

Invitation to Pledge

Grid Catalyst developed the PowerNorth Incubator to leverage the incredible ecosystem of energy, cleantech, and sustainability-committed companies in Minnesota, whose expertise and market leadership can be game changing for innovators and startups. Minnesota makes an exceptional place to test and launch solutions that can be resilient in cold climates.

We are currently recruiting 30 companies to participate in our PowerNorth Incubator program in 2023. Participation is structured to create introductions to incredibly promising energy startups and a pathway to partnership that meets the needs and priorities of your organization. By pledging, you agree to the following:

- Name of organization listed on website and promotional materials as a partner
- Participation in two pitch events in 2023 (one virtual in late February, one in-person in May)
 - Note that the first virtual event will likely be structured in two sessions. We request participation in both, but recognize that might not be possible.
- Provide brief feedback on startup pitches

If your organization identifies startups that you would like to consider mentoring during the incubator phase, you provide your highest priority candidates for us to consider during matchmaking in March 2023.

Pledging interest in the Innovators Network does not obligate any organization or individual to host a startup during the incubator phase. There is also no financial obligation to participate; however, there are sponsorship opportunities available. This is a non-binding commitment to allow your organization access and introduction to promising startups from around the country.

Incubator Phase

Once your organization has been matched with a startup, you begin the incubation phase. For six weeks, the startups will meet regularly with one or members of your organization serving as a corporate mentor to refine their product approach and value proposition.. Mentors are required to have weekly meetings with startups. The program intends to drive the following outcomes from incubation:

- A refined business or go-to-market plan
- Development of or improvement of a prototype
- Proof-of-concept demonstration or demonstration plan
- Increased investment potential and visibility - note that host organizations have no requirement for investment in their matched startup

At the end of the incubation period, we will host a final demo day for our matched cohort, inviting other regional partners, startups, and investors to participate in and support next steps for the startups toward commercialization.

Benefits Provided to Innovation Network Partners

Impact - Strengthen our regional economy and taking climate action

Early interest from partners will show startups that Minnesota is serious about developing and deploying innovation. This will attract a high-caliber slate of candidates to the accelerator cohort, with priority recruiting and selection given to diverse founders and diverse-led startups.

Visibility - Elevate your organization’s commitment to clean energy

Innovator Network partners will be featured on the Grid Catalyst website, in digital media, and industry storytelling. Hosts will be featured in ongoing media and communications campaigns.

Opportunity – Introductions to emerging technology and entrepreneurs

Partners will be introduced to emerging businesses with innovative solutions that have been through a vetting process with technical and financial advisors. This creates an opportunity for investment, collaboration, and customizing solutions to meet your unique climate and clean energy needs.

