

For Immediate Release

**The Rick Hansen Foundation Launches the
2025-26 Building Without Barriers Challenge
At the Start of National AccessAbility Awareness Week**

May 22, 2025 - Traditional territory of the xʷməθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam) First Nation / Richmond, BC – In honour of this upcoming National AccessAbility Awareness Week, the Rick Hansen Foundation (RHF) launches the 2025-26 Buildings Without Barriers Challenge designed to improve accessibility for everyone. Supported by BOMA Canada, the Challenge recognizes commercial and multi-unit residential property owners and managers demonstrating leadership and commitment to a more accessible and inclusive future.

1 in 4 Canadians identify as having a disability. Improved accessibility benefits everyone, including caregivers and friends of those living with a disability, and our aging population. When people of all abilities can access the buildings where we live, work, learn and play, everyone can participate in our communities.

“This Challenge inspires developers and organizations to deepen their understanding of the return on investment available when their properties deliver meaningful access for people of all ages and abilities,” said Brad McCannell, Vice President, Access and Inclusion at the Rick Hansen Foundation. “We are always encouraged to see so many established organizations embracing this Challenge and advancing the goal of an inclusive country. Their leadership sets a powerful example for others in the industry to prioritize accessibility through the practical application of universal design.”

Launched in 2021, participating organizations of the Buildings Without Barriers Challenge are encouraged to accelerate their accessibility journey by participating in Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification™ (RHFAC). RHFAC is a national rating and recognition system that measures the level of meaningful accessibility of buildings from the holistic perspective of individuals with varying disabilities including mobility, vision, hearing and neurodiversity. The program also offers a variety of accessibility training courses.

This year’s awards will include four categories:

1. **Commitment Award:** Organization with the most buildings or pre-construction plans RHFAC rated.
2. **Most Improved Award:** Previously RHFAC rated building with the highest overall improvement in their rating.

3. **Innovation Award:** Building with the highest number of innovation points on their RHFAC rating.
4. **NEW Culture of Accessibility Award:** Organization with the most number of staff trained in any RHFAC training offering.

Winners will be announced at the BOMA Canada National Awards Gala, BOMEX taking place in Fall of 2026.

Previous Challenge winners include Cadillac Fairview, Choice Properties, GWL Realty Advisors, Carleton University and First West Credit Union.

To learn more and participate in the Challenge visit www.RickHansen.com/Challenge.

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About the Rick Hansen Foundation

The Rick Hansen Foundation (RHF) was established in 1988, following the completion of Rick Hansen's Man In Motion World Tour. For over 35 years, RHF has worked to raise awareness, change attitudes, and remove barriers for people with disabilities. For more information on the RHF Accessibility Certification program visit www.RickHansen.com/RHFAC.

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