

Call for Innovation: Women in Climate Tech

2026 Applicant Guide

NORTHX CLIMATE TECH

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NorthX 2026 Call for Innovation: Women in Climate Tech

About NorthX

NorthX backs the builders of climate hard tech, pinpointing the critical moment when potential is immense, but capital is scarce – where our strategic investments turn local strengths into global climate solutions.

Rooted in British Columbia (BC) but global in vision, we fund climate hard tech that transforms industries and builds lasting prosperity. We unite visionaries, investors, and partners to scale technologies that drive deep decarbonization and economic growth for Canada. NorthX is where the future gets built.

NorthX impact to date

Since its inception in 2021, NorthX Climate Tech (formerly the BC Centre for Innovation and Clean Energy) has become the largest early-stage funder of technology that focuses on decarbonizing a majority of BC's largest emitting sectors. In four short years, NorthX has generated tangible economic impact in BC and across Canada— [funding 74 projects with more than \\$45 million in capital](#) while catalyzing over \$480 million in follow-on investment.

These investments are fueling the creation of over 880 jobs, more than 75 patents and trade secrets, and the advancement of technologies with the potential to abate 46 megatonnes of emissions per year at scale in 2035. Collectively, they will strengthen competitiveness for industries in BC and support the growth and trade diversification of our core sectors.

NorthX is also ensuring its approach to backing the builders of climate tech brings all our talent to the table. Over 65% of our portfolio companies are led and managed by underrepresented groups, while 21% include Indigenous participation at the core of their company leadership and/or business model. To accelerate commercialization, over 30% of our funding has supported university spin-outs, bridging the gap from research to market.

To date, 37% of NorthX funding (\$17M) has supported women-led companies—more than 5x higher than the venture capital industry, where only 7% of global venture-backed climate funding goes to women-led companies. NorthX's women-led portfolio companies have gone on to raise over \$69M in follow-on funding, demonstrating strong market validation.



2025 Women in Climate Tech program summary

In April 2025, NorthX completed its first-of-kind Call for Innovation: Women in Climate Tech, committing [\\$2.46 million across five women-led climate ventures](#). These ventures are tackling some of the toughest challenges in global decarbonization – while helping build a stronger climate tech ecosystem.

The Women in Climate Tech initiative is grounded in a simple idea: when all innovators have a fair shot, Canada is stronger for it. By investing in practical climate solutions, and the diverse talent behind them, NorthX is driving economic growth, strengthening our innovation economy, and helping ensure Canada builds competitiveness in a changing world.

2026 Women in Climate Tech program: the \$200 billion opportunity

Insights from NorthX's ongoing research underscores the importance of advancing gender equity in climate tech. According to the MaRS Discovery District, increasing the number of women-owned SMEs by just 10% could contribute an estimated \$198 billion to Canada's GDP. On average, climate tech startups with at least one woman founder decrease the time required to commercialize technology by 13%, reduce time to exit by 1–7 years, and generate \$0.47 more per dollar invested.

The NorthX Call for Innovation: Women in Climate Tech is designed to unlock high-potential economic climate solutions led by women that are essential to achieving deep decarbonization yet remain underrepresented in investment pipelines. While access to capital is a well-documented challenge, many women-led ventures encounter additional barriers across the investment and commercialization cycle, including limited access to customers, technical validation, strategic partnerships, and market-facing expertise.

These gaps often prevent promising technologies from progressing from prototype to market adoption, despite strong technical and operational performance. By addressing these barriers directly, the program focuses on accelerating commercialization readiness and reducing risk for both founders and investors. The following program elements are intentionally structured to provide targeted support at critical points along this path, helping founders convert technical innovation into investable, market-ready solutions.



Catalytic beyond funding

This call is designed not only to deploy capital, but to reduce friction across the founder journey through a structured commercialization ecosystem. In addition to potential upfront investment, the program offers targeted support to strengthen investor readiness, business models, and climate impact validation, including access to life cycle assessments (LCA).

