

Innovation Cluster Accelerator Update

Puget Sound Regional Council EDD
Meeting

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Washington State
Department of
Commerce



Innovation Cluster
ACCELERATOR

**Why is the state investing in
innovation clusters?**



Challenges WA must meet to compete



Attract talent,
capital & high-
value jobs



Upskill our
workforce



Develop new
high growth, high
value industries



Increase exports



Compete in global
race for clean
energy economy

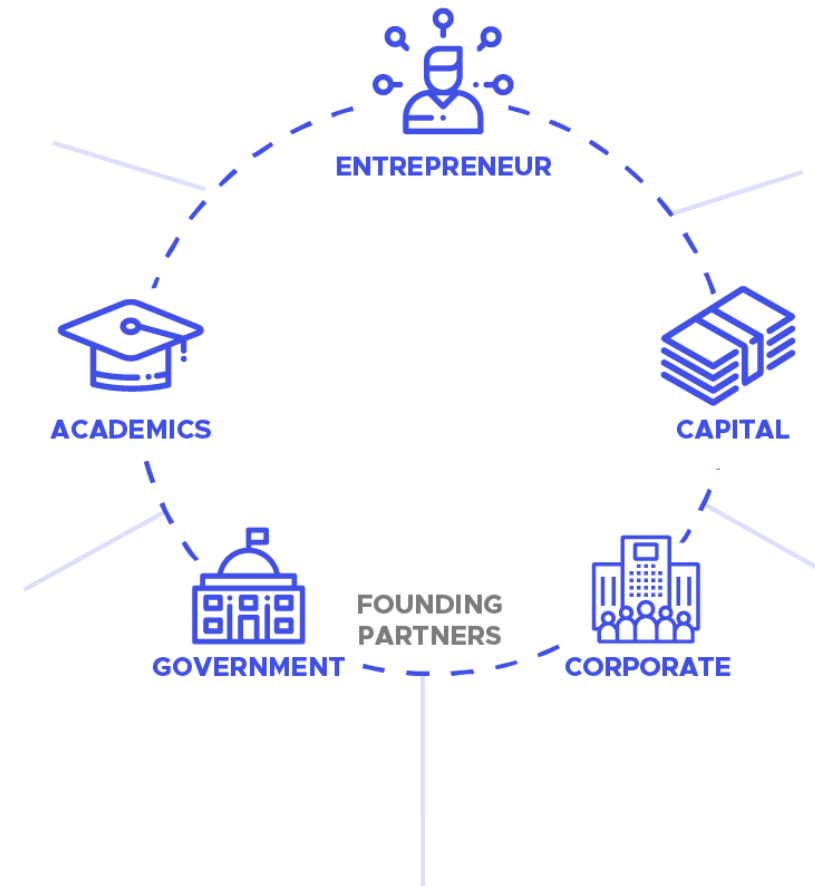
What is an Innovation Cluster?



What is an Innovation Cluster?

A formalized, industry-led, member-based organization working together to:

- Drive innovation
- Overcome barriers
- Access new market opportunities
- Attract talent and capital.



What is the Innovation Cluster Accelerator?



What is the Innovation Cluster Accelerator?

The Innovation Cluster Accelerator is a multi-year cluster development program to strengthen industry ecosystems and accelerate economic development.

Commerce is providing funding and strategic guidance to develop and scale 9 high-impact Innovation Clusters beginning in 2021 and expanding the program over the coming decade.



How We Support Clusters



Funding

Up to \$500,000 to support administrative, operating and market analysis report expenses



Cluster strategy & leadership development

Cluster strategy and leadership development program



Advisory support

Dedicated cluster expert support



Networking

Networking with state and global cluster leaders



Communications & marketing support

Active communications support in selected sectors and international markets

First cohort clusters



Washington VERTical, led by the [Port of Benton](#) –accelerating the transition to clean, renewable and non-emitting energy production sources by 2025 through advanced nuclear power technologies.



BUILT Cluster, led by [The Clean Tech Alliance](#)– leverages Washington's social and intellectual capital to accelerate, scale, & replicate sustainable & innovative planning, design, & construction practices/technologies.



Consortium for Hydrogen And Renewably Generated E-Fuels (CHARGE), led by [WSU's JCDREAM](#) – transforming Washington into a global hub for clean hydrogen and e-fuel production with the goal to eliminate fossil fuels from heavy-duty transport, aviation, shipping and other economic sectors which are difficult to decarbonize through traditional electrification.

First cohort clusters



Washington Autonomous Vehicle Cluster (WAV-C), led by Kitsap Economic Development Alliance - accelerating the advancement of unpiloted and autonomous vehicles, with an initial focus on the growing need for waterborne craft.



Pacific Northwest Aerospace Cluster (PNWAC), led by [Pacific Northwest Aerospace Alliance](#) – Promote the growth and global competitiveness of the PNW aerospace industry, industry transformation of our aerospace manufacturing sector



Sustainable Aviation Technologies and Energies (SATE), led by Aerospace Futures Alliance – advancing aviation’s global fight against climate change by leading the research, development and deployment of sustainable aviation fuels, electrified aircraft and hydrogen-powered aviation

Opportunities for partners to engage

Clusters are actively being built!

- Join as a member
- Explore serving as a board member
- Reach out and share areas of potential overlap/partnership
- Make connections

Partner

- Joint innovation projects
- Projects to solve industry challenges – i.e. workforce, policy, start-up support
- EDA Build Back Better Regional Challenge example – leverage clusters to pursue funding

Building the program long-term

- First cohort funded by EDA SafeStart grant through September 30, 2023
- Commerce recently awarded an EDA Planning Grant to support long term program development + early stage, regional, and rural cluster development
- Legislative ask to get program into statute next session
- **Goal:** Support current cohort long term + add clusters + project funding

Q & A





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Thank you!

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