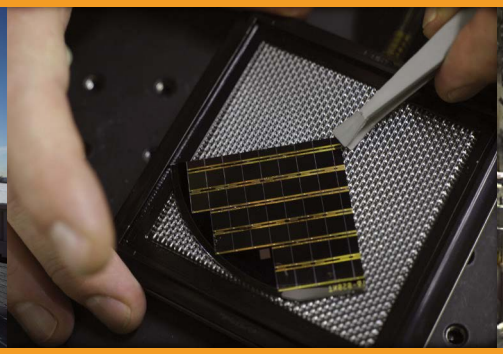
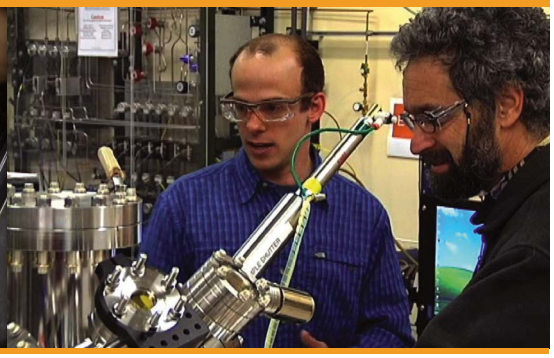
SunShot
U.S. Department of Energy

SunShot Catalyst Prize Competition

SunShot Catalyst is an open innovation program launched in 2014 by the U.S. Department of Energy SunShot Initiative that aims to catalyze the rapid creation and development of products and solutions that address near-term challenges in the U.S. solar energy marketplace. Through a series of prize challenges, SunShot Catalyst makes it faster and easier for American innovators to launch cutting-edge solar companies, while tackling time-sensitive market challenges.

Since its inception, SunShot has helped hundreds of innovators bring mature solar solutions to the marketplace. Catalyst's prize challenge framework introduces the business community to the vast array of tools, capabilities, data assets, and additional resources developed by the Energy Department and its national laboratories. Catalyst's open, fast-paced innovation cycle allows crowd-sourced engagement and frequent partnerships with the nation's growing networks of technology mentors, incubators, and accelerators.

The Catalyst process prioritizes problem and solution fit. Catalyst engages industry to identify bottlenecks and pain points in order to create a wish list of solutions. Catalyst opens that wish list up to a community of entrepreneurs and these entrepreneurs pitch an innovative business solution. These are problems looking for solutions, rather than technologies looking for problem approaches.

Catalyst Process Overview

The Catalyst competition consists of four steps with value awarded to all winning contestants totaling $1,000,000, including about $500,000 in cash prizes.

		Winners	Awards
Step 1	Ideation	Up to 5	$1,000 cash per winner
Step 2	Business Innovation	Up to 20	$25,000 in services per winner
Step 3	Prototype	Up to 20 finalists	Create a prototype and prep for demo
Step 4	Incubation	Up to 5	Up to $100,000 prize per winner

STEP 1: IDEATION

The ideation contest focuses on generating and aggregating pressing U.S. solar market needs and problem statements that can be solved through automation, algorithms, data, and software, especially by leveraging available data assets, tools, capabilities, and resources. Anyone can participate by submitting problem statements online or by voting on problem statements submissions from others. A contestant with a problem statement may win $1,000 in cash prizes when a team, who adopted this problem statement in their business solution, has been selected among the top five winners.

STEP 2: BUSINESS INNOVATION

The business innovation contest is designed to help teams form and explore business solutions to the most compelling problems identified during ideation. Anyone can participate by submitting a business plan package online. Up to 20 winners will be given the opportunity to move forward in the Catalyst process to develop the product proposed in their business plan and to create minimum viable products (MVPs).

STEP 3: PROTOTYPE

The prototype phase is designed to help business innovation contest winners rapidly develop MVPs using a crowd-sourced performance-based software development platform. During the contest, teams will be provided with $25,000 of support from a DOE-provided software developer over a 60-day period. Each team will formulate their requirements and scope of work for their MPV, working closely with the software developer.

STEP 4: INCUBATION

The Incubation contest is designed to help teams with MPVs start their businesses and accelerate offering new products and services in the solar marketplace. To win cash awards, teams will participate in a DOE-hosted Demo Day to showcase their MPVs, market entry execution strategy, and six-month growth plan. During Demo Day, teams will be evaluated by judges and the top five winning teams will receive up to $100,000 in cash prizes.

MORE THAN JUST PRIZES

Each team selected to participate in the prototyping step of the competition is granted exclusive access to resources that can assist them throughout the remainder of the competition. Teams have access to Catalyst mentors and subject matter experts who will work on product development and assist innovators and entrepreneurs in moving their ideas from concept to prototype.

In addition to mentors, each team has VIP access to the National Renewable Energy Laboratory's (NREL's) data science and integration team. This team of experts assists with the integration of multiple data sources, helping each team access the full data resources available. In addition to NREL data, Catalyst teams will have access to other government data sets, like green button and Energy Information Administration data.

Each month, Catalyst teams are invited to exclusive webinars that feature entrepreneurs, industry leaders, and other experts who present case studies, opportunities for adapting best practices from one industry to another, and reflections on lessons learned.

TEAMS WE'VE FUNDED

The first round of the Catalyst prize competition led to the creation of 17 solar energy start-ups focusing on bringing new solar energy solutions to the marketplace.

- UtilityAPI automates utility data acquisition for solar companies.
- Gridmates brings peer-to-peer energy sharing in the first transactive energy platform to eliminate energy poverty.
- American Solar Energy Society's National Solar Tour provides organizers and individuals easily accessible resources for hosting and promoting local tours of solar homes and businesses.
- PVBid accelerates solar industry growth through efficient cost estimation for solar installers and developers.
- PVComplete offers commercial PV designers a comprehensive solar project design software that increases productivity, reduces error, and speeds time to installation.
- PVimpact changes the way homeowners interact with their solar system.
- Savenia Solar Ratings is the CarFax for solar.
- Simplify Solar gets consumers the best solar value using a comprehensive online platform.
- SolarAgs PV App customizes, autonomizes, and optimizes residential PV leads generation and system design.
- Solar Power Report is your independent guide to solar.
- Solar Retina provides real solar intelligence, from real solar arrays.
- Solar Site Design sells qualified solar energy development projects to solar equipment manufacturers, suppliers, engineering firms and finance companies.
- Soluxify connects solar providers and customers on an easy to use social bidding platform and helps them track their progress throughout all the phases of their collaboration.
- Sunmetrix Go gives consumers a chance to test-drive their solar system before spending a single dollar.
- Sunsight brings the value of solar to everyday finances.
- Tumalow gives K-12 schools going solar a way to reduce their electric bills at no cost using battery energy storage.
- Window Street Financial aligns solar customers seeking financing to mission-driven capital from their favorite institutions.

JOIN CATALYST

The first round of SunShot Catalyst will culminate in a Demo Day on May 14, 2015. For more information about the next round of Catalyst, visit *catalyst.energy.gov* or sign-up for the SunShot Initiative newsletter at *energy.gov/sunshot*.

For questions about SunShot Catalyst, contact *sunshot.catalyst@ee.doe.gov.*

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