Founders also benefit from outcome-driven mentorship and direct connections to customers and investors, helping to de-risk early commercialization, shorten time to revenue, and unlock pathways to bankable offtake agreements. Together, these supports address barriers that disproportionately affect women-led climate ventures and persist beyond access to capital alone.

By supporting founders beyond funding, NorthX creates opportunities to refine value propositions, build strategic relationships, and gain visibility with partners and investors positioned to accelerate growth.

Additional support for innovators

As part of the 2026 Women in Climate Tech Call for Innovation, companies advancing to Stage 2 will have the opportunity to participate in select NorthX-partnered events and programs.

[Web Summit Vancouver](#) offers an unprecedented opportunity to engage with a global innovation community—right here in BC. With an estimated **30,000+ delegates**, Web Summit and its associated fringe events, including programming in the lead-up to the main conference, create high-value opportunities for founders to connect, gain visibility, and be seen by investors, partners, and global decision-makers.

NorthX is pleased to once again be at the forefront of showcasing our climate tech sector, companies and founders to the world at Web Summit through official R2WSV events, made possible by Innovate BC, and the Climate Innovation Zone on the Web Summit.

The Road to Web Summit (R2WSV)

NorthX has partnered with the [Vancouver Entrepreneurs Forum](#) and [Innovation UBC](#) to deliver **R2WSV: Impact Pitch Showcase**. This two-part program is designed to support high-potential women founders to pitch and sell at one of the world's most influential global tech events, Web Summit Vancouver.

ROAD TO WEB SUMMIT (R2WSV) PROGRAM

Impact Pitch Showcase

Tuesday, April 21, 2026
Location: UBC Robson Square Theatre
5:00 - 8:00 pm

Program Timeline
The program runs from March 30 to April 21, culminating in a live Showcase Pitch Finale.

- Applications Open: February 2
- In-Person Training: March 30
- Showcase Pitch Finale: April 21

This program is for founders who are serious about sharpening their pitch, strengthening investor readiness, connecting with customers, and increasing their visibility ahead of Web Summit.

What selected founders will receive:

- In-person pitch and storytelling training, finance bootcamp, and sales training
- Live feedback from investors and ecosystem leaders
- A curated showcase pitch opportunity in front of a live audience
- Meaningful connections to investors, mentors, advisors, and partners

And more to help them prepare to maximize impact at Web Summit.

Applications are now open! Apply [here](#) by March 2, 2026.

Note key dates: March 30 & April 21. Founders are asked to indicate their interest in this program on the EOI form. Stage 2 founders will also have an opportunity to be referred by NorthX team.

The Climate Innovation Zone, May 12-14, 2026

NorthX is thrilled to once again be leading the [Climate Innovation Zone](#) at Web Summit. The Zone will serve as a global gateway into BC and Canada's climate innovation ecosystem, designed to showcase breakthrough technologies, attract international investors, and strengthen global partnerships. It's also high impact hub for founders to demonstrate on stage, why BC is one of the world's most compelling regions to start and scale climate tech.



It brings together founders, investors, corporates, and policymakers in a curated environment built for meaningful discussion, collaboration, and discovery.

As part of this platform, NorthX will host a dedicated Women in Climate Tech POWER PITCH session, giving women founders the opportunity to spotlight their innovations to a curated audience of global investors and industry leaders. This visibility helps accelerate commercialization, deepen partnerships, and amplify the leadership of women shaping the future of climate technology.

Curated support & connections

NorthX goes beyond funding to actively create opportunities that help founders move faster and farther. We curate meaningful networking moments that connect founders with allies, supporters, investors, and ecosystem partners who can open doors and accelerate progress. Alongside these connections, we will offer targeted support sessions for companies selected for Stage 2 advancement, such as a PR and media-readiness workshop, designed to help founders sharpen their story, build credibility, and win media attention in a crowded market. Every opportunity is thoughtfully selected to support founders at the moments it matters most.

