



## Energy-Executive-in-Residence (EEIR) FAQs

### **What is an EEIR?**

An EEIR is a consultant who joins a Startup Team in a functional role. Most Startup Team Leaders will be the inventors of new technology. EEIRs take on the supporting executive roles that you would expect to see in an investible clean energy company. These roles might include Chief Executive Officer, Chief Marketing Officer, Chief Sales Officer, Chief Development Officer, Chief Financial Officer, or Chief Operations Officer. EEIRs create work product for the company, develop plans, and can represent the Startup Team in public settings. EEIRs participate in the customer discovery process that determines the critical feature set needed to achieve product-market fit.

### **Who can be an EEIR?**

An EEIR has at least 10 years of work experience and has significant functional experience. An EEIR can slot into the Startup Team as a subject matter expert. While most EEIRs will have managerial experience, an EEIR will not be asked to manage people. Since EEIRs will work part-time, the position could be ideal for someone who is currently employed full time and is looking to experience the creation of a new company. Consultants or entrepreneurs are also good candidates to become EEIRs.

EEIRs should have an interest in becoming a co-founder of a compelling startup. The goal for an EEIR while working in the accelerator program is to gain a better understanding of the market potential for the Startup Team's technology, and to decide if the EEIR wants to join the founding team. The 6-month accelerator provides a risk-free environment for the Startup Team members to get to know each other, to work together (and assess personality fit), and to determine if there is a potentially viable business to create. At the end of the accelerator program, the Startup Team will be asked to decide whether to start a company, to decide which EEIRs will become the founders, and to negotiate a founder's agreement. The EEIR is not obligated to become a founder, nor is the team obligated to include the EEIR in the founding team.

### **How many hours do EEIRs work?**

EEIRs should be able to work 5 hours per week, on average, during the cohort period. Some roles and/or periods of time may be more intense than others. EEIR hours will be managed by the Startup Team Leader. Each Startup Team has a budget that it can use for purchasing business services including EEIR time. MEIA has set expectations with Startup Team Leaders that EEIRs will be working part-time including nights and/or weekends. Most of the Startup Team Leaders will also be part time.

### **Are EEIRs paid? Are there other benefits to being an EEIR?**

EEIRs set an hourly rate, which can be as low as \$0 per hour for people who want to volunteer, or as high as budgets allow for professional services. Generally, the Startup Team's budget is based on a rate of \$50 per hour, which is a below-market rate because we expect many if not most EEIRs will volunteer. All EEIRs will sign a subcontractor agreement with the Maryland Clean Energy Center. On weekly basis, EEIRs will submit hours using an online form, and the Maryland Clean Energy Center will pay EEIRs monthly.

EEIRs will learn the *Lean Startup* methodology by first-hand experience and by participating in curriculum designed to drive the team towards a go/no-go decision on company formation. There are many lessons that could position the EEIR for entrepreneurship in the future, or an innovation support role in their existing organization. EEIRs will also have a risk-free opportunity to learn about an emerging technology and be in a position to potentially become a co-founder of the commercializing company.

### **How do I become an EEIR?**

After MEIA has received an expression of interest via the website (<https://mdeia.org/eeirs>), MEIA will interview each eligible candidate. Prospective EEIRs will need to sign the EEIR Memorandum of Understanding. Once approved, the EEIR is eligible to match with a Startup Team.

### **How is an EEIR matched to a team?**

Startup Teams will post positions on the MEIA Job Board, which will be circulated to the list of EEIRs, and EEIRs can apply for those positions. Fundamentally, the EEIR Job Board functions as a marketplace where Startup Teams seek the best candidates for jobs. Startup Teams will interview candidates and make hiring decisions. When an EEIR is hired, MCEC will ask the EEIR to sign a sub-contractor agreement.

### **Can an EEIR be released from a Startup Team?**

Yes. The Startup Team Leader is effectively in charge of the team's financials and personnel. EEIRs are paid hourly and are not guaranteed any specific hours. Thus, an EEIR can be released at will by the Team Leader. The EEIR can submit final hours for billing, and he or she will be paid at the next pay date.

### **Can MEIA remove an EEIR from the eligibility list?**

Yes. MEIA can remove an EEIR from the eligibility list at any time for any reason. MEIA recognizes that being "released" from a Startup Team will often be the result of poor fit (for example, if a Startup Team leader does not believe that an EEIR would be a good fit to be a co-founder). MEIA does not expect to remove EEIRs from the eligibility list unless the EEIR fails to meet their commitments or behaves in such a way that future placement is unlikely. EEIRs may resign at any time.

### **Are Non-Disclosure Agreements required?**

Yes, the subcontractor agreement with MCEC will have an NDA within it.

**Is there a cap on the number of EEIRs?**

Yes, MEIA will have no more 2 EEIRs for every open position. If it is expected that a given cohort will need 20 EEIRs, MEIA will recruit and activate no more than 40 EEIRs. This enables teams to have choices. EEIRs that are not selected can withdraw or can wait for the next cohort.