

UC Davis Researchers Awarded Aggie Climate Action for Equity (ACE) Grants



Aquaculture Specialist Dr. Jackson Gross' project taps into the development of sustainable soils from California's pistachio shell waste. Photo: Elena Zhukova for UC Office of the President

The State of California, through the University of California Office of the President, has granted \$1 million for the [Aggie Climate Action for Equity \(ACE\)](#) initiative to enable the transition of early-stage climate-based projects to the next phase of tangible development. The ACE program is managed by [Venture Catalyst](#), under the [Office of Research](#).

Seven projects were selected, and the recipients received up to \$90,000 each for FY2024-25 to advance action-oriented clean-tech innovations to positively impact California communities vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

Congratulations to the 2024-25 award recipients!

- [MD Shamin Ahamed](#): *Net-zero Greenhouse Crop Production with Climate-Smart Solar Screen*
- [Michele Barbato](#): *A Novel Homebuilding Technology for Affordable and Wildfire-Resilient Homes*

- [Hamad El Mashad](#): *A Novel Biofilter for Emission Mitigation and Ammonia Recovery from Dairy Manure*
- [Nina Fontana](#): *Cultivating Climate Resilience: A Fire Stewardship Decision Support Tool for California Tribes and Beyond*
- [Jackson Gross](#): *Sustainable Soils from Pistachio Shell Waste*
- [Tessa Hill](#): *Quantifying Carbon Sequestration in Seagrass Meadows: Testing Methodologies for Climate Mitigation, Resilience, and Carbon Markets*
- [Ruihong Zhang](#): *Producing Bioplastic Products from Dairy Byproducts*

Join the ACE awardees at the [UC Davis Research Expo](#) on April 18 where they will discuss their vision related to the challenges of climate change as part of a panel discussion: “Aggie Climate Action for Equity: A Showcase of Innovations Addressing California’s Climate Challenges.” Attendees can hear from all seven awardees during this breakout session from 2:00-3:00pm to learn more about their unique innovations.

[Read More](#)

Venture Catalyst, Ailment Capital, and MoFo Host Food & Ag Startup Legal Bootcamp

Disruptive startups in the food and agriculture sectors are revolutionizing the way we address the world’s food challenges and paving the way for a better tomorrow. To ensure you get your industry-changing ideas off the ground, it is critical that you have a solid understanding of the legal issues that arise when launching and growing a startup in this field.



This free course features interactive sessions designed to introduce startups, entrepreneurs, and others interested in the food and agriculture industries to the legal knowledge needed to grow your business, protect your innovations, and navigate the challenging regulatory landscape. Leading lawyers from [MoFo](#)’s globally recognized Food + Agriculture industry team will lead each session with a real-world experience-based approach and provide insights on key legal issues across the sector.

The course begins Thursday, March 28, 2024, 1:00pm – 2:00pm PDT, and runs every Thursday through May 9, 2024. Registrants may choose to attend some or all of the seven sessions.

[Register Now](#)

**AgStart and Bayer Announce Golden Ticket Competition
for AgriFood Innovators**



LifeHub California Golden Ticket

The Bayer Crop Science LifeHub California Golden Ticket competition is open to startups from anywhere in the world, from pre-seed to Series A, in the areas of regenerative agriculture, novel crop protection & efficiency approaches, advanced breeding technologies, and applications of synthetic biology. The successful winner of the competition will receive a year of fully-paid use of lab space, shared instruments and equipment, incubation, refrigeration, and other facilities at the Bayer LifeHub California @AgStart facility, hosted by [AgStart](#), in Woodland California. Applications from startup companies will be accepted starting March 1st, with the application window closing April 30th. The winner of the competition could be commencing work as early as June 1st, with fully-subsidized lab facilities available for twelve months from their starting date.

[Learn More](#)

UC Davis-associated Startup Elve to Open New Manufacturing Operation in Davis



UC Davis-associated startup [Elve](#) is preparing to open a manufacturing operation in 7,000 square feet of space in University Research Park in Davis. Elve makes high-efficiency lightweight millimeter-wave power amplifiers, primarily for supplying connectivity for space applications and high-bandwidth earth communications. The company chose to manufacture in Davis because it started in the college town, and it has collaborations with the university and access to university labs.

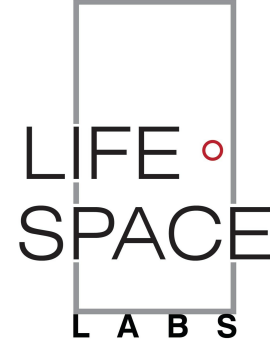
In February, Elve raised \$15 million from investors. The company said the funding will be used to grow its customer base and to increase manufacturing capabilities.

[Read More at Sac Biz Journal](#)

LifeSpace Labs Unveils One-of-a-Kind Flex BioCulture Program

Local incubator and [Venture Catalyst DRIVE](#) network participant [LifeSpace Labs](#) recently announced the launch

of its Flex BioCulture program. Building on its mission to support biotech innovators, the program offers startups affordable access to state-of-the-art fermentation and cell culture capabilities. The exciting initiative aims to reduce costs traditionally associated with R&D while ensuring clients retain autonomy over their intellectual property.



