



Impact Report

January 2024

Introduction

SmartJob was founded in 2020 to tackle the pressing global challenge of an economy and workforce that has yet to fully realize the profound, even limitless, contributions of people with disabilities.

Our work emanates from a place of belief that social entrepreneurs, entrepreneurial support organizations, and innovative startups can make material contributions to filling the almost \$2 Trillion hole in global GDP where disability talent and innovation should be.

As technology continues to drive broadscale changes in the economy, there exists a need to center the full human experience at the core of design, and for tech-enabled workforce, skilling, and assistive technology solutions to be born inclusive, accessible, and with the 1.5+ Billion person disability community in mind.



Approximately 2/3 of working age adults with disabilities are in fact not employed. Of those that do participate in the labor market, people with disabilities are vastly overrepresented in

low-wage work and industries that are contracting rather than emerging and growing. We know that closing the disability wealth gap will require filling an ever-widening skills gap, and upskilling and reskilling workers for the demands of this century. Disruptive changes to the labor market are inevitable in the decades to come as employers will continue to demand new skills and

technological competencies. This makes the advancement of future-proofed tools, designed from the beginning to include all workers, consumers, and end-users to fully participate in work-based learning opportunities and careers, crucial to the future of the economy.

We have found no better way to unlock economic opportunity than to support and back entrepreneurs with disabilities, and those co-designing with the disability community, to bring the next generation of breakthrough tools to market.

We do this while building community across the innovation sector and the entrepreneurial ecosystem.



We also know that the step change needed to close the disability wealth gap can only happen through **partnerships that cross sectors, boundaries, and borders.**

For example, over the course of our inaugural years as a company, we have partnered with:



**CLINTON
GLOBAL
INITIATIVE**

**JPMORGAN
CHASE & CO.**



(more info & partners on the following slides)

The Clinton Global Initiative & Entrepreneurial Support Organizations,

including 10 programs, across 6 countries (Australia, New Zealand, India, Kenya, Canada, and US) as part of a global Moonshot Initiative we announced as a Commitment to Action at the CGI in 2022.

JP Morgan Chase, in 2023, as they backed Phase I of the Moonshot, culminating in a globally circulated report, produced with our partners at Village Capital, highlighting the work of the global collaborative effort and surveying where disability innovation resources lie across the world.

Individual donors from across the United States (Pool I and Pool II) who pooled their philanthropic contributions in 2021-2023 to the SmartJob Fund at ImpactAssets into a sleeve akin to a “community bank;” received education and information about disability start-ups, social entrepreneurs, innovators, and entrepreneurial support organizations; and, in turn, after deliberating democratically, made educated decisions about the mission-driven entrepreneurs and programs they would support as donors. See Donor Pool Video on Page 20.

- Pools I and II backed an Australian disability tech accelerator (**Remarkable**) to launch its first pilot cohort in the US (helping to launch a permanent US program), and supported two US companies and one Canadian company driving impact for those that experience spinal cord injury (**Aurie**), the aging and mobility communities (**Lotus**), and for those who experience barriers to fine motor control (**ImaginAble Solutions**).



The National Federation of the Blind (“NFB”) and the American Action Fund for Blind Children and Adults (“Action Fund”) joined the SmartJob Fund at ImpactAssets as donors.

- In 2022, the NFB & Action Fund designed a custom impact portfolio that allowed them to support: a small business development incubator (**Synergies Work**) that provided support and curriculum to a cohort of NFB member entrepreneurs seeking business development support for growing their business ideas; a multi-part webinar training series provided to over 75 blind individuals on how to convert a business idea into a business plan and go-to-market strategy, alongside coaching support to blind people in how to build an investor pitch deck (**Include LLC**).
- In 2023, the NFB & Action Fund also created a custom impact portfolio by backing early-stage startups that had the potential to drive material impact to members of the organized blind movement and to the greater disability community. These companies are driving material changes in the labor market and job searching (**Making Space**), tactile mapping and navigation (**XR Navigation**), financial literacy and inclusion (**Purple**), and use of AI for personal digital assistance (**Be My Eyes**).



We look forward with eagerness to what new partnerships and work lies ahead as we work diligently with colleagues across the world to build a permanent, scalable global disability innovation sector.



