



Frequently Asked Questions

Who is Smart City Works?

SMART CITY WORKS™ is a new class of business accelerator, called a *BUSINESS ACTUATOR*, that can more rapidly move early stage ventures to commercialization, reduce risk for downstream investors, and improve likelihood of product uptake in the marketplace. Our mission is to accelerate innovation and speed commercialization of solutions that improve the livability, operations, and resilience of cities and communities. We are uniquely focused on urban infrastructure, the built environment, and on changing the way we design, build, and operate civil infrastructure. Our Spring and Fall sessions are designed to propel graduating companies into the marketplace, endowed with proven products, and equipped with the skills to grow and compete for funding and market share.

What areas of infrastructure does Smart City Works focus on?

The built environment is indeed a broad canvas. We are focused on businesses and ideas that solve problems related to energy, water, transportation, resilience, public safety, and construction. We are looking for high-impact solutions on how to design, build, operate, and maintain infrastructure in these areas. Solutions can also be related to enabling technologies, such as materials, processes, computer technologies and applications, sensing, optimization, analytics, etc. Look for our Call for Innovators (CFI) every Spring and Fall for more details!

What is a business accelerator?

A business accelerator provides hands-on personalized business and technical mentoring to emerging businesses over a period of months to speed commercialization of early stage ventures and new technologies.

How is Smart City Works doing more than traditional business acceleration?

We go beyond traditional business acceleration and into a new model of commercialization called business *actuation*. What does this mean?

First, actuation is not just about developing strong business plans and opportunities for funding, though these remain critically important. Actuation is about catalyzing business and technology development across the entire innovation-commercialization life-cycle – it's about closing the gap between innovator and investor, and between entrepreneur and end-user. In this regard, we integrate end-users and investors at the beginning, into our selection process – we learn from our municipal partners, investors, and others what the critical needs and capability gaps are in cities. Applicants that meet these needs, are then selected and are in a far better position to participate in demonstration and pilot projects upon graduation, and ultimately to drive their solutions into the marketplace faster.

Second, selected ventures participate in a detailed gap analysis program we pioneered as part of our intake process. From this, we develop an agreed upon 90-day highly-focused, and highly-customized actuation program. To support these programs, we provide intensive 1:1 mentoring, and unmatched capability with a world class network of executives, technical resources, and cities, to help overcome challenges in prototyping, go-to-market strategies, pricing, operations, and other core capabilities, and to endow ventures with proven products, and a team equipped with the skills to grow and compete for funding and market share.

What resources and funding do Smart City Works companies receive?

We offer a number of key resources and amenities to participating companies:

- **Initial funding.** Smart City Works does not have a formulaic approach to providing financial support to cohort companies. However, qualified companies may receive initial funding of up to \$25,000 and be eligible for follow-on investment.
- **Customized Actuation Program.** We develop a tailored, highly-focused, customized actuation program for every participant, to support the unique business and growth needs of each venture.
- **Acceleration Training and Services.** Our Acceleration bootcamp is a three-month intensive business training program on how to build, run, and grow a

top-level business, with hands-on mentorship from the Smart City Works' broad network of mentors, industry experts and executives, and tech gurus.

- **Strategic Introductions** to a curated group of cities, universities, laboratories, technical experts, entrepreneurs, and business executives from the Smart City Works network.
- **Professional Services.** Access to free and reduced-fee **professional services** such as accounting, banking, legal, technology, etc. and perks with significant value.
- **Office Space.** Free office space for six months (and possibly beyond).
- **CRM.** Customer relationship management (CRM) technology for managing all your company's relationships and interactions with customers and potential customers, marketing, sales, social, analytics, reporting, etc.
- **Demo Day** and other investor and customer opportunities.

What type of training will companies receive in the cohort acceleration program?

You will receive and participate in top-level immersive training and mentorship across all the important elements of creating a successful business. The program has multiple learning streams including: how to best organize and manage a startup, business planning, building a world class team, product design and development, raising capital, communications and pitching your ideas, sales and go to market strategies, building and implementing a financial plan, and ultimately testing and commercializing the product. We maintain regular and scheduled deliverables and check-ins with the Smart City Works team to make sure that all companies stay on track and progress throughout the experience.