Flex BioCulture will transform the trajectory of emerging startups by connecting them with in-demand bioreactor systems. With no long-term commitment required, the program is uniquely positioned to support the biotech industry's dynamic needs. While an in-house specialty staff is available to operate the instrumentation, pre-qualified clients are welcome to run their experiments.

Press Release

Funding Opportunities

Bakar Fellows Spark Award

The Bakar Fellows Spark Award is designed to accelerate faculty-led research to tangible, positive societal impact through commercialization. Successful Spark Award recipients join the robust I&E ecosystem that includes faculty, post-docs, students, staff, and alumni, as well as campus programs and organizations designed to assist Fellows in introducing discoveries to the market. [Register here.](#)

Deadline: March 22, 2024

HS Chau Women in Enterprising Science Program at IGI

WIES offers fellows one-year of paid custom bio-entrepreneurship programming to further their research and form their businesses. At the end of that year, up to two fellows may be selected by our generous third-party donor to receive up to \$1,000,000 directly. These funds will have no strings attached and will help the chosen fellows further the development of their startup venture. [Apply here.](#) Deadline: April 12, 2024

VentureWell E-Team Program

The E-Team Program, part of the VentureWell Accelerator, supports student ventures as you embark down the path you're likely to take as an innovator and entrepreneur. We help you advance your invention through a powerful mix of up to \$25,000 in grant funding, entrepreneurship training, mentorship by dedicated staff, national recognition, and networking with peers and industry experts. [Learn more.](#)

Deadline: May 1, 2024

Agriculture and Food Research Initiative - Foundational and Applied Science Program

To meet the growing population's food needs, we must develop innovative, safe, and sustainable management strategies for livestock, crops, and critical underlying resources. Applications that address climate change, food and nutrition security, expanding markets for producers, indigenous traditional ecological knowledge, and equity for underserved producers are welcome. [Apply here.](#) Deadline:

December 31, 2024

SBIR Grants for Women

By awarding \$200+ million in research and development (R&D) funding to about 400 startups each year, in three phases, through 11 federal bodies. Grantify helps you apply for funding from one such body, the

National Science Foundation (NSF). [Learn more.](#)

Growth Factory - Accelerating Venture-Backable Startups

The goal of this local startup accelerator is to help founders of pre-seed to seed stage venture backable companies located in the Greater Sacramento Region rapidly achieve product-market fit, positioning them to raise funds and achieve revenue of \$1M in ARR within 18 months. Applications are open on a rolling admissions basis. [Apply here.](#)

AgFunder

AgFunder is a new kind of venture capital firm built on proprietary technology and a global ecosystem of over 85,000 subscribers. We invest in exceptional and bold founders who are committed to building the next generation of agrifood technology companies that will transform our food system. We are one of the most active agrifood tech investors in the world. [Apply here.](#)

Tech Coast Angels

If your company has a strong team with a great defensible idea, early traction, and is set to grow, TCA is ready to invest up to several million dollars individually or with our syndicate partners. TCA looks at investments in the United States and Canada. [Currently accepting applications.](#)

Open SBIR/STTR Grant Topics

Federal Research/Research & Development with the potential for commercialization. [Learn More.](#)

UC Davis Office of Research - Links to Funding Sources

Browse the listings of funding announcements provided by sponsoring agencies and other pertinent information about obtaining critical research funding. [View the complete list here.](#)

Educational Opportunities

How to Come Up with Great Startup Ideas - Webinar

In this live event, Jonathan Greechan (Co-Founder & CEO of Founder Institute) will share a framework for crafting great startup ideas that he has learned from working with over 10K startups worldwide. Attendees will also have the opportunity to share their ideas, get feedback from others, and meet aspiring entrepreneurs interested in their space. [Register here.](#) Date: March 27, 2024 | 5:00pm PDT

License Lowdown: How does your university compare to your peers? - OUP Webinar

Join OUP as they explore how the Core Partner universities compare to each other regarding the eight financial terms collected for the startup license terms database: university equity percentage, anti-dilution protection amount, total milestone payments, royalty percentage, sublicensing percentage, change of control fee, upfront fees, and maintenance fees over the first five years of the license. [Register here.](#)
Date: April 9, 2024 | 12:00pm EDT

2024 Cleantech Open Accelerator Cohort

Cleantech Open is the world's largest cleantech accelerator, providing entrepreneurs and corporate innovators the resources they need to launch and grow successful cleantech businesses. Our one-of-a-kind innovation ecosystem built over the last 20 years of programming spans key cleantech innovation hubs in the U.S., linking labs and universities, service providers, investors, corporations, governments, and other cleantech incubators and accelerators. [Register here.](#) Deadline: April 14, 2024

Startup Pitch Workshop - Monthly

Three startups present their pitch for advice and feedback from a panel of experts. Organized by StartupSac, Startup Folsom and NCID. [Apply here.](#) Date: 4th Wednesday of every month.