Regina Kline

Regina "Gina" Kline
Founder, SmartJob

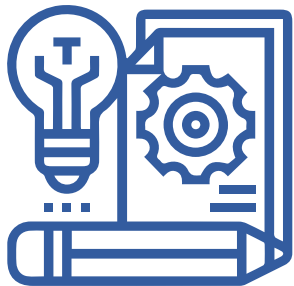


SmartJob by the Numbers



~\$1.2mm

Total Donor
Commitments Made to
the SmartJob Strategy



10 Grants



7 Equity
Investments

SmartJob Portfolio Companies Raised:

\$3.7m in Non-Dilutive
Grant Capital

\$17.7m in Equity
Funding

Moonshot Summary

SmartJob's Moonshot Disability Accelerator Initiative, first announced at the Clinton Global Initiative in the Fall of 2022, reflects the rise of a thriving global disability innovation ecosystem.

Our **recently published report** explores the current state of the disability innovation ecosystem.

Moonshot Partners' Impact Snapshot (2023)



The overall Moonshot goal is to coordinate and support 10 global accelerator partners or Entrepreneurial Support Organizations in 6 countries (from the United States and Canada to Australia, India, Kenya, and New Zealand) that leverage principles of inclusive and universal design and accessibility in their models. Those accelerator programs, in turn, aim to support and mentor approximately 220 early-stage companies across the globe by the end of the Moonshot project, and it is the initiative's target goal to continue to grow the number of disability tech start-ups worldwide that will be supported to commercial success and sustainability in the coming years.



For Phase I of the project, SmartJob partnered with a fiscal sponsor, New Venture Fund, to host the project’s strategic research and development phase. The Initiative received generous support from JP Morgan Chase for the Phase I work which included:

Partnering with the world class team at Village Capital (VilCap) to conduct individual interviews with all 10 participating ESO programs leveraging an evidence-based evaluation tool designed for accelerators (known as “Abaca”) to collect information about the baseline capacity-building needs of the programs:

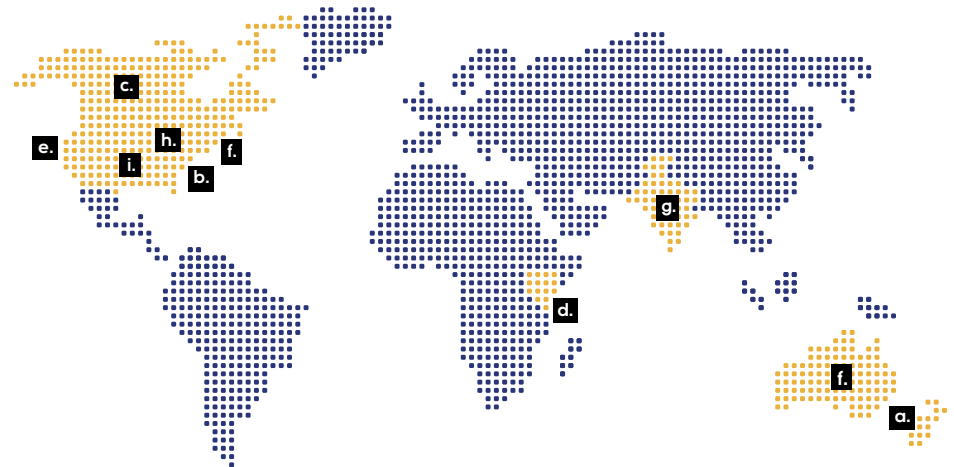
→ Collaborating with the ESOs, VilCap utilized Abaca and conducted qualitative interviews to chart the development and capacity needs of the 10 disability focused ESOs;

Compiling findings into a report that underscored the achievements of participating ESOs, even within resource constraints, and emphasized the importance of honoring leaders perspectives about approach to design and accessibility within the disability innovation ecosystem. The groundbreaking report can be found [here](#).

Partnering with Remarkable, one of the oldest and most experienced disability tech accelerators in the world, to lead a Peer-to-Peer counseling network to provide technical assistance and webinar-based curriculum and content to the participating programs.

→ Remarkable provided content and curriculum trainings on fundraising, marketing, and other subjects material to running a sustainable ESO.

Global Accelerator Partners



10

Accelerators

6

Countries

220

Early-stage Companies

Global Accelerator Partners

- a. Global Centre of Possibility (NZ) | Minnie Baragwanath
- b. Communication Service for the Deaf – Social Venture Fund Incubator (US) | Greg Bland; Rosa Lee Timm
- c. Access to Success Accelerator (CAN) | Varun Chandak
- d. AT Innovate Now (KE) | Bernard Chiira
- e. Multiple (US) | Dan Feshbach; Heidi Kershaw
- f. Remarkable Accelerator (AUST) | Pete Horsley; (US) | Molly Levitt
- g. AssisTech Foundation (IN) | Prateek Madhav
- h. 2-Gether International (US) | Diego Mariscal
- i. Synergies Work i2i Incubator (US) | Aarti Sahgal

4 Impact Categories

■ Up-Skilling, Re-Skilling & Future-Proofing Work:

We work to **fill the widening skills gap** and support **disability-diverse talent pipelines** into emerging industries.

