

The Slaight Family Foundation announces landmark \$30 million gift to support Canadians with disabilities

The largest investment in disability in Canadian history will enable the transformative work of 11 organizations towards a more inclusive and accessible future

TORONTO, December 3, 2024 – The Slaight Family Foundation today announced a historic donation of \$30 million to 11 organizations supporting people with disabilities across Canada.

This transformational investment will fund a unique cross-country partnership of 11 national and regional disability organizations, led by [Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital Foundation](#) and [Rick Hansen Foundation](#). Together they will work to give Canadians with disabilities the supports and solutions they need to thrive throughout their lives, while also raising disability awareness to better address ableism in schools, workplaces and communities across the country.

About eight million people in Canada live with a disability, including 850,000 children and youth. The number is steadily increasing, including the number of seniors across the country, and yet people with disabilities continue to face multiple barriers and inequities preventing their full participation in society. This includes everything from lack of access to appropriate health care and underemployment to expensive equipment, inaccessible infrastructure and persistent stigma.

The Slaight Family Foundation’s landmark donation will allow the recipients to build, connect and share their initiatives and services widely in a powerful, multi-pronged drive to dismantle barriers to inclusion and change the disability landscape in Canada.

“The impact of disability exclusion is significant, not just on people with disabilities and their families, but on our culture and economy as well,” says Gary Slaight, President and CEO of The Slaight Family Foundation. “Connecting and expanding programs and innovations from organizations dedicated to disability care and awareness will create an umbrella of support across Canada, while dismantling stigma and creating a more inclusive society for us all.”

This funding will support and expand a range of initiatives to increase the number of accessible buildings, schools and infrastructure in Canada, develop and distribute innovative technologies to children with disabilities in underserved areas, build awareness and fight ableism across the country, train more developmental pediatricians, increase access to care, housing and equipment for disadvantaged populations, help youth with disabilities achieve employment and independence, and much more.

The \$30 million donation will be divided among the recipients as follows:

Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital Foundation	\$10.5 million
Rick Hansen Foundation	\$10 million
Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work	\$1 million
Canadian National Institute for the Blind	\$1 million
Canadian Women’s Foundation	\$1 million
Easter Seals Canada	\$1.5 million
Empowered Kids Ontario	\$1 million
Inclusion Canada	\$1 million
March of Dimes Canada	\$1 million
Ontario Disability Employment Network	\$1 million
Wavefront Centre for Communication Accessibility	\$1 million

The Slight Family Foundation’s support for this innovative multi-organization collaboration will serve as a model of issues-based giving and coordination. It represents an unprecedented investment that will increase access to health care for children and adults with disabilities, reduce barriers to accessibility and equity and help create a more inclusive society.

“Never before has a philanthropic investment of this magnitude been made to support people with disabilities. With our shared commitment to inclusion and equity and our complementary services and expertise, we believe the Rick Hansen Foundation, the Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital Foundation and our nine partners are ideally suited to make an unparalleled impact for people with disabilities across Canada.” – Sandra Hawken, President and CEO, Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital Foundation.

“My deepest gratitude to The Slight Family Foundation for this incredibly meaningful and transformational gift. Your support of this one-of-a-kind partnership between our Foundation, Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital Foundation and nine regional and national partners will ensure that Canadians with disabilities get the comprehensive support and innovative solutions they need and deserve throughout their lives. Thanks to your generous support, together we will be able to build an accessible and inclusive country for all.” – Rick Hansen, Founder, Rick Hansen Foundation.

About The Slaight Family Foundation

Since 2013, The Slaight Family Foundation has funded several strategic initiatives to multiple organizations. These initiatives started with gifts to five Toronto hospitals to support priority healthcare issues, followed by programs to address global humanitarianism, the healthy development of children and youth across Canada, support for Indigenous issues, a seniors' initiative to help keep seniors in their homes, mental health challenges exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, women and girls at risk globally and in Canada, the theatre industry's recovery from pandemic closures, a youth mental health initiative and support for dementia prevention and care.

The Slaight Family Foundation was established in 2008 by John Allan Slaight. Allan Slaight (1931-2021), known as Canada's broadcast pioneer, was a leader in the music industry and a prominent Canadian philanthropist. Through his generosity, the Foundation proactively supports charitable initiatives in the areas of healthcare, at-risk youth, international development, social services and culture. Allan's son, Gary Slaight, oversees the foundation as President & CEO, The Slaight Family Foundation.

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