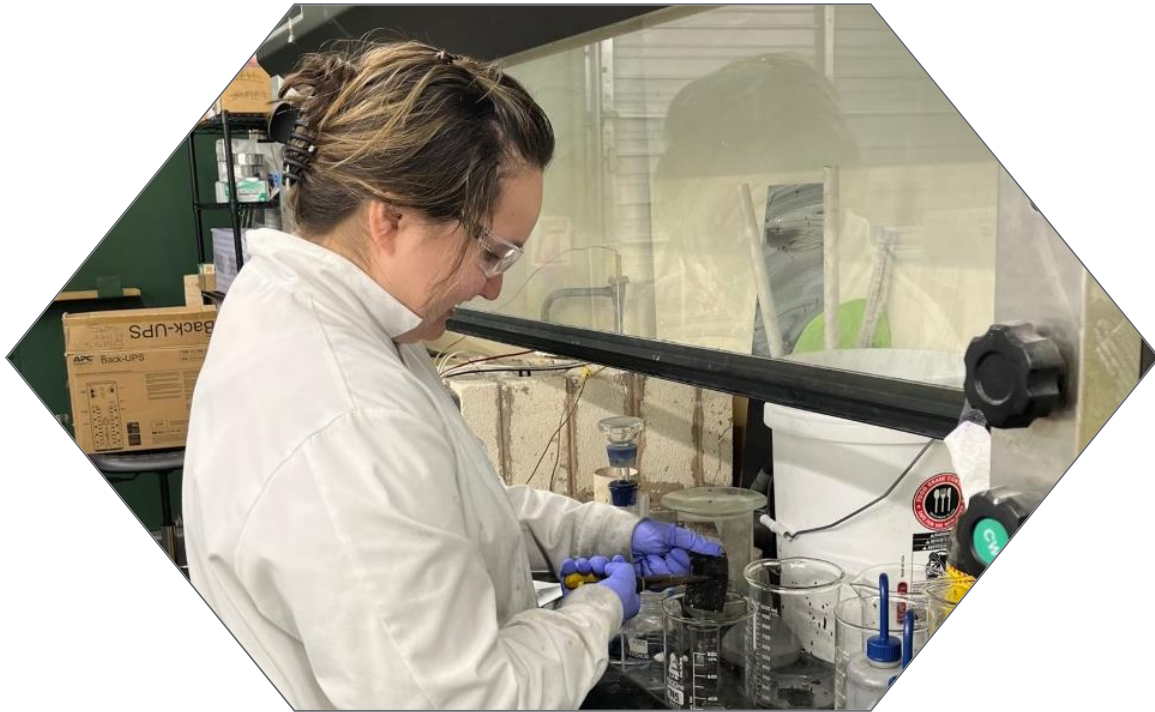




# SPARK CLEANTECH ACCELERATOR

**An early-stage business accelerator that offers a comprehensive set of services to support promising cleantech technology companies**



## **UT Research Park at Cherokee Farm**

2641 Osprey Vista Way, Knoxville, TN 37920

<https://www.tnresearchpark.org/spark/accelerator/>

[sparkcta@tnresearchpark.org](mailto:sparkcta@tnresearchpark.org)





## Meet the Spark Innovation Center Team



**Lilly Tench**

*Director of the Spark  
Cleantech Accelerator*

Lilly Tench believes in using innovation and entrepreneurship to address the world's most pressing problems. Over the past ten years she has supported entrepreneurs working to develop solutions in key global industries from energy and agriculture. Early in her career, Lilly worked alongside No Impact Man to design sustainability education and engagement programs and also helped manufacturers to improve their environmental impact with the NYC Manufacturing Extension Partnership, ITAC. She later joined the Newlab team, helping to start an innovation center for entrepreneurs in an abandoned ship building facility that is now home to over 800 entrepreneurs. Lilly went on to support cleantech researchers at Columbia University Technology Ventures and agtech innovators at the nonprofit AgLaunch. Lilly has a BA in Peace and Social Justice from Berea College, and an MBA and an MS in Agricultural and Natural Resource Economics from the University of Tennessee. To learn more about Lilly, visit her LinkedIn profile by [Clicking Here](#)



**John Bruck**

*Director of the Spark  
Innovation Center*

John Bruck is a professional engineer, entrepreneur (founded and chaired an engineering company for 25 years), and is currently an investor and the Director of the Spark Innovation Center located at the UT Research Park at Cherokee Farm in Knoxville, TN.

