



MaRS

MISSION FROM MaRS
FOOD AND AGTECH
VENTURE ACCELERATOR

POWERED BY FARM CREDIT CANADA

APPLICANT GUIDE 2026



Introduction

Mission from MaRS: Food and Agtech is the latest instalment in a series of initiatives helping ventures scale and commercialize their technologies.

This mission aims to accelerate the adoption of innovative food and agriculture solutions that make Canada's agri-food system more sustainable, resilient and competitive through its three key objective:

1. **Increase the flow of investment** to support the growth of Canadian food and agtech solutions.
2. **Build resilience** into the food and agriculture sector to boost Canada's global competitiveness.
3. **Reduce operational emissions** of Canada's food and agriculture sector.

The Food and Agtech Venture Accelerator, made possible with the support of Farm Credit Canada, is part of Mission from MaRS: Food and Agtech.



Why apply?

Program details

The second cohort of Mission from MaRS: Food and Agtech is designed to accelerate the commercialization and adoption of Canadian technologies that strengthen our country's food sovereignty.

MaRS will recruit six to 10 ventures developing technologies that enhance Canada's ability to produce, manufacture and distribute food domestically through more resilient, efficient and sustainable systems. Selected ventures will gain access to advisory support, industry connections and commercialization opportunities.

The accelerator provides a platform to move beyond pilots and prototypes into commercial implementation, strengthening Canada's food system while driving long-term economic and climate impact.

If selected

Companies will receive:

- **Case-by-case adoption support, including:**
 - Curated introductions with potential agri-food and supply chain adopters
 - Support to seek funding for pilot or commercial deployment projects
 - Guidance on project implementation and procurement processes
 - Active relationship management
- **A targeted workshop curriculum** designed with input from food system stakeholders, potential adopters and MaRS experts to prepare ventures for commercial success.

- **Non-dilutive funding opportunities** through Agriculture and Agri Food Canada's (AAFC) Agricultural Clean Technology (ACT) Program to help offset the cost of a commercial pilot with a corporate partner.
- **Curated investor connections** with domestic and international investors interested in food systems, climate technology and supply chain innovation.
- **Access to expert advisors** through investor showcases and events with industry leaders, customers and partners.
- **Access to MaRS venture services**, including:
 - Market intelligence
 - Capital advisory
 - Talent support
 - Communications services
- **Peer and coalition engagement** with other selected ventures and with industry leaders through ongoing workshops and activities.
- **Enhanced public profile and exposure** through the Mission from MaRS Climate Champion brand, with features in press releases, case studies, media coverage and agri-food-focused industry events.

Second cohort focus

Technologies Securing Food Sovereignty

The overarching technology theme of the Mission from MaRS: Food and Agtech Venture Accelerator focuses on solutions that strengthen Canada's ability to produce, manufacture and distribute food domestically while building a more climate resilient, secure and sustainable food system.

Guided by input from industry, government and ecosystem partners, we've identified three priority technology categories that support a more resilient, secure and self-sufficient food system. These categories reflect technologies that strengthen Canada's food production and processing capacity while improving the resilience and efficiency of critical food infrastructure.

1. Controlled food production

Solutions that strengthen Canada's ability to produce food through climate resilient, resource efficient, and controlled production systems that enhance food sovereignty.

Examples include:

- Controlled environment agriculture (CEA) and greenhouse operations
- Land-based aquaculture and aquaponics operations
- Precision growing and environmental control (lighting, sensors, AI, robotics)

2. Domestic manufacturing

Solutions that expand Canada's capacity to process, manufacture, package, and add value to food through advanced production technologies and modern manufacturing systems.

Examples include:

- Food processing and value-added production technologies
- Modular, distributed and onshoring manufacturing technologies
- Industrial automation, process optimization and digital transformation

3. National food distribution

Solutions that improve how food moves across Canada by enhancing logistics, storage, traceability, and supply chain coordination from production to end market.

Examples include:

- Cold chain and storage technologies
- Logistics, fleet and warehouse optimization
- Supply chain visibility, traceability and demand forecasting platforms
- Ports, rail, freight and distribution technologies

Paid pilot opportunity

AAFC Agricultural Clean Technology (ACT) Program

Unlock non-dilutive funding

Mission from MaRS cohort participants may apply for non dilutive funding to help offset the cost of paid pilot projects with industry partners.

Funding is awarded through a competitive application process and is not guaranteed.

