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## **EIGHT GREENTECH STARTUP FINALISTS SELECTED FOR SAINT-GOBAIN NOVA INNOVATION COMPETITION 2012**

***Final "speed dating" round with business leaders to be held at Greenbuild International Conference in San Francisco on November 15th; finalists earn opportunity to partner with Saint-Gobain along with prize money***

**PARIS, October 15, 2012** – Self-shading smart windows, radiant-heated sheetrock and a new eco-friendly resin for making greener building materials are just some of the innovative finalists in an upcoming competition for entrepreneurial green-building and clean-tech startups.

Saint-Gobain, the world's largest building materials company, and the U.S. Green Building Council – Northern California Chapter (USGBC-NCC) today announced the eight finalists in the NOVA Innovation Competition 2012, which will be held November 15<sup>th</sup> at the 2012 Greenbuild International Conference and Expo in San Francisco.

Saint-Gobain's NOVA Innovation Competition rewards startups around the world that have innovated new products in the area of *sustainable habitat and construction markets* : i.e. construction products, advanced materials, energy efficiency and environmental sustainability. After having been held twice in France and once in Germany, the Nova Innovation Competition is taking place for the first time in the United States.

The eight finalists were selected from a field of 168 entrants using an open, transparent judging process involving experts from MIT, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, the US Green Building Council – Northern California Chapter and Webcor, one of the world's top commercial building contractors. They will pitch their innovative businesses in a live speeddating format at the 2012 Greenbuild International Conference and Expo in San Francisco to a judging panel consisting of Saint-Gobain business leaders.

While the top three winners will be awarded cash prizes of \$50,000 (about €38,000), \$25,000 (about €19,000) and \$10,000 (about €7,700), respectively, the bigger prize is the opportunity for *all* NOVA Innovation Competition participants to partner with Saint-Gobain's NOVA External Venturing organization in exploring potential joint development, licensing or other collaboration agreements.

The eight finalists range from early stage to well-established entrepreneurial startups, and span diverse segments of the building construction, advanced materials, energy efficiency and environmental sustainability market segments. They include:

**Aquamost Inc.** (Brookfield, Wisconsin, USA) – A chemical-free system for the remediation of hydraulic fracturing (“fracking”) and other oil/gas well wastewater, combining catalyst plates, UV light and electricity.

**Architectural Applications** (Portland, Oregon, USA) – An air conditioning efficiency technology that uses membrane-based, air-to-air heat and moisture exchangers integrated into the building envelope system to create healthier indoor environments with much less energy.

**Blue Water Bioproducts** (Port Huron, Michigan, USA) – Developer of eco-friendly polyurethane resins made from lignin, a pulp and paper industry waste product.

**Encapsulix** (Simiane, Provence, France) – Developer of thin-film coating equipment that make OLED, LED lighting, photovoltaics, organic electronics more durable and less expensive to manufacture.

**Heliotrope Technologies** (Oakland, California, USA) – Developer of energy efficient electrochromic glass windows that can switch between solar transparent, heat blocking and heat and lighting blocking states.

**PlanGrid** (Sunnyvale, California, USA) – Complete collaborative platform for construction information and the fastest pdf viewer in the universe.

**Smarter Shade** (South Bend, Indiana, USA) – A daylight control platform that enables a new or existing window to go from clear to dark with the touch of a button, which activates a sliding film.

**ThermoCeramix Group** (Boston, Massachusetts, USA) – A radiant heat system integrated into sheetrock and tiles for ceilings and walls.

NOVA External Venturing, an international team that evaluates startup companies for partnerships with Saint-Gobain joined with the USGBC-NCC to host the first North American NOVA competition in San Francisco because of its fast-growing green building and green technology startup culture. Saint-Gobain brings an alternative venturing model to the heavily VC-driven industry, focusing more on joint development opportunities with promising startups rather than seeking a financial stake in the company. Since 2006, the organization has partnered with dozens of promising startups worldwide, with some being discovered through the bi-annual NOVA Innovation Competition.

“Saint-Gobain is recognized as one of the 100 most innovative companies in the world,” said Rakesh Kapoor, director of NOVA External Venturing and Northboro R&D Center (Saint-Gobain’s largest R&D Center in North America). “This year’s NOVA Innovation Competition has attracted our largest field of entrants yet. And it’s no wonder; word has finally gotten out that Saint-Gobain offers startups tremendous value in providing access to a global

market along with the support, resources and expertise that comes from the building materials industry leader.”

To learn more about the NOVA Innovation Competition, visit [www.saint-gobain.com/innovationcompetition2012](http://www.saint-gobain.com/innovationcompetition2012).

#### **About Saint-Gobain Worldwide**

Located in 64 countries and headquartered in Paris with nearly 195,000 employees, Saint-Gobain, the world leader in the habitat and constructions markets, designs, manufactures and distributes building materials, providing innovative solutions to meet growing demand for energy efficiency and environmental protection. For more information about Saint-Gobain, please visit [www.saint-gobain.com](http://www.saint-gobain.com).

#### **About Saint-Gobain NOVA External Venturing**

NOVA External Venturing joins entrepreneurial companies and Saint-Gobain, the \$54 billion habitat and construction market leader, in mutually beneficial, long-term development partnerships. They combine Saint-Gobain’s marketing, manufacturing and R&D resources with the freshest ideas in construction and advanced materials. Together, Saint-Gobain and its partners *start* with a sound idea, *scale* it to the commercial level, and *soar* to success developing the next generation of advanced materials for construction, energy efficiency and environmental sustainability. For more information about NOVA External Venturing, a unit of Saint-Gobain, please visit [www.http://www.saint-gobain.com/en/NOVA](http://www.saint-gobain.com/en/NOVA).

#### **About U.S. Green Building Council, Northern California Chapter (USGBC-NCC)**

The USGBC is committed to a prosperous and sustainable future through cost-efficient and energy-saving green buildings. USGBC works toward its mission of market transformation through its LEED green building certification program, robust educational offerings, a nationwide network of chapters and affiliates, the annual Greenbuild International Conference & Expo, and advocacy in support of public policy that encourages and enables green buildings and communities.

USGBC-Northern California Chapter is one of the largest USGBC Chapters in the country, with 22,000 constituents, 10,000+ LEED credentialed professionals, and more than 5% of the world’s LEED certified square footage. The Chapter hosts more than 150+ annual events, workshops, and conferences with regional, national and international organizations, and is a leading voice in green building public policy throughout Northern California. As the premier green building organization in the region, USGBC-NCC plays a pivotal role as a convener, mobilizer and educator in transforming the built environment.

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