



2021 Future of Energy Challenge: Net-Zero Emissions

Frequently Asked Questions

Contents

Eligibility and Submission.....	2
What is the application process?.....	2
How mature should my solution be in order to apply?	2
Do I need to be an expert in the area, or major in something directly relevant?.....	2
Who is eligible to participate?.....	2
Is there a cost to participate?.....	3
Can I work on an existing idea or an idea that is already being funded?	3
What if I have a team larger than 4 members?.....	3
I don't have experience pitching. Does this matter?.....	3
Do I need to have a prototype ready in order to apply?	3
What if I need to change the answers to my submission?	3
Selection	3
How are solutions selected?	4
When will I hear back about my application?	4
The 2021 Net Impact Accelerator	4
What is the time commitment to participate in the 2021 Net Impact Accelerator?	4
How long is the 2021 Net Impact Accelerator?.....	4
What topics will be covered in the 2021 Net Impact Accelerator curriculum?	4
What can I expect to walk-away with after my participation in the 2021 Net Impact Accelerator?	5
What is the format of the 2021 Net Impact Accelerator and am I expected to attend in-person?.....	5
Other Related Questions	5
If selected, what benefits will I receive from my participation in the 2021 Future of Energy Challenge?.....	5
If selected to participate, do I have to give up any equity or stock in my company or future venture?.....	6



Eligibility and Submission

What is the application process?

Step 1: Download the Challenge Brief on our website. This document will provide you an overview and context for the Challenge question and how best to approach it. It also includes the selections criteria and other key program information.

Step 2: Review the rest of this FAQ document and the following [Applicant Resources](#) to get helpful tools and articles on the Challenge question's topic. If you have additional questions, register to attend one of our weekly Q&A sessions [here](#) or email us at futureofenergy@netimpact.org.

Step 3: submit your solution by clicking the "Apply Now" button on our [website](#). Net Impact is offering early bird feedback opportunities to those who submit before March 15th to help build out your solutions and better meet the judging criteria. You can then incorporate this specialized feedback into your submission and re-submit before the final deadline April 9th, 2021.

How mature should my solution be in order to apply?

Solutions can be in the early stages of development. However, successful submissions should:

- Be able to describe the solution, speak to the specific need being addressed, and explain how the solution is uniquely suited to address this need.
- Demonstrate some experience in the topic, whether professional or academic.
- Be knowledgeable about similar solutions in the marketplace, if any.
- Be committed to bring their solution to market.

Do I need to be an expert in the area, or major in something directly relevant?

No, but you should have at least one person in your team with relevant expertise.

Who is eligible to participate?

Undergraduate, graduate and professionals are welcome to apply.

Teams must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Have between 2 and 4 members.
- Be committed to launching their solution over the next 3-5 years **within the U.S. market.**
- Solutions must address the challenge question. This question is intentionally broad in its interpretation so you can think creatively about applicable solutions.
- Commit 6 hours a week, per team, to participate in the 2021 Net Impact Accelerator from early June to the end of July 2021.



International applicants should consider the following:

1. Must be working on a solution that can be implemented within the United States market (it could also apply to other markets besides the United States).
2. Must be willing to base their work in the accelerator on a US-focused approach since mentorship will be provided by field experts with experience in the United States.

Is there a cost to participate?

No, there is no application or participation fee.

Can I work on an existing idea or an idea that is already being funded?

Yes, as long as the solution is still in an early stage of development. The challenge is calling for innovative solutions. You should be either applying a completely new concept, or working with an existing concept that is being applied in a new or innovative way. The goal of the 2021 Net Impact Accelerator is to support you in building technical and business aspects of your solution to arrive at a Proof of Concept and possibly also prepare you to seek funding--depending on the maturity stage of your solution.

What if I have a team larger than 4 members?

Up to four members from your team can participate in the 2021 Net Impact Accelerator curriculum and the final competition.

I don't have experience pitching. Does this matter?

