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CleanTech Alliance Awarded \$2.5 Million from U.S. Small Business Administration to Launch Regional Innovation Cluster

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The Alliance's new Washington Energy – Carbon Advancement Network (WECAN) will accelerate small business growth, job creation, and innovation regionally.

SEATTLE; October 7, 2024 – [CleanTech Alliance](#), the nation's largest clean technology industry association, has been awarded \$2.5 million in funding from the [U.S. Small Business Administration \(SBA\)](#) to stand up a new Regional Innovation Cluster (RIC).

The Washington Energy – Carbon Advancement Network (WECAN) will focus on:

- carbon capture, utilization, and storage,
- carbon materials, and
- carbon purchasers.

CleanTech Alliance received one of 14 new awards nationwide, which are designed to leverage regional strengths and collaboration to develop and commercialize cutting-edge technologies.

“We owe much of our success in securing this award to our [Board of Directors](#)' vision to design programs for industry-specific verticals,” CleanTech Alliance President and CEO Mel Clark said.

This guidance led to the organization's initial Washington State Department of Commerce Innovation Cluster (ICAP) grant to establish the [BUILT Cluster](#) in 2022, and then to securing its next ICAP grant, which CleanTech Alliance contracted for this week, to establish the [Focus on Fusion Cluster](#) as an independent brand.

Clark explained: “This cluster development experience, combined with the gifted leadership of our entrepreneur and accelerator programs from our VP of Economic Development, Rachelle Ames, positioned us to lead a successful application with the SBA for the only award in the Pacific Northwest.”

Through this significant new investment, the CleanTech Alliance is excited to build upon its past successes to expand its industry expertise, reach, and influence into the future.

Clark continued: “Thanks are also much needed for our entire staff team and their efforts on cluster economic development and so many more projects all year long.”

The trade association is pleased to announce its dynamic new grant partner, [Momentum](#), which will support grant management and provide technical support for entrepreneurs as part of this program. Momentum’s CEO, Matt Hart, spoke at the sold-out [CleanTech Innovation Showcase](#) earlier this year.

The Washington Energy – Carbon Advancement Network (WECAN) program is slated to run for five years; the project team will receive approximately \$500,000 per year to cover staffing and program costs. The CleanTech Alliance will be adding two new positions to grow its team.

Interested in learning more? Stay tuned this fall for convening webinars.

You can read the SBA’s press release and learn more about its RIC program [here](#).

About the CleanTech Alliance:

CleanTech Alliance is the largest cleantech trade association in the nation, representing more than 1,000 member organizations spanning 17 U.S. states and four Canadian provinces. The Alliance connects the clean technology ecosystem to drive innovation, economic development, and public policy to accelerate clean technology adoption, benefiting all communities. Learn more at www.CleanTechAlliance.org.

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Media Contact:

Jennifer Audet
Senior Director of Programs and Communications
CleanTech Alliance
jennifer@cleantechalliance.org
(206) 389-7276