



SCALAR ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

A Venture Studio for Climate and Technology Innovation

Accelerating early-stage startups from market validation to investment readiness across the District of Columbia

Launch: June 2026

PARTNERS · Scalar International · Arizona State University (ASU) · E3G · Arent Fox · D.C. Green Bank

SASU is a USD 10 million venture studio building 10 startups through a milestone-based programme across a 12-month incubator cycle

USD 10M · 10 Startups · Up to USD 1M each · Milestone-gated tranches · 12-month incubator cycle

- Milestone-gated capital: USD 250K at acceptance + four tranches of USD 187.5K released on module completion
- Portfolio composition targets include D.C-led businesses, climate-focused startups, digital technologies and underserved community focus
- Backed by ASU, E3G, Arent Fox and D.C. Green Bank, bridging climate policy, academia, legal and green finance

1

Structured Programme

Four modules over 6 months: Market Validation, Building the Venture, Investment Readiness, and Pipeline & Fund Integration.

2

Milestone-Based Capital

\$1M per startup released in 5 tranches tied to module completions, ensuring accountability and de-risked deployment.

3

Expert Network

6 Senior Fellows / EIRs, 6 Vertical Experts, Selection Committee, and dedicated Program Leads across all disciplines.

4

Events & Ecosystem

12 clinics per year, annual flagship summit, quarterly roundtables. \$500K annual events budget.

5

National Activation

Congressional & mayoral engagement, Bloomberg media feature, D.C. physical launch event in 2026.

A \$2.5T annual climate-investment gap, and corporate demand growing 10×, opens a structural wedge at the seed-to-growth stage.

\$2.5T

Annual climate-investment gap to stay below 1.5°C

Limiting warming to 1.5°C requires roughly 2% of global GDP, about \$80T cumulative, invested between now and 2050. That is ~10× today's climate spend.

45%

Fortune Global 500 with net-zero targets (2024)

Corporate buyers Amazon, IKEA, Nestlé, Etsy now anchor procurement demand across clean energy, zero-emissions logistics and the built environment.

\$200B

Energy-as-a-Service market by 2026 (Navigant)

Service-led models EaaS, C-PACE, zero-emissions delivery zones are unlocking trillions in retrofits and last-mile transport by removing upfront cost as the barrier to deployment.

\$10M

SASU Year 1 deployment

Up to \$1M per startup, milestone-gated across 6 months, capitalising 10 climate-tech ventures in the underserved gap between seed and Series A.

SASU invests across six digital-infrastructure verticals underpinning the energy, fintech and operational economy

1 Energy

Digital tools for power-system visibility, turning telemetry into decisions and invoices.

- Metering & monitoring SaaS
- Utility / municipal billing
- Grid telemetry & analytics
- Operations decision support

2 Distributed Energy & Micro-grids

Software and services for decentralised generation, storage and asset coordination.

- C&I solar + battery storage
- Micro-grid control & billing
- Hybrid diesel-renewable ops
- Small-asset coordination

3 Fintech

Financial rails tied to energy and ICT cash flows: billing, settlement and digital money.

- PAYG / PAYU logic
- Payments, billing & reconciliation
- Settlement infrastructure
- Stablecoin / digital cash flows

4 Sectoral Software & SaaS

Vertical software for data centres logistics, extending into energy and demand optimisation.

- data centres
- Logistics & fleet SaaS
- Energy-demand optimisation

5 Compliance

Tools that convert operational data into trusted evidence for regulators, lenders and buyers.

- MRV & carbon evidence
- Environmental & social tracking
- Digital product passports
- Audit trails & reporting

6 Deeptech

Advanced tech for the digital-infrastructure stack: digital twins, satellite and LEO.

