Eligibility and Application

Who is eligible to apply for the Innosphere Earth and Space Systems Accelerator?

Our primary targets are early-stage Colorado-based Earth and Space System technical founders, startups from federal labs, university startups, and entrepreneurs who are seeking to be a part of a collaborative environment and supportive business climate for companies focused in the following sectors:

- Space
- CleanTech
- ClimateTech
- Quantum
- Photonics

What stages of startups are you looking for?

Our target startups are typically in the late FORMATION to early LAUNCH stages of development.

Late FORMATION companies include those finalizing the testing phase of their business idea and assessing the fit between the product and the market, ensuring that there is a demand for what they're offering.

The LAUNCH stage include those with a focus on growth and expansion. They are beginning to seek significant funding, typically through Series A, B, or later-stage venture capital rounds, to support and accelerate growth.

Are there any restrictions on the type of earth and space system startups that can apply?

No; however, our curriculum is geared towards helping science and technology startups. Additionally, startups exclusively focused on government sales will want to have a discussion around their needs prior to submitting an application.

This accelerator is focused on Colorado based startups, so any startups located outside of Colorado should contact us to discuss suitability.

How can I apply, and what is the deadline for application submissions?

The application window for the first Cohort of the new Innosphere Earth and Space Systems Accelerator is open between July 15th, 2025 and September 5th, 2025. Innosphere evaluations and interviews will occur on a rolling basis as applications are received.

An interested company founder should apply here.

If a company is declined for anticipated fit reasons, they will be informed at the time of that determination. Acceptance communications will occur between September 5th and Sept 30th, 2025.

Is there an application fee, and if so, how much is it?

No, there is no fee associated with submitting an application. If a company is Colorado based, there is no fee for the accelerator.

If the company is located outside of Colorado, please contact us to discuss.

Can non-Colorado based startups apply for the program?

This accelerator is geared towards Colorado based companies. If the company is located outside of Colorado, please contact us to discuss.

Are solo entrepreneurs eligible, or do you only accept teams?

Yes, solo entrepreneurs are eligible to apply for the program. They should be aware that one of the criteria they will be judged on is team composition - an awareness of the appropriate level of skills and experiences, relevant to the stage of their project, including appropriate scientific, business, and operational expertise. Demonstrating that they understand what this is and having a plan to achieve it will be beneficial to their selection. The program can help founders with team building.

Program Details

What is the duration of the Accelerator program?

It is an eight-month, intensive program to accelerate the commercialization of novel earth and space systems technologies. For participating companies, the curriculum runs September, 2025 through May, 2026.

Is the program virtual, in-person, or a hybrid model?

The program is a hybrid model. Most of the core content and curriculum will occur virtually (Zoom). There are programs and investor meetings that we will encourage participating founders to join in-person.

What type of mentorship, training and resources can participants expect?

- Eight full months of support
- A dedicated, expert Innosphere Client Director
- A comprehensive accelerator program that kicks off with a cohort-based model
- Earth and space systems startup specific development and training program
- Access to an Innosphere market and investor research resources
- A proven framework for building your business.
- Multidisciplinary, expert mentors representing industry, investors, entrepreneurs, academics, payers, and technology advocates.

How much equity does Innosphere take in exchange for participation in the program?

None. Innosphere does **not** take equity in companies, as we are fee based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. In this case, Colorado OEDIT covers the fees for Colorado companies.

Will participants have access to laboratory space and equipment?

No. This program does not provide laboratory space or equipment. Innosphere does manage laboratory space. A decision to lease space would need to be made separately. Innosphere and our partners do provide discounts on service providers.

Support and Funding

Does the accelerator provide funding, and if so, what is the typical investment range?

No, the accelerator program does not provide investment or non-dilutive funding.

We work closely with participating founders to create a capital strategy to secure investor and/or non-dilutive funding outside of the program. Innosphere does have a Venture Capital arm that invests in science and technology startups during the Seed and Series A Rounds. It can invest in Cohort companies that match their current investment thesis. However, that decision is made independently of accelerator program participation.

What kind of investor connections does the program facilitate?