Current professional pursuits include founding four local startups, working with early-stage tech businesses to create and grow value for stakeholders by effective visioning, strategic planning, developing a pathway to commercialization, and preparing for outside investment. Specific interests and skills include business planning (start-up and ongoing); market and competitive analysis; business modeling; value proposition development, and financial forecasting and projecting cash flow; strategic planning; development of systems, skills, organizational design, staffing, style, and shared values. To learn more about John, visit his LinkedIn profile by [Clicking Here](#)



**Carol Seamons**

*Director of Engagement,  
Spark Innovation Center*

Carol Seamons is Director of Engagement at the Spark Innovation Center. Previously she was a private banker with FirstBank in both Knoxville and Memphis. She is a former investment banker whose financial work over the last 25 years has included capital markets origination and strategic consulting to non-profit organizations with Consilience Group. Seamons is a newcomer to Knoxville after living in Memphis, TN for 20 years. She currently serves on the boards of the Thomas W. Briggs Foundation, Porter-Leath, Inc., The Wolf River Conservancy (all serving the Memphis MSA), and is member of the Knoxville Chamber Entrepreneurship and Small Business Council and Rotary of Knoxville. To learn more about Carol, visit her LinkedIn profile by [Clicking Here](#)





## *Meet the Spark Innovation Center Team*



**Tom Rogers**

*CEO, UT Research Park at Cherokee Farm*

Tom Rogers assumed the leadership of the UT Research Park at Cherokee Farm in March 2019, where he is focused on accelerating connections and collaborations between private companies and faculty, staff, and students at the University of Tennessee. Tom has spent his entire career in various economic development and entrepreneurial leadership roles in Tennessee. He served most recently as the Director of Industrial Partnerships and Economic Development at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory, and prior to that as the founder and CEO of Technology 2020, a public-private partnership focused on building a regional entrepreneurial support system. Tom has also worked as the Executive Director of the Tennessee Technology Development Corporation (now LaunchTN), as President of the Oak Ridge Chamber of Commerce, and began his career at TVA in the areas of economic development and strategic planning. He also serves as an Adjunct Assistant Professor with UT's Bredesen Center, teaching entrepreneurship to PhD students. Tom has served over the years on many state and regional economic development boards, including the East Tennessee Economic Council and the Knoxville Chamber of Commerce. He currently serves on the regional advisory board for Truist Bank. Tom holds a B.A. with honors from Michigan State University and a Master of Regional Planning degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. To learn more about Tom, visit his LinkedIn profile by [Clicking Here](#)



**Cortney Piper**

*Executive Director, TAEBBC*

Cortney Piper is the Co-Founder and Executive Director of the Tennessee Advanced Energy Business Council and is also the President and Founder of Piper Communications, a communications firm that specializes in energy and technology. Cortney also oversees the Energy Mentor Network, a statewide mentor network that provides coaching and industry expertise to participants of the Spark Innovation Center. To learn more about Cortney, visit her LinkedIn profile by [Clicking Here](#)





***An early-stage business accelerator that offers a comprehensive set of services to support promising cleantech technology companies***

### **Our Mission**

To support early stage cleantech businesses and drive commercialization of their technologies in Tennessee and throughout the Midwest in partnership with Evergreen Climate Innovations (previously Clean Energy Trust) and other partners

### **What We Do**

- **Recruit** the best in-class cleantech technology companies to invest and deploy their technologies in Tennessee.
- **Nurture** the development and deployment of those companies and their products and/or services.
- **Ensure** the inclusion of promising underserved entrepreneurs, including women, people of color, and veterans

