

Four local companies named pitch competition

Staff report

Tuesday, October 16, 2018

Times Union

A high-tech episode of the TV show Shark Tank? Not quite, but close.

Four Capital Region start-up companies were named finalists for the New York State Commercialization Competition, a business pitch contest for small to mid-size manufacturing companies.

Eighteen entrepreneurs from across the state will pitch their ideas in front of an audience during the two-day competition held on Nov. 7 and 8 at the Albany Capital Center. Up to seven winners will be awarded \$50,000 each for use in developing their product.

The local finalists include Schenectady-based KIRSH Helmets, a company developing new motorcycle helmets that use a patented “fluid displacement liner” in place of a typical foam liner.

Another finalist is Mohawk Machine Works, which developed a machine to clean and dry outdoor or commercial surfaces like pavement, athletic fields, commercial flooring or asphalt.

One company, ecoLong, is developing hardware to measure solar radiation and other factors that determine the effectiveness of solar panels.

Another component of the energy technology company includes a transactive energy platform that will allow “prosumers” — consumer who produce their own energy through things like solar panels — to transact energy directly with other consumers to “maximize energy and technological benefits,” according to ecoLong’s website.



A Kirsh helmet is seen at the Annual Technology Awards at the Rivers Casino Resort on Thursday, June 28, 2018 in Schenectady, N.Y. (Lori Van Buren/Times Union)

PHOTOGRAPHER: Lori Van Buren

Lux Semiconductors, the fourth Capital Region-based finalist, is working to produce a new semiconductor substrate — the base electronic devices are built on. Because the traditional silicon wafer design has been nearly unchanged for decades, Lux is seeking to develop a flexible, more durable format.

The non-profit organization Fuzehub is holding the second-annual Commercialization Competition in conjunction with Empire State Development.

The two-day event will also feature speakers and exhibits. Winners will be chosen based on the commercialization potential of their product or technology.

“The New York State Commercialization Competition spotlights the many

innovative entrepreneurs who are developing new ideas for technologies across the state, and awards funding that will help those entrepreneurs get those ideas into the marketplace,” Matt Watson, director of Empire State Development’s Division of Science, Technology and Innovation, said in a statement.