Through the powerhouse network of organizations participating in this program, there is opportunity for investor introductions, investor events, and conferences.

In addition, working with their Client Director, participants will create an Investor Relationship Action Plan. Founders will develop a strategy to make investor connections, deliver solution information, and ultimately pitch their products.

Mentorship and Networking

Who are the mentors, and what are their areas of expertise?

The Innosphere Earth and Space Systems accelerator uses a novel approach to finding mentors who will maximize contribution and impact to your company growth and development.

For each cohort, we recruit a group of 5-6 mentors that each founder will have access to during the last quarter of the program. Their expertise is aligned to your field of focus and they bring varying perspectives including industry representatives, investors, entrepreneurs, academics, and other advocates.

In addition, the key Mentor/Coach/Consultant for the startups are their Client Directors. These are typically former C-Suite and Senior Executives with

extensive startup commercialization experience. They work collaboratively with client company management teams on issues including business strategy, capital/funding, customer acquisition, sourcing talent and operations. Client Directors focus on unique aspects and attributes of earth and space systems startup ventures.

How are mentors matched with startups?

During the accelerator program, we create small subgroups of 5-6 founders based on the key outcomes they need to achieve within 90-180 days around key technology focus areas.

We then recruit mentors for each of these subgroups. The mentors for each group represents 5-6 experts specifically matched to bring the expertise, experience, insights, and connections to address the needs of each subgroup. This is a multidisciplinary group usually including a mix of representative perspectives of industry representatives, investors, entrepreneurs, academics, and other advocates.

They are matched to work with their subgroup from February to May.

What networking opportunities are available through the program?

The powerhouse network of organizations participating in this program provides many opportunities for networking. Throughout the course of the program, there will be many events, educational programs and conferences that our Cohort members will be invited to participate in.

How does the program facilitate connections with industry and potential customers

Our Client Directors have deep industry experience and connections to potential customers. They work closely with founders to capitalize on their network and those of fellow Client Directors to create valuable connections.

Our program pays close attention to the needs of our participating founders. We build a group of mentors specifically selected to aid our founders in accelerating their growth and development goals. This group typically includes industry representatives and potential customers of the technology that the founder is working to advance.

Outcomes and Expectations

What are the expected outcomes for startups by the end of the accelerator program?

The expected outcomes for startups are to accelerate their development progress and graduate the program at a high state of investor readiness.

As our participating companies join us with different development pathways and stages of readiness, we use a Company Assessment to capture their starting point and initial development priorities. We reapply the assessment during the program to gauge our pace of progress and satisfaction with work completed.

Our achievement of investor readiness is measured by the accomplishment of individual company Capital Strategy goals, including securing non-dilutive and investor funding. In our 2024 Cohort of the Colorado Life Sciences Incubator Program, 64% of the 34 participating companies successfully raised capital, securing a total of $18.2M. This included $6.1M in dilutive capital and $12.1M in grants. This reflects the strength of our program in equipping founders to achieve their Capital Strategy funding goals.

How is progress measured throughout the program?

Individual Founder progress is measured by their specific progress against OKRs and Capital Strategy goals. All companies will receive measures of progress through the application of our Company Assessment. This will monitor business and market readiness. Program progress will be measured by the U.S. Economic Development Administration on measures of participating startup funding, job creation, IP, strategic partnership development, product development, and market entry.

What happens after the program ends?

After the program ends, participating companies will join our Alumni network. They will continue to be invited to our community and networking events. We welcome the opportunity for our Cohort companies to continue their formal Client Director relationship. That would be a custom engagement that they would need to contract for separately with Innosphere. In most cases, Client Directors maintain an ongoing mentor relationship with their client companies providing occasional and informal feedback.

Intellectual Property

How does the program handle intellectual property (IP) created during the program?

The accelerator program treats any intellectual property (IP) created during the program to be owned by the participating startup that created it. The program will survey founders at certain intervals as to their filed and received IP as well as the type of IP. This is a reporting requirement by the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade which is supporting the development and execution of this accelerator program.