- Forecasting & optimisation models
- Digital twins of assets
- Satellite / LEO connectivity
- Earth-observation sensing

Each vertical maps to specific focus sectors: areas with strong fundamentals, material funding gaps and clear commercial prospects

Vertical	Focus Sectors	Stage Lens
1 Energy	Smart metering · AMI / AMR · Utility & municipal billing · Grid telemetry SaaS · Outage & loss analytics · Customer ops platforms	Pre-seed → Seed
2 Distributed Energy & Micro-grids	C&I solar + storage · Micro-grid control software · PAYG mini-grid billing · Hybrid diesel-renewable ops · DER aggregation & VPPs	Pre-seed → Seed
3 Fintech	PAYG / PAYU energy finance · Payments & settlement rails · Reconciliation engines · Embedded credit for energy · Stablecoin energy cashflows	Pre-seed → Seed
4 Sectoral AI & SaaS	Data centresops & ESG tracking · decarbonisation and data centres · Logistics & fleet SaaS · Demand-response platforms · Energy optimisation for industry	Pre-seed → Seed
5 Compliance	MRV (carbon, methane, water) · ESG & social-impact tracking · Digital product passports · Lender / regulator reporting · Audit-trail infrastructure	Pre-seed → Seed
6 Deeptech	AI forecasting & optimisation · Digital twins of grids & assets · LEO / satellite connectivity · Earth-observation sensing · Edge inference for assets	Pre-seed → Seed

Sectors are illustrative; SASU prioritises ventures with proven team, problem-solution fit and a defensible path to revenue within 6 months of programme entry.

USD 10M deployed to 10 startups, up to USD 1M each, through milestone-gated tranches across a 12-month incubator cycle

PROGRAMME SUMMARY	
Total Fund Size (Year 1)	USD 10,000,000
Selected Startups per Cohort	10
Maximum Investment per Startup	USD 1,000,000
Initial Tranche — on Acceptance	USD 250,000 (25%)
Milestone Tranches	4 (Modules 1–4)
Programme Duration	6 months

TRANCHE SCHEDULE — PER STARTUP			
Stage	Timing	Amount	Milestone
Acceptance	Month 0	USD 250,000	Signed acceptance, founder onboarding, KYC complete
Module 1	Months 1–3	USD 187,500	Market Validation — problem-solution fit, customer validated
Module 2	Months 3–6	USD 187,500	Building the Venture — MVP launched, key hires, systems in place
Module 3	Months 6–9	USD 187,500	Investment Readiness — data room, go-to-market, first revenue
Module 4	Months 9–12	USD 187,500	Pipeline Readiness — Scalar Decarbonisation Fund integration
TOTAL PER STARTUP		USD 1,000,000	

Four structured modules take startups from market validation to investment readiness and Scalar Decarbonisation Fund integration

0

ACCEPTANCE · Month 0

USD 250,000 initial tranche · SPV agreement signed · Founder onboarding & KYC · Milestone agreement tailored per startup

1

Market Validation & Foundations

Months 1–3

MILESTONE UNLOCKS

- ✓ Problem-solution fit validated
- ✓ Target customer defined & tested
- ✓ Founding team complete
- ✓ Go-to-market hypothesis documented

Climate · Innovation

2

Building the Venture Engine

Months 3–6

MILESTONE UNLOCKS

- ✓ MVP launched with early users
- ✓ Key hires made (tech, commercial)
- ✓ Operational systems in place
- ✓ Unit economics baseline established

Commercial · Operations

3

Investment Readiness & Growth

Months 6–9

MILESTONE UNLOCKS

- ✓ Data room complete
- ✓ Go-to-market strategy live
- ✓ First revenue or LOIs secured
- ✓ Impact metrics tracked vs. IRIS+

Investor Ready · Impact

4

Pipeline Readiness & Fund Integration

Months 9–12

MILESTONE UNLOCKS

- ✓ Follow-on pitch deck complete
- ✓ Fund-grade KPIs established
- ✓ Scalar Decarbonisation Fund plan approved
- ✓ Cohort graduation & showcase

Pipeline · Fund Integration

Pre-seed to seed stage startups across climate and technology verticals with defined composition requirements per cohort

CRITERIA	PRE-SEED	SEED	TARGETS
Monthly Revenue	USD 0 – \$25K	USD \$25K – \$100K	45% Energy Efficiency
Round Size	USD \$100K – \$1M	USD \$300K – \$2M	
SASU Investment (max)	USD 1,000,000	USD 1,000,000	25% Digital
Max Pre-Money Valuation	USD 5 million	USD 15 million	
SASU Role	Lead Investor	Lead Investor	20% GHG Emissions
Minimum Runway	12+ months	12 – 24 months	20% DACs (Disadvantaged Communities)
GOVERNANCE NOTES			

- Each startup signs an SPV agreement at acceptance, with the full \$1M committed and tranches released against module milestones.
- Module milestones are agreed during the onboarding sprint (Month 0) and tailored to each startup's stage and sector.
- Failure to meet a milestone pauses the next tranche; SASU and the startup agree a remediation plan or off-ramp.
- Portfolio composition targets are applied at cohort level; individual startups are evaluated on commercial and impact merit.

