

MaRS



Build the future

At MaRS, philanthropic capital drives transformative change for Canada and the world.





MaRS fuels meaningful innovation

Donors directly help innovators create real-world impact.

MaRS was founded 25 years ago on a bold idea that Canada's brightest minds, given the right support and connections, can solve society's hardest problems.

Today, that ambitious premise has become North America's largest innovation hub, and the problems we are looking to tackle are thornier than ever. Finding the right tools to address the climate crisis, a fractured healthcare system and other challenges requires the support of visionary donors — people and organizations that understand why transformative change needs the right infrastructure to succeed. This report reflects how philanthropy continues to power the MaRS mission.

Philanthropy at MaRS is catalytic. It mobilizes change where markets falter by taking on the problems that don't yet have a clear commercial path and moving solutions forward.

Our partners fund targeted interventions that:

- Provide people with mobility disabilities with greater autonomy by supporting startups developing innovative assistive technologies.
- Catch cancer at its early stages by raising awareness about the benefits of early screening in rural and remote areas.
- Help communities prepare for the next flood, wildfire or extreme heat wave by supporting high-potential founders so that they can deploy their climate adaptation solutions faster.
- Close the gap in women's healthcare by building a strong foundation of data and research to develop crucial solutions.
- Get tangible solutions into the market faster, by convening researchers, entrepreneurs, policy-makers and investors so that they can address systemic barriers.

Tracking change

Philanthropy at MaRS is a powerful enabler of long-term, systemic change. It's how we create momentum, open doors and build infrastructure that science alone cannot achieve.

By the numbers
\$5 million

Total catalytic donor funding raised between April 2025 and March 2026

16

New and renewed philanthropic partnerships in FY26

25

Years of MaRS connecting innovators, capital and community



"A group of civic leaders made a bet 25 years ago on what was possible. That bet — on people, on ideas, on the belief that innovation is a public good — is still the foundation of everything we do at MaRS. The challenges ahead are bigger than ever, and so is the opportunity. Philanthropic partners are how we rise to meet it."

– Grace Lee Reynolds
CEO, MaRS



Creating impact

How visionary donors at MaRS are shaping the future.

Every dollar we receive from partners helps launch programs, pilot bold ideas and build platforms that move breakthrough innovations from the lab into the real world. Here's a snapshot of what that looked like in FY26.

"MaRS has always been about more than innovation — it's about what Canadians can accomplish when the right people commit to solving hard problems together. The Chisholm Thomson Family Foundation supports MaRS because we believe that kind of civic leadership matters, and that it compounds over time."

– **Chisholm Thomson Family Foundation**



Above: Bionic Power's devices help kids with disabilities. Below: Christine Gabardo and her team at CERT Systems are converting carbon dioxide emissions into high-value chemicals.



Scaling Canada's women-led cleantech revolution

The MaRS Women in Cleantech Network is building a culture of support, innovation and growth.

Supporters: Verschuren Foundation, Enbridge

Despite marked advancements, women's representation in cleantech remains disproportionately low. [The MaRS Women in Cleantech Network](#) directly addresses this gap by providing a vital support system. This community of more than 50 female founders fosters collaboration among women-led ventures, providing peer connections, mentorship, programming and platforms to help participants scale and succeed.

Impact

- The network held a roundtable discussion to explore resilience and the innovation mindset with dozens of founders and high-profile stakeholders including former federal minister of environment and climate change Catherine McKenna, SRTX founder Katherine Homuth and Canadian Olympic athletes.
- Delivered targeted workshops on board governance and international development, which are essential skills for founders looking to scale globally.



"In cleantech, the timelines are long and the wins are hard-fought. Having a network of founders who understand that — people you can call when something goes sideways or when you need a warm introduction you wouldn't otherwise get — is not a nice-to-have; it's critical. The WIC Network is the kind of community that determines whether women-led ventures make it to the next stage. Philanthropic support is what makes that community possible, and you can see the difference it makes in the companies coming out of it."

– **Vida Gabriel, Co-founder and CEO, TerraFixing**

The Women in Cleantech Network provides a critical support system for founders.



Building Canada's climate resilience

The MaRS Adaptech Accelerator supports startups scaling solutions that help communities predict, prepare and respond to extreme weather events.