Will the accelerator have any claim to IP developed by participating startups?

No. The accelerator will not have any claim to IP developed by participating startups.

Program Curriculum and Structure

What does the typical program curriculum look like?

- Creating relevant strategies specific for successful companies
- product commercialization.
- Understanding key business principles and processes.
- Developing a strong investor pitch and deck.
- Defining a clear development timeline.
- Refining communications strategy.
- Enhancing and communicating the company's business model.
- Building a deep network of earth and space systems leaders.
- Connecting companies to corporate partners, investors, and advisors.
- Gaining visibility and investor recognition.

Are there any mandatory events or sessions that participants must attend?

Yes, there are several elements of the program that we consider mandatory for participant attendance. These include:

- **Workshops, Seminars, and Mastermind Sessions**: Regular attendance is expected to gain industry insights and business development knowledge.

- **Community Engagement**: Actively participate in our community through Slack, networking events and peer-to-peer sessions.

- **Regular Meetings and Reviews**: Engage in scheduled meetings, performance reviews, and reporting sessions to track your progress.

- **OKRs**: Objectives and Key Results (OKRs) are key to driving progress in our program. Each company will be required to maintain an OKR document while in the program.

How is the program tailored to meet the needs of earth and space systems startups?

We highly value the interaction between your company and your assigned Client Director. Regular and meaningful engagement is crucial for the success of your venture. Our advisors will also conduct in-depth reviews quarterly to assess your business progress and tackle any specific challenges your team or technology may be facing.

Your feedback is invaluable in helping us tailor the program to your needs and improve. Regular check-ins, surveys, and peer review sessions will facilitate this exchange of feedback.

Success Metrics and Past Performance

Can you share success stories or metrics from previous cohorts?

Innosphere supports entrepreneurs in many industries, including but not limited to: bioscience; medical device; energy; advanced materials; hardware; enterprise software; fintech; and artificial intelligence. In the past 10 years Innosphere client companies have achieved the following:
- $2B+ capital raised
- $116M+ revenue generated
- 2,000+ jobs created
- 200+ graduated companies

How does the program measure its success in terms of participant satisfaction and long-term viability of the startups?

Participant satisfaction is measured during the program. We measure perceptions of Client Director quality; satisfaction with the progress being made against priority goals; and we measure relevance, quality and impact of our programming content. Finally, to gauge our success and satisfaction versus alternative programs, we incorporate a Net Promoter Score (NPS).

We will also be gauging the long-term viability of the participating startups by measuring:

Transformational Growth
- *Dynamic Job Creation*
- *Substantial Funding Injections*
- *Product Development and Market Entry*

Competitive Advantage
- *Intellectual Property Milestones*
- *Strategic Partnership Development*

Alumni Network and Post-Program Support

What kind of post-program support can startups expect?

Participating Founders will continue to be invited to our social and networking events.

Is there an alumni network, and how can past participants engage with it?

Yes, there is an Alumni network. They will have access to the post program support noted above without additional costs.

Are there follow-on investments or continued mentorship opportunities available after completion of the program?

If a company would like to continue its formal Client Director relationship, they would need to contract for that support separately.

In most cases, Client Directors maintain an ongoing mentor relationship with their client companies providing occasional and informal feedback.

Application Process and Selection Criteria

What is the selection process for applicants?

(1) An interested company founder should apply <u>here</u> before September 5, 2025.

(2) Innosphere will evaluate all applications upon receipt.

(3) If Innosphere determines that a company is a good fit for the accelerator Program, it will set up an interview between receipt of application and September 26th, 2025.

(4) If Innosphere determines that a company is not a good fit for the accelerator Program, it will communicate that to an applicant at the time of that determination.

(5) Acceptance communications will occur between evaluation completion and September 26th, 2025.

What criteria are used to evaluate startups for the program?

There are four selection criteria that will be used to evaluate each startup applicant:

(1)   Innovative Solution – Innovative solution or product that addresses a significant problem or need in the earth and space systems sector. This innovation can be in terms of technology, methodology, service delivery, business model, or ways of delivering value to customers.

