



A Program of the Buckminster Fuller Institute

# THE BUCKMINSTER FULLER CHALLENGE

Catalyzing the vanguard of a design science revolution

## 2011 CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Each year a distinguished jury will award a \$100,000 prize to support the development and implementation of a strategy that has significant potential to solve humanity's most pressing problems.

---

### A DESIGN SCIENCE REVOLUTION

Buckminster Fuller's prolific life of exploration, discovery, invention and teaching was driven by his intention "to make the world work for 100% of humanity, in the shortest possible time, through spontaneous cooperation without ecological offense or disadvantage of anyone."

Fuller coupled this intention with a pioneering approach aimed at solving complex problems. This approach, which he called "comprehensive anticipatory design science", combined an emphasis on individual initiative and integrity with whole systems thinking, scientific rigor and faithful reliance on nature's underlying principles. The designs he is best known for (the geodesic dome, the Dymaxion house, car, and map, and the global electric grid) were part of a visionary strategy to redesign the inter-related systems of shelter, transportation and energy.

After decades of tracking world resources, innovations in science and technology, and human needs, Fuller asserted that options exist to successfully surmount the crises of unprecedented scope and complexity facing all humanity – he issued an urgent call for a design science revolution to make the world work for all.

Answering this call is what the Buckminster Fuller Challenge is all about.

---

### WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR

Winning the Buckminster Fuller Challenge will require more than a great stand-alone innovation. If for example, your solution emphasizes a new design, material, process, service, tool, technology, or any combination, it is essential that it be part of an integrated strategy dealing with key social, economic, environmental, policy and cultural issues.

The winning solution should exemplify the *trintab principle*. Trintabs are small steering devices used on ships and airplanes which demonstrate how relatively small amounts of leverage, energy, and resources strategically applied at the right time and place can produce maximum advantageous change.

Entrants must put forward a bold, visionary, tangible initiative that is focused on a well-defined need of critical importance. Proposed solutions must represent a *preferred state* model – one that aims to optimize conditions from inception in order to create the most desirable, sustainable, future outcome. Entries should be regionally specific yet globally applicable, and backed up by a solid plan and the capability to move the solution forward.

#### Entries must be:

**Comprehensive** – applies a whole systems approach to all facets of the design and development process; aims to simultaneously address multiple goals, requirements, conditions and issues ;

**Anticipatory** – factoring in critical future trends and needs as well as projected impacts of implementation in the short and long term;

**Ecologically Responsible** - reflecting nature's underlying principles while enhancing the Earth's life-support systems;

**Feasible** – relying on current know-how, technology and existing resources;

**Verifiable** – able to withstand rigorous empirical testing; and

**Replicable** – able to scale and adapt to a broad range of conditions.

The winning strategy will integrate all these criteria into a powerful catalyst having the potential to play a significant role in the transition to an equitable and sustainable future for all.

## 2011 APPLICATION QUESTIONS AND SUBMITTALS

1. Summarize your proposal in **50 words** or less.
2. Describe the critical need your solution addresses. **50 words**
3. Explain your initiative in more depth and its stage of development. Please include the inspiration, and/or underlying principles informing your initiative. **300 words**
4. How does your strategy and approach respond creatively and comprehensively to key social, cultural, economic, ecological, and technological issues which shape the condition you are seeking to transform? Why is your strategy a breakthrough and what makes it a preferred state model? **300 words**
5. Compare and contrast your initiative with at least two leading initiatives addressing the same critical need. In comparison to these initiatives why is your proposal more likely to effect change and make a distinguishing impact? **200 words**
6. Describe your implementation plan. What are the priority milestones you intend to achieve in years one (1) through three (3)? **200 words**
7. Please provide details regarding the team and/or partners you have assembled, the team's experience and qualifications, and your ability to execute your implementation plan. If applicable, include details about external validation and/or support your strategy has received to date. **200 words**
8. What are the primary obstacles that might prevent your initiative from being realized? How do you plan to overcome them? **150 words**
9. What range of funding is needed to bring your project to fruition and from where do you anticipate funding will come? What is the total annual budget and explain how your initiative will financially sustain itself? **150 words**
10. If available, please list by title, date, and source any additional materials or URLs that directly support your application and/or independently corroborate your claims. List no more than four items.
11. Applicants are encouraged to provide up to six images. Format must be jpeg. Maximum size is 2000 x 2000 pixels, 150 dpi, 250k.
12. You may submit up to a two-minute long video to help communicate your idea. While we encourage you to do so **it is not required** and should you choose not to submit a video the review of your entry will not be adversely impacted in any way. You will need to upload your video to YouTube or Vimeo (video-sharing sites) before you can copy and paste the "URL" into the online application.

***(1600 words total)***