NorCal Entrepreneur Hub

The NorCal Entrepreneur Hub is a dynamic online platform that enables innovators, startup founders, and small business owners to find and connect with the right resources for their business, including investors, universities, mentoring programs, networking groups, training programs, and more. This FREE regional tool is a great place for any startup founder or small business owner to get started and/or look for resources as you grow. [Learn more.](#)

On-Demand Virtual Entrepreneurship Toolkit Series

The new On-Demand Toolkit Series is a resource of past recordings as well as slides and tools taught throughout the 5-week series. After a short application, you will have access to five recordings and subsequent resource tools. [Apply now.](#)

Regional Events

Startup Happy Hour

Come join for a fun evening at The Last Stop Saloon in Old Sacramento! Network, relax, and connect with fellow startup enthusiasts. Featuring Co-founder of Webconnex Eric Knopf. [RSVP here.](#) Date: March 26, 2024 | 5:00-7:00pm PDT

Pitch Day - MoFo ScaleUp San Francisco

Morrison Foerster is excited to announce that we are hosting an in-person Pitch Day in San Francisco on May 29, where select companies will have the opportunity to pitch to a panel of Bay Area-based venture capitalists. [Email for more details.](#) Deadline: April 1, 2024

AgStart Learn From a Local Series - Gaston Salinas of Botanical Solution

Learn from a Local is an on-going speaker series hosted by AgStart, a non-profit organization supporting entrepreneurs advancing innovation in agriculture, food, and health. [Learn more.](#) Date: April 4, 2024 | 5:30-7:30pm PDT

CBCC Business Mixer

Network and grow your business at the upcoming CBCC Business Mixer on the first Friday of every month! Get the chance to win a generous Visa Card, a week's worth of radio spots to promote your business, and more! [Learn more here.](#)

1 Million Cups

Present your early-stage company to your peers. Or just grab a coffee and listen.
Date: [Every Wednesday](#)

Business Casual: Get Your Creative Biz Together

Every fourth Saturday of the month, Atrium's mentorship team will be hosting a free business basics discussion group. Growing your creative business can seem like a daunting task. Atrium is here to help take your ideas from the drawing board to the boardroom with free "get started right" business workshops for creative startups. Come with a laptop and a ready-to-grow mentality. [Register now.](#) Date: Ongoing

Sacramento State Carlsen Center for Innovation & Entrepreneurship Events and Workshops

[Learn More.](#) Date: Ongoing

California Life Sciences Institute FAST Advisory Program

Get the coaching you need to perfect your business model. [Apply now.](#) Date: Ongoing

Bay Area NSF Innovation Corps Immersive Short Course

Join the weeklong immersive course for university researchers and early-stage startup founders. [Apply now](#). Date: Ongoing

Industry Events

Science2Startup Symposium

This one-day symposium in Cambridge, MA will feature presentations from top therapeutics researchers to a curated audience of experienced biotech venture capitalists, entrepreneurs at leading biotech startups, and senior executives at large pharma companies. [Learn more](#). Date: April 10, 2024

Seed Central - The Essential Networking Event

Postdoc Panorama - A multi-year series featuring the research conducted by postdoctoral researchers at UC Davis and UC Berkeley. [Register here](#). Dates: April 11, 2024

World Summit AI Americas

The world's leading AI summit for the Americas will return to Montréal and bring together global AI leaders from enterprise, big tech, startups, academia, law, government and investment to hear the world's brightest AI brains deliver innovative, cutting-edge, topical content, tackle the most burning AI issues and set the global AI agenda. [Learn more](#). Dates: April 24-25, 2024

TechCrunch Early Stage

At this one-day founder summit, you'll get actionable advice and takeaways from top experts, meet other entrepreneurs taking similar journeys, share your own experiences, and build the confidence to take the next steps towards growing your business. [Learn more](#). Date: April 25, 2024

X4 - The Experience Management Summit

Every experience at X4 plays a role in helping you become a leader in the XM movement. You'll leave energized, informed, and prepared to drive immediate change at your organization. Featuring Keynote Speaker, Former First Lady Michelle Obama. [Learn more](#). Dates: May 1-3, 2024

2024 BIO International Convention

The BIO International Convention is the largest and most comprehensive event for biotechnology, representing the full ecosystem of biotech with over 20,000 industry leaders from across the globe. [Learn more](#). Dates: June 3-6, 2024

About Venture Catalyst

UC Davis Venture Catalyst supports the development of new UC Davis-associated ventures fueled by university research and technology. Venture Catalyst offers several innovative programs that bridge the gap between early-stage research and commercialization and provide entrepreneurs the resources, support, and connections needed to successfully form and grow technology-based startups. With a focus on accelerating technology-led economic development in the Davis-Sacramento region, Venture Catalyst also works closely with partners in the regional innovation and economic development ecosystems.

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