

Brownsville Tech Startup, Permittivity, Wins Global Prize Challenge

Permittivity tech startup utilizing NASA technology to support America's water infrastructure

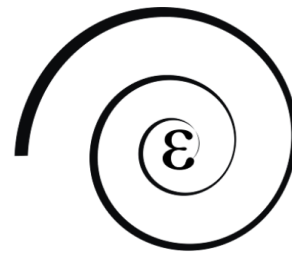
BROWNSVILLE, TEXAS, UNITED STATES, September 25, 2021 /

EINPresswire.com/ -- Permittivity, a local tech startup, placed among the top 5 teams in the [Bureau of Reclamation's](#) "Imperfection Detection: Detect Me If You Can " prize challenge, winning \$60,000 to develop non-destructive evaluation systems for industrial-containment solutions.

Fully realized, Permittivity's innovation will be key in mitigating the negative environmental impact of chemical leaks. Permittivity is one of several tech startups currently housed at [Expanding Frontiers](#) seeking to commercialize NASA technologies in new markets.

"Taking technologies from the space program and bringing them back to Earth has allowed Permittivity to develop a creative and innovative solution; the mentorship provided by Expanding Frontiers has been a key component to our team's success," said Dr. Louis Dartez, Co-Founder of Permittivity.

The Bureau of Reclamation, the largest wholesale water supplier and the second largest producer of hydroelectric power in the United States launched the crowdsourcing competition [Imperfection Detection Challenge](#) to find a non-destructive evaluation method to assess the structural integrity of existing fiber reinforced polymer composite structures as part of its effort to maintain America's water infrastructure. Permittivity competed against 21 teams made up of over 240 innovators based all over the world for a share of \$300,000 in the first phase of this challenge. The challenge is a three-phase challenge, participants are competing for the



PERMITTIVITY™

**IMPERFECTION DETECTION
CHALLENGE WINNER**

Permittivity, a South Texas tech startup, based in Brownsville placed among top 5 teams in a global prize challenge.





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*Helen Ramirez, Brownsville
Deputy City Manager*

opportunity to build prototype devices and to gain access to subject matter experts and commercial partners.

"Permittivity is the first of many local tech startups supported by Expanding Frontiers," stated Dr. Fredrick Jenet, the executive director of Expanding Frontiers. "Permittivity's success is an important milestone as we move forward with our mission of developing a space-tech hub in the City of Brownsville."

"Congratulations to Permittivity for another great success! The work that Dr. Jenet and his team at Expanding Frontiers is doing provides a successful model for

technology transfer in the South Texas region that has the potential to impact so many lives regionally and nationally," said Kris Romig, Commercialization Services Lead at NASA Johnson.

Permittivity, was launched in 2019 by a team including three Brownsville natives and UTRGV alumni: Keeisi Caballero, Louis Dartez, Ph.D., and Brent Cole. Since then, Permittivity has participated and excelled in several business competitions in the past year including: StartUp Texas, Pitch. Launch. Grow., and the Rafael Munguia Business Plan Competition. Including the Imperfect Detection challenge's prize, Permittivity has acquired almost \$85,000 non dilutive seed funding. Permittivity is a client company of Brownsville's Expanding Frontiers, a NewSpace business startup accelerator, where they have access to office space, laboratory space, and mentoring from a staff of experienced entrepreneurs and corporate executives.

"Investing in Brownsville's local tech ventures promotes the economic growth of our city and is an opportunity to attract new business to our region," said Helen Ramirez, Brownsville Deputy City Manager. "I am so excited about Permittivity's successes."

"We are ecstatic to see our inaugural StartUp Texas Pitch summit winner, Permittivity, continue to succeed on a national scale in Brownsville with assistance from ExF," said Josh Mejia, Executive Director for BCIC. "ExF's technology driven companies will provide our community with greater, higher paying job opportunities in the future, and we are proud to support them in that endeavor."

Key sponsors supporting the Imperfect Detection Challenge include Thompson Pipe Group, NASA, the Engineer Research and Development Center, and the Clemson Composites Center.

About Permittivity

Permittivity combines a licensed NASA technology with a team of seasoned experts to provide novel leak-detection and non-destructive evaluation systems for industrial-containment solutions. By helping prevent chemical container leaks, Permittivity's technology mitigates

further negative impacts on the environment potentially saving billions of dollars in clean up costs. Permittivity emerged from the Rocket and Rigs (R&R) initiative, a collaboration led by Expanding Frontiers that engages the Space and Energy industries, promoting the commercialization of technologies that add value to both industries. Permittivity is an incubator company of Expanding Frontiers, based in Brownsville, Texas.

About Expanding Frontiers

Expanding Frontiers (ExF) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization developing an innovation ecosystem with emphasis on space and energy technologies in Brownsville, Texas. ExF supports local entrepreneurs commercializing NASA technologies by providing training, mentorship, and exposure to industry experts. The organization also provides STEM education and skills development opportunities to high school students, college level students and veterans. Expanding Frontiers collaborates with NASA, the National Space Society, and Silicon Valley Space Center and is supported by the Brownsville Community Improvement Corp., Department of Energy and the Economic Development Agency.

To learn more about Expanding Frontiers and its mission, please visit [Expanding Frontiers](#).

About the Bureau of Reclamation

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) is the largest provider of water and the second-largest producer of hydroelectric power in the United States. Reclamation's infrastructure uses all major civil engineering material classes, including steel, concrete, plastics, and composites, to achieve the performance, and service life needed to manage, develop, and protect America's water.

Dr. Fredrick Jenet

Expanding Frontiers

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