(2)   Stage of Development – Our target startups are typically in the late START to early LAUNCH stages of development.

Late START companies include those finalizing the testing phase of their business idea and assessing the fit between the product and the market, ensuring that there is a demand for what they're offering. The LAUNCH stage include those with a focus on growth and expansion. They are beginning to seek significant funding, typically through Series A, B, or later-stage venture capital rounds, to support and accelerate growth.

(3)   Team Composition – The founding team should demonstrate an appropriate level of skills and experiences, relevant to the stage of their project, including appropriate scientific, business, and operational expertise. If a single Founder, demonstrating an understanding what this is and having a plan to achieve it will be beneficial to their selection. The program can help founders with team building.

(4)   Founder Characteristics – We will be looking for growth, commitment, accountability, urgency, courage, and collaboration

When will applicants be notified of their acceptance into the program?

Acceptance communications will occur between evaluation completion and September 26th, 2025. If a company is declined for anticipated fit reasons, they will be informed immediately.

Legal and Regulatory Guidance

Does the program offer companies legal and regulatory guidance?

The program does not offer company specific legal and regulatory advice. The program focuses on helping founders create the strategies they need to succeed as an earth and space system startup. Regulatory and certain aspects of Legal strategy are included in the curriculum.

Where the founder needs counsel assistance to execute the strategy, we will work with the founder to identify multiple options they can pursue outside the program to secure that advice. That contract would be independent of the program.

Market Access and Commercialization

How does the program assist with market analysis and entry strategies?

The accelerator helps with market analysis and entry strategies in several ways:

(1) The participating companies will have the support of both investment and earth and space systems research databases.

(2) The program participants will have access to Innosphere Research Associates who can use these databases to accelerate their access to insights about markets, target audiences, competitors, investors, and many other aspects that they need to sharpen their pitch.

(3) The programming content will address specific business models, stakeholder strategy, economic strategy, and market insights to best prepare the Founders for developing their market entry strategy.

What support is offered for commercialization and scaling of products?

Innosphere has a successful history of helping companies reach their business milestones and working with university spinouts to advance technologies to commercialization.

Our program focuses on helping entrepreneurs learn valuable skills on how to access capital, acquire customers, build talented teams, grow top line revenue and (if it's your goal) execute a successful company exit. We connect inventors and business drivers, facilitate introductions to corporate partners, turn startups into viable businesses, and advance technologies to commercialization.

Miscellaneous

What makes Innosphere's Earth and Space Systems Accelerator unique compared to other accelerators?

(1) Innosphere's accelerator program accelerates the success of high-impact startup companies. The program focuses on ensuring companies are investor-ready, connecting entrepreneurs with experienced advisors and early hires, making introductions to corporate partners, exit planning, and accelerating top line revenue growth.

(2) Companies in the program are supported by a dedicated Client Director that rolls up their sleeves to work *hands on* with company founders and CEOs on business milestones.

(3) Our novel approach to mentoring provides multiple expert vantage points to overcome key challenges, increase fundraising success, and accelerate the accomplishment of key outcomes.

(4) We are operating under a Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade award aimed at creating breakthrough results and outcomes. We are accountable to performance. This is an impact-oriented program.

(5) Innosphere does *not* take equity in companies, as we are fee-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization

How can participants balance program participation with the ongoing demands of running their startup?

Our program is designed to keep you focused on the priorities that your startup needs to achieve to be successful. So, this is not incremental or distracting work, it focuses every day on driving and accelerating the key accomplishments that are your startup priorities.

To achieve your goals, we will look to you for have:
- **Accountability** - Taking responsibility for their engagement, work, and results.
- **Urgency** - Recognizes that speed of delivering results matters; pressing necessity.
- **Commitment** - Obligation of time and priority to achieve something great.
- **Courage** - Strength to venture, persevere, and withstand uncertainty and risk.
- **Leadership** - Ability to motivate, inspire, and influence others to drive accomplishment.
- **Collaboration** - Harnessing diverse perspectives to create new solutions and thinking.
- **Growth** - Lifelong learning, personal development, self-education.