



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Mastercraft Ventures Raises \$6.2M to Fill Startup Funding Gap**

Fund Will Invest in Early-Stage Wisconsin Startups

**Beloit, Wisconsin** –Mastercraft Ventures, which was launched in January, has raised \$6.2M as a result of its most recent closing. The fund is based in Rock County, but will invest across Wisconsin.

Mastercraft Ventures is the eighth venture capital fund supported by the Badger Fund of Funds and the sixth emerging fund where the Badger Fund matches up to 40% of the fund's invested capital.

“Wisconsin has great potential to grow startups in emerging fields like AI and automation, especially in sectors where the state already excels—such as advanced manufacturing, food tech, logistics, healthcare, and ag tech,” said Mason Cook, Managing Director of Mastercraft Ventures. “We are eager to help build startups in these areas and more that create value for both our investors and the community.”

Cook will lead the fund with an investment committee of individuals with experience starting, scaling, and selling companies. Prior to starting Mastercraft, Cook had roles with investment organizations and several technology startups, including as president of a VC-funded software company. Mastercraft Ventures portfolio companies will benefit from Cook’s strong connections across many of Wisconsin’s industries and extensive network of other investors in Wisconsin and the rest of the country.

Mastercraft will target initial investments of approximately \$500,000 in startup companies across a broad range of industries, technologies, and products. The fund will aim to be the first investor in startups, addressing a need in Wisconsin for “first in” seed capital.

"Mastercraft will provide talented entrepreneurs in our community access to much-needed capital," said Tobin Ryan, a Mastercraft investment committee member and professional investor. "Wisconsin has a history of launching innovative companies, but the state struggles with limited funding resources – especially in areas outside of its major cities."

Wisconsin lagged all neighboring states in 2024 for venture capital per capita, according to the National Venture Capital Association. The state also ranks 46<sup>th</sup> out of 50 states for the amount of venture capital dollars invested relative to GDP, according to US News.

“A Badger Fund focus is addressing the Wisconsin need for first in investors for new entrepreneurs,” said Ken Johnson, Partner of the Badger Fund. “Typically, a VC fund will continue to fundraise to their target fund size after holding a close like this, and the Badger Fund will invest an additional 40 cents for every 60 cents raised by Mastercraft.”

Mastercraft expects to register with the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation to obtain qualified venture fund certification. This designation would allow the fund to offer Wisconsin tax benefits to eligible investors when it invests in Wisconsin-based startups recognized as qualified new business ventures.

For additional information about Mastercraft Ventures, please visit [mastercraft.vc](https://mastercraft.vc) or contact Mason Cook at [mason@mastercraft.vc](mailto:mason@mastercraft.vc).

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### **About Mastercraft Ventures**

Established in 2025, Mastercraft Ventures is a venture capital fund focused on leading investments in Wisconsin startups first round of funding. Mastercraft Ventures typically invests in Wisconsin-based, pre-revenue startups across a broad range of industries, technologies, and products. Mason Cook is the Managing Director and a graduate of Iowa State University and Columbia Business School.

[www.mastercraft.vc](https://www.mastercraft.vc)

### **About Badger Fund of Funds**

The Badger Fund of Funds I, LP was formed in 2015 and includes a \$25 million investment from the State of Wisconsin pursuant to 2013 Wisconsin Act 41 to invest in Wisconsin based venture capital funds. In the 2023/25 biennial budget the State made a second \$25 million investment commitment to the Fund as a Limited Partner and passed 2023 Wisconsin Act 98, which evergreened the Fund. The State of Wisconsin, individuals and the Badger fund manager have invested \$57.5 million in the Badger Fund.