

MaRS



RBC WOMEN IN CLEANTECH ACCELERATOR

APPLICATION GUIDE



APPLICANT GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

WOMEN (INCLUDING THOSE WHO IDENTIFY AS WOMEN) ARE A POWERFUL FORCE IN CANADA'S INNOVATION ECONOMY, BUT ARE SIGNIFICANTLY UNDERREPRESENTED IN THE AREA OF CLEAN TECHNOLOGY.¹ It's time to change that. Building on the success of the MaRS Women in Cleantech (WIC) Challenge, we launched the RBC Women in Cleantech Accelerator ("the Accelerator"), powered by MaRS, in 2021. The Accelerator includes an expanded Black, Indigenous and/or People of Colour (BIPOC) mandate to include support for women entrepreneurs from under-represented communities. The next RBC Women in Cleantech Accelerator Cohort will be a 24 month program with the goal of recruiting 7–10 entrepreneurs.

This application guide (the "**Guide**") provides a high-level summary of the application requirements. It is not meant to replace the "**Official Rules**" found at the bottom of the **application form**. By entering the Accelerator, you agree to abide by the Official Rules and decisions of MaRS. You also agree to comply with the applicable laws. Please see Official Rules for details. If in the event of a conflict between this Guide and the Official Rules, the Official Rules will prevail.

1. Women are under-represented in the innovation economy. A [2017 #movethedial report](#) on women in Canada's innovation community found that only 5 per cent of Canadian tech companies have a solo woman founder or CEO, and only 13% of companies have one woman co-founder. A recent report published by MaRS on [Women in Cleantech](#) found that "Only 1 in 10 Cleantech founders is a woman" and "only 19% of cleantech companies across Canada has at least one woman founder".

2. In recognition of the need to increase the representation and inclusion of diverse groups within workplaces, the Government of Canada has introduced the [50 – 30 Challenge: Your Diversity Advantage](#). In the [Who Are Canada's Tech Workers?](#) report it was stated that "[f]or most visible minority groups in tech occupations [...] average pay is much lower than for non-visible minority tech workers. This difference in pay is particularly stark for Black tech workers."





ACCELERATOR OBJECTIVES

1.

Seek out the best, most driven woman-identifying and/or non-binary entrepreneurs in cleantech, balanced with BIPOC representation.

2.

Enable their dedication to the mission.

3.

Leverage existing federal research assets and networks of expertise, maximizing use of existing public resources to accelerate advancement of their R&D.

4.

Build support for their success – via a curated mix of mentorship, educational programming and access to market intelligence.

5.

Make timely connections to the investors and corporate partners that matter.

6.

Communicate to the global cleantech community the groundbreaking women-led clean technologies being commercialized in Canada.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

“APPLICANTS” MUST:

- identify as a woman and/or non-binary person,
- be a leader (i.e., officer or executive) of a registered Canadian business engaged in Cleantech (as defined below) (the “**Applicant Company**”),
- regularly engage in technological innovation at the Applicant Company,
- be comfortable with, and agree to participate in, the public nature of this Accelerator (i.e., speaking with the media, appearing at events, etc.),
- a MaRS venture before they are provided any winner benefits, and must agree to [MaRS’s venture terms and conditions](#); and
- submit a full application in a manner consistent with the Official Rules.

THE APPLICANT’S TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION AT THE APPLICANT’S COMPANY (THE “TECHNICAL INNOVATION”) SHOULD:

- fall under MaRS’s definition of “Cleantech,” which for the purposes of this Accelerator is defined as “A company that is focused on the creation of intellectual property and new products that protect and/or increase efficient utilization of land, energy, water and natural resources while improving economic performance and reducing the environmental footprint relative to the baseline.”,
- be proprietary and/or patentable,

- have potential to scale globally for major impact, and
- fall within TRL 3 and TRL 5, on the nine-point [Technology Readiness Level spectrum \(TRL\)](#), with:
 - TRL 3 – Active research and development is initiated,
 - TRL 4– Being basic testing to validate the technology in a laboratory/controlled setting,
 - TRL 5 – Component and/or validation in a simulated environment,

NOTE: Applicants may submit a Technical Innovation from work done in a university or college environment, as well as innovation spun out of and in settings such as, corporate laboratories, innovation hubs, private businesses or personal workshops, in accordance with these Official Rules including fulfilment of all eligibility criteria, and all applicable intellectual property laws.

NOTE: If desired applicant falls within TRL 6-9 but meets all other criteria, they are encouraged to apply to MaRS’ venture services program at: marsdd.com/apply



WHY APPLY?

