



Vermont Energy & Climate Summit **Pitch Submission Form**

1. **Pitch Submitted By (Your Name or Organization):** Phelan Fretz, Executive Director, ECHO, Leahy Center for Lake Champlain
2. **Contact Email Address:** pfretz@echovermont.org
3. **Contact Phone Number:** 802-864-1848 Ext 126
4. **Pitch Title:** Engage “all” Vermonters that visit Burlington’s Waterfront in how they can and should individually and collectively participate in achieving Vermont’s energy goals.
5. **Pitch Summary:** In fall of 2018, ECHO will install “**Energy Commons**”, an outdoor, free public space that invites the Waterfront’s nearly 1 million annual visitors to explore environmental sustainability through interactive exhibits and social connections. It will be composed of synergistic elements: a science park with interactive exhibits; green infrastructure demonstrations, including renewable energy technologies and alternative transportation linkages; interpretive panels; social spaces, including a cafe and performance space; and art installations by local artists. This \$1 million project, a partnership between ECHO and the City of Burlington, will serve as a platform for utilities, energy companies, NGO’s and government agencies to engage the public in achieving our energy goals.
6. **What energy sector(s) does this Pitch apply to? (Bold all that apply):**
 - **Energy Efficiency**
 - **Electricity**
 - **Transportation**
 - **Thermal Heating &/or Cooling**
 - **All (Total Energy)**
 - **None: Non-energy related carbon reduction proposal**
7. **Which criteria category(ies) does it address? (Bold all that apply):**
 - **Economic Activity**
 - **Affordability**
 - **Vulnerable Vermonters**

- **Other - what each of us can/should be doing to achieve our energy future**

- 8. Scale of impact on Vermont's energy and climate goals:** We can't really estimate the "conversation rate" of visitors to participating in our energy future, but hundreds of thousands of visitors convening, engaging, socializing and learning about energy through hands-on interactives has the potential to make the concept of energy and its management, real for people. We know that ECHO's guests are 40% Chittenden County residents, with 60% living outside this county. We know that ECHO's location is the nexus for multiple forms of transportation (train, boat, bike, car, walking, etc). We know that Energy Commons will include demonstrations that highlight many of Burlington's renewable energy investments. We know that folks come to the Waterfront to be inspired by the views and ECHO's guests have the expectation to be engaged and challenged.
- 9. Benefits/costs of this proposal for Vermont and Vermonters:** Getting every Vermonter to participate in our collective energy future will take reaching out to folks across the state, a very expensive and complex process. Delivering a message to nearly 1 million that visit the Waterfront and 150K annual ECHO guests offers a unique and powerful platform for building engagement and commitment. Where else can the public engage with tomorrow's technology, ask questions, take a pledge, learn what net zero really means, share their energy future with friends over a cup of coffee, and take the first steps toward their own energy independence?
- 10. Decision-makers necessary for this proposal to be adopted or move forward:** The partners are in place. Most of Vermont's utilities and renewable energy companies are already serving as content experts or have committed resources. The City of Burlington is a partner. The next step is for these partners (and others we haven't reached yet) to look beyond the opening of Energy Commons in fall 2018 to new 5-year goals to demonstrate, engage and teach about how our utilities and businesses can propel and support each Vermonter to take action - using ECHO and Energy Commons as a platform.
- 11. Strategy and key considerations:** ECHO will manage Energy Commons' daily operations - from programs, to maintenance, to the cafe. To make the Commons truly come to life, all the utilities, energy companies, energy/sustainability NGO's and government agencies need to fully embrace and help us populate the space with excitement - demonstrations, live shows, real products, point to it in their communications, and support it through ways and means yet to be thought of or created.
- 12. Timeline:** Energy Commons will open in fall 2018. It can serve as a platform for education for years to come.