

Carbon Neutral Innovation Challenge

FAQ

What is an Innovation Challenge?

An Innovation Challenge looks to find and develop innovative, entrepreneurial talent and solutions that positively impact the lives of citizens, while also delivering smarter infrastructure and processes to help our leaders manage resources effectively and efficiently.

The greater DC metro area is a particularly special ecosystem for championing and incubating Smart City solutions because we are really a confederation of “DMV” (District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia) leaders in government, business, associations, nonprofits, educational institutions, and start-ups.

Finalists will present their solutions to panel judges in a virtual vote, as you might have seen on the TV show “Shark Tank.”

Do I Have to Live in the DC Area?

No! While we are approaching this challenge with a regional focus, we welcome national – and global – participation. We think that’s a wonderful perk of our hybrid format for participants!

What is the Cost of Participation?

This event is free!

What is the Process Once I Registered to Compete?

- A member from Smart City Works will reach out to registrants (within 3-5 business days) to schedule an introductory meeting
- Companies begin creating & collecting the necessary information for review – due Oct 03, 2022
- A limited number of companies will be selected for the pitch event. Finalists will have about four minutes to present their proposals and four minutes for a Q & A from judges and the audience
- Judges will deliberate and a winner will be announced

What are the Key Due Dates?

- September 15: Virtual orientation and Q & A
- October 03: Deadline to submit two-page concept
- October 04 – 14: Initial review period



- October 14: Finalist announcement
- October 14 – 18: Optional pitch support for finalists
- October 19: Live pitch event

What Resources and Data are Available to Me?

We have a list of publicly available documents on our webpage under [Resources](#), outlining Fairfax County's actions and goals related to carbon neutrality and environmental management.

Two subject matter experts are available during Oct 14 – Oct 18, to provide tips & recommendations for how to present one's product/solution.

What items will entrepreneurs need to turn in?

Cover page plus two-page concept paper, containing:

- Company name, CEO, Bios of presenters
- Executive Summary
- How your product addresses one of the three key areas of concern: (1) Improve the energy efficiency of buildings (2) Increase the use of renewable electricity (3) Accelerate the adoption and use of electric vehicles
- How your product or solution meets the four criteria: (1) Innovation (2) Regional Impact (3) Practicality and Scalability (4) Social Responsibility and Equity

Pitch Deck, containing:

- Items from the two-page concept paper
- How you would go about implementing the solution
- Value Proposition of product

What Do the Winners Get?

The winner(s) will receive the opportunity to pilot their product or solution in Fairfax County, the largest county in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The product or solution will be judged based on the following criteria: innovation; social responsibility and equity; practicality and scalability of the application; and regional impact.

Who is Reviewing the Companies?

Initial Review is being conducted by the planning committee:



Smart City Works Innovation Hub; Fairfax County Office of Energy & Environmental Coordination; Fairfax County Department of Economic Initiatives; George Mason University's Office of Sustainable Earth.

The pitch competition will be judged by four subject matter experts, selected by the planning committee.

How Can I Attend the Event?

The event is being held in a hybrid capacity.

People who are comfortable doing so, are encouraged to attend in-person. The location of the venue will be in Fairfax County, exact location TBD. All those that have already registered will receive an email from FairfaxInnovates@gmail.com informing of the venue location.

People who registered to attend in a virtual capacity will receive a Zoom link, no less than one week before the live event.

What public health precautions are being taken at the in-person event?

At minimum, we will follow the CDC guidance related to in-person, indoor gatherings. We hope to be able to offer face masks at the sign-in desk.

We strongly request that all who attend in-person, are fully vaccinated against the coronavirus.