

National Instruments Announces 2011 Green Engineering Grant Program



AUSTIN, Texas, /PRNewswire/ -- National Instruments today announced its 2011 Green Engineering Grant program, a worldwide competitive program that fosters rapid design, prototyping and commercialization of promising new renewable energy, energy efficiency and smart grid systems. Through the program, NI will donate up to \$25,000 USD equivalent in NI LabVIEW graphical system design software tools and training to eligible startups to help advance clean energy development in applications such as solar, wind and biofuel technology. The 2011 program has a special focus on technologies that improve the smart grid and provide the foundation for a clean energy future.

"For more than 30 years, engineers and scientists around the world have used NI software and hardware to implement their world-changing innovations more quickly and efficiently," said Dr. James Truchard, president, CEO and cofounder of National Instruments. "The NI Green Engineering Grant program helps remove technological barriers by providing access to the training and tools needed to bring smart grid and renewable energy solutions to market."

LabVIEW software and the LabVIEW FPGA Module, as well as embedded prototyping and deployment platforms such as NI CompactRIO and PXI instrumentation, are ideal for building innovative control and monitoring solutions for the renewable energy market. Small companies throughout many countries have combined the open, graphical nature of LabVIEW software with the high-performance characteristics of modular, reconfigurable NI hardware to prototype and prove advanced embedded designs significantly faster than with traditional solutions.

"With only three employees, we work hard to develop clean energy solutions for people in developing nations," said Matt Bennett, vice president of research and development for Windlift, a startup company that develops mobile airborne wind energy systems, including onboard energy storage for mobile microgrids in post-conflict reconstruction and disaster relief. "The NI Green Engineering Grant gave us the tools to facilitate rapid development of our technology, helping us to progress from concept to prototype in just eight months. Also, the same hardware and software will carry through the entire technology development process, providing a smooth transition when we are ready to enter production."

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To date, the NI Green Engineering Grant program has delivered NI software and training to more than 40 startups and small companies working on a variety of revolutionary renewable energy applications. The following examples demonstrate how past grant recipients are using NI tools in their renewable energy solutions:

- * Powering remote villages with portable airborne wind technology
- * Producing quality transportation fuels from inedible plants
- * Generating electricity by harnessing ocean thermal energy

Because smart grid technology is a foundation for renewable energy innovation, the company will host, on April 19–21, an interactive Earth Week webcast series about smart grid technologies and the 2011 Green Engineering Grant program. The three-part series examines the rapidly changing landscape of clean energy, smart grid and energy storage technologies. It also features presentations from past grant recipients and other technical demonstrations that show how NI technology can help engineers develop and speed the adoption of renewable energy systems.

Readers can register for the webcast and learn more about the 2011 NI Green Engineering Grant program by visiting <http://www.ni.com/greengrant/>.

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