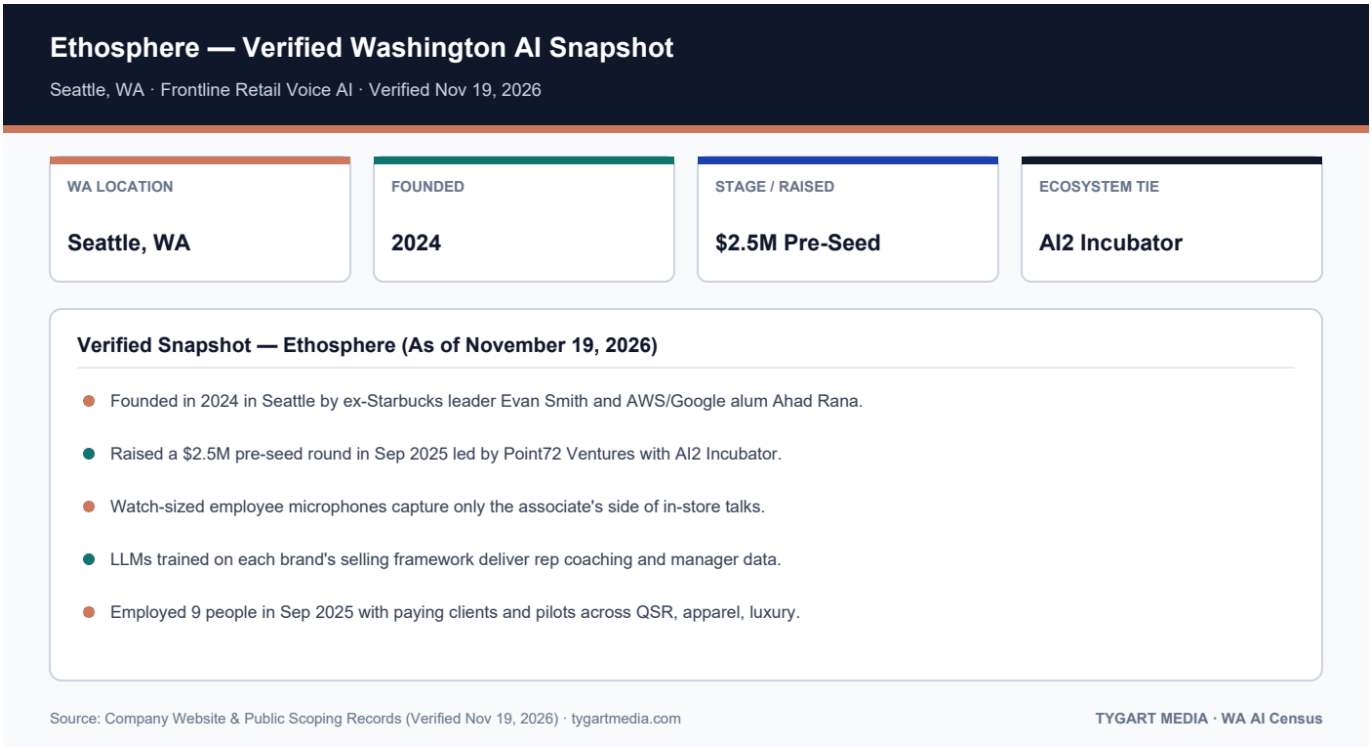
Ethosphere: Seattle AI Profile — Product, Footprint & Verified Record

Verified: November 19, 2026 · Canonical URL: https://tygartmedia.com/ethosphere-seattle-wa-ai-profile/

Verified Record Summary: Ethosphere (ethosphere.ai) is an independent Seattle voice AI startup founded in 2024 by former AI2 Incubator entrepreneurs-in-residence Evan Smith and Ahad Rana. Backed by a $2.5M pre-seed round led by Point72 Ventures in September 2025, the company uses employee-worn microphones and brand-trained language models to coach frontline retail workers and surface store-level conversion insights.