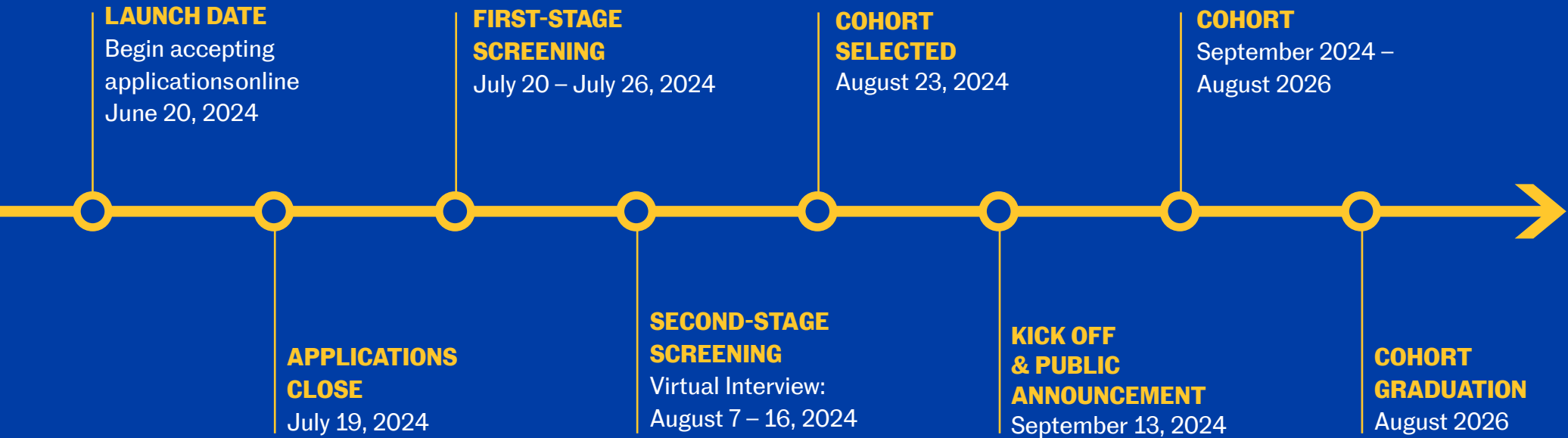
WE ARE LOOKING FOR CANADA'S BEST, MOST DRIVEN FEMALE INNOVATORS WHO ARE READY TO SCALE THEIR BUSINESS. SUBJECT TO OUR SPECIFIC TERMS AND CONDITIONS IN OUR OFFICIAL RULES, IF SELECTED TO THIS EXCLUSIVE COHORT, YOU WILL RECEIVE:

- A lead MaRS business advisor with deep sector knowledge to guide the Applicant as the Applicant's Company builds its business and develops the Technical Innovation.
- Enhanced public profile through the Women in Cleantech brand including highlights in press releases and industry events focused on Cleantech.
- Workshops through a curriculum designed to build business skills necessary for success. This curated curriculum was designed with feedback from MaRS's subject matter experts and the WIC Finalists with the goal of helping the Applicant's Company gain an edge in a difficult to penetrate market.
- Curated introductions to domestic and international investors and corporations.
- Access to mentor networks through investor showcases and curated events with influential women-identified leaders and industry experts.
- Opportunity to build relationships with the other selected ventures and previous Women in Cleantech cohort participants.
- Access to market intelligence, capital, talent, and communications services offered through MaRS.
- MaRS will provide facilitation for the opportunity to participate in the Canadian Tech Accelerator program(s) organized by Global Affairs Canada.
- MaRS may provide the facilitation for the potential access to a federal government lab facility that is matched to the selected venture's specific research and development needs.
- Invitation to join the MaRS Women in Cleantech Network

NOTE: All benefits and non-guaranteed benefits will be made available in English only.



KEY DATES



OPT IN

PR/MEDIA EXPOSURE CONSENT:

- If selected, are you comfortable with being interviewed by the media and appearing at various events and promoting your business/technology?

MANDATORY

SUBMITTING 1-2 MINUTE PRIVATE VIDEO CLIP:

- Are you prepared to submit a short private video clip as part of the application?
- If selected, you will need to be available for the RBC Women in Cleantech 2022-2024 finale event at the MaRS Discovery District on September 12, 2024 - it will be at this event that the Public announcement of the RBC Women in Cleantech Accelerator 2024-2026 cohort will be announced. A press release will follow on September 13, 2024. You will also need to be available on September 13, 2024 to participate in the in-person cohort onboarding at the MaRS Discovery District centre.

