

**FRAUNHOFER TECHBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS CLEAN ENERGY CENTER AND
NEW ENGLAND CLEAN ENERGY COUNCIL “INNOVATION ACCELERATION
PARTNERSHIP” SELECTED FOR U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY ECOSYSTEM
AWARD**

\$1M over 3 years to build out a cleantech commercialization ecosystem in New England

Cambridge, MA – September 15, 2010 – The Fraunhofer Center for Sustainable Energy Systems (CSE) today announced a \$1 million award from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) to fund a joint clean technology commercialization program. The Fraunhofer CSE TechBridge Program will lead an effort with the New England Clean Energy Council (NECEC), Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC) and the Association of Cleantech Incubators of New England (ACTION). The funding will go towards an expansion of the existing Fraunhofer TechBridge Program and establish the Innovation Acceleration Partnership specifically to streamline commercialization of university-originated technologies.

DOE Secretary Steven Chu announced the Fraunhofer, NECEC, MassCEC and ACTION partnership as one of only five proposals selected from across the country to build and strengthen “innovation ecosystems” that accelerate the movement of cutting-edge energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies from university laboratories into the market. The five programs will receive up to \$5.3 million over a three-year period in this cost-shared project, with an estimated total project value of \$9 million.

The Innovation Acceleration Partnership streamlines the process of enabling university technologies to progress to the commercial stage by combining the capabilities of Fraunhofer R&D labs with NECEC Entrepreneurs-In-Residence (EIR) and the ACTION incubators. In addition to connecting to experienced entrepreneurs and incubator facilities, the program will also support access to funding through venture capital partners and MassCEC. The end result will be to help validate, accelerate and spin out new clean energy ventures and valuable clean energy technology products. Interested parties can find more information on the TechBridge website: cse.fraunhofer.org/Techbridge/acceleration.

“MassCEC fully supports this innovative commercialization partnership,” said MassCEC Executive Director Patrick Cloney. “This is the exact process needed to accelerate the clean energy commercialization process from our university laboratories to the market. We are very pleased with the DOE’s support in making this happen.”

“Despite the diversity of academic, entrepreneurial and R&D resources in New England, many companies emerging from universities and other sources fail to capitalize on these advantages in the early stages of their ventures,” said Eric Graham, Director of the Fraunhofer TechBridge Program. “We will draw advisors and potential business partners from large U.S. corporations, venture capital firms and other strategic partners to help these innovative technologies move from the lab to the marketplace.”

“Being one of only five proposals selected for this national program speaks to our partnership and our ability to accelerate the innovation and growth of new companies in a clear and measurable way,” said Peter Rothstein, President of NECEC. “As both an entrepreneur and a venture capitalist, I appreciate the value of helping new university-hatched ventures avoid typical start-up pitfalls and beat the odds to grow into mature, profitable companies.”

“As New England’s leading network of non-profit, university-affiliated and commercial incubators, ACTION is excited to join other industry leaders in this exciting partnership,” said Brent Larlee, Executive Director of the ACTION network and a member of the leadership team of the Cleantech InnoVenture Center in Lynn, MA. “This collaboration aligns the physical space ACTION provides with the technical expertise of Fraunhofer and the mentor network of NECEC to increase the probability of commercial success for cleantech innovations.”

The five innovation ecosystem proposals selected by DOE are led by universities or nonprofits based in five different states, and convene a total of 80 partners, uniting the strengths of universities, business, finance, government, research institutes, economic development organizations, accelerators and National Laboratories. DOE selected proposals based on the following objectives: nurturing and mentoring entrepreneurs; pursuing intellectual property protection for technological innovations; engaging the surrounding business and venture capital community; or integrating sustainable entrepreneurship and innovation across university schools and departments.

About Fraunhofer Center for Sustainable Energy Systems

Based in Cambridge, MA, the Fraunhofer Center for Sustainable Energy Systems (CSE) is a non-profit applied research and development laboratory dedicated to the commercialization of clean energy technologies. CSE focuses on PV modules, building energy efficiency and smart grid research. Fraunhofer engages in collaborative research and development with private companies, government entities and academic institutions, performing research that broadly benefits firms, industries and society. The Fraunhofer TechBridge Program is specifically devoted to providing R&D and commercialization assistance services to early stage startup companies. TechBridge leverages the capabilities of 15 Institutes that are part of the Fraunhofer Energy Alliance and works with strategic corporate partners and VC firms to fund promising early stage technologies. For additional information please visit www.cse.fraunhofer.org. (Follow on Twitter [@FhTechBridge](https://twitter.com/FhTechBridge) and [@FraunhoferCSE](https://twitter.com/FraunhoferCSE))

About the New England Clean Energy Council

The New England Clean Energy Council was formed in early 2007. The Council's mission is to accelerate New England's clean energy economy to global leadership by building an active community of stakeholders and a world-class cluster of clean energy companies. The Council represents over 175 members, comprising clean energy companies, venture investors, major financial institutions, local universities and colleges, industry associations, area utilities, labor and large commercial end-users. The Council's ranks include more than 50 clean energy CEOs, representatives from most of the region's top 10 law firms and partners from over a dozen of the region's top venture capital firms (with a total of over \$8 billion under management). Working with its stakeholders, the Council develops and executes a wide array of programs in five key focus areas: Innovation, Growth, Education and Training, Adoption, & Policy. For additional information please visit www.cleanenergycouncil.org.

About the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center

Created by the Green Jobs Act of 2008, MassCEC's mission is to foster growth of the Massachusetts clean energy industry through funding to companies, universities and nonprofit organizations; job training programs; and workforce development grants. MassCEC is also home to the Massachusetts Renewable Energy Trust, which supports the installation of renewable energy technologies with funds provided by small renewable energy charges on electric bills. For additional information please visit www.MassCEC.com.

About the Association of Cleantech Incubators of New England (ACTION)

The ACTION Network is a consortium of cleantech incubators throughout New England. For the incubator management organizations, ACTION provides a common set of best practices and materials to support operations. For the entrepreneurs in the incubators, ACTION creates a network of collaborators around industry sub-sectors to accelerate commercialization and growth. For the cleantech industry, ACTION provides a network of physical locations where experienced executives can engage with the cleantech industry and become involved with supporting business growth. For industry associations, universities, public officials and NGOs, ACTION is an important economic development engine, a technology commercialization platform and contributor to the growth of the New England clean energy cluster. For additional information please visit www.innovativeACTION.org.

Contact:
Jay Staunton
Greenough Communications
617-275-6517
jstaunton@greenoughcom.com
