

# Manufacturing Expertise-In-Residence (MEIR) Program



Startups with physical products are solving the world's toughest problems in fighting climate change - but these startups face added roadblocks to scale. FORGE serves the unique role of providing manufacturing-focused, no-cost support to innovators - preparing innovators to manufacture, and then providing tailored connections to regional manufacturers, suppliers, and relevant collaborative startup support organizations. FORGE has served over 550 startups since 2015.

Building out an expanded, scalable, and sustainable Manufacturing Expert in Residence (MEIR) program is a critical next step for FORGE as it scales its reach and impact. While the FORGE team is trained in cross-sector and cross-disciplinary manufacturing needs, as we now serve hundreds of startups annually, there is a small fraction of startup needs that are more complex and require deeper coaching than the internal team can provide. In the past year, FORGE has piloted the addition of its first MEIR.

There is opportunity to reach, appeal to, and deepen support for a greater number of cleantech startups, ensuring more cleantech startups successfully manufacture (domestically) and ultimately deploy solutions at impactful scale, through building out a scaled and scalable FORGE MEIR program.

**With support from the EPIC 2 program, FORGE will expand and systematize a broader pool of on-call Experts in Residence with deep domain knowledge to provide additive, special manufacturing-focused support to startups.** In the coming months, FORGE will work to continue the discovery and pilot of an expanded, highly scalable and sustainable, next iteration of MEIR program. Building out our MEIR program will be foundational to our ability to engage the breadth and depth of knowledge needed to serve an ever increasing number and complexity of innovations across sectors, life stages, and materials.

Developing this expanded program will include further research and discovery, identifying the best model, and recruiting additional experts according to startup life stage, sector, and/or manufacturing process. The goal is to build out the infrastructure, vet our short list of in-network, target MEIR candidates, and run an initial, expanded pilot program to connect startups with these high value individuals and ultimately, support the commercialization of their impactful products.