

IN² Channel Partner Strategic Award – Funding Opportunity Information

Background

History

The Innovation Incubator (IN²) program was created in 2014 to advance clean energy technologies in the commercial buildings space in order to bridge the valley of death. This program began by providing support to select commercial building related energy efficiency technologies through technical support at NREL and project related funding. Companies were selected into the program after being referred by Channel Partners and undergoing rigorous review through three down selection rounds. In 2017, based on the success of IN² to date, the program is being expanded to address additional technology verticals, and to provide strategic funding awards to Channel Partners.

The IN² Channel Partner Award Program is a pilot program that serves to support the cleantech ecosystem by funding sustainability-focused incubators, accelerators, and university programs as key stakeholders in the clean energy economy. In addition to supporting the ecosystem financially, the program aims to further the ecosystem through promotion of a sustainable, robust network. The community will be convened and strengthened through activities and events that will provide opportunities for funded members to share learnings, discuss strategic objectives, and network in an effort to strengthen the cleantech community.

Funding Opportunity

By responding to this funding opportunity, Channel Partners are submitting ideas for strategic programmatic funding that further support the mission of fostering clean technology solutions that can be leveraged across the IN² ecosystem. Programs shall focus in driving active engagement within the ecosystem to support clean energy innovation.

This pilot program is anticipated to run for four years with new funding available each year. While proposals will request funding for one year, successful programs may develop into multi-year opportunities.

Proposals may choose to engage with economic development agencies, local and state governments, other key clean energy/cleantech stakeholders, and local Wells Fargo teams.

This is an open call for ideas but programs must address one or more of the following focus areas:

Energy (required):

- Residential / Commercial Building Technologies
- Sustainable Mobility
- Food / Energy / Water Nexus
- Smart Cities

Socio-Economic (encouraged):

- STEM (Youth K-12)
- Diversity
- Public Health
- Job Creation

Funding

We anticipate funding 9 strategic award proposals in 2017 ranging from \$15,000 - \$500,000.

- 1 500,000 (requires a minimum of 4 channel partners)
- 1 150,000 (requires a minimum of 2 channel partners)
- 2 100,000 (partnering with other channel partners encouraged)
- 3 50,000 (partnering with other channel partners encouraged)
- 2 15,000 (partnering with other channel partners encouraged)

In the application you will be required to list the funding amount you are applying for in addition to how funding will be divided amongst partners. Please be aware that awarded funding amounts may differ from funding requests.

Responsibility

The Prime Recipient will be the responsible authority regarding the settlement and satisfaction of all contractual and administrative issues related to fund distribution and reporting.

Application Process

The application process will occur in two phases, 1. Pre-proposal phase and 2. Final proposal phase.

Pre-Proposal Phase

The IN² team will distribute a survey requesting the following information:

- Impacted technology category (buildings, sustainable mobility, food energy water etc.)
- Partners you are looking to engage
- Funding award amount targeted

- A short summary of your proposed program and description around if the program is new or an expansion of an existing initiative
- How will you measure program success

The IN² team will use this information to make partnering recommendations and request full proposals from selected teams. Not all submissions will result in final proposal requests.

Final Proposal Phase

If a final proposal is requested, teams will complete full proposal outlining activities, partnerships, and a budget of how funding will be spent.

Final proposal submissions shall be no more than three pages in length

Limitation on Number of Applications Submitted per Organization

Applicants may either submit one application or collaborate on one application proposal with other organization(s) on a proposal application. Each Channel Partner organization is limited to participation in one proposal.

The IN² Channel Partner Awards meeting and IN² Summit are intended to help cultivate these relationships. We encourage you to make connections and engage other Channel Partners and subject matter experts in your programing.

Reporting

Annual one-two page update and impact reports will be provided to the NREL IN² Program Management team.

Event Sponsorship and Logo Usage

While we encourage you to promote the IN² Program and Wells Fargo as supporters of your program efforts, prior communication and approval is required for all events associated with this funding. Awardees are expected to communicate all events and request logo usage at least one month prior to event date in order to gain approval and provide the ability for programmatic representation at events, when possible.

Eligibility

Funding is restricted to U.S. NGO 501c3 organizations. To be considered for funding, the Wells Fargo Foundation must refer organizations, to be considered on a case-by-case basis.

This is non-advocacy funding; as such no amount of this funding may be used for any lobbying efforts. Additionally, funding must have impact in the United States and is not intended for international use.

Evaluation Rubric

			SCORING RANGE			
	Subject	Prompt	1	2	3	4
Viability and potential impact (80%)	Ability to positively impact ecosystem (20%)	<i>How impactful will this program be if successful?</i>	Project will have minimal impact if successful	Project may have impact, if successful	Project will have some impact, if successful	Project will have remarkable impact if successful
	Sustainability (20%)	<i>What potential does this program have to sustain beyond initial funding?</i>	Little or no indication that the project will sustain beyond project funding	Some indication that project may create lasting impact	Project will likely have lasting impact	Project funding is well positioned to create long lasting program
	Potential project success (20%)	<i>What is the likelihood for success?</i>	Project cost, time scale, or other barriers will prevent success	Project, organization, and team are moderately positioned for success	Project, organization, and team are likely positioned for success	Project, organization, and team are well positioned to for project success
	Impact on Cleantech startups (20%)	<i>What impact will this program have toward the goal of advancing cleantech startups?</i>	Project will have minimal impact if successful	Project may have impact, if successful	Project will have some impact, if successful	Project will have remarkable impact if successful
Match with IN2 goals (20%)	Innovation (10%)	<i>How innovative is this program?</i>	Project is not innovative	Project is minimally innovative	Project is innovative	Project is very innovative
	Partnership (5%)	<i>Does the proposal leverage additional IN2 partners and other key stakeholders?</i>	No partnerships listed	Some partnerships listed	Project is structured to partner with other IN2 stakeholders, with impact to some	Project is structured to partner with other IN2 stakeholders, providing impact to all
	Impact on Wells Fargo EA targets (5%)	<i>Does this project impact additional Wells Fargo Environmental Affairs target groups (STEM, diversity, public health, job creation)</i>	EA target groups will not be impacted by this project	EA groups may be slightly impacted by this effort	EA groups will be impacted by this effort	Yes, these groups will be impacted greatly by the project effort

Timeline

The timeline for strategic awards is scheduled as follows:

Pre-Proposals DUE: October 2, 2017

Feedback and Proposed Matchmaking by IN² Team: October 25, 2017

Full Proposals DUE: November 17, 2017

Award Decisions Anticipated: Mid-December 2017