

/2024

Impact Report

Building a
Water Secure Future





Message from the President & Board of Directors

Water is life.

It sustains our communities, drives our economies, and shapes our environment.

But in 2024, we were reminded again that water's future is far from secure.


Floods ravaged the U.S. Midwest. Wildfires devastated Jasper. Hurricanes battered our coasts. From the Colorado River Basin to the Gulf of St. Lawrence, the continent faced an escalating wave of water-related crises – not as isolated events, but as part of a new climate reality. They are a wake-up call, demanding that we rethink how we value, manage, and protect our most vital resource.

At AquaAction, we view this not just as a crisis, but as a **call to action**. We believe that **awareness sparks action, action drives resilience, and resilience builds hope**. Our response: **develop leaders, scale innovation, build systems, and inspire stewardship** – all toward one shared goal: **to build a water secure future**.

We are building a movement. Please join us.

This year's impact report is a **testament to what's possible when bold vision meets collective action**. At AquaAction, we are proud to stand alongside **the next generation of tech entrepreneurs**—bright minds who are not only imagining a better future for our freshwater but building it.

Their concrete solutions are already **delivering results**, thanks in no small part to the tireless work of our internal team and the **unwavering support of our partners**: from sponsors who fuel our mission, to municipalities, NGOs, and all levels of government who open doors and lend their strength. We do this work not only to repair the damage done by our own generation and those before us, but to ensure that our children—and theirs—**inherit a future where clean, abundant freshwater is no longer a crisis, but a given**.



Soula Chronopoulos,
President, AquaAction



Nan-b de Gaspé Beaubien
Francois de Gaspé Beaubien
Co-chairs, Board of Directors, AquaAction

AquaAction at a Glance

At AquaAction, we envision a future where every community across North America has access to clean, safe, and secure freshwater.

In the face of mounting challenges—pollution, climate change, and overuse—we see not obstacles, but a powerful call to action.

We believe that innovation and entrepreneurship hold the key to turning today's water crisis into tomorrow's opportunity. That's why we ignite the potential of emerging leaders, activate breakthrough technologies, and empower entrepreneurs to build the clean water solutions our future depends on.



Key Program Pillars



AquaHacking Challenges – Launching the Next Wave of Water Tech.

Our flagship AquaHacking program, launched in 2016, has included over 15 challenges nationwide, reached over 3000 participants, and launched 45 active water tech companies that have implemented thousands of solutions across the US and Canada.



AquaEntrepreneur – Scaling Water Solutions, Amplifying Impact.

Since 2022, with support from Québec's MEIE, AquaAction's AquaEntrepreneur program has created 250+ jobs, supported companies generating \$200M+ annually, and completed 170+ pilots and projects (including 26M in new contracts) and with municipalities and industries in Quebec.



AquaNation Community – Empowering Alumni to Expand Global Impact.

Our network offers a structured community for AquaAction program graduates. We focus on facilitating access to new markets and clients for our alumni. We also support their efforts in scaling their initiatives for greater global impact in water.



Education & Awareness – Launching a Nationwide Water Stewardship and Careers Program.

With generous support from Environment and Climate Change Canada, we're developing a Canada-wide awareness program, that is scheduled for launch in 2026. This initiative will promote water stewardship among Canadians nationwide. It will also highlight diverse career opportunities within the water sector.

Our Impact

Since 2016



100+

active water tech companies



+65M\$

Capital raised



+2000

Participants trained in sustainable water leadership



+200M\$

in annual revenues



400+

green jobs created

Our Work

Supports Key UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)



Clean Water & Sanitation:

Expanding access to safe, clean water and promoting sustainable water use.



Affordable & Clean Energy:

Supporting cleantech innovations that reduce energy consumption in water systems.



Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure:

Accelerating water tech startups and building resilient, smart infrastructure.



Climate Action:

Tackling water-related climate risks through innovation, education, and policy.



Life Below Water:

Reducing freshwater pollution and protecting ecosystems that feed into oceans and lakes.

By empowering the next generation of water leaders, we are driving tangible solutions to safeguard this vital resource for our communities, our economies, and our ecosystems.