Life cycle assessments (LCA) validation in partnership with UBC

As startups face growing expectations from investors and customers to substantiate their climate and sustainability claims, life cycle assessments (LCAs) have become an important tool for demonstrating credible environmental performance. Through a partnership with UBC, this program offers founders access to affordable, high-quality LCA support while providing students with hands-on experience applying sustainability assessment methods in a real-world context.

Participating companies receive a preliminary LCA report tailored to their product or service, including a high-level comparison against relevant conventional or incumbent alternatives where appropriate. This helps founders contextualize their environmental performance and generate credible, defensible data to support investor discussions and customer conversations. The assessment highlights key environmental impact drivers and identifies practical opportunities to improve performance and strengthen climate-related claims.

Through a structured partnership with UBC, the program delivers investor-credible LCA analysis to startups with minimal founder time required, while students support the work as part of their applied training—creating a meaningful collaboration between startups and an academic institution.



Recipients approved for funding through the program will also gain access to:

Advisory Council networking event

Following selection for funding, companies will be invited to an exclusive networking event with the NorthX Women in Climate Tech Advisory Council, connecting founders directly with experienced leaders and potential mentors to support commercialization strategy, market entry, and growth acceleration. Founders from the 2025 Women in Climate Tech cohort will also be in attendance, creating opportunities for peer learning and collaboration.

CONVERGE feature

Companies selected through this call will be prominently featured at NorthX's annual CONVERGE conference, gaining visibility on a national stage dedicated to climate innovation. Portfolio companies may be showcased through mainstage spotlights, curated founder showcases, and thematic technology sessions that highlight their breakthroughs and commercialization progress. In addition, founders will have opportunities to engage directly with investors, customers, industry partners, and ecosystem leaders through tailored networking forums and closed-door investor roundtables. This platform is designed to amplify companies' market presence and accelerate pathways to strategic partnerships.

NorthX's investor network

Companies within the NorthX portfolio will have access to an investor network through curated matchmaking, reverse pitch sessions, and targeted introductions aligned with each company's commercialization stage. By connecting founders with investors who are specifically equipped to support capital intensive climate technologies, NorthX helps accelerate the path from pilot to market ready deployment. This integrated approach ensures that portfolio companies gain both the financial backing and strategic partnerships necessary to scale their solutions effectively.

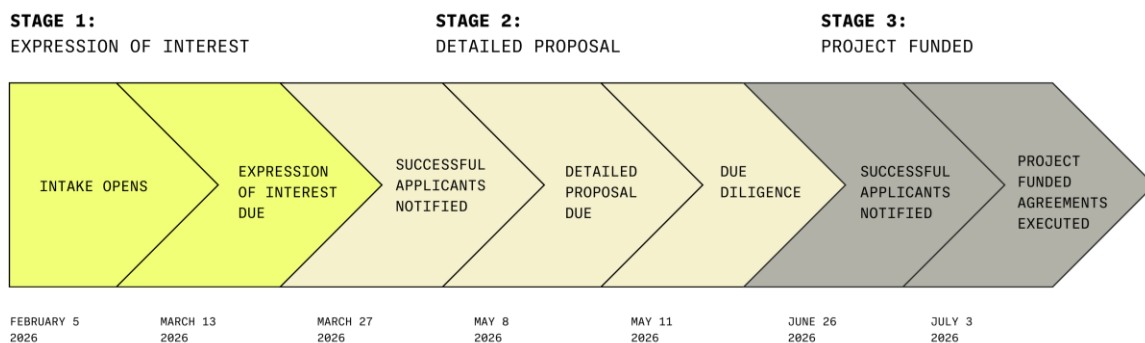
Partner with NorthX

NorthX invites parties interested partners to connect and explore participation in this call. By investing, partners can position themselves at the forefront of a high-growth climate innovation market while advancing equity within the sector. Supporting women-led companies in climate hard tech is not only inclusion imperative, but also a strategic investment in a largely untapped pipeline of breakthrough solutions with the potential to deliver significant economic returns and measurable environmental impact.

