

The Future of Accessibility: Toyota Mobility Foundation and MaRS Discovery District Launch the *Mobility Unlimited Hub* in Toronto

Toronto, Canada (March 7, 2024) – “Active mobility” is more than getting from A to B. It’s having the autonomy of movement that allows us to be actively independent, so we can pursue all the things that make life healthy, joyful and worthwhile. In a significant step towards creating a more inclusive society, Toyota Mobility Foundation (TMF) and MaRS Discovery District are proud to announce the launch of the Mobility Unlimited Hub. This initiative aims to bridge the gaps in the ecosystem and accelerate the development and adoption of early-stage personal mobility technologies.

When people are free to move, they can broaden their horizons and fully realize their potential. The Mobility Unlimited Hub will work to foster innovation by offering a path to successful commercialization. It will bridge early-stage achievements and the capacity to succeed in the mass market. The range of resources provided to participants includes marketing and public relations support, funding opportunities, and avenues for collaboration. The initiative is underpinned by a commitment to community engagement and the creation of a supportive environment for startups and innovators in the active mobility sector.

“The Mobility Unlimited Hub is a beacon of innovation and inclusivity and seeks to shine a light on the growing prevalence of disability, position the mobility market as one worth investing in, and help more people lead active, healthy lives,” stated Ryan Klem, Director of Programs at TMF.

Krista Jones, Interim CEO of MaRS, echoed this sentiment, stating, “This collaboration between MaRS and Toyota Mobility Foundation represents a commitment to leveraging technology and creativity to break down barriers to mobility. It’s about creating not just new pathways for movement, but also catalyzing the development and adoption of early-stage personal mobility technologies while accelerating commercialization in this crucial field.”

Canada has an estimated 8.0 million people who have at least one disability, representing 27% of Canadians aged 15 and older (or 20.9% of total population).* 72% of Canadians with disability reported having encountered some form of barrier to accessibility within the last year, and among those with physical disabilities, 44.9% required at least one type of aid or assistive device or an accessibility feature within their home**. However, over 30% of people with disabilities in Canada report unmet needs for assistive devices, highlighting the critical role of initiatives like the Mobility Unlimited Hub.

- **Growing Demand:** The marketing opportunity of Active Mobility Technology was valued at over \$48 billion in 2022, with projections to nearly double to \$90 billion by 2030.***

- **Critical Need:** Over 1 billion people globally are in need of assistive technologies, a figure expected to double by 2050, highlighting the urgent requirement for innovative solutions.****
- **Immeasurable Impact:** The Mobility Unlimited Hub aims to meet these needs, providing sustainable and independent mobility experiences for all, especially those with disabilities.
- **Economic Opportunity:** The initiative is set to unlock significant economic benefits, with improved mobility solutions expected to contribute more than USD 10 trillion to the global economy over the next 55 years.***
- **Health and Wellness Benefits:** Enhanced access to assistive technologies is anticipated to offer an additional 1.3 years of 'perfect health' over the life cycle of each user.****
- **Social Engagement and Inclusion:** The Hub seeks to foster increased social engagement and inclusion, addressing issues of chronic loneliness and improving overall well-being.

While establishing the Mobility Unlimited Hub, Toyota Mobility Foundation and MaRS worked closely with Toronto Global, a team of experienced business advisors assisting global organizations to expand into the Toronto Region. Toronto Global hosted Toyota Mobility Foundation on a number of visits to Toronto, met with executives in Japan, and facilitated key connections with industry leaders.

"We are thrilled to support TMF and MaRS in leveraging the Toronto Region's advanced technology ecosystem and resources for this health-tech breakthrough," said Toronto Global CEO Stephen Lund. "Diversity and inclusion are key pillars to the Toronto Region's values, this project will help the region further embrace inclusivity by creating a more accessible society for Canadians."

The Hub is launching with the support of several community members, including Access to Success, George Brown College, Global Startups, Linamar iHub, KITE UHN, Sheridan College, Toronto Global, University of Toronto, and Woven Capital, all united under the mantra, "Nothing about us without us". This community-driven approach is fundamental to the Hub's mission, ensuring that solutions are developed with direct input from those they aim to serve.

Call for Submissions for the First Cohort

The Mobility Unlimited Hub is now accepting submissions for its first cohort. Innovators, entrepreneurs, and startups specializing in active mobility technology are encouraged to apply and become part of a vibrant community working towards the common goal of advancing active mobility solutions.

The launch of the Mobility Unlimited Hub in Toronto is just the beginning. Toyota Mobility Foundation envisions establishing a network of Hubs around the world, each dedicated to addressing local mobility challenges while contributing to a global movement towards inclusive mobility solutions.

For more information about the Mobility Unlimited Hub and to submit your application for the first cohort, visit www.mobilityunlimitedhub.org.

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About MaRS Discovery District

[MaRS Discovery District](#) helps Canadian startups succeed so they can solve our toughest problems in areas like climate, health and the economy. As North America's largest urban innovation hub and a registered charity, MaRS provides direct support for more than 1,200 ventures, builds communities of innovators within its 1.5 million square feet of lab and office space and beyond, and spurs the adoption of new solutions — in Canada and around the world.

About Toyota Mobility Foundation

[The Toyota Mobility Foundation](#) (TMF) was established in August 2014 by the Toyota Motor Corporation (TMC) to support the development of a more mobile society in which everyone can move freely. The Foundation underscores TMC's on-going commitment to continuous improvement and respect for people. It utilizes Toyota's expertise and technologies to support strong mobility systems while eliminating disparities in mobility. TMF works in partnership with universities, governments, non-profits, research institutions and other organizations, creating programs that are aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to address mobility issues around the world.

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Citations:

* Statistics Canada. (2022). <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/231201/dq231201b-eng.htm>,

*** Statistics Canada. (2022) <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/231201/dq231201b-eng.htm>)

*** *Disabled and Elderly Assistive Technology Market: Global Industry Analysis, Trends, Market Size, and Forecasts up to 2030*. Custom Market Insights. (2023, October).

**** ATscale. *The Case for Investing in Assistive Technology*. 2020.