Our Team



SOULA CHRONOPOULOS
PRESIDENT



OLIVER ANDERSON
VICE-PRESIDENT, COMMUNICATIONS
& GROWTH



MARIE-CÉCILE POITEVIN
EXECUTIVE COORDINATOR,
OPERATIONS & HR



KARIANN AARUP
VICE-PRESIDENT, PROGRAM
DEVELOPMENT & IMPACT



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CHALLENGE, AQUANATION



LAILA BENAMEUR
DIRECTOR, AQUAENTREPRENEUR



PATRICIA DORNE
DIRECTOR OF COACHING,
AQUAENTREPRENEUR



BRITTANY VANDERBEEK
DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS
DEVELOPMENT



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DIRECTOR OF DIGITAL PLATFORMS
AND IT STRATEGY



JEANNE MÉNARD
PARTNERSHIP MANAGER



DANIEL CORBER
SENIOR INSTRUCTIONAL
DESIGNER



JONATHAN TANG
GRANTS AND RESEARCH
SPECIALIST



JULIETTE DUFRESNE
COORDINATOR,
AQUAENTREPRENEUR



MARILOU FILLIOL
COORDINATOR, AQUANATION



KENZA VANDENBROECK
COORDINATOR, AQUAHACKING



ADREANNA RUSSELL MARTEL
SOCIAL MEDIA COORDINATOR



NICK TRUSIAK
STORYTELLING COORDINATOR



SOPHIE-CATHERINE HUNEAULT
MARKETING AND CAMPAIGN
COORDINATOR



VITTORIA DE PALMA
CONTROLLER

Our Board of Directors



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FOUNDING CHAIR, AQUAACTION



FRANÇOIS DE GASPÉ BEAUBIEN
FOUNDING CHAIR, AQUAACTION



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PLATFORMS



DAVID TORRE
OWNER AND PRINCIPAL CONSULTANT,
CENTER MAST

AquaAction |
Team & Board



2024



Great Lakes Binational AquaHacking Challenge 2024

METRIC

RESULT

**Participants
engaged**



160
registrants

36
teams

**Academic
institutions**



40 from the US &
Canada

**Number of new
startups launched**



10 Startups
launched

**Number of
participants**



55 accredited in
entrepreneurship &
innovation

**Issues
addressed**

- Nutrient cycling & management
- Forever chemicals (PFAS detection, monitoring & destruction)
- Microplastics (detection, monitoring & removal)
- Lead contamination (sequestration & elimination)

**Water issue
leaders**



Northwestern Michigan College,
Watersheds Canada, Ovivo, e2 Metrix,
Solve PFAS, Xerxes, NOAA, Grand Valley
State University



Meet the new AquaHacking 2024 Water Tech Startups:

Baleena

1

Baleena makes filtration tech to stop microplastic pollution from laundry and helps fashion brands reduce fiber shedding.

"In three words, I would describe the AquaHacking Challenge as immersive, empowering and joyful." Julia Yan & Sarah Beth Gleeson

FIRST PLACE:

2

Wave Lumina

Wave Lumina makes portable sensors for fast, on-site PFAS water testing, cutting the need for lab analysis.

"This was an awesome event that brought environmental innovators into the spotlight, and we couldn't be prouder to have won these awards" - Vernon LaLone

SECOND PLACE:

3

Proto-STLO

Proto-STLO developed a novel algal filtration system that uses powdered algae and pH regulation to reduce lead concentrations in drinking water.

"We're excited to see all the pitches, and pitch ourselves. Are we nervous? A little. But we're trying to save the environment, so we think we'll do great either way. We're winners just to be here." - Merrick Marshall

THIRD PLACE:



The 2024 Great Lakes AquaHacking Expedition was a memorable experience, one of collaboration, impact and life-long friendships, all built around securing our precious water.



2024

Program Impact

AquaEntrepreneur 2024

METRIC

RESULT

**Participants
engaged**



27 companies
(TRL 6+)

**Jobs
created**



250+ jobs created

**Pilots secured &
contracts**



90+ contracts

**New contract
revenue secured**



\$26 million

**Industries
accessed**

- Municipal, Infrastructure
- Food & Beverage
- Agtech
- Energy
- Sports & Entertainment

**Environmental
Impact**



Collectively, our AquaEntrepreneurs have saved the equivalent of over 38,500 Olympic pools of water, and 85,000+ trees in terms of CO₂.

2024

Meet the 2024 AquaEntrepreneurs who are making an impact:





Our AquaEntrepreneurs shined on a national stage at Oeil du Dragon, Americana 2024, showing Québec's leadership in water innovation.