■ Work-Related Technology:

We support **innovative technologies** that maximize **global human talent**.

■ Accelerators & Incubators

SmartJob supports the **Entrepreneurial Support Organizations** that will guide the next generation of breakthrough founders & disability-led solutions.

■ Seeding Underrepresented Founders

We support early-stage companies, across sectors, led by underrepresented founders with disabilities to **build a more inclusive workforce** and **generate wealth for people with disabilities**.



Up-Skilling, Re-Skilling,
& Future-Proofing



Seeding
Underrepresented
Founders



Work-Related
Technology

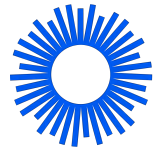


Accelerators
& Incubators

The SmartJob Portfolio at ImpactAssets

Startups:

aurie



be my
eyes



ImaginAble
Solutions Inc.

 Lotus

**MAKING
SPACE**

purple

XR
NAVIGATION

Entrepreneurial Support Organizations:

IN  LUDE
ACCESSIBILITY IN ACTION



SYNERGIES
WORK

Next Generation Assistive Technology



Description			
Disability Impact	<p>In 2023, the ImaginAble Solutions team manufactured 350 Guided Hands, which sold to leading healthcare facilities, schools and directly to people with disabilities across 15 countries. They also opened new manufacturing facility to produce Guided Hands™ in-house in Hamilton, ON, Canada. Finally, they received over \$275,000 in non-dilutive funding from over 30 international awards.</p>	<p>When SmartJob invested, Lotus had <10 prototypes; they now have 40+ rings and 100+ switch covers being used in pilot programs. Lotus has inked written agreements with Veterans Affairs and the State of New York. A small-scale pilot is underway in San Francisco in partnership with Bay Area Adaptive Sports and Recreation Program, Independent Living Resource Center SF, and Paralyzed Veterans of America. All participants have mobility disabilities. They were also selected by AARP to exhibit with them at CES 2024.</p>	<p>Aurie was recognized with Safer Technology Designation by FDA, is entering agreements with VA Hospitals, and received a Phase II NIDILRR SBIR Grant. It has had 4 patents issued by the USPTO with 2 more submitted. The company continues its R&D and navigation of the FDA clearance process to usher into the market a product designed to reduce urinary tract infections—a leading cause of death for people with spinal cord injuries, by almost half—by increasing access to safer no-touch catheters at the same cost as the current standard of care.</p>
	<p>deployment type: SAFE Note donor group: Pool I</p>	<p>deployment type: SAFE Note donor group: Pool II</p>	<p>deployment type: Equity donor group: Pool II</p>

Founders with Disabilities



Up-Skilling, Re-Skilling, + Future-Proofing Work



Description

Builder of Audiom, the world's first inclusive and accessible visual, auditory, and tactile digital map viewer and editor to make digital geographic content accessible to the more than 385 million blind, deafblind, and low vision people unable to access digital maps. XR Navigation creates digital maps of places like college or enterprise campuses, buildings, as well as environmental maps, fire maps, contagion maps, and service outage maps. XR conveys map data flexibly through headphones, a screen, or even through tactile means.

Making Space is a talent acquisition and learning experience platform for people with disabilities targeting work in creative economies. Founded by an entrepreneur with disabilities who exited a previous company representing disabled talent in Hollywood, Keely Cat-Wells has relationships with entertainment giants like NBC, Disney, Amazon, Hello Sunshine, and Netflix. Making Space's platform hosts company-specific accessible credentialing courses for talent to self-enroll and pre-qualify themselves for jobs, creating a tangible path to employment.

Disability Impact

XR Navigation built customer relationships with NASA and University of Washington and engaged in user testing and feedback with people with disabilities. They are the only digital map platform to have achieved accessibility certification under the WCAG AAA compliance standards.

Making Space has strengthened its position as a premiere platform for disability talent to access skills training & onboarding into the creative economy. After securing NBC Universal as a customer, Making Space trained people with disabilities who were hired from its talent pipeline by NBC for broadcasting of the Paris 2024 Olympics, the first time NBC ever hired self-identified talent with disabilities for the Games broadcast.



deployment type: SAFE Note **donor group:** NFB/AAF

deployment type: SAFE Note **donor group:** NFB/AAF

Improving Access to Work + Economic Participation



Description

Be My Eyes is a free app that connects blind and low-vision people with sighted volunteers and company representatives for visual assistance through a live video call. In collaboration with OpenAI, Be My Eyes released “Be My AI,” a new feature in the app that allows users to take a picture and be given a detailed description; users can then chat with Be My AI to ask more specific questions. By the end of 2023, Be My AI was integrated into customer support for blind and low vision users at Microsoft’s call center, enabling 90% of the customer support calls made by their users to be solved without requiring human intervention.