Field	Verified Record (As of Nov 19, 2026)
Company	Ethosphere
Official Website	ethosphere.ai
Washington HQ	Seattle, WA
Other WA Footprint	AI2 Incubator / AI House alum and active portfolio company (Seattle)
Founded	2024 (per GeekWire, Sep 16, 2025)
Founders / Leadership	Evan Smith (Co-founder & CEO), Ahad Rana (Co-founder & CTO)
Stage	Pre-Seed
Announced Funding	$2.5M pre-seed (Sep 2025; led by Point72 Ventures with AI2 Incubator, Carya Ventures, Pack VC, Hike Ventures, J4 Ventures)
Team Size	9 (as of Sep 2025 GeekWire report)
Primary Ecosystem Ties	AI2 Incubator / AI House; Point72 Ventures Seattle; Starbucks and AWS alumni founders

What Ethosphere Builds

Ethosphere builds a privacy-first voice AI and wearable microphone analytics platform for physical retail operations. As detailed by GeekWire on September 16, 2025 and on ethosphere.ai, frontline retail associates wear lightweight, watch-sized microphones during their shifts. Ethosphere's software cleans and transcribes the captured speech, then runs large language models configured on each retailer's own training manuals and selling frameworks to assess how associates execute store conversations.

To manage in-store privacy constraints, Ethosphere engineered its hardware and processing pipeline to capture only the employee's side of customer conversations—not the shopper's voice—while working with retail clients to post appropriate in-store disclosures. CEO Evan Smith told GeekWire the company is also exploring optional, opt-in concierge recording workflows in luxury retail settings where stylists offer personalized follow-up summaries. The processed insights feed individualized coaching and growth tracking for associates alongside store-level visibility for managers.

Washington Footprint and Leadership

Ethosphere was founded in Seattle in 2024 and spun out of Seattle's AI2 Incubator, where both co-founders served as entrepreneurs-in-residence. The company remains listed as an active, independent portfolio startup on the AI House directory with the summary "Ethosphere transforms real life interactions into real analytics."

Co-founder and CEO Evan Smith previously held leadership roles in technology and operations at Seattle-headquartered Starbucks after starting his career in education and public affairs. Co-founder and CTO Ahad Rana is a veteran software engineer and technologist with prior experience at AWS, Google, Factual, and AOL. At the time of GeekWire's September 2025 funding report, the Seattle startup employed nine people.

Products, Users, and Public Traction

On ethosphere.ai, Ethosphere structures its product around three internal audiences inside brick-and-mortar retail chains: frontline sales reps receiving curated feedback and skill-progression tracking, store managers identifying who is excelling and where targeted coaching helps, and corporate retail operators measuring in-store execution across locations.

In its September 2025 interview with GeekWire, Ethosphere reported generating revenue from paying retail customers while running custom pilots with additional brands across three physical segments: quick-service restaurants (QSR), clothing and apparel stores, and high-end luxury retailers. Specific customer brand names are not publicly disclosed. Smith noted that the gamified recognition component resonated more strongly with frontline workers than expected, helping address the feedback gap that frequently drives retail staff turnover.

Funding, Stage, and Place in Washington's AI Landscape

Ethosphere announced a $2.5 million pre-seed round in September 2025 led by Point72 Ventures—represented by Seattle-based managing partner Sri Chandrasekar—with participation from AI2 Incubator, Carya Ventures, Pack VC, Hike Ventures, and J4 Ventures (per GeekWire). No subsequent institutional funding round or updated team size has been publicly announced through November 19, 2026.

Within Seattle's AI startup cluster, Ethosphere pairs local retail operations leadership (Starbucks) with Pacific Northwest cloud and applied-AI engineering (AWS and AI2 Incubator) to instrument physical store floors rather than purely digital commerce. Alongside fellow AI2 Incubator retail startup Jinn Labs (which fuses store cameras and point-of-sale feeds for loss prevention and traffic analytics), Ethosphere reflects Seattle's pragmatic focus on turning unstructured brick-and-mortar store signals into measurable operational metrics.

Verified Primary Sources & Official References

• Ethosphere Official Website: https://ethosphere.ai/

• GeekWire — Ethosphere $2.5M Pre-Seed (Sep 16, 2025): https://www.geekwire.com/2025/seattle-startup-raises-2-5m-to-analyze-retail-worker-conversations-using-ai-and-microphones/

• AI House / AI2 Incubator Companies Directory: https://aihouse.vc/incubator/companies

Companion Markdown twin: https://tygartmedia.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/11/ethosphere-seattle-wa-ai-profile.md (also mirrored at https://tygartmedia.com/ethosphere-seattle-wa-ai-profile.md). Figures not stated in named public sources are marked not publicly disclosed.