**From Crisis
to Innovation**

Stories That Moved the Needle

1

Ecotime: Turning greywater into safe water for reuse in buildings

In partnership with Ecotime, the municipality of Saint-Sulpice focused on turning greywater into safe water for reuse in buildings by installing Oasis and Hydraloop systems to recover both rainwater and greywater. Despite construction delays, key milestones like system integration, community engagement with One Drop, and measurable water-saving impacts were achieved. The project strengthens sustainable water management and long-term community awareness.



**From Crisis
to Innovation**

Stories That Moved the Needle

2

Clean Nature: Cutting road salt and protecting habitats in Assumption

The pilot project in the City of L'Assumption, in collaboration with Clean Nature, validated the effectiveness of the GuIA decision-support tool for optimizing road salt spreading. Results showed a 22% reduction in de-icing material costs in the test zone, while maintaining road safety. At the municipal scale, this translates to potential annual savings of up to \$1.33 million, while reducing salt pollution in soil and drinking water sources.



**From Crisis
to Innovation**

Stories That Moved the Needle

3

MotMot: Detroit Startup Launches Underwater Robots for Water Main Inspections Across North America

Motmot, a Detroit-based startup is pioneering the use of Autonomous Underwater Robots (AURs) to inspect aging drinking water infrastructure, offering a cost effective and minimally disruptive solution for a \$4452M infrastructure challenge across North American. Their AUR can inspect hundreds of miles of pipe from a single entry point, reducing inspection costs by up to 85% and helping cities better manage their water systems. Backed by \$1.34 million in pre-seed funding, Motmot has lined up over 40 pilot programs with municipalities across the Great Lakes region and North America.



**From Crisis
to Innovation**

Stories That Moved the Needle

4

Baleena: Tackling Microplastic Pollution at the Source

Winners of the 2024 Great Lakes AquaHacking competition and named to the Forbes 30 Under 30 list in 2024, Baleena is a trailblazing startup that is developing next-generation filtration devices designed to capture harmful microplastic fibers shed during laundry cycles. Baleena's filters integrate directly into household washing machines and are aimed at eco-conscious consumers through direct-to-consumer sales. In parallel, Baleena is also launching its first pilot with outdoor apparel brand Arc'teryx to test filters in high-volume laundry operations at the company's repair and service centers. Backed by a \$460,000 pre-seed round and supported by leading environmental organizations including Patagonia, Ocean Wise, and Plastic Pollution Coalition, Baleena is positioning itself as a key innovator at the intersection of sustainability, fashion, and clean water.

Introducing the AquaAction Ambassadors:

Leading the Wave of Youth Engagement

In 2024, AquaAction proudly launched our first official Ambassador Team—a dynamic and diverse group of young changemakers from across Canada, brought together to amplify our mission and shape the future of freshwater protection through youth leadership and innovation.

Meet the Ambassadors

- **Kimia Shafigi**
(AquaEntrepreneur Cohort 3)
- **Mohammad Zeinati**
(AquaEntrepreneur Cohort 3)
- **Starla Richardson**
(AquaHacking Challenge – Great Lakes 2024)
- **Merrick Marshall**
(AquaHacking Challenge – Great Lakes 2024)
- **Margaux Provencher-Marie**
(AquaAction Intern, 2024)
- **Sophie-Catherine Huneault**
(Marketing and Campaign Coordinator – AquaAction)