Purple is a fintech company built with the needs of people with disabilities in mind. Purple enables checking accounts and ABLE savings accounts with a linked debit card to increase the adaption and usage of ABLE accounts and make the administrative burden of living with asset limitations a bit lighter. Purple has automatic features that help users ensure they are not in violation of SSDI policies and automatically pulls expenses from the correct accounts based on eligibility.

Disability Impact

Be My AI has had an enormous impact on the lives of their blind and low vision users, with over 3.2 million uses by the end of 2023. The New York Times named Be My Eyes first in their 2023 Good Tech Awards for improving accessibility through AI. Be My Eyes is currently serving more than 580,000 blind and low-vision users in more than 150 countries and 180 languages.

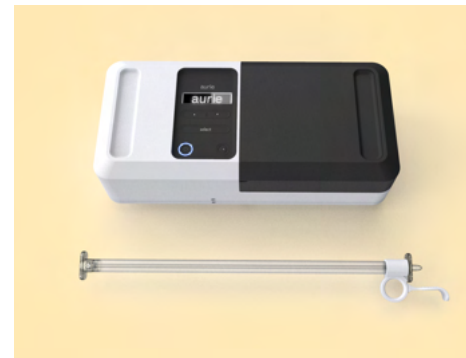
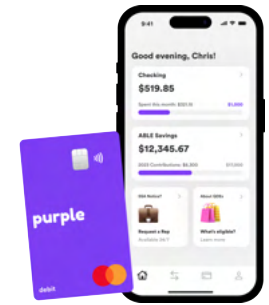
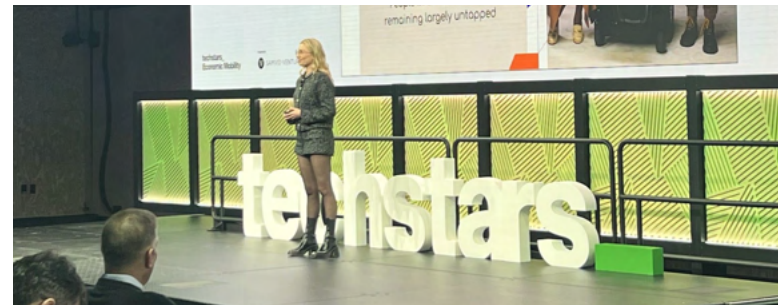
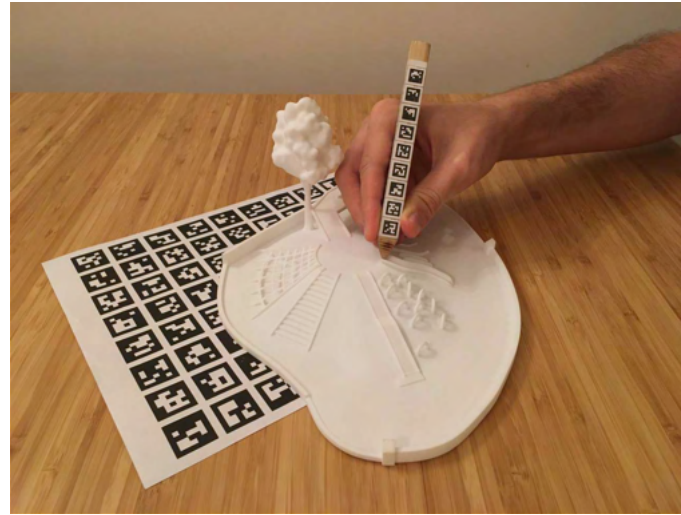
At the end of 2023, Purple was finalizing processes and procedures with a key banking partner to ensure proper compliance is in place, and kicking off the validation of the platform’s flow of funds ahead of initial launch, preparing to launch this first-of-its-kind product.



