

Technology leading to economic and democratic progress

*Net Change Week: Technology for Social Change
June 7-11, 2010*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Toronto (May 13, 2010) - The best online social movement campaigns appear to have no source. By the time you get the call to action, there may already be several thousand members and it feels like you are part of something big; a groundswell that will effect change. During Net Change 2010, not only will participants hear from the founders of such successful movements like Avaaz.org and the 350° campaign for climate change, but they will also get the training needed to do it themselves.

Net Change is a weeklong series of events at the MaRS Centre in Toronto exploring the intersection between technology and social change. Renowned leaders will be featured throughout the week to share amazing stories about the application and implication of social technologies. Speakers include:

- Beth Kanter, "One of the most influential women in technology" (Fast Company magazine)
- Grameenphone Founder, Prof. Iqbal Z. Quadir, Director, Legatum Center for Development and Entrepreneurship at MIT
- Doors of Perception's John Thackara, co-producer of 4-Days Halifax in Nova Scotia
- Ontario Privacy Commissioner, Dr. Ann Cavoukian
- Don Tapscott, author of Wikinomics and Grown up Digital

Monday thru Wednesday, participants can sign-up for dedicated training in online and mobile strategic communication. Thursday and Friday events will challenge our thinking about how technology can be designed for positive social change in the future. Canadian and international digital media and technology experts will discuss the repercussions of speedy adoption of online technology along with critical observations about our current social context.

Net Change Lead Lisa Torjman discusses the focus of the week: "We're particularly interested in how technologies are decentralizing, going beyond conversation and creating positive social change. From the distribution of health information via SMS to the organization of mass volunteerism online, we want to showcase the latest strategies and reveal the talent and potential right here in Toronto."

Net Change Week 2010 builds on the success of its inaugural year with collaborations across the city. Among partners: CanadaHelps.org will present MyCharityConnects - a two-day intensive training with 250 participants from non-profits and charities. Toronto Public Health joins the week to share their groundbreaking use of SMS with at-risk communities in the GTA.

"SMS for health advocacy is just one aspect of the emerging use of mobile technology for social change. But mobile tech is still a mystery for many. We felt that this technology deserved an entire day of dedicated training space during Net Change this year. To that end, we've partnered with MobileActive.org to bring the first Mobile Tech 4 Social Change event to Ontario," says Geraldine Cahill, Net Change Communications Coordinator.

Unearthed throughout the week are the tools and tactics on the communications forefront that are driving global social change movements. Increasingly, we will see technology solutions used to address the greatest social and ecological challenges this world is facing. Come explore how at Net Change Week 2010.

For a current list of our scheduled events, visit our website at <http://netchangeweek.ca>

About SiG@MaRS

SiG@MaRS supports the launch and growth of social ventures through Advisory Services. We convene unusual stakeholders and bring global leaders to Ontario to share and explore best practices. We accelerate social innovation through research, education and enabling infrastructure such as social finance and social tech with the aim of creating a culture of social innovation in Canada.

About MaRS Discovery District

MaRS Discovery District (www.marsdd.com) is a large scale, mission driven innovation centre located in Toronto and networked across Ontario, focused on building Canada's next generation of technology companies. MaRS works closely with entrepreneurs to grow and scale their ventures into global market leaders in life sciences and health care, information, communications and digital media technologies, cleantech, advanced materials and energy, as well as innovative social purpose business.

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