



# Innovating Energy

The West's Largest Clean Energy Business Plan  
Competition for University Students

100+ Contestants • 40+ Universities • 10+ States

# FLOW

first look west

FLOW works closely with the strong entrepreneurship communities of Southern and Northern California to build the competition throughout the Western Region.

## Founders



**RESNICK INSTITUTE**  
science + energy + sustainability



**USC Viterbi**  
School of Engineering

## Partners



## Sponsoring Partners



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## FLoW's Mission

First Look West (FLoW) is a cleantech business plan competition and mentorship program. FLoW grows the entrepreneurial talent within American universities, and accelerates the launch of cleantech companies with transformative technologies.

Managed by the California Institute of Technology, in partnership with the University of Southern California, UC Berkeley and UCLA, FLoW works with a network of universities, cleantech companies, investors, accelerators and economic development agencies throughout the Western US.

FLoW is the Western Region of the National Clean Energy Business Plan Competition (NCEBPC), a \$2 million initiative launched by the DOE Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) under Startup America, the White House campaign to inspire and promote entrepreneurship. Our territory covers Alaska, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon and Washington as well as American Samoa and Guam. However, FLoW welcomes applications from across the US.

## Our First Two Years

Our high quality teams offered ideas from new battery materials for portable electronic devices to telephone apps for tracking energy use in the home.

- » 140 applicants from 40 universities across 18 states
- » \$450,000+ in prizes and in-kind sponsorship support
- » 100+ industry expert mentors with technical, finance, legal, strategic, marketing expertise
- » 50 judges from **Khosla Ventures, and other VCs, Dow, Solvay, Aramco, Tesla, Intel, Southern California Edison, CalCEF and the DOE's ARPAe**
- » **20+ companies incorporated**

## Go with the FLoW

Get involved as **mentors, judges and sponsors** • See game-changing ideas early • **Share your experience with the brightest young innovators** • Help them shape the future of clean energy • Competition opens in fall. Regional competitions finish in early spring prior to the National Competition in June.



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## The Competition

Contestants use entrepreneurial tools including Lean Launchpad and mentorship support to create business models, incorporate new ventures, and seek potential investors and customers. Regional winners participate in the DOE's National Competition in Washington D.C.

## What FloW Offers

- » First Prize of \$100,000, and cash prizes for second and third place
- » Pitch time with **Vinod Khosla**, Founder of Khosla Ventures
- » The best mentors in clean energy, including **seasoned entrepreneurs**
- » **Legal startup support**
- » Access to sources of finance: **top cleantech VCs, private and corporate venture investors, and utility experts**
- » Exclusive places in the **Cleantech Open (CTO) program**
- » Access to resources and programs provided by the **Los Angeles Cleantech Incubator**

## 2013 Winners

**First Place: \$100,000, Pyro-E:** solid-state heat engine for waste heat harvesting that is ten times more powerful and lower in cost than existing devices.

**Second Place: \$40,000, Chai Energy:** a mobile phone app for monitoring energy use in the home

**Third place, \$20,000, Dragonfly Systems:** device for boosting the energy output of solar panels

**Transformational Idea Award: \$5,000 Rare Earth Separation:** innovative process for separating rare earth elements that should open up new sources of these important raw materials.



“ Entrepreneurship shouldn't be about extrapolating the past, but rather inventing the future. Startups shouldn't let the word of the 'experts' or conventional 'wisdom' constrain them from imagining new possibilities. ”

-Andrew Chung, Partner, Khosla Ventures  
FLoW Judge and Keynote Speaker