~\$3.25M

Awarded to MaRS Discovery District

From Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
over the duration of Mission from MaRS:
Food and Agtech



Emissions reduction

Supports the commercialization and adoption of clean technologies that reduce emissions and strengthen Canada's food system



Commercial pilots

Funding is available for commercial pilot projects with industry partners to accelerate real-world adoption



Deployment ready

Eligible technologies must be deployment ready (TRL 6 to 9) at the time of application



Venture lead requirements

The venture lead applicant must be a MaRS venture and have a Letter of Intent (LOI) from a corporate partner



Eligibility

The Applicant/company must:

- ✓ **Be a Canadian agtech venture**

Be an officer or executive of a Canadian incorporated company developing climate and resilience technologies for the food and agriculture sector that strengthen supply chain resilience and reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions

- ✓ **Prove authorization**

Have authorization from your company to submit this application on its behalf

- ✓ **Be actively engaged**

Be willing to actively participate in the public nature of the accelerator, including potential media engagement and community event participation

- ✓ **Complete the application**

Submit a complete application in strict accordance with the official rules

- ✓ **Be generating revenue**

Have generated revenue in the last 12 months or expect to generate revenues over the next 12 months

As it relates to the climate technology solution, the company must:

- Not be a subsidiary of a larger parent company that would otherwise not be eligible for the program;
- Must be incorporated, based, or, if a non-Canadian venture, have a significant and growing presence in Canada. However, priority consideration will be given to Canadian-headquartered applicants;
- Have been operational for at least one year prior to the application start date;
- Own the intellectual property behind a solution that can improve productivity, competitiveness, resilience and sustainability (e.g., GHG profile) of food and agriculture companies;
- Ensure the solution is, in MaRS' opinion, focused on:
 - strengthening Canada's food sovereignty by enabling more resilient, efficient and sustainable food production, domestic manufacturing and/or national food distribution systems;
 - Proprietary and/or patentable;
 - Scalable and capable of delivering significant impact.
- Be classified as a small and mid-sized enterprise (SME) as defined by [Innovation, Science and Economic Development \(ISED\) Canada](#).



Technology Readiness Levels

Solutions should fall within TRL6 and TRL9 on the nine-point Technology Readiness Level spectrum, as defined by [Innovation, Science and Economic Development \(ISED\) Canada](#):

- **TRL 6:** System/subsystem model or prototype demonstration in a simulated environment.
- **TRL 7:** Prototype ready for demonstration in an appropriate operational environment.
- **TRL 8:** Actual technology completed and qualified through tests and demonstrations.
- **TRL 9:** Actual technology proven through successful deployment in an operational setting.

Timeline



Program launch

November 17, 2026

Program end

August 30, 2027

Application

Apply by completing the online application form and submitting all required documents and information. All entries must be accurate, and you must accept the terms and conditions outlined in the application process.

By submitting an application, you confirm that:

- You have your company's authorization to apply and enter into this agreement on its behalf.
- The information provided is true, accurate, complete and does not infringe on any third-party intellectual property rights.
- MaRS Discovery District ("MaRS") may collect, use and disclose the information in your application for the purposes of evaluating your eligibility and fit for the program.
- MaRS may share your information with its review committee, external reviewers and mentors as needed for this purpose.
- You consent to MaRS collecting, using and disclosing your personal information in connection with this program.

Opt-in

If selected, you will be prompted to indicate if you are comfortable participating in media interviews, attending events and promoting your business/technology. You will also be asked to announce mission participation at MaRS Climate Impact on November 17, 2026.

Accessibility

MaRS is committed to ensuring fair and equal participation in the application process and the accelerator. If you require accommodations protected by human rights legislation (e.g., disability-related needs), please email mfm@marsdd.com with details. MaRS may request additional information to understand your needs and make the process accessible.

Selection process

There are four main components to the Mission from MaRS: Food and Agtech venture cohort selection process, starting with a national recruitment campaign.

Here's how the program will unfold:

Stage 1: Application submission (August 11 to September 25, 2026)	A Canada-wide recruitment campaign will launch on August 11, 2026 with applications accepted until 11:59 p.m. (ET) on September 25, 2026.
Stage 2: Eligibility screening (September 25 to 28, 2026)	A MaRS review committee will screen all submitted applications to confirm eligibility based on company profile, solution stage, Canadian incorporation, IP ownership and alignment with the accelerator's goals.
Stage 3: Technical details request (September 28 to October 2, 2026)	Shortlisted applicants will be notified and asked to provide additional technical and business documentation to support a more detailed assessment. These materials must be submitted by October 2, 2026.
Stage 4: Third-party technical review and interviews (October 2 to 23, 2026)	MaRS will coordinate a third-party technical review of shortlisted ventures. Select applicants may also be invited to participate in interviews with MaRS advisors and program partners to further evaluate commercial readiness and strategic fit.
Stage 5: Selection Committee meeting (week of October 26, 2026)	A panel of MaRS staff, partners and advisors will review cumulative evaluation results to recommend the final six to 10 ventures. The committee will assess cohort composition, as well as the strengths and weaknesses of individual companies. The final decision rests with the MaRS program team.
Notification date (no later than October 30, 2026)	MaRS will notify the selected ventures of the final cohort No later than October 30, 2026.