### **What We Offer**

- **Stipends** to help defray travel and living costs and to support business and technical milestones
- **Prototyping services** through the University of Tennessee's Center for Materials Processing
- **Mentoring** One-on-one support from our experts in business, market analysis and positioning, and IP/patent strategy, product design, engineering, prototyping, testing, material selection, tooling design, and manufacturing
- **Connections** with customers, investors, strategic partners, suppliers, and universities and national laboratories
- **Training** Workshops and one-on-one support, including individual meetings with DOE SBIR/STTR staff
- **Partnerships** with organizations such as the Tennessee Valley Authority, the University of Tennessee, the City of Knoxville, and members of the Tennessee Advanced Energy Business Council

### **Eligibility**

- Applicants from Tennessee, the Midwest, and beyond
- Companies that demonstrate a positive impact to energy efficiency, generate renewable energy, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase recycling/upcycling and a circular economy
- Companies that show strong market potential and defensible intellectual property, with issued patents or pending patents filed

### **Eligibility Continued**

- Those who demonstrate their technology can support the challenges and needs of Spark partners, such as utilities, local governments, universities, manufacturing companies, commercial building operators, etc.
- Those that create software or hardware technologies including intelligent connected devices, advanced materials processes, or with technology companies at a Technology Readiness Level (TRL) 2-6
- Applicants who are open to Tennessee as a permanent business location.

***NOTE: This program is not open to individuals or academic entities that are not incorporated.***

### **Company Acceptance Criteria**

- Evidence of customer discovery, and market validation and interest.
- Understanding of the competitive landscape and market forces.
- Dedicated founder and qualified advisors.
- Committed funding sources; including founder and evidence of non-dilutive grants.
- Dedication to developing and growing their business in Tennessee directly or through supply chain partners in the state.

### **2023 Spark Accelerator Schedule**

- |                     |                       |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| • January 24, 2023  | Applications Open     |
| • May 12, 2023      | Applications Close    |
| • June 15, 2023     | Participants Notified |
| • July 1, 2023      | Acceptance Deadline   |
| • August 21, 2023   | Accelerator Begins    |
| • November 15, 2023 | Demo Day              |

### **Contact Information/Links**

Email: [sparkcta@tnresearchpark.org](mailto:sparkcta@tnresearchpark.org)

Webpage: <https://www.tnresearchpark.org/spark/>

Application: <https://www.f6s.com/spark-cleantech-accelerator-cohort-2/apply>





# SPARK CLEANTECH ACCELERATOR

## CURRICULUM

### PROGRAMMING

#### Week 1:

#### **Orientation & Introductions**

Welcome to Knoxville  
Accelerator Onboarding

#### Week 2:

#### **Business Model Canvas, Market Fit & Validation**

Total Market Size  
Total Accessible Market  
Ideal Customer Profile  
Customer Interview Findings

#### Week 3:

#### **Value Proposition**

Value Proposition Canvas

#### Week 4:

#### **Business Modeling**

Opportunity Assessment  
Mentor Introductions  
Business Model Concepts  
Technology Description  
Customer Discovery

#### Week 5:

#### **Intellectual Property**

Patenting  
Trademarking  
Trade Secrets & Copywriting  
Attorney Office Hours: Goodwin Procter