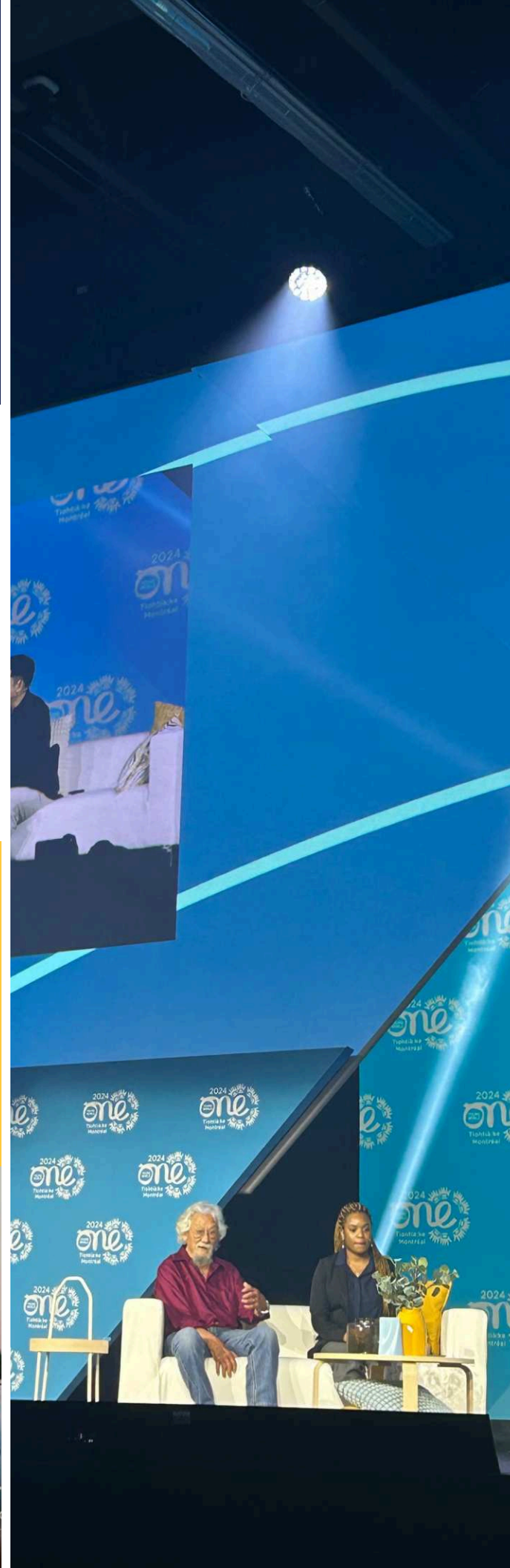
These Ambassadors represent a powerful cross-section of our programs and youth talent pipeline—from entrepreneurs and innovators to interns and advocates. They are passionate about building awareness, sparking dialogue, and leading youth-driven solutions for North America's water challenges.



Youth Voices at the Forefront

In September 2024, our Ambassadors participated in the One Young World Forum for Young Leaders in Montreal—an opportunity made possible through joint support from AquaAction and The Fondation de Gaspé Beaubien. Their participation underscored our investment in emerging water leaders on both national and global stages.

Later in the year, we convened our first-ever Youth Advisory Board. During this inaugural meeting, the team collaboratively defined the strategy and direction for AquaAction's 2025 national awareness and engagement campaigns—ensuring that youth insight drives the core of our public-facing initiatives.



Strategic Partnerships & Government Relations

Strengthening Our Ecosystem

In 2024, AquaAction has significantly strengthened the water innovation ecosystem by expanding its footprint into the United States and forging deeper collaborations with government agencies at the federal, provincial, state, and local levels. We have launched a nationwide water tech adopter network, bridging industries and innovators to accelerate the deployment of critical solutions. By diversifying our revenue streams and launching comprehensive education and awareness programs—starting in grade school—we are nurturing a new generation of water stewards and leaders.

These efforts are laying the foundation for a future where water is recognized as a national security asset and water technologies form the backbone of a strong, resilient, and sustainable economy across the U.S. and Canada.



Proud members of



Canadian Coalition
For Healthy Waters





Elevating the Role of Water Federally

Our President, Soula Chronopoulos, alongside one of our Water Tech founder, Patricia Gomez, CEO of Clean Nature, testified before the Environment and Sustainable Development Committee at the House of Commons, reinforcing the essential role of water innovation in federal environmental policy discussions.

[LINK](#)

National Leadership, Local Impact

Strategic partnerships were secured with **Glencore, Agnico Eagle, La Vie en Rose**, and the **Port of Québec**.

AquaAction, member of both the **Canadian Coalition for Healthy Waters** and the **Forum for Leadership on Water**, became a voice in national policy at the **Canada Water Agency** launch in Winnipeg.

National Programs and Cross-border Cooperation

AquaHacking expanded to the U.S., launching from Michigan and preparing for the first North America-wide challenge in 2026.

In partnership with CIER, we designed the Prairies AquaHacking Challenge

AquaEntrepreneur is heading to the Great Lakes in 2025!