Evaluation methodology

The following selection criteria will be applied to all applications submitted by eligible ventures (the “evaluation criteria”) during the quality review stage:

Criteria	Weighting	Scale (1-10)*
Program fit	30%	1 – The venture is not relevant to this accelerator’s aims. 5 – The venture is relevant to this accelerator’s aims, and its inclusion would be helpful. 10 – The venture is extremely relevant to the accelerator’s aims, its inclusion will strengthen the cohort composition and the venture could provide a unique and valuable perspective.
Technology and value proposition	20%	1 – There is little, if any, evidence of new innovation or market differentiation in the applicant’s solution. 5 – The applicant’s solution is moderately differentiated from competitors. 10 – The applicant has a unique and highly innovative solution with a compelling customer value proposition.
Adoption readiness	20%	1 – The venture has not provided any evidence that it is prepared to commercially engage with prospective customers. 5 – The venture has demonstrated that it’s prepared to commercially engage with prospective customers, and has begun engaging with adopters. 10 – The venture is ready to commercially engage, has an early track record, and is able to scale to meet the demand of customers.
Revenue model	20%	1 – The revenue model is weak and doesn’t have the potential to gain market traction. 5 – This is a reasonable revenue model for the applicant’s business that is likely to resonate with customers and investors. 10 – This is the perfect revenue model for the applicant’s business and would be highly appealing to the market.
Intellectual property	10%	1 – The applicant is using off-the-shelf technology with no intellectual property or proprietary offering. 5 – The applicant’s technology is slightly differentiated from competitors and is protected or protectable. 10 – The applicant has a strong intellectual property strategy that provides it with a distinct advantage over its competitors and is protecting its technology.

Frequently Asked Questions(FAQ)

How do I apply?

Visit the accelerator webpage at missionfrommars.ca/food-and-agtech and click on the [Apply Now](#) button. You will be guided through the application process. Late or incomplete entries will not be accepted. By accepting our official rules and submitting an application, you also agree to MaRS Discovery District's venture [terms and conditions](#). Applications must be in English only.

What technologies are eligible?

call for applications is seeking ventures with commercial or near-commercial solutions that are ready for pilots or have completed pilots in operational environments. Eligible innovations must have achieved a Technology Readiness Level (TRL) of at least TRL 6, as defined by Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada. Past prototypes, pilots, demonstration projects or commercial deployments are not required but are preferred.

Eligible technologies include those listed in the technology streams on slide 4: Controlled food production, domestic manufacturing and national food distribution. However, we know innovation doesn't always fit neatly into categories. MaRS welcomes applications from companies developing enabling technologies that strengthen Canada's ability to produce, manufacture and distribute food domestically, while improving resilience, efficiency, sustainability and food sovereignty. Technologies do not need to be currently deployed in the food and agriculture sector to be eligible. If you have questions about your venture's fit, please contact mfm@marsdd.com.

Does participation in the Mission from MaRS: Food & Agtech accelerator guarantee access to AAFC funding?

No. Participation in the accelerator does not guarantee funding. The Agriculture and Agri Food Canada (AAFC) Agricultural Clean Technology (ACT) Program funding opportunity is available only to eligible ventures that meet the program requirements and successfully complete the separate application and evaluation process.

To be eligible, a proposed pilot must include one of the following partnerships:

- A Mission from MaRS venture cohort member partnered with a Mission from MaRS corporate cohort member.
- A Mission from MaRS corporate cohort member partnered with any eligible Canadian venture.
- A Mission from MaRS venture cohort member partnered with any eligible Canadian corporate partner with significant operations in Canada.

How will the information I submit be used?

Your privacy is very important to us. All information collected through our online application form will only be viewed by our selection committee, the MaRS program team and key partners involved in the program. While we encourage you to be open in your application, please avoid including highly-sensitive proprietary details. If you are not selected for the cohort, your application will be permanently deleted unless you request otherwise. MaRS will treat your application as confidential and protect it in accordance with our [privacy policy](#).

If I am selected for the final cohort, will information (intellectual property, financial information, etc.) about my venture be kept confidential?

Yes. If selected, you will be asked to sign an agreement outlining how your information will be handled, in line with our Official Rules. Your information will remain confidential and will not be shared without your permission, except as agreed (for example, with investors or potential partners).

Do you take any equity in the projects?

No, MaRS does not take equity.

Join our webinar

What we'll cover

1. Program structure

A detailed walk-through of the Mission from MaRS structure and journey.

2. Applicant guide

A step-by-step walk-through of the application requirements and guidelines.

3. Cohort and case studies

An exclusive overview of our current cohort and impactful real-world case studies.

4. Interactive Q&A

An open opportunity to ask questions directly to the MaRS program team.

September 2, 2026

Join us online for a comprehensive walk-through and get all your questions answered live.



The Food and Agtech
Venture Accelerator
is powered by
Farm Credit Canada.