Supporters: Definity Financial, Donner Canadian Foundation, TD Bank Group

As climate shocks intensify, our communities, infrastructure and economy are increasingly under threat. While emission reduction remains essential, it is no longer sufficient. We need to adapt to the realities of our changing climate and bolster Canada's ability to prepare, prevent and respond to climate impacts. Yet adaptation and resilience ventures have been chronically underfunded and under-supported. The [MaRS Adaptech Accelerator](#), which launched in early FY27, was designed to close that gap.

The Adaptech Accelerator is supporting nine ventures, helping them access capital, build market traction and advance adoption in Canadian communities. The inaugural cohort spans AI-powered flood simulation and wildfire hazard tools, climate-resilient modular housing and low-carbon building materials.

Impact

- Produced a landmark [research report](#) with Tailwind Futures, mapping the demand, supply and investment landscape for adaptech solutions in Canada.
- Joined the Adaptation Canada Advisory Group, which helps connect participating ventures with the policy and investment community driving Canada's adaptation agenda.
- Committed to funding three pilot projects with global sustainability network ICLEI, which will connect cohort members with the municipalities their solutions are built to serve.



"Our commitment to helping build a more resilient Canada is a core part of our purpose. We are proud to advance this commitment through our work with MaRS, fostering a new generation of Canadian innovators. By accelerating these adaptation-focused ventures, we are making a targeted investment in the practical solutions that will help protect our communities and support our country's economic vitality. This initiative is a tangible step in our strategy to ensure a sustainable and insurable future for Canadians."

**– Rowan Saunders
President and CEO,
Definity Financial**

Tinybox Systems is developing climate-resilient housing designed for remote regions and disaster response.



Global leadership in accessibility innovation

The Mobility Unlimited Hub was created to help bring transformative solutions to market.

Supporter: Toyota Mobility Foundation

The human-centered philosophy of the [Mobility Unlimited Hub](#) is simple: When people are free to move, they can fully realize their potential. With catalytic support from the Toyota Mobility Foundation (TMF), MaRS built on the success of this global platform. In late 2025, MUH launched a second cohort to help accelerate the development of assistive technologies for people with mobility challenges.

Impact

- Provided startups with up to \$100,000 in non-dilutive funding to help fast-track their solutions through the product development and proof-of-concept phases and unlock follow-on private investment. This funding has helped participants expand access to their groundbreaking mobility solutions.
- Organized international market visits to support the growth of domestic innovations into scalable, export-ready enterprises.
- Cohort participants have now expanded into the U.S., U.K., Australia, Japan, Germany, South Korea, Brazil, Hong Kong, Egypt and Ukraine, carrying made-in-Canada assistive technology to every corner of the world.
- Opened a dedicated coworking space within the MaRS Centre to drive real-time collaboration, networking opportunities and strategic partnerships.
- The Mobility Unlimited Hub will open applications for its third cohort in late 2026. It is also launching a cohort alumni network to foster mentorship, collaboration and shared learning.



GiveVision's sight-enhancing headsets allow visually impaired users to watch live sports and cultural events.

The Mobility Unlimited Hub demonstrates what philanthropic capital can build. We invite donors to join as founding supporters of the next chapter, backing a platform that is already changing what independence looks like for people with disabilities around the world.



“Being part of MaRS has provided access to an exceptional digital health and innovation ecosystem that has

played a key role in validating our solution, increasing our visibility, and supporting our growth. It has also allowed us to connect with an outstanding community of founders and companies, creating a valuable space for learning, collaboration and shared experience. MaRS has opened the door to resources that are essential to our development, including support for business growth, patents and regulatory strategy.”

– **Nicolas Jimenez, CEO and President, Kinesix**



“TMF had a vision to establish a hub for active mobility innovation, to scale technologies and

products that benefit the world and meet the needs of our disabled and aging populations. Making that happen requires actualizing a global program or resource at the local level. Organizations like the Toyota Mobility Foundation cannot make this happen without organizations like MaRS who have the local resources, network and ability to operate and lead in the complexities of the local ecosystem. No one quite emulates what MaRS does for ventures.”

– **William Chernicoff, Senior Manager, Global Research and Innovation, Toyota Mobility Foundation**

smartARM has developed an AI-powered bionic arm with vision-based grip recognition.