deployment type: Convertible Note **donor group:** NFB/AAF


deployment type: SAFE Note **donor group:** NFB/AAF

Portfolio Companies at Work



Entrepreneurial Support Organizations



Description	<p>Remarkable Disability Tech Accelerator is an international accelerator that equips disability tech startups with coaching, user feedback, and go-to-market skills.</p>	<p>Synergies Work is an accelerator and hub for entrepreneurs with disabilities based in Atlanta, GA. The SmartJob Fund at ImpactAssets made a grant to Synergies Work to support a cohort of entrepreneurs from the NFB.</p>	<p>Include LLC are coaches on entrepreneurship, storytelling, and creating materials for venture capital. The SmartJob Fund at ImpactAssets made grants to Include LLC to deliver content on entrepreneurship for the NFB's membership.</p>
Disability Impact	<p>The SmartJob Fund at ImpactAssets' grant in 2022 allowed Remarkable to pilot a US-based cohort of 3 companies, with 3 US-based coaches supporting them for around 480 total hours and 22 new US mentors, assisting with things like strategic mentorship around FDA pathways; advice around advertising, marketing, and accessibility; cash flow and runway analysis; and pitch deck design and feedback.</p>	<p>Over the course of 10 weeks in 2022, Synergies Work supported 16 entrepreneurs (shortlisted from 97 applications) through one-on-one coaching, weekly learning labs, and resources that they needed to either launch or grow their businesses. 46% of the cohort founders were people of color and 54% were women, with the vast majority being blind or low vision entrepreneurs.</p>	<p>In 2022, Include LLC taught a six-week class to 75 members of the NFB on how to ideate on entrepreneurial ideas and create real business plans. In 2023, they also worked closely with two members of the National Federation of the Blind on creating accessible materials for pitching their venture-backable businesses.</p>
	<p>deployment type: Grant donor group: Pool I</p>	<p>deployment type: Grant donor group: NFB/AAF</p>	<p>deployment type: Grant donor group: NFB/AAF</p>

(NFB/AAF = National Federation of the Blind + American Action Fund)

Entrepreneurial Support Organizations at Work



Media Mentions + Ecosystem Gatherings

Forbes


FORBES > LEADERSHIP > LEADERSHIP STRATEGY

Disability Tech Is A Game Changer For 2023 And Beyond

Laurel Donnellan Contributor @
I write about compassionate leadership.

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Jan 18, 2023, 12:23pm EST



Bernard Chira, Director of Innovate Now, Africa's first accelerator for disability technology ... [+] INNOVATE NOW

People with disabilities are entering a new world of opportunity as they rely increasingly on advances in technology — including mobility devices as well as hardware, software, and peripherals — all geared to addressing their

Forbes


FORBES > SMALL BUSINESS > ENTREPRENEURS

Disability Accelerator Initiative Targets 'The Next Generation Of Radically Inclusive Technology'

Anne Field Contributor @

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Nov 22, 2023, 11:00am EST



Varun Chandak ERIC BENCHIMOL PHOTOGRAPHY

There are nearly 1.3 billion people with some form of disability globally, according to the World Health Organization. And despite the fact that an increasing variety of assistive technologies exist, a tiny portion of all those individuals have access to them. Plus, while disability-



Featured in
Forbes

SmartJob Multimedia Portfolio



SmartJob's Donor Pool at Work



SmartJob's Global Moonshot Video



SmartJob's Global Accelerator Partners

Our Partners



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SYNERGIES
WORK



SmartJob Board of Advisors



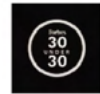
Mark Riccobono
President, National Federation of the Blind



Carina Ho
Global Accessibility Initiatives, Airbnb



Aaron Hsu
CEO, ClearMask



KR Liu
Head of Brand Accessibility, Google



Jonathan Kaufman
Contributor, Forbes



John Keeling
Senior Vice President and Venture Partner,
The Motley Fool



Ranga Jayaraman
Director, Neurodiversity Pathways



Eddie Ndopu
One of 17 global advocates appointed by the
Secretary General of the United Nations



Ruby Moore
Executive Director, Georgia Advocacy Office



Erin McPike
Policy Communications Manager, Facebook



Jan Piercy
Advisor, Southern Bancorporation



Barr Even
Venture Impact Investments, Rebalance Capital



In Memoriam



Judy Heumann
Activist & Former Special Advisor On International
Disability Rights for the U.S. State Department



Thank You to our Founding Ambassador Donors & Advisors!

The National Federation
of the Blind

American Action Fund for
Blind Children and Adults

Michael Bien

Jack & Gretchen Cooley

Rhett Ellis

Barr Even

Timothy Freundlich

Kristen Howe

Ranga Jayaraman

Samantha Fernandez Keys

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Ruby Moore

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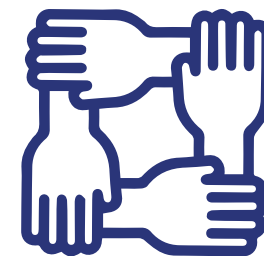
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