How can I participate in a Smart City Works cohort?

Twice yearly, Smart City Works will issue a *Call for Innovators (CFI)* to announce a new cohort class is forming. Companies that seek to compete for a place in a cohort class, should sign-up for notifications through the Smart City Works website at www.smartcityworks.io. Each cohort may be tailored to advance a particular aspect of designing, building, and operating infrastructure, or a particular smart city vertical, or both! Sign up now and get ready to innovate!!

How are cohort companies selected?

We are looking for the best ideas or inventions and companies to reinvent cities and communities to make them smarter, safer, and more resilient. Companies that

meet eligibility requirements will be included in a selection process that may require responding to a written questionnaire, or submission of additional information. Finalists will be required to pitch their solution and participate in an interview process. We are looking primarily at three key criteria:

- **Impact.** How likely will your proposed solution change the way we design, build, and operate urban infrastructure?
- **Commercial Feasibility.** Is your innovation and business well-positioned to reach commercial markets?
- **Team.** What is the maturity of your business and your business team?

If you are competitive in these areas, you will be well-positioned to be selected to participate in a cohort.

Am I eligible to participate in a Cohort?

To be eligible, you must be an established business, with a specific product or solution in the Smart City Works mission space. You and key members of your team must be willing to travel to the accelerator and re-locate for 3 months to participate in person with other motivated entrepreneurs and professionals.

Do I have to be in the Smart City Works location for the entire 3-month period?

Yes. We believe co-locating at the site with other leading entrepreneurs for the entire three months of the program adds tremendous value to start-ups and will yield the most from the experience. We have an in-depth curriculum and ongoing events and learning opportunities daily as well as industry leaders and mentors regularly spending time on site. We provide opportunities for business building, actuation, and time with customers as part of the program. We want you to be successful. The best means to achieve that success is through the synergies that come from similarly-focused entrepreneurs and participation together in the business acceleration program.

Can I apply if our company or founders are not from the US?

Can you help with visa/immigration issues?

Yes. Anyone from anywhere can apply. You do have to be legally in the U.S. during the program, of course. Once accepted, we can help with legal/immigration issues by leveraging our contacts and network to help. However, we cannot help with them in advance of acceptance to Smart City Works.

What level of business maturity should our team have to be eligible?

We will look at all applications from established businesses, at all levels of development. We are looking for great ideas and great teams. We are looking for solutions most likely to re-invent the way we design, build, and operate cities. You may be that difference. And, if so, we want to work with you to help make your company a success!

When is the next opportunity to join a Cohort?

We are now OPEN for Spring 2018 Cohort Class! APPLY NOW!!

< <https://www.f6s.com/smartcityworks/apply> >

What are my responsibilities?

Two things. First, each cohort company will need to determine who on the team will participate. Participants will be responsible for travel, living arrangements, and local transportation. Second, you are responsible for showing up and being open to a world of possibilities! Bring your passion, ingenuity, and dedication to your cohort, and your commitment to listening, communicating, challenging, and adapting your ideas to create a viable commercial business ready to change the world.

What happens when the program ends?

After your three months in residence with Smart City Works ends, it is the beginning of a long-term relationship. Our post-cohort support program begins with you. You are now part of the Smart City Works family and alumni network. And we remain part of your team. We will continue to support your journey. You will be invited to events, pitches, and industry gatherings. Our training programs and technical office hours are open to you for refreshers or to work on key areas of interest. We will continue to monitor your progress and look for opportunities for further investment, partnering, and customer contacts, and we will look to you as future cohort companies come through our actuator program, to lead the way, sharing your lessons and success with them.

Our goal is to help you be wildly successful!

Where will the Spring 2018 cohort be located?

The Spring 2018 cohort will be located in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area at Refraction – a collaborative co-working environment at the end of the Silver Line on DC’s Metrorail. <http://www.refractionpoint.org>

Where will I live?

If a company is accepted into a Smart City Works cohort, we will work with the team to find suitable living arrangements, but ultimately your living arrangements are up to you.

How can I invest in cohort companies?

Great idea. We can work with you on how to best partner with, sponsor, or invest in Smart City Works and its cohort companies. Send us an email through our website www.smartcityworks.io.