



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Pacific NorthWest Economic Region (PNWER) Selects Eight Innovative Companies for First Cohort of Its Congregate Solutions Accelerator

Challenge-based accelerator to build resilience in the Tourism, Performing Arts, Travel, and Hospitality (TPATH) sectors in the Pacific Northwest

SEATTLE, November 8, 2021 -- The [Pacific NorthWest Economic Region](#) (PNWER) today announced the eight companies that have been selected for the organization's [Congregate Solutions Accelerator](#). The goal of the Congregate Solutions Accelerator is to scale solutions to help safely reopen the Tourism, Performing Arts, Travel, and Hospitality (TPATH) sectors, which have been heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Following a rigorous application process, PNWER and its partners accepted these eight members of the innovation economy to be part of Cohort 1 of the Congregate Solutions Accelerator.

"I am excited by the cohort of companies that the Congregate Solutions Accelerator program has assembled. Collectively, they have technologies directly applicable to the greatest challenges of our performing arts, travel, and tourism sectors which have been hardest hit for the past 20 months of COVID. I look forward to several successful demonstration projects in the next few months," said Matt Morrison, PNWER Executive Director.

The Congregate Solutions Accelerator's "challenge-driven" approach engages and supports the innovation ecosystem to address societal and industry challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. Congregate's Cohort 1 is organized around addressing four challenges facing the TPATH industries: Workforce Management, Hybrid Experiences, Contactless Commerce, and Immunity Verification. The Congregate Accelerator pairs TPATH organizations that need help addressing these challenges and are willing to run pilot or proof-of-concept programs with cohort companies over the next twelve weeks. The cohort will also receive mentorship from health industry experts, regulators, and industry experts who will advise companies as they scale their solutions.

"ATIA is happy to be a partner with PNWER," said Sarah Leonard, Alaska Travel Industry Association President & CEO. "Our membership has spoken clearly about the challenges facing the tourism industry, especially around workforce shortages. PNWER's focus on addressing these issues as part of the Congregate Accelerator program launch is exciting, and will bring broad benefit to employees and employers going forward."

"The Congregate Accelerator program provides a unique opportunity, offering these eight

participating companies the critical support needed to come together and use technology to solve some of the region's biggest problems," said Michael Schutzler, CEO, Washington Technology Industry Association (WTIA). "As we embark down the road to economic recovery, I'm proud of the innovation already grown out of our region and am eager to see what's next."

Companies selected for Congregate Cohort 1 include:

- [2D Metric](#) - Chad Hill
- [Altoura](#) - Jamie Flemming
- [Bespokely](#) - Edgardo Romero, Julia Kimmig
- [iCrypto Inc.](#) - Peter Hartmaier
- [Lubn Inc](#) – YC Chung
- [Mantis XR](#) - Kahlil Ashanti
- [Novaby](#) - Julia Beabout
- [SOTECH Health](#) - Craig Micklich, Doug Murphy, Paul Craig

For more information, visit www.congregate.resiliencefoundry.org

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ABOUT PNWER

The Pacific NorthWest Economic Region (PNWER) is a public/private non-profit organization created by statute in 1991. Member jurisdictions include Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, Montana, and Washington, and the Canadian provinces and territories of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, the Northwest Territories, and Yukon. PNWER's mission is to increase the economic well-being and quality of life for all citizens of the region; identify and promote "models of success; and serve as a conduit to exchange information.

ABOUT ATIA

The Alaska Travel Industry Association is the leading statewide nonprofit association and the voice for Alaska's tourism industry. Over 600 tourism business members operate in every region of the state, including individual fishing guides, wilderness lodge owners, cultural attraction managers, and cruise ship executives. ATIA, in partnership with the Alaska Dept. of Commerce, Community & Economic Development, is also the manager of Alaska's destination marketing program: Travel Alaska.

ABOUT WTIA

The Washington Technology Industry Association (WTIA) is a non-profit organization dedicated to building a strong and sustainable technology sector and supporting a thriving community. WTIA's transformative programs leverage the collective power of the technology industry for more than 1000 member companies and their employees. WTIA includes the 501c6 WTIA Member Trade Association, the 501c3 WTIA Workforce Institute dba Apprenti, and the for-profit company HR Benefits, Inc.

ABOUT FUTURE BORDERS COALITION

In 2020, the coalition was renamed “Future Borders Coalition” with a multi-year mandate to continue the work of accelerating a cohesive border vision based on improvements in technology, processes, facilities and innovation to drive ahead economic recovery, prosperity, safety and security.

ABOUT SPRINT GRANT

The Scaling Pandemic Resilience through Innovation and Technology (SPRINT) Challenge Grant was awarded to PNWER by the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration.