2026 Women in Climate Tech Call for Innovation Details

General information

Timeline



Application and evaluation:

- Stage 1: Applications include a 5-minute video and a short, written expression of interest.
- Stage 2: Successful applicants will advance to Stage 2, submitting a detailed proposal for competitive evaluation through NorthX's existing systems and processes.
- Stage 3: Projects undergo final due diligence. Those approved will sign project funding agreements and receive non-dilutive, milestone-based reimbursement funding from NorthX.

Funding amount: NorthX's goal is to invest up to \$3 million CAD in total across multiple projects. While proponents may request up to \$3 million CAD for a single project, NorthX aims to balance investments across a range of solutions and will prioritize proposals that contribute to this objective.



Eligibility

NorthX will fund Canadian companies advancing greenhouse gas reduction and removal innovations. While projects may be conducted outside Canada, preference will be given to those demonstrating the greatest impact in BC and contributing across Canada.

Considerations

To comply with NorthX requirements, technologies being advanced within the project will fall between [Technology Readiness Level \(TRL\) 4-9](#). Proposals where the entire project scope consists solely of studies or reports (including feasibility or FEED studies) will not be considered. Projects may, however, include studies or reports as part of a broader project scope. Consortium projects must be led by a single Canadian-based applicant, preferably the technology developer. Preference will be given to projects that demonstrate strong Indigenous participation and contribute to enhancing economic reconciliation in Canada.

Funding details

How NorthX funds are used

Funding is provided on a project level basis. NorthX provides reimbursements to costs incurred during the project. Each project will have various milestones in which committed capital will be disbursed. Milestones are negotiated between NorthX and the proponent in the final stage of the application process.

Only project costs are eligible for funding. Please ensure you segment project costs from general corporate and company-related costs. Applicants should be prepared to provide accurate estimates of project costs to NorthX upon request.

Timeline restrictions on NorthX funds

Projects must start within 6 months of the signing of a project funding agreement starting July 2026 for this application timeline. Projects can be no longer than 2-years in total length.

Capital at risk with NorthX funds

It is expected that applicants either have secured or can secure at least 50% of funding for the project through internal funding or external funding sources. Cash and in-kind funding are considered towards capital at risk based on the level of commitment and amount from funders and/or partners including future commitments.

General project evaluation criteria

Projects activities may include, but are not limited to, demonstrations and pilot projects, innovative implementation solutions, novel linkage of system components, mitigation or monitoring technologies and business model innovations. Projects will be evaluated by NorthX staff and subject matter experts. The following lists the major decision criteria which will be applied to project proposals:

Strategic alignment

The project advances the commercialization of a technology or business model innovation with potential to significantly reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in Canada, and achieve substantial global GHG reductions at scale. Projects must demonstrate measurable direct replacement or removal of GHG emissions from high carbon-intensity energy and/or feedstock. The innovation must be validated, developed, and commercialized by a Canadian-based company or through a project completed in Canada, with a measurable BC-based impact.

Mandate match

To be eligible, projects must be led by a Canadian-incorporated company and demonstrate a clear impact in Canada.

Team strength

Applicants present a strong team with the required skills for growth aspiration. The team possesses a depth of knowledge on what is required to successfully scale their solution.

Technology viability

The plan for technology development is realistic. Barriers have been identified and plans to overcome barriers have clear and measurable targets. Regulatory, permitting, and IP ownership issues are addressed to enable project implementation.

Corporate and project readiness

A financial plan is in place to partially fund and scale the opportunity and implementation of the project. Agreements with partners and funders should be finalized or nearing completion.



Impact readiness

Strong understanding of impact measurements required to show the climate achievements and potential of the technology and/or innovation and project outcomes. Impact reports and other documents should be available upon request.

Application process

Stages of application

A staged application process will be used to funnel project proposals from initial inquiry to final evaluation, as outlined below.

Stage 1 – Expression of Interest (“EOI”)

The first stage of proposal includes an expression of interest that requires a short video and provision of basic details about the proposed project, the proponent advancing the project and the alignment with NorthX objectives and criteria.

