

Catalyzer Ventures Launches Fund to Transform the Built Environment

DURHAM, NC, UNITED STATES, June 2, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Catalyzer Ventures today announced the first close and official launch of its inaugural Seed and Series A venture fund, targeting \$100M to support companies accelerating the modernization of the physical economy, with a focus on energy, infrastructure, and industrial systems. The firm has already completed four investments, with additional transactions underway.

Founded by former U.S. Under Secretary of Energy Dr. Kristina M. Johnson and Mr. Heriberto Diarte, founder of SE Ventures, Catalyzer backs breakthrough companies transforming the built environment through innovative energy, infrastructure, and industrial systems.

Catalyzer was founded on a simple conviction: companies often fail not because the technology fails, but because commercialization is difficult. Industrial markets are complex, regulated, and capital-intensive, and founders often need far more than financing to achieve scale. The convergence of AI-driven power demand, grid modernization, industrial decarbonization, resilient infrastructure, and advanced manufacturing is creating one of the largest infrastructure and industrial investment cycles in decades. Catalyzer believes this represents a generational opportunity to deploy technologies capable of improving the efficiency, resilience, productivity, and sustainability of the built environment.

Catalyzer focuses on the critical transition from Potential to Proven — the stage where technologies have demonstrated technical validation, but commercial adoption, operational scale, and institutional readiness determine long-term success. The firm targets companies where technical risk has been substantially reduced, but commercialization and scaling remain the critical barriers to value creation.



Co-Founders and Managing Partners, Catalyzer Ventures: Dr. Kristina M. Johnson and Mr. Heriberto Diarte Visit Portfolio Company Aro Homes Site

Catalyzer concentrates on technologies that improve large-scale physical systems including power generation, industrial operations, infrastructure, manufacturing, and the built environment. This is where successful deployment can improve efficiency, resilience, productivity, and sustainability at global scale.

"We focus on the built environment: sectors where the systems are complex, capital-intensive, and essential to everyday life," said Kristina M. Johnson, Co-Founder and Managing Partner. "When innovative technologies successfully scale across energy, infrastructure, and industrial systems, they can create lasting economic, operational, and environmental value at global scale."

"Our role extends well beyond providing capital," added Heriberto Diarte, Co-Founder and Managing Partner. "We work alongside founders to accelerate commercialization, secure strategic customers, scale operations, and position companies to attract larger pools of institutional capital." The firm leverages extensive relationships across industry, government, utilities, research institutions, and infrastructure operators to help accelerate commercialization for portfolio companies.

The firm's leadership includes former operators, industrial executives, infrastructure owners, scientists, and public-sector leaders with deep experience deploying technology inside complex real-world systems.

Johnson is a scientist, entrepreneur, investor, and former senior government leader. As U.S. Under Secretary of Energy under President Obama, she oversaw an \$11B portfolio and helped launch ARPA-E. She holds 45 U.S. patents, is a member of the National Academy of Engineering and the National Inventors Hall of Fame, and received the National Medal of Technology and Innovation in 2025. As Co-Founder of Cube Hydro Partners, she led the company to a successful sale generating 2.4x DPI and a 22.9% net IRR.

Before co-founding Catalyzer, Diarte spent nearly two decades scaling industrial businesses at CEMEX and Alstom. He founded SE Ventures, Schneider Electric's \$1.2B venture platform, building a 45-company portfolio delivering a 28% IRR as of his departure. He subsequently served as Partner at Quantum Capital Group's Innovation Fund, overseeing approximately \$150M in energy transition and climate investments.

Operating Partner Neal Simmons serves as CEO of Eagle Creek Renewable Energy, the largest independent hydropower platform in the United States. Dr. Simmons is a professor of the practice at Duke University and holds 33 patents and patents pending.

Catalyzer's leadership team brings decades of experience spanning science, industrial operations, infrastructure, government, and venture investing, with more than 70 investments across energy, climate, mobility, infrastructure, and industrial technology.

Catalyzer's initial investments include:

- Infleqtion, a quantum sensing company built on Nobel Prize-winning research with applications across defense, navigation, infrastructure, and advanced sensing systems.
- Eagle Creek Renewable Energy, the largest independent hydropower platform in the United States, providing a strategic platform for deploying and validating next-generation energy technologies.

Additional investments will be announced in the coming weeks.

Catalyzer believes the next generation of enduring technology companies will be built not only in software, but in the systems that power, move, manufacture, and sustain the world.

Heriberto Diarto Martinez

Catalyzer Ventures

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