

THE CHALLENGE

Each year, The Buckminster Fuller Institute (BFI) invites citizens from all over the world—including artists, scientists, students, designers, architects, activists, planners and entrepreneurs—to submit their innovative solutions to some of humanity's most pressing problems. A \$100,000 prize is awarded to support the development and implementation of one outstanding strategy.

THE INSPIRATION

Buckminster Fuller led a prolific life of research, invention, writing and teaching. He developed a comprehensive systems approach to understanding complex global problems and a unique set of “design science” principles that embodied a deeply attuned ecological aesthetic. Fuller conceived and prototyped new strategies intended to enable all of humanity to live lives characterized by freedom, comfort and dignity without negatively impacting the earth's ecosystems or regenerative capacity. He emphasized that the technology and know-how already exist to successfully surmount our global challenges and he advocated “doing more with less” by increasing the overall performance of every resource invested in a system.

Fuller issued an urgent call for a design science revolution “to make the world work for 100% of humanity, in the shortest possible time, through spontaneous cooperation, without ecological offense or the disadvantage of anyone”.

Answering this call is what the Fuller Challenge is all about.

OUR CATALYST PROGRAM

In addition to the \$100,000 grand prize, BFI offers further support for Finalists, Semi-finalists and other select applicants through relationships with our sponsors, partners and networks. Catalyst Program benefits can include: additional funding, pro-bono legal services, fiscal sponsorship, international press coverage, business incubation, mentorship opportunities and special invitations to present at conferences and exhibitions.

DEADLINE FOR ENTRY: March 31, 2015

REGISTER INTENT TO APPLY: challenge@bfi.org

MORE INFORMATION: bfi.org/challenge

WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR

Winning the Fuller Challenge requires more than a stand-alone idea or innovation that focuses on one aspect of a system failure. BFI looks for holistic strategies that demonstrate a clear grasp of big-picture dynamics. If a proposal emphasizes a new design, material, process, service, tool or technology, it is essential that it be part of an integrated strategy that simultaneously addresses key social, environmental and economic factors.

BFI seeks initiatives that tackle urgent needs at a range of scales: from macro-strategies that have the potential for widespread impact, to local, community-based initiatives with global relevance and replicability. Proposals at any stage of development will be reviewed; non-profit, for-profit and hybrid initiatives are all eligible.

PROJECT CRITERIA:

VISIONARY — i.e. put forth an original idea or synthesize existing ideas into a new strategy that creatively addresses a critical need.

COMPREHENSIVE — apply a whole-systems approach; aim to address multiple goals, requirements and conditions in a holistic way.

ANTICIPATORY — factor in critical future trends and needs as well as the projected impacts of project implementation in the short and long term.

ECOLOGICALLY RESPONSIBLE — practice environmental responsibility; enhance the ability of natural systems to regenerate.

FEASIBLE — illustrate how the solution is possible today; have a solid team capable of implementation.

VERIFIABLE — able to demonstrate authentic claims.

REPLICABLE — able to be adapted to similar conditions elsewhere.