Expressions of interest will be submitted via a web-based application form that will be available February 5th. At this stage NorthX expects submissions to involve non-confidential disclosures submitted without a requirement for any non-disclosure agreement.

We encourage participants to refer to the project evaluation criteria as guidance in preparing for submission. To help you and your team prepare for the online submission, a list of information to submit in the EOI is provided for your reference at the end of this document.

Questions to address in your video submission

Companies are invited to submit a 5-minute video that provides an overview of the project, and clearly articulates the following:

1. Who are you and why this problem?
Introduce yourself and your company and tell us about your journey as a founder. Why did you decide to focus on this climate challenge?

2. What are you building?
 - What is your technology or innovation, what specific market gap or problem does it solve, and what clearly differentiates your approach from existing alternatives?
3. What is the current status of your company and technology?
 - Please describe the current stage of your company and the commercial readiness of your technology. Highlight key traction such as prototypes, customers, partners, funding secured, and your anticipated path to market. What differentiates your product economically and competitively from existing options?
4. What project are you proposing to advance this technology?
 - What specific project are you seeking support for through NorthX? Where and how will your technology be tested or implemented, and what key technical, regulatory, or partnership milestones does it address?
5. What would NorthX support unlock?
 - What are you requesting from NorthX, and what outcomes will this project unlock over the next 12-18 months? What measurable climate, economic, or social impacts do you expect, and how does the project's commercialization model contribute to inclusive growth — including opportunities for women in climate tech — while aligning with NorthX's mandate?

Videos will be uploaded via the web-based application form.

Stage 1 evaluation will consist of a preliminary review of proposal details to ensure eligibility against program requirements. Eligible projects will undergo a competitive review of the proposed projects against the NorthX evaluation criteria as well as in comparison to all other project proposals submitted. In some cases, we may contact the applicants to request additional information related to the project proposal. A limited number of project proposals will be invited to execute a confidentiality agreement and proceed to Stage 2.

Stage 2 – Detailed proposal submission and review

This stage includes preparation and submission of a detailed proposal, detailed due diligence, third-party assessments conducted by experts in their relative fields and multiple engagements with the NorthX project review team.



NorthX will provide Stage 2 applicants with a document template for the detailed proposal submission. Applicants will be required to enter into a confidentiality agreement with NorthX before confidential or detailed information on the project is submitted.

Upon review of the written submission, NorthX may elect to conduct a review meeting with project leads and request further documentation to support the project proposal.

Project proposals will be reviewed against NorthX evaluation criteria and will be ranked competitively with other Stage 2 project proposals. NorthX and their third-party reviewers will assess proposals independently and in relation to each other to identify projects most aligned with the strategic objectives of this call for innovation. Multiple projects may be funded, the amounts determined by the requirements of each project.

Successful project proposals will be subject to a final stage of due diligence review after which they may proceed to Stage 3.

Stage 3 – Funding decision:

Successful project proponents will work with NorthX to develop and agree on a project funding agreement (“PFA”) which will identify obligations of all parties and will become a binding agreement governing the relationship between NorthX and the project proponent(s). The PFA will also include key milestones for fund release and reporting requirements.

Information for the expression of interest

General information and company overview

Company name, incorporation, address, website
 Project title, short summary, and location
 Company size
 Primary contact and details

Project specific data

Project description, status, timeline, and location
 Project partners
 Technology type
 Technology readiness level (current and expected at the end of the project)
 IP ownership status
 Regulatory compliance status of project
 Commercial readiness level of project
 Diversity and inclusion of project

Effect on GHG emissions

How does the project replace / remove GHG emissions?
 What is the project level GHG emissions impact and over what period?
 What is the scaled level GHG emission impact and over what period?
 How does this innovation compare to the technology baseline on emissions?
 Indicate how GHG emissions claims are validated, if any validation?

Project costs and funding request

Project total costs
 Funds requested from NorthX
 Funding requested start date
 Funding estimated end date
 Remaining funds status