Three-stage selection: Expression of Interest → Draft Application → Final Application: October 2026 to April 2027

1 STAGE 1 Expression of Interest		2 STAGE 2 Draft Application		3 STAGE 3 Final Application	
1 Oct 2026	EOI Opens	29 Nov – 3 Dec	Interview Invitations	21–25 Feb 2027	Final Interview Invites
1–30 Oct 2026	EOI Submission Window	3 Dec – 1 Jan	Application Submission	21 Feb – 22 Mar	Final Application
30 Oct 2026	EOI Deadline	2–31 Jan 2027	Application Review	23–27 Mar 2027	Final Evaluation
30 Oct – 28 Nov	EOI Screening	1–5 Feb 2027	Review Consolidation	27–31 Mar 2027	Evaluation Consolidation
29 Nov – 3 Dec	Results Communicated	5–9 Feb 2027	Committee Review	3–7 Apr 2027	Final Interview Round
		10–14 Feb 2027	First Interview Round	7–11 Apr 2027	Final Consolidation
		14–18 Feb 2027	Interview Consolidation	12–16 Apr 2027	Final Decision
		21 Feb 2027	Shortlist Notification	17 Apr 2027	Cohort Notified

Four-phase PR and institutional activation, June to December 2026.

Policy alignment to national media rollout to cohort launch



Phased activation: foundation in Q2, public surface in Q3, conversion in Q4, feeding the 2027 cohort selection.

D.C Technology Ecosystem Grant covering costs across three activities

\$2M grant awarded by the Government of the District of Columbia — Venture Studio · Events & Convenings · Innovation Ecosystem Support

Activity 1 Venture Studio Total \$4,760,000 Grant \$1,250,000	Activity 2 Events & Convenings Total \$1,100,000 Grant \$500,000	Activity 3 Innovation Ecosystem Total \$250,000 Grant \$250,000	YEAR 1 GRAND TOTAL Total \$6,110,000 Grant \$2,000,000
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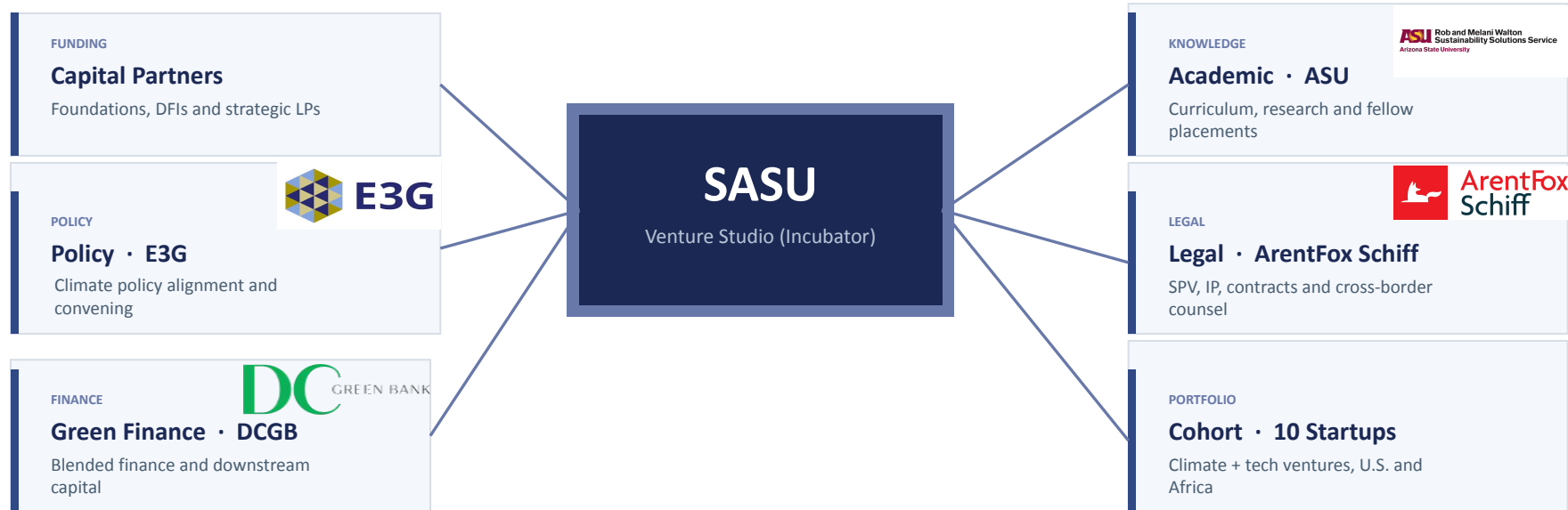
ACTIVITY 1 — VENTURE STUDIO BUDGET BREAKDOWN	
Program Development (10%)	\$140,000
SEED Funding for Development Activities	\$100,000
Market Research & Product Opportunity Brief	\$150,000
Training & Coaching Roadmap Setup	\$250,000
Travel	\$100,000
Conference Attendance	\$100,000
Salaries & Benefits — Staff, EIRs & Experts	\$3,920,000
Program Director + ASU Professor (×2)	\$500,000
Program Managers / Leads (×5)	\$1,000,000
Senior Fellows / EIR (6 × 4 × \$50K)	\$1,200,000
Selection Committee + Vertical Experts	\$900,000
Operating Costs + Overheads	\$600,000