Global Opportunities

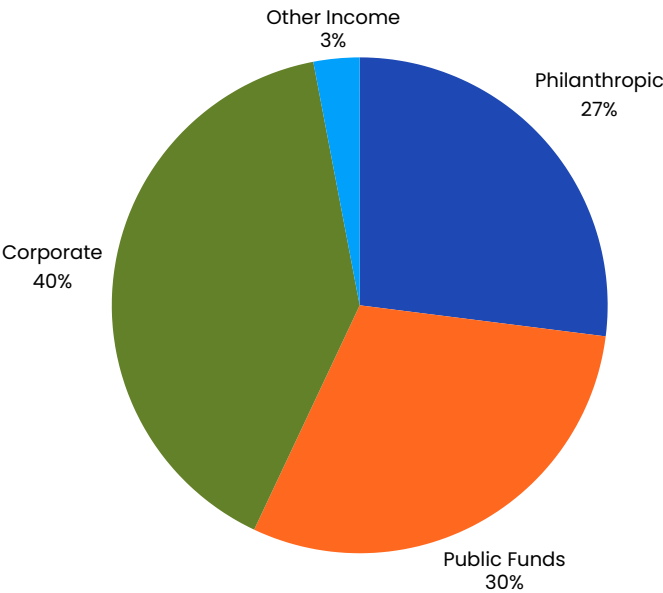
35 AquaEntrepreneurs joined trade delegations to the **SelectUSA** conference in **Washington DC**, and the **International Water Association**, in **Toronto, Ontario**, exporting Canadian water innovation globally.

Financial Overview

At AquaAction, we are committed to stewarding our funding with integrity and impact. Every dollar we receive is thoughtfully invested to deliver rich, high-quality programs that nurture innovation and drive real-world environmental solutions. Our financial strategy is centered on maximizing value, ensuring that our resources directly support the development, launch, and scaling of breakthrough technologies and initiatives that address freshwater challenges. Through careful planning and efficient use of funds, we empower changemakers, catalyze sustainable ventures, and bring market-ready innovations to life.

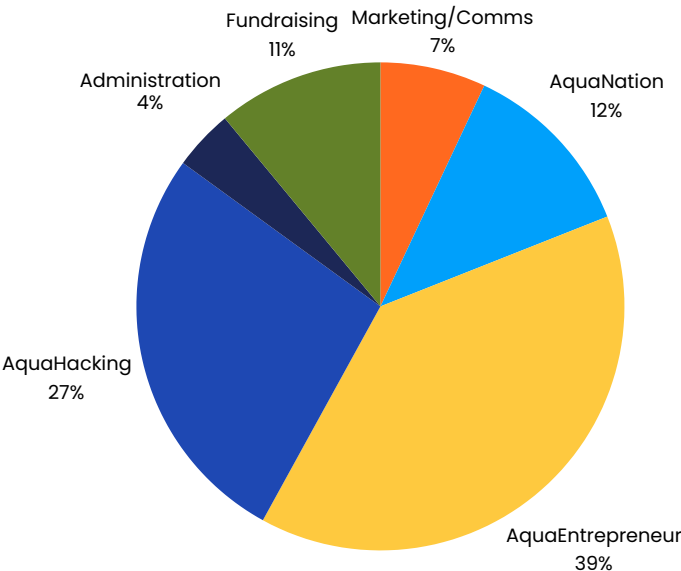
AQUAACTION REVENUE SOURCES

Total Revenue 2024: \$3,598,852



AQUAACTION PROGRAM COSTS

Spend by Program





Statement of Transparency and Stewardship

At AquaAction, we hold ourselves accountable to the communities we serve, our partners, and the planet. As we present our 2024 Impact Report, we do so with a deep commitment to transparency, integrity, and responsible stewardship of the resources entrusted to us.

This report reflects not only our achievements, but also our challenges, learnings, and the ongoing work required to advance freshwater sustainability across Canada. Every figure, story, and outcome shared here is grounded in data, collaborative effort, and the belief that environmental innovation can, and must, be accelerated.

We are committed to open communication about our decision-making, resource allocation, and program effectiveness. Our impact is measured not just in numbers, but in the real progress made toward cleaner water, empowered youth, and resilient communities.

As stewards of both funding and public trust, we ensure that every dollar is directed toward meaningful, measurable outcomes. We actively evaluate our programs, engage with diverse voices, and adapt to new insights to maximize our impact.

We thank our supporters, partners, and changemakers who share our vision. Together, we are building a future where Canada's freshwater ecosystems thrive for generations to come.

— ***The AquaAction Team***



Media Highlights

In 2024, AquaAction continued to play a leading role in shaping the national dialogue around freshwater sustainability. Our President was a key voice in several high-profile forums and publications, bringing critical attention to Canada's freshwater challenges and the urgent need for innovation and technological engagement.



