



Ben Marchionna
Chief Innovation Ecosystem Officer, Michigan Economic Development Corporation

Ben was announced by Governor Gretchen Whitmer in 2024 as Michigan's first-ever Chief Innovation Ecosystem Officer. His charter is to build a community of innovation - across founders, universities, corporations, investors, and government - and make Michigan a place where innovators and entrepreneurs are seen, heard, and work together to drive us forward.

Previously, Ben led technology innovation and business development teams at Electra.aero, an aerospace and defense hard-tech startup near Washington, D.C., where he played a pivotal role in advancing the world's first hybrid-electric aircraft for dual-use applications. Before Electra, Ben built the global operations team at SkySpecs, a clean energy startup headquartered in Ann Arbor, where he led-from-scratch the product development and scaling of autonomous robotics and AI-based software solutions into 26 countries.

Ben's career began at the Lockheed Martin Skunk Works, the renowned national security innovation factory in the Mojave Desert. During his tenure, he contributed to numerous groundbreaking aircraft development programs and graduated from Lockheed Martin's prestigious Engineering Leadership Development Program.

Ben holds a B.S.E. in Aerospace Engineering from the University of Michigan and an M.S. in Product Development Engineering from the University of Southern California. He is the Chair of the University of Michigan's Aerospace Industry Advisory Board, a Board Trustee and Associate Fellow of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, and a founding nonprofit Board member of the Los Angeles County Air Show.