No. This is part of what will be covered during the 2021 Net Impact Accelerator. There will be time toward the end of the curriculum to prepare you to pitch before the final competition event.

Do I need to have a prototype ready in order to apply?

No. The 2021 Net Impact Accelerator curriculum will help you in making a plan for testing the viability of your solution and/or creating a prototype--depending on the type of solution you are working with.

What if I need to change the answers to my submission?

Simply submit your solution again before the final submissions deadline. Only the most recent submission will be evaluated.

Selection



How are solutions selected?

Successful proposals will be those that best demonstrate ability to reach a Proof of Concept stage at the end of the 2021 Net Impact Accelerator, while exhibiting:

- *Clarity of goals and objectives:* Clearly identify which part of the problem (which players, part of the value chain, etc.) you're addressing. The solution should reduce emissions from energy products, while providing energy for a low or no-emission future
- *Innovation and breakthrough potential:* The proposal should be fundamentally innovative and generate value by applying a unique solution or an existing solution in a new way. The proposal focuses on systemic thought and strategy rather than single-solution gadgets, apps, or products.
- *Feasibility:* The proposal could be reasonably implemented in the next 3-5 years and could create substantial new value, i.e. >\$ 1M of value per year. *Special consideration will be given to teams who demonstrate a commitment to launching their solution

When will I hear back about my application?

For submissions made before the early bird deadlines of February 15th and March 15th, you will receive guided feedback on your submission within 10 business days of the early-bird deadlines.

For submissions made by the final application deadline of April 9th, 2021, selection notifications will be shared between April 30th and May 7th, 2021.

The 2021 Net Impact Accelerator

What is the time commitment to participate in the 2021 Net Impact Accelerator?

Semi-finalists teams are expected to commit to a period of concentrated participation, dedicating approximately 6 hours each week during the two month accelerator, refining their solutions via virtual group training and coaching calls with mentors and experts.

How long is the 2021 Net Impact Accelerator?

8 weeks, from early June to end of July 2021

What topics will be covered in the 2021 Net Impact Accelerator curriculum?

The curriculum topics include:

- Problem/solution and Mission/Vision
- Market and Stakeholders
- Product Development and Finances



- Business Development and Marketing
- Building your Team, Partnerships and Collaborations
- Scale and Growth
- Building and Delivering your Pitch

What can I expect to walk-away with after my participation in the 2021 Net Impact Accelerator?

Through the 2021 Net Impact Accelerator, you can expect to have a Proof of Concept for your solution. This includes:

- An impact assessment strategy
- A theory of change
- A tested MVP (minimum viable product)
- An impact report
- A pitch
- A roadmap for next steps in launching your venture.

*Depending on the level of maturity of your solution and your progress in the 2021 Net Impact Accelerator, you can also get support on the following additional milestones to help you in obtaining funding for your solution:

- Creating a 90-day plan
- Applying for funding
- Creating a marketing funnel and sales pipeline
- A roadmap for next steps in structuring your company or venture

What is the format of the 2021 Net Impact Accelerator and am I expected to attend in-person?

The accelerator will be entirely online. The curriculum will be delivered in a combination of recorded content, group meetings, and one-on-one check-ins.

Other Related Questions

If selected, what benefits will I receive from my participation in the 2021 Future of Energy Challenge?

You will receive mentorship by industry experts and business coaches. You will have access to a network of young entrepreneurs working towards impactful solutions, mentors and field experts. You will receive feedback and support to grow your solution and understand what next steps are needed to launch your venture.

By participating in the final pitch competition, the winning team will receive up to \$10,000 of non-dilutive funding to invest in the next stage of developing their clean energy start-up. See the challenge brief for full details.

Examples of eligible uses of these funds include R&D, software, consulting services and marketing among others.



If selected to participate, do I have to give up any equity or stock in my company or future venture?

No, neither Net Impact nor its affiliates or sponsors retain the right to any part or portion of your venture, idea or company.

If you have other questions not addressed in this document, please email us at futureofenergy@netimpact.org