QUESTIONS ON APPLICATION FORM

FOR YOUR REFERENCE, HERE ARE THE QUESTIONS YOU CAN EXPECT TO BE ASKED ON THE ONLINE APPLICATION FORM.

1. Contact Details: First Name, Last Name
Street Address, City, Province, Postal Code, Email Address, Home Phone, Cell Phone.
2. Job Title.
3. Do you identify as a woman and/or non-binary person?
4. Do you identify as Black, Indigenous and/or People of Colour (BIPOC)?
5. Please provide the legal name of the company you are applying on behalf of.
6. Please provide the incorporation number.
7. Where are your headquarters located?
8. Please include the link to your company website.
9. If selected, are you prepared on occasion to travel to MaRS to attend Accelerator events (health & safety regulations permitting)?
10. If selected, are you available to travel to MaRS to attend the RBC Women in Cleantech Cohort (2022-2024) Finale Event on September 12, 2024 and the Cohort launch event on September 13, 2024?
11. If selected, are you comfortable with being interviewed by the media and appearing at public events to promote the Accelerator and your business/technology?
12. Which sector(s) will your technology impact most? [Will include a drop-down menu - Food & Agriculture/Natural Environment/Energy/Industry/Water/Transport/Air Pollution Control/Circular Economy/GHG Capture, Removal & Storage/Emissions Control, Reporting & Offsetting/Built Environment/Other]
13. How would you describe your technology innovation?
14. How would you describe the current state of development of your innovation?
15. What problem(s) do you believe your technology is solving?
16. What evidence of demand and industry interest does the product/technology have? i.e., What sales and interest have you generated from partners and paying customers?
17. Who do you consider potential future customers for your technology/product?
18. Who will be your competitors for this technology/product?
19. Do you consider your technology to be disruptive or visionary? If yes, please explain.
20. Is there potential for your technology to be patented?
21. Is your technology potentially scalable? If yes, please explain.
22. What is your company's [TRL](#) Level?
23. How much external investment, if any, have you secured to date for the development of your technology (i.e., research funding, public grant, angel funding, venture capital, etc.)?
24. Please attach a short biography.
25. Please link to a private 1-2 minute video introducing yourself (including your co-founder, if applicable).
26. How did you hear about this program?

SELECTION PROCESS

- Following the launch of a Canada-wide recruitment campaign, applications will be accepted from June 20, 2024 to July 19, 2024 at 11:59pm (EST), at which time the application window will formally close.
- MaRS will appoint two panels of judges to evaluate entries based on the evaluation criteria during a two-stage screening process. The judging process will be completed in two stages:
 - **First-Stage Screening:** Judges will choose a minimum of 20 applicants during July 20 – July 26, 2024. These applicants will be contacted by August 2, 2024.
 - **Second-Stage Screening:** Judges will conduct a more thorough screening review, including an interview with the prospective applicants, during August 7 – August 16, 2024. The judges will seek answers to three key questions:
 - Is the applicant coachable? Is she likely to benefit from the advisory support and workshops provided through the Accelerator?
 - Can the applicant effectively articulate the importance of her innovation and business model, including potential for global impact?
 - Can the applicant effectively articulate what she hopes to get out of the Accelerator program and does this align with program objectives?
- The judges will use information collected during the second-stage screening to select the Accelerator's 7–10 person cohort and will be notified no later than August 23, 2024. A public announcement will be made on September 13, 2024.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

HOW DO I APPLY?

Visit the Accelerator website at marsdd.com/women-in-cleantech-accelerator and click on the Apply Now link, after which you will be walked through the application process. Late or incomplete entries will not be accepted. By accepting our Official Rules and entering a submission, you also agree to MaRS's venture terms and conditions found here.

MaRS wants to ensure fair and equal participation in this program and will provide necessary accommodations (alternative arrangements). To request an accommodation related to such a need, please email ppatel@marsdd.com with the necessary details. In some cases, MaRS may request more information to better understand your needs and determine how it can make the process accessible.

WHAT HAPPENS IF THERE IS A TIE?

In the event of a tie, MaRS may admit all applicants that tied or require additional submission to re-evaluate those Applicants that have tied and select the final cohort accordingly.

WHAT TECHNOLOGIES FALL UNDER CLEANTECH?

Generally, we are looking for potentially scalable technologies that use less material and/or energy, reduce waste, and cause less environmental damage than the alternatives.

The chart on the next page ([FAQ Table 1](#)) gives some examples of the types of technologies that would be considered.