ACTIVITY 2 — EVENTS & CONVENINGS	
Special trainings, clinics & conferences (12)	\$1,000,000
Overhead (10%)	\$100,000
Subtotal	\$1,100,000
Grant Allocation	\$500,000

ACTIVITY 3 — INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM	
Ecosystem Mapping & Research	\$38,000
Partnerships & Network Building	\$57,000
Capacity Building & Toolkits	\$57,000
Comms, Knowledge Sharing & Staffing	\$76,000
Overhead (10%)	\$22,000
Subtotal / Grant Allocation	\$250,000

SASU sits at the centre of a coalition spanning capital, academia, policy, legal and ecosystem partners

Scalar International Ltd · Programme administrator & accountable entity



Hub-and-spoke model: SASU is the central operating entity; partners contribute distinct capabilities under defined agreements.

Administered by Scalar, delivered through a consortium of academic, legal, media and green finance partners

SCALAR INTERNATIONAL Programme Administrator & Fund Manager	ASU Arizona State University · Academic Partner	E3G Climate Policy & Advisory Partner	ARENT FOX Legal Advisory Partner	D.C. GREEN BANK Green Finance Institutional Partner
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SASU CORE TEAM · KEY ROLES

ROLE	RESPONSIBILITY	BUDGET
Program Director	Strategic oversight, investor relations, cohort governance	\$250,000
ASU Conjoint Professor	Curriculum design, academic modules, research partnership	\$250,000
Program Manager	Day-to-day operations, applicant management	\$200,000
Program Technology Lead	Technical due diligence and startup technical support	\$200,000
Program Engineering Lead	Engineering mentorship and portfolio support	\$200,000
Program Energy Lead	Climate & energy sector expertise, portfolio company support	\$200,000
Investment Analyst	Portfolio monitoring, reporting, fund-grade KPIs	\$120,000
Marketing / PR Consultant	Brand, launch, media amplification and digital presence	\$150,000
Senior Fellows / EIR (6 × 4)	Hands-on mentorship from Entrepreneurs in Residence across 4 cohort cycles	\$1,200,000
Selection Committee (6)	Independent evaluation of cohort applicants at each selection stage	\$300,000
Vertical Experts (6 leads)	Sector depth in climate, fintech, digital, agri, mobility, health at \$100K each	\$600,000



SCALAR STUDIO UNIT

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**FOR FURTHER DETAILS
PLEASE CONTACT:**

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