

Canada authorizes first exchange-traded bitcoin fund

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The Ontario Securities Commission has cleared Purpose Investments to launch the world's first exchange-traded bitcoin fund

Canada's main securities regulator has cleared the launch of the world's first exchange-traded bitcoin fund, the investment manager and the

regulator said Friday, giving retail investors greater access to the booming cryptocurrency.

The Ontario Securities Commission gave Purpose Investments Inc. the nod to roll out the Purpose Bitcoin ETF (exchange-traded fund) on the Toronto Stock Exchange.

It is to start trading under the ticker BTCC "as early as next week," a company spokesman told AFP.

"The ETF will be the first in the world to invest directly in physically settled bitcoin, not derivatives, allowing investors easy and efficient access to the emerging asset class of cryptocurrency without the associated risk of self-custody within a digital wallet," the asset management company said in a statement.

Gemini Trust Company will be sub-custodian for the fund, while CIBC Mellon Global Securities Services will administer it.

Launched in 2009, bitcoin has been on a meteoric rise since March, when it stood at \$5,000, spurred by online payments giant PayPal saying it would allow account holders to use cryptocurrency.

It hit a record-high near \$45,000 on Monday after Elon Musk's electric carmaker Tesla invested \$1.5 billion in the digital currency.

Canadian and US fund companies had tried unsuccessfully in recent years to launch bitcoin ETFs.

Several in recent weeks filed preliminary prospectuses with the Ontario Securities Commission and the Securities and Exchange Commission in the United States.

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