IF I APPLY, HOW WILL THE INFORMATION I SUBMIT BE USED?

Your privacy is immensely important to us, and we respect the need for confidentiality. We will only use the information we collect as set out in our Official Rules. While we encourage you to be as open as possible in your application, we would advise against including any critically sensitive proprietary details. If you do not make it to the final cohort, your application will be deleted unless you tell us otherwise.

IF I AM SELECTED FOR THE FINAL COHORT, WILL INFORMATION ABOUT MY RESEARCH AND PROJECT – I.E., INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY, FINANCIAL INFORMATION, ETC. – BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

If you are selected, you will be asked to sign an agreement that will detail how your information will be treated by MaRS, subject to our Official Rules, and when this information might be shared, for example, with investors and potential customers/partners. Your information will be kept confidential and will not be shared unless you have given us permission.

DO YOU TAKE ANY EQUITY IN THE PROJECTS?

We do not take equity.

WHAT ARE YOUR SELECTION CRITERIA?

We are looking for entrepreneurial technical leaders who have the drive and ability to build a transformative technology and lead a team in its development. We also work to ensure that the initial project concept is technically sound, reasonably differentiated, and addresses a well-framed problem with potential for significant long-term impact. ([FAQ Table 2](#))

FAQ Table 1:

TYPES OF TECHNOLOGIES THAT FALL UNDER CLEANTECH

TRANSPORTATION

New ways to move people and products using eco-friendly fuel and vehicles

FOOD & AGRICULTURE

Technologies that enable sustainable farming and increased food production

ENERGY

Solutions for storing, generating and distributing energy, and managing consumption

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Technologies targeting emissions produced by the construction and operation of buildings, streets, and urban infrastructure

WATER

Solutions for water purification and wastewater management

CIRCULAR ENVIRONMENT

Technologies enabling a model of production and consumption that utilizes existing materials and products

INDUSTRY

Technology inputs and solutions helping to decarbonize heavy industry (cement, mining, manufacturing)

GHG CAPTURE, REMOVAL & STORAGE

GHG capture technologies with their sequestration methodologies

EMISSIONS CONTROL, REPORTING & OFFSETTING

Solutions for governance and offsetting of GHG emissions and pollutants

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Activity related to biodiversity, forestry, ocean and atmosphere, climate and weather

SELECTION CRITERIA

CRITERIA	DESCRIPTION
BIPOC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the applicant BIPOC?
Technical Merit & Product Potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there an initial value proposition? • Does the Applicant's Company have patentable intellectual property? • To what degree is Technical Innovation providing a solution to a sizable problem, highly innovative, and pushing industry boundaries?
Growth Potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the size of the problem the Technical Innovation is trying to solve and the impact of the solution? • What is the potential of the Applicant's Company becoming a high-growth cleantech company? • To what extent is Technical Innovation product differentiated and offering a clear competitive advantage in customers' eyes? • What are the potential barriers to commercialization and adoption?
Scalability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the Technical Innovation scalable? • How long will it take to reach product launch? • What is the likelihood of a successful product in the Applicant's sector within Cleantech?
Market Traction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent does the Applicant's Company show evidence of pilots/trials, and significant customer traction (signed customers, customer demand, etc.)?
Program Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what degree would being declared a winner support the growth of the venture company?
Team & Coachability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How devoted, engaged, and coachable does the Applicant appear to be?



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

ARE APPLICANTS SELECTED ON A ROLLING BASIS, OR, WILL PROJECT SELECTIONS ONLY BEGIN ONCE THE APPLICATION DEADLINE HAS CLOSED?

Selection of Applicants will begin once the application deadline has closed. Applications will not be reviewed and selected prior to the deadline.

DO I/WE HAVE TO BE INCORPORATED IN CANADA TO APPLY?

Yes.

ARE INNOVATIONS BASED ON AI, BLOCKCHAIN OR “PLATFORM” TECHNOLOGIES ELIGIBLE?

Yes, though the Applicant must demonstrate the novel and disruptive nature of this innovation and directly link it to environmental benefits.

IS THERE A SCREENING PROCESS TO ENSURE THE TECHNOLOGY IS NOT INFRINGING ON OTHER PATENTED TECHNOLOGY?

It will be the responsibility of Applicants to ensure projects do not infringe on patented technologies.

IF I HAVE OTHER QUESTIONS, WHO CAN I CONTACT?

We realize there are other questions you may have that are not answered here. If you'd like to ask us something, email ppatel@marsdd.com.

PARTNERS