### ENERGY MENTOR NETWORK PANELS

#### Week 1: INTRO PANEL

#### Week 2: INTAKE PANEL

#### Week 5: BUSINESS MODEL PANEL





# SPARK CLEANTECH ACCELERATOR

## CURRICULUM

### PROGRAMMING

#### Week 6:

**Partners, Supply Chain & Engagement**

#### Week 7:

**Organizational Design**

Team Building

Talent Recruitment

Hiring/Firing

Management & Leadership

Building and Working with your Boards

Creating Company Culture

#### Week 8:

**Financial & Valuation Modeling**

#### Week 9:

**Funding, Non-D: Outside Investment**

Finance Panel

Funding Strategy

Term Sheets

#### Week 10:

**Investor Week**

Queen City Angels Bootcamp

Pitch Practice & Investor Feedback

#### Week 11:

**Communications & Branding**

#### Week 12:

**Pitch Prep**

Best Approach to Pitching

Audience Engagement

Due Diligence Scoring

#### Week 13:

**Final Presentations & Demo Day**

### ENERGY MENTOR NETWORK PANELS

Week 9: FINANCE PANEL

Week 12: DRY RUN PANEL

Week 13: FINAL PANEL





# SPARK CLEANTECH ACCELERATOR

## SPEAKERS & INSTRUCTORS



**Tom Rogers**  
President & CEO, UT Research Park



**Gary Rawlings**  
Technology Consultant  
ORNL Innovation Crossroads Program



**John Bruck**  
Director, Spark Innovation Center



**Carol Seamons**  
Director of Engagement,  
Spark Innovation Center



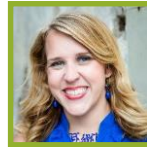
**Randy Boyd**  
President, University of Tennessee



**Dr. Angelique Adams**  
Executive Coach to Scientists and Engineers



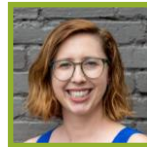
**Lilly Tench**  
Director, Spark Cleantech Accelerator



**Courtney Jones**  
Chief Revenue Officer, Boulo Solutions



**Cortney Piper**  
President, Piper Communications,  
Co-Founder & Vice President,  
TN Advanced Energy Business Council



**Abby Hassler**  
Content Creation Manager  
Piper Communications



**Will Wilson**  
Partner at Goodwin Procter



**Marty Brown, CPA**  
President & CEO, PYA



**Brandon Bruce**  
CEO & Co-Founder at Uncat



**Chris Trump**  
Shareholder & Attorney  
Egerton, McAfee, Armistead & Davis





# SPARK CLEANTECH ACCELERATOR

## SPEAKERS & INSTRUCTORS

Angelique Adams	Engineer & Scientist Consultant
Chris McAdoo	Knoxville Entrepreneur Center
Booth Andrews	The Booth Andrews Company
Maha Krishnamurthy	UT Research Foundation
Courtney Jones	Boulo Solutions
Brandon Bruce	Entrepreneur, Podcaster, Board Member
Mayor Indya Kincannon	City of Knoxville
Christopher Trump	Egerton McAfee
Don DeRosa	Eonix
Will Wilson	Goodwin Procter
Charles Layne	LaunchTN
Martha Weeks	Martha Weeks Communications Coaching
Daniel Miller	Oak Ridge National Laboratory
Jesse Smith	Oak Ridge National Laboratory
Allie Eskew	Piper Communications
Hannah Whitson	Piper Communications
Abby Hassler	Piper Communications
Marty Brown	PYA
Mike Halloran	Queen City Angels, Xavier University
Scott Mindrum	Queen City Angels
Tony Shipley	Queen City Angels
Scott Jacobs	Queen City Angels
Vance VanDrake	Queen City Angels
Dave Carroll	Red Stag







# SPARK CLEANTECH ACCELERATOR

## SPEAKERS & INSTRUCTORS

Rob Rickerson	Red Stag
Anna Douglas	SkyNano
John Bruck	Spark Innovation Center
Carol Seamons	Spark Innovation Center
Sally Kay	Strat Kay
Gary Rawlings	TAEBC Energy Mentor Network
Ira Weiss	TAEBC Energy Mentor Network
Nastassja Hagan	TAEBC Energy Mentor Network
John Hopkins	TAEBC Energy Mentor Network
Tony Lettich	TAEBC Energy Mentor Network
Ryan Stanton	Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA)
Gary Brinkworth	Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA)
Andrew Campbell	Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA)
Chad Duty	UTK Center for Materials Processing
Tom Rogers	UT Research Park
Angelee Day	UT Research Park
Rickey McCallum	UT Research Park





# SPARK CLEANTECH ACCELERATOR

## FUNDING SUPPORT



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF  
**ENERGY**



Launch  
Tennessee



## PROGRAMMING SUPPORT



Tennessee  
Advanced Energy  
Business Council



evergreen  
climate innovations



MHUB



GOODWIN



PIPER  
COMMUNICATIONS





## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is the Spark Innovation Center?**

The Spark Innovation Center was founded in 2020 as the entrepreneurial initiative of the UT Research Park in Knoxville, TN. It is currently an incubator program: 8 energy – focused startups lease laboratory and office space in the Park’s world-class Institute for Advanced Materials and Manufacturing, and the Park is currently developing additional space to support even more startup companies. The Spark Cleantech Accelerator is the newest initiative of Spark in partnership with the Clean Energy Trust, DOE, Tennessee Valley Authority, Launch Tennessee, the City of Knoxville, and many others.