Improving access to cancer screening

The Rural and Remote Community Cancer Screening Challenge worked with local organizations to increase participation in screening programs.

Supporter: Canadian Cancer Society

Getting screened for cancer before symptoms appear has the potential to identify the disease at an early stage, leading to vastly improved outcomes. However, in rural and remote communities, it can be difficult to access critical information and resources, and many residents of these areas miss the early detection window that saves lives. With the [Rural and Remote Community Cancer Screening Challenge](#), MaRS and the Canadian Cancer Society aimed to improve screening participation through community-rooted, low-barrier solutions.

Impact

- Awarded \$175,000 to pilot projects implementing community-driven solutions in five regions across Canada.
- Gateway Centre of Excellence in Rural Health (Gateway CERH), a Goderich, Ontario-based non-profit, was named the \$100,000 grand prize winner at Impact Health, MaRS's annual health tech summit.

Gateway CERH aimed to normalize cancer screening conversations in public, non-clinical settings.



"By integrating screening facilitation within trusted community settings, the model aims to improve uptake, streamline pathways to diagnostic follow-ups and reduce strain on primary care. We are excited about the opportunity this funding creates to continue advancing cancer screening initiatives in rural communities."

– **Gwen Devereaux, President Gateway Centre of Excellence in Rural Health**



Building what's next

MaRS is looking for bold partners to solve tomorrow's problems today.

Make MaRS your home for impact. Together, we can build a prosperous, equitable future for all Canadians. We are actively seeking partners for two new initiatives.



Above: Green Graphite is developing a more sustainable method of processing graphite. Below: By reducing the marine acidity, Planetary Technologies' solution helps the oceans absorb more carbon dioxide.



Where the next breakthrough in women's health begins

Women make up about 51 percent of the population, and they spend more time in poorer health, which has deep economic and social impacts on communities, families and the country's productivity. But women's health remains underfunded, undervalued and misunderstood at a fundamental level.

Health innovation has the potential to transform this inequitable landscape into an even playing field. MaRS is working to create better models of care and more efficient tools by building a coalition of researchers, entrepreneurs, investors and healthcare leaders.

To help build this critical infrastructure, we are actively seeking anchor donors.

What your investment could make possible:

- Funding foundational research to fill crucial data gaps — the science that has to exist before solutions can be built.
- Supporting early-stage women's health ventures through a dedicated cohort.
- Convening stakeholders across the women's health ecosystem to expedite real-world impact.

MaRS is looking to build and foster a community of innovators to close the health gap for women.



Canada's first-of-a-kind (FOAK) Lab for commercial-scale deployment cohort

Supporters: Natural Resources Canada, Chisholm Thomson Family Foundation and the Schmidt Family Foundation

The [MaRS FOAK Lab](#) supports clean technology ventures through the design, financing and execution of their first commercial-scale projects, reducing the failure rate that has historically defined this stage and accelerating the path to the scale needed for real climate impact. The pilot cohort launched in early 2026, with MaRS committed to offering the program on an ongoing basis subject to philanthropic support.

Donor capital makes the FOAK Lab possible and determines whether it continues.

What your investment makes possible:

- Cohort ventures will complete their first commercial-scale projects, proving the technical and commercial viability of their innovation for the first time.
- Each participating venture will secure at least two new investors in their FOAK project through the program, turning philanthropic support into catalytic follow-on capital.
- Each venture will build at least two new development partnerships, expanding the network of relationships needed to execute at scale.



"Deploying new technologies isn't easy, but we need them if we hope to achieve our climate objectives. With the FOAK Lab, MaRS is concentrating resources and expertise on a particularly challenging part of the journey to scale."

**– Kyle McEneaney
Program Director,
Climate Tech Program,
Schmidt Family Foundation**



Exterra Technologies, one of five ventures in the MaRS FOAK Lab, has developed a method of extracting critical minerals from mine tailings.

With thanks to our FY26 supporters:

MaRS Discovery District is a registered charitable organization supported by the Ontario and federal governments and by the generosity of individuals, philanthropic foundations and corporations. Thank you for your commitment to developing breakthrough, actionable solutions to humanity's most complex challenges in partnership with MaRS and the ventures we support.

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MaRS

The future starts here

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economy, contact the Philanthropy Office:

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