Pila Energy Recognized as Winner of the Grid Forward Innovation Pitch Competition at GridFWD 2026



SNOWBIRD, UT, UNITED STATES, October 1, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Grid Forward, a member-based non-profit organization promoting grid modernization, announced Pila Energy, a developer of next-generation home batteries for reliable backup power and smart energy management, as the winner of the 2026 Innovation Pitch Competition held during GridFWD 2026 in Snowbird, Utah. The two-day annual event brought together hundreds of utility executives, solution providers and other members of the electric energy and utilities industry, with eight carefully selected startups showcasing innovative technologies and services that help to enhance energy affordability. Each participating company aligned with this year's core theme: "Reprioritizing Affordability for modernizing the grid."

Pila's mission is to modernize power in homes and businesses, creating a safer, healthier, more affordable built environment and a stronger power grid. Founded by former Tesla and SPAN product leader Cole Ashman, Pila is building the distributed control layer for grid-edge power in homes and buildings, using plug-in battery-and-compute nodes coordinated through Pila Mesh OS. Its platform combines backup power, energy management, and appliance-level intelligence in a system customers can deploy without rewiring, including in rentals and multifamily buildings. Local coordination and Pila's Mesh Connectivity keep devices working together to serve households and support the grid. As the winner of the

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>
> *Bryce Yonker*

Innovation Pitch Competition, Pila Energy is eligible for up to a $250,000 equity investment from Accurant International, a technology consulting and capital investment firm working with energy, power and climate-tech companies.

“Pila Energy stood out with a 'plug and play' home battery solution which reduces customer friction, with no install costs, for a more flexible grid,” said Mark Hormann, Managing Partner at Accurant International. “Solutions like Pila’s demonstrate how customer energy solutions deployed cost effectively and at scale can help solve the grid capacity challenges quickly. We’re excited to recognize Pila and support its continued growth.”

“Our vision is to make energy management and power resilience a default part of every home, so families spend less time worrying about outages and power bills,” said Cole Ashman, Founder and CEO. “Pila makes grid-edge batteries frictionless to deploy, including for renters and multifamily buildings, and keeps them coordinated through our local Mesh OS. That creates lasting value for households and dependable capacity for the grid, which can help fund wider access. Winning at GridFWD is especially meaningful because this community understands what it takes to deliver that future. We’re grateful to Grid Forward and the judges for recognizing our vision.”

Eight Startups Competed in the Innovation Pitch Competition
The first round of the competition featured CRWN AI, Grid Rails, GridVar, HillStar, Path-Power, Pila Energy, Treeswift and Variablegrid. Their solutions span today’s grid including transmission infrastructure, distributed energy resources, power systems analysis, procurement, construction, residential energy storage, field operations and EV load management.

Advancing to the final three alongside Pila were Crown AI and VariableGrid.

“The Innovation Pitch Competition puts the spotlight on entrepreneurs developing practical solutions to some of the grid’s most pressing challenges,” said Bryce Yonker, CEO and Executive Director of Grid Forward. “Our focus this year on energy affordability has played out over many dimensions at the GridFWD 2026 event. Pila Energy’s focus on innovative home-based battery format and frictionless deployment is a clear example of the many innovations needed to help make energy more affordable and resilient for all. We’re pleased to recognize Pila and connect its team with the broader Grid Forward community.”

About Grid Forward
Grid Forward is a 501(c)(6) non-profit, member-driven trade association dedicated to promoting and accelerating innovation on the electric system. We deliver community, expertise and resources for leaders who are working to modernize the grid across the western U.S. and Canada. More information can be found at gridforward.org.

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