



# New Investment Model To Unlock Millions for Cleantech, Receives Backing from the U.S. Department of Energy

*Clean Energy Trust pursues financial innovation to catalyze millions in private and philanthropic capital for cleantech innovation*

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, UNITED STATES, August 1, 2017 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Clean Energy Trust, a non-profit that supports early stage cleantech startups with direct investment, mentorship and venture development services announced that it was selected to receive an Innovative Pathways award from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE).

Clean Energy Trust will use the award to refine and launch a novel investment model designed to attract a new class of investors to early-stage cleantech businesses. The model combines the structure of a venture capital (VC) fund with the benefits of a mission-driven, non-profit organization. Leveraging philanthropic donors' support, the new model will address the longer time horizons, capital requirements, and bounded upsides that have driven VCs from cleantech.

“Since 2010 Clean Energy Trust has been working to lessen the barriers cleantech entrepreneurs face when bringing their innovations to market,” commented Clean Energy Trust CEO Erik Birkerts. “By embracing the spirit of innovation we cherish in our entrepreneurs, we designed this new model to bring needed capital to the companies that are creating positive societal and environmental impacts while also delivering strong financial returns.”

With support from the U.S. Department of Energy, Clean Energy Trust will unlock a new source of capital that has not yet meaningfully invested in early-stage cleantech companies. The program structure as implemented by Clean Energy Trust has the potential to catalyze \$2.5 million of philanthropic support and \$18 million of new investment. When deployed at scale, it has the potential to unlock \$35.5 billion of impact investing capital.

DOE's Innovative Pathways projects are designed to address the systemic barriers currently preventing the private sector from more fully supporting energy innovation and bringing new energy technologies to market. The eleven selected projects will develop and test new ways to integrate emerging technologies into the energy industry, and new models to unlock private capital in support of energy innovation.

“Over the last 5 years, traditional VC investors have largely fled the clean energy sector because of a fundamental mismatch between expectations and the reality of building a cleantech company. We've created a new investment model that relaxes those constraints and offers investors up to 30% higher returns,” said Ben Gaddy, Clean Energy Trust's Director of Technology and the program's Principal Investigator.

About Clean Energy Trust:

Clean Energy Trust partners with innovators to bring scientific and technological advancements to market that change how the world generates, consumes and reuses energy and natural resources.

We make direct investments, provide mentorship, offer venture development services and work to strengthen the Midwest innovation ecosystem. To learn more visit [www.cleanenergytrust.org](http://www.cleanenergytrust.org).

#### About the Technology-to-Market Program

The Technology-to-Market Program (Tech-to-Market) within the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy is strengthening the U.S. innovation ecosystem by eliminating common barriers that prevent market exploration of new energy technologies.

#### About the SunShot Initiative

The U.S. Department of Energy SunShot Initiative is a national effort to drive down the cost of solar electricity and support solar adoption. SunShot aims to make solar energy a low cost electricity source for all Americans through research and development efforts in collaboration with public and private partners. Learn more at [energy.gov/sunshot](http://energy.gov/sunshot).

Emily Achler  
Clean Energy Trust  
847-687-9367  
[email us here](#)

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