### **Where is your facility located?**

The Spark Innovation Center is located in the Institute of Advanced Materials and Manufacturing (IAMM) at the University of Tennessee Research Park, 2641 Osprey Vista Way in Knoxville Tennessee.

### **Will the accelerator program be held in-person or virtually?**

The accelerator is an in-person program.

### **Can you give some examples of eligible technologies?**

Eligible technologies will primarily focus on solutions, preferably hardware, that address climate mitigation, resilience and natural resource conservation including but not limited to bioenergy, buildings, energy efficiency, vehicles, fuel cell, advanced manufacturing technologies, grid modernization technologies, carbon capture, and related fossil energy innovations.

### **How do I apply for the Accelerator?**

The best way to apply to the Spark Cleantech Accelerator is to go to the F6S application located at this link: <https://www.f6s.com/spark-cleantech-accelerator-cohort-2/apply>

### **What investments does Spark make in its accelerator companies?**

A stipend will be provided to Spark Cleantech Accelerator companies to help defray the costs of travel, living, and other company expenses. The stipend amount will be \$15,000 and can be used at the participant's discretion. Funding will be provided in two tranches, half on your arrival in Knoxville and half at the midpoint of the accelerator based on satisfactory participation in the program.

### **Do you fund companies that are competitive with each other?**

In the very unlikely event that we receive applications from two competitive companies, we will make every reasonable effort to avoid the distraction of selecting both.

### **Where will we live while we're in Knoxville?**

We will do our best to assist you in finding housing options that meet your needs. Stipends can be used to offset housing costs. We are currently working with the [Knoxville Chamber of Commerce](#) and [Visit Knoxville](#) to identify housing that will be available for our accelerator participants to rent while in Knoxville, or preferably occupy for a longer term.



**What is the typical day/week like for a company during the accelerator?**

A typical week will include two (or more) days of instruction from our staff of technology and business mentors and partners. The remainder of the week will be used for development of your business plans on the topic of that week's instruction, pitch practices, one-on-one mentoring, or other area(s) that are a priority for you.

**Do I have to work on my company full-time?**

We prefer that you work on your company full time during the accelerator program, but understand that there may be other unavoidable time commitments. In those instances, we'll work with you on an alternate schedule.

**What is expected of me/our team during the Accelerator Program?**

We expect you and your team to be productively engaged in every aspect of the program, and to support your company's development, your accelerator cohorts where possible and the program in general.

**What happens at the end of the accelerator program?**

The accelerator program will end with a "demonstration day" where participants will present their business, in a pitch format, to our network of institutional and corporate partners and investors.

**Am I expected to stay in Knoxville after the program ends?**

One of our selection criteria will be the applicant's plans to bring their business, or a portion of their business (e.g., partners, supply chain companies, etc.) to Knoxville or the Tennessee region. We would love to have companies locate or relocate in this area.

**How many companies will be selected to participate?**

Up to six (6).

**What will happen to my confidential information when I apply?**

Please do not include confidential or trade secret information in your application, even if it is marked as such.

**What is the role of corporate partners in the program?**

We will make introductions to corporate partners of the Spark Cleantech Accelerator for technical and business mentorship both in cohort and individual instruction, pilot project development, and follow-on working relationships where appropriate.

**Where do the mentors come from?**

The Spark Innovation Center currently includes three senior mentors who have extensive planning, engineering, startup formation, business development, financial, successful exit, investment and incubator/accelerator experience: Tom Rogers, John Bruck, Lilly Tench, and Carol Seamons

Additionally, the Tennessee Advanced Energy Business Council will be providing mentors through its mentor network, and the Midwest Regional Innovation Partnership's (of which Spark is a member) programming will be available through its members the Clean Energy Trust, mHub and Centrepolis.