Photograph courtesy of Reinhard Plenitz/imaggeo.egu.eu

AquaAction's leadership and mission were also featured in The Hill Times, AquaAction raised concerns about Canada's dual risk of freshwater scarcity and talent drain in the growing water tech sector.

[Canada at risk of both freshwater and brain drain as thirst for tech grows: AquaAction president - The Hill Times](#)



(Daniel Thomas/CBC/Radio-Canada)

In CBC News, AquaAction contributed to the conversation on industrial water use, particularly the billions of litres consumed annually by Quebec's mining and metals sector.

[Billions of litres of water are used yearly by Quebec's mining and metal industry, data reveals | CBC News](#)



PHOTO : JÉROME MARTY

In the French-language publication "L'eau au Canada : une ressource abondante, mais sous pression", AquaAction's perspective helped underscore the paradox of abundance versus vulnerability in Canada's water systems.

[L'eau au Canada : une ressource abondante, mais sous pression](#)

Our Supporters

With Deepest Gratitude

On behalf of the entire AquaAction team, we extend our heartfelt thanks to our major funders, donors, sponsors, and partners whose generous contributions make our mission possible. Your continued support empowers youth, fuels innovation, and drives meaningful action for Canada's freshwater ecosystems. Every initiative, challenge, and breakthrough is a reflection of your commitment to a sustainable future.

We also proudly acknowledge the incredible dedication of our Ambassadors, advisors, and volunteers—the changemakers who bring our programs to life. Your time, talent, and insight have shaped the direction of our work and inspired a growing movement of water leaders across the country.

Together, we are turning bold ideas into lasting impact. Thank you for standing with us.

NATIONAL PARTNERS



Fondation
de Gaspé Beaubien
Foundation



Bringing water to life



Tech for Nature

FONDATION
les Roses
de l'Espoir



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Réseau
Environnement

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Regroupement des organismes
de bassins versants du Québec



GREAT LAKES AND
ST. LAWRENCE
CITIES INITIATIVE



ÉTS
Le génie pour l'industrie



OXIA
initiative



hackworks

CentrEau
Centre québécois de recherche sur l'eau
Quebec Water Research Centre

Investissement
Québec



INRS
Institut national
de la recherche
scientifique



PORT
QUÉBEC



Cteau
CENTRE DES TECHNOLOGIES DE L'EAU



Ville de
Rouyn-Noranda



NSF Engines:
Southwest Sustainability
Innovation Engine

COLLECTIF
TERRITOIRE

CANADA'S OCEAN
SUPERCLUSTER

DISCOVERY
CENTER & PIER

CEN
TECH
PROPULSÉ PAR L'ÉTS



McGill
Dobson Centre
for Entrepreneurship
BUILDING INNOVATIVE COMPANIES WITH A PURPOSE



ALBERTA INNOVATES

UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

Looking Ahead

Priorities
for 2025

New offices in Detroit, Michigan –
to grow our reach binationally

National & Binational AquaHacking Challenge
in planning for 2026

New AquaEntrepreneur cohort (2025–2028)
in Canada and in the United States, starting
with the Great Lakes region

AquaNation launch – our first cross-border
innovation-to-impact hub of program alumni

**Multilingual education program for
stewardship and careers in water** across
Canada and the United States

**New ISO-based evaluation reports to
measure avoided water**, quality of restoration
of our AquaNation, and water footprint of our
Water Tech adopter community

Global Water Adopter Network
to scale implementation abroad



"We're not just launching programs – we're
building a movement to restore and protect
water for generations to come."

– **Soula Chronopoulos**, President, AquaAction



Thank You

Our work is only possible because of the passionate network of entrepreneurs, partners, donors, and allies who believe in a water secure future.

Our supporters play a vital role in advancing AquaAction's mission to protect and restore freshwater ecosystems across Canada. You can donate to fund youth-led innovation and real-world water solutions, partner with us to scale impact through collaborative programs, share our mission within your networks to inspire broader engagement, or volunteer your time and expertise to help mentor, judge, or support our initiatives. Every form of support helps drive a cleaner, more resilient water secure future, together.

Thank you for being part of this journey.

Let's keep building it — together.

www.aquaaction.org

Contact us: info@aquaaction.org

**Support